Honors

Latin honors are conferred at graduation on students who participate in the department’s honors program. Latin honors are noted on students’ diplomas and transcripts. Students may be awarded Latin honors—cum laude, magna cum laude or summa cum laude—based on the range and quality of their coursework as well as an honors project completed over one semester with the professor of their choice.

Eligibility

(1) If you wish to sign up for an honors project, you will need approval from the English Department. It is best to obtain this approval the semester prior to the one in which you wish to work on your project. Please email the Honors Director with a copy of your transcript for GPA verification. You will receive confirmation about your status.
(2) Candidates need 3.25 overall and 3.5 in English courses in order to qualify to pursue Honors.
(3) You must have 15 upper division credits with UCD English faculty (ENGL 3000 and above) before you undertake honors work.
(4) Students need to register for 3 credits for honors projects.

The Process & Registration

- Honors projects are completed over one semester, usually in the spring or fall of the senior year. Students may not do honors projects in the summer. Once the students have contacted the Honors Director and received approval, they receive registration information.
- Students need to form an Honors Committee for their project. The committee consists of a Chair and a second reader, both chosen by the student. The Committee Chair must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the English Department faculty. The second reader may be another faculty member or an instructor. For a list of tenure-track/tenured faculty, as well as faculty bios and research interests, check the English Department faculty pages.
- Students write a brief proposal (about a page) for the proposed work. The student’s Committee Chair will approve this proposal before student registers for honors. The proposal should discuss the content as well as provide a timeline for completion. The Chair may ask for changes in content and the timeline.
- English Majors (literature, film, and creative writing) sign up for ENGL 4720 and Writing Majors sign up for ENGL 4740. Registration for honors needs a special form, which has to be signed by the Chair of the student’s Honors Committee. The student takes the signed form to NC 1030 for the dean’s signature. Registration information will arrive via email.
- Students completing their degree at a distance/online may email the completed form to their Honors Committee Chair who will sign it and send to CLAS Advising for signature.
- Once the student has put in place a committee and has registered for the appropriate course and credits, the student meets with the Committee Chair to work out the scope and structure of the project. Working with the chair, the student prepares a schedule for delivering drafts and completing the project.
- Over the semester, the student designs and completes the honors work.
- The process concludes with a one-hour oral defense (attended by the student and the Honors Committee), usually scheduled at the end of the term. Students receive their Honors levels at the end of the oral defense. For more details regarding the date for the oral defense, especially as it concerns the graduation ceremony, contact the Honors Director.
- Students prepare two clean, bound copies of their work and present one copy to their Honors Committee Chair and one copy to the English Department.
Honors Projects

Projects vary in shape and scope. Some students choose to write a 30 page (or equivalent) research paper and critical analysis. Others opt for more hybrid and creative projects that can include screenplays, poetry, literary journalism, grant-writing, multimedia projects. Students may, for instance, construct and design a web site (including detailed audience analysis and design research), or create a multimedia project on subjects related to their coursework or future community or workplace environments. Students must dedicate the same level and amount of work to the web site and multimedia projects that they would to a traditional 30-page research essay. Students should discuss the parameters of the final document with the Committee Chair.

Honors Projects and Previously Completed Work:

While many students choose something entirely new for their honors work, many honors projects emerge out of work the student has already done in classes. In that case, projects present opportunities for developing and deepening the research inquiry or following up a set of related research questions. In such cases, students need approval from the Honors Director and/or the Committee Chair before beginning the work.

- If a student undertakes honors work to develop a previous project, for instance, if a student wishes to develop a previously written Senior Writing Project, the student must submit copies of the completed Senior Writing Project to the Honors Director and the Committee Chair before beginning honors work.
- In some cases, it may be possible for a student to use their honors project to take the place of their senior writing project. As long as the student meets the GPA and credit-hour requirements, faculty have the discretion, in specific cases, to approve such a substitution for academic reasons.
- In some cases, a student may work at a Senior Seminar or Senior Writing Project and an Honors project during the same semester. This is fine as long as work for the senior seminar or senior writing project does not duplicate the work undertaken for honors.

Additional information about English Department Latin honors may be obtained from:
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