

HONORS PROGRAM
SENIOR HONORS PROJECT
(or Senior Departmental Project)

Proposal Guidelines

The proposal is a very important part of the Senior Honors Project (or of the research project done within a department that is being submitted to the Honors Program). It is in the proposal that the student outlines the area of study, the methodology to be employed, the resources to be enlisted, the anticipated form of the final project, and the timetable for the completion of the final project. All students who do either HP 450 or a research project in their department in place of HP 450 must write a proposal.

Before any significant work begins on the project itself, this proposal should be approved by the student, the advisor of the project, by the Director of the Honors Program, and by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. In order to obtain all of these necessary approvals, it is important that the proposal be well thought out, well written, and well presented. Sloppy proposals with inadequate thought, careless consideration of what is being proposed, or poor writing will be rejected.

Each proposal should be composed of three parts: a written account of the proposed project; a bibliography; and a tentative timetable. In order to assist the student in the preparation of the proposal the following suggestions are made about each of these three items.

1) Written account (3-6 pages, double spaced)

The written, prose account should clearly and concisely outline the project which is being proposed. It should state what is being proposed, why it is being proposed and how the student expects to complete the project. Thus, the account should include the following:

- a) a thesis statement which briefly indicates what is being proposed;
- b) some sense of the scholarly context in which the project is set, such as previous work in the area, historical background, scope, and limits;
- c) some indication of the rationale for the project--what are the reasons for undertaking this project;
- d) a demonstration of your knowledge of the field necessary to undertake the project;
- e) evidence that you understand the issues and questions to be raised in the project;
- f) a discussion of how (methodology) you expect to accomplish the goal of your project, including comments on what research, laboratory work, interviews, surveys, etc., you will undertake; and
- g) some comments on what you anticipate will be the final form of your project.

2) Bibliography

Your proposal must include a preliminary bibliography of those sources which you anticipate being essential to your project. It should include primary and secondary sources. It should be approximately one page in length, and it should be in proper format (e.g., Turabian, MLA).

3) Timetable

Your proposal must include a timetable. This timetable should indicate approximate dates for completion of various parts of your project. Among the dates you should present are ones for acceptance of the proposal, for beginning of research, for completion of research, for first draft of final project, and for final completion date. The timetable might also include dates for meetings with your project advisor. **Remember that the final project must be submitted no later than one week before the last class day of the semester in which one is registered for HP 450 or for a course in your major department.**

Sample copies of previously approved Senior Honors Project Proposals are on file in the Honors Office and may be consulted by the applicant.

Students who expect to do any form of human experimentation, including surveys, should realize that they will have to submit their proposal to the JCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. In addition, a student who intends to do any form of animal experimentation must file a protocol review form with The Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC). Information about these processes is available from the Honors Office or the Graduate School Office. Proposals cannot be submitted to the dean until IRB or IACUC approval (or waiver) has been granted.

In order to facilitate the approval process, students should simultaneously submit a draft of their proposal to their advisor and the Director. Thus, corrections from both readers can be made at the same time and before the proposal is submitted for approval and signatures.

It is essential that the proposal be well written. Hence, there should be clear organization of materials, an introduction and conclusion, logical development of arguments and points, clear, correct and coherent writing, and neat appearance. Poorly written or poorly thought through proposals will be returned for further work.

(02/03)