

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES –

Thesis Guidelines

Honors students in one of the five major program areas of Human Environmental Sciences (Child Development, Clothing and Fashion Merchandising, Family and Consumer Sciences, Foods and Nutrition, and Interior Design) are encouraged to work closely with a professor in her major to design a thesis or creative project. All students will be expected to present their work at an Undergraduate Research Symposium sponsored by KONu at Meredith College. Guidelines for writing an honors thesis and completing a creative project are described below.

Honors Thesis An honors thesis involves a rigorous review of literature of the research of a given topic, a research project that generates the student's own data for interpretation, and a summary of the findings. A five-chapter design is preferred:

Chapter 1- Introduction (including the goals, research questions and/or hypotheses of the study)

Chapter 2- Review of Literature

Chapter 3 -Methodology

Chapter 4- Findings (analyses, results)

Chapter 5 -Discussion, Conclusion, and Recommendations.

This will result in an extensive paper that includes an abstract, references, and appendices. Students will work with their thesis advisor to determine the type of research best suited to address the goals of the study. An honors thesis would conform as closely as possible to the format of a scholarly publication in a professional journal in her major area of study. The advisor will determine the style guide that should be used. Papers in Human Environmental Sciences have typically been between 30-60 pages of double spaced text with a minimum of 20 references.

Procedure Students identify the research topic the semester prior to completing the honors thesis. With the assistance of the department head, the student selects a professor to direct the thesis. The title and a brief description of the research are submitted on the special studies form to register for the class. Most students choose to complete the project for a grade. The student will meet with her thesis advisor to develop a time line for completing the project. Students are encouraged to spend one semester researching the topic and setting the goals for the project. The actual semester that the student is registered for the thesis should be spent submitting a proposal for the project that includes the first three chapters, gathering the data and interpreting the results, and writing the final paper. Advisors will work closely with the student to make sure that scholarly standards are upheld. When the final paper is completed, the advisor will sign the title page as outlined in the Senior Honors Thesis/Creative Projects Information and Guidelines for Meredith College. The grade will be determined by the thesis advisor. During the spring semester of her senior year, the honors student will present her research and findings in an Undergraduate Research Symposium sponsored by the Kappa Omicron Nu Honor Society at Meredith College. Outstanding theses may be recommended by the department to be submitted to the Undergraduate Research Community for Human Sciences (URC) conference that is sponsored nationally by KONu.

Creative Projects An honors creative project is typically completed by those students in Interior

Design and Fashion Design. She would work with a faculty advisor to complete an in-depth project produce an exhibit of her work. For example, one student in Interior Design completed an interior design project for the Admissions Office at Meredith College. She met with the clients, developed a budget for the project, designed the office space, selected the interior finishings, and oversaw the installation of the project. A student in Fashion Design could present a Fashion Show of a collection of her original work. Actual exhibit of the creative project is required.

This project would represent greater depth than the general major requirements. It would involve research of the topic and the student would submit a reference list with her final project. Students would also be expected to present their project at the undergraduate research symposium sponsored by KONu.