



## Honors Program Thesis Advisor Expectations

As an Honors Program Thesis Advisor, you play a crucial role in guiding and supporting students through the development, research, and completion of their Honors thesis. Your mentorship will significantly influence the academic and professional growth of the student. The following expectations outline your responsibilities and commitments in this role:

- ❖ Regular Meetings
  - Schedule and maintain regular meetings with the student throughout the thesis process. These meetings should provide opportunities to discuss progress, offer feedback, and address any challenges. Aim to meet weekly or at least biweekly to ensure consistent progress and adherence to deadlines.
  
- ❖ Research Guidance
  - Provide expert advice on the selection, development, and refinement of the thesis topic. Assist the student in identifying appropriate research methodologies and resources. Guide them in developing a comprehensive literature review, thesis outline, and research plan.
  
- ❖ IRB/IACUC Process (If Required)
  - Determine if the student's research involves human subjects (requiring IRB approval) or animals (requiring IACUC approval). As a rule of thumb, if the research involves interaction with humans or animals *in any way*, consult the appropriate board early in the process.
  - If approval is required, assist the student in understanding the ethical considerations, regulatory requirements, and submission processes. Guide them through the preparation and submission of applications, including informed consent documents, animal use protocols, and other necessary materials. Ensure that the student does not begin data collection or animal research until IRB or IACUC approval is granted and that all research adheres strictly to approved protocols.
  
- ❖ Feedback and Revisions
  - Offer constructive feedback on drafts, focusing on structure, argumentation, evidence, and clarity. Help the student understand and integrate feedback to

improve their work through multiple revisions. Consult the Honors Thesis rubrics available on the [Honors Program Faculty Resources website](#) to guide your feedback.

❖ Academic Rigor and Integrity

- Ensure that the thesis meets high academic standards in research quality, originality, and scholarly contribution. Emphasize academic integrity, including proper citation practices and the avoidance of plagiarism. Provide guidance on the ethical use of generative AI if appropriate.

❖ Research Support and Funding

- Encourage the student to seek out research support funds if needed, including [grants available through the Honors Program](#) or external sources. Provide guidance on applying for these funds, helping the student identify and secure necessary resources.

❖ Presentation and Dissemination

- Encourage the student to explore opportunities to present their research at academic conferences within your field or related disciplines. Inform them that the [Honors Program maintains a fund to support these research presentations](#) and guide them through the application process.
- Help the student prepare for their thesis presentation by reviewing their materials and anticipating potential questions. Offer advice on effectively communicating their research to a non-expert audience and ensure they adhere to the presentation guidelines (e.g., 20-minute time limit, proper use of visual aids). Consult the Honors Oral Presentation rubric on the [Honors Program Faculty Resources website](#) for guidance.

❖ Support and Encouragement

- Foster a supportive and collaborative relationship with the student. Encourage them to take ownership of their project while providing the guidance needed to achieve their goals.

❖ Communication

- Maintain open and clear communication with the student regarding expectations, progress, and potential concerns. Keep the Honors Program informed of any challenges that may require additional support.

❖ Final Evaluation

- Advisors are required to assess both the student's written thesis and their oral presentation (either in person at the Thesis Presentation Event or via a recording). Submit all assessment materials, including the Thesis Rubric, Oral Presentation Rubric, and any other required grading forms, in a timely manner.