The Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies
Information for Honors Students

I. Thesis Guidelines

The honors thesis is a major piece of writing that goes beyond term papers, summary reports, or reviews of scholarly literature and scholarly debates. Students are expected to present their ideas and marshal evidence to support these ideas on the thesis topic. In the best of all possible worlds, the questions and the answers presented will be absolutely original. However, this is rarely the case for senior theses, or indeed for the vast majority of scholarly writing. More realistically, students are expected to cover thoroughly the existing scholarship on their thesis topics and present their evaluation or point of view on the subject. Students should provide the appropriate evidence needed to support their point of view and should also consider other points of view or arguments on the topic to show why their argument should prevail.

It is expected that this essay be 50-60 pages in length and follow the full scholarly format: a table of contents; text, with introduction, chapters and conclusion; footnotes (or end-notes); and a full bibliography. You may wish to consult Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* or the *Chicago Manual of Style* for guides. As long as the style is consistent and complete, it is unimportant which of these particular formats you choose.

You are expected to employ primary sources in the research for your thesis. This does not mean that you must use sources in a foreign language, though this is to be encouraged. Materials can be in translation. Primary sources include documents, interviews, or certain forms of data, such as statistical analysis or formal quantitative models where they are appropriate.

II. Guidelines for Student-Faculty Interaction

*What Professors Expect from Students:* Call your advisers by their preferred titles—Professor, Dr., etc.—unless one of them specifically requests something more informal.

Respect the office hours of your advisers. If you cannot see them then, request an appointment at another time, but don’t expect to drop by and chat whenever it suits you. Don’t miss an appointment without canceling. If you haven’t completed an assignment you were to hand in, either call to reschedule, or drop by to discuss your problem. Never be a no-show. Get the department phone numbers of your advisers so you can leave messages with the department secretary.

Don’t ask a professor to call you. But do leave a phone number or an e-mail address so that a professor can get in touch with you. Don’t call a professor at home unless you are asked to do so.

It is your responsibility to follow the guidelines and deadlines laid out for the Honors Program as well as those you set up with your advisers.
What Students Can Expect from their Advisers: All faculty members involved in the Honors Program are volunteering their time; nevertheless, when they agree to serve in any capacity, they are making a commitment, and students deserve the help promised.

Faculty members should make themselves regularly available to the students they are advising to provide advice, read drafts, and answer questions. They should keep appointments and, within a reasonable length of time, read drafts they have assigned you.

Advisers should be helpful. They should make assignments and give advice that a student can be expected to follow. At the same time, they should keep in mind the student’s research interests and capacities.

Problems: If you find your adviser unhelpful or discourteous, or if you are getting two conflicting kinds of advice from professors and/or the Committee, seek advice from a member of the Honors Committee as to how to proceed. Keep in mind, however, that if you alienate an adviser, there is little we can do. Please remember that the program is voluntary for all participants, students as well as faculty, but that most people involved over the years have found participation to be one of the most exciting elements in their careers at the University of Washington.

III. Grading Practices for JSIS 491-492

The grades given in these seminars reflect the quality of your thesis, which is not determined until the end of May. This causes some difficulty in assigning grades at the end of Autumn and Winter quarters. We have worked out the following scheme to deal with these difficulties.

JSIS 491 is mandatory for all students writing an honors thesis. The grade will be determined by the Honors Committee in consultation with your adviser(s). You will be informed of that grade at the end of Autumn Quarter, but it will not be sent to Grade Recording. It will appear on your grade report as an “N” (except when your work is Incomplete (“I”); see below).

JSIS 492 may be taken by students who want credit for continuing to write their theses. However, if this would result in your paying extra tuition or if for some other reason you do not want to sign up for the class, you do not have to. While JSIS 491 meets regularly throughout the quarter, in Winter Quarter you will work entirely with your advisers and will not meet as a group. As with 491, grades for 492 will not be determined until your thesis has been turned in and graded. The grade for 492 will appear as an “X” on your grade report. This mark simply means that a professor has not turned in a grade for you.

JSIS 492 may be taken by students who want credit for continuing to write their theses. However, if this would result in your paying extra tuition or if for some other reason you do not want to sign up for the class, you do not have to. While JSIS 491 meets regularly throughout the quarter, in Winter Quarter you will work entirely with your advisers and will not meet as a group. As with 491, grades for 492 will not be determined until your thesis has been turned in and graded. The grade for 492 will appear as an “N” on your grade report.

If you take only 491 and not 492, the “N” will remain until your thesis has been graded and the grade will appear on your transcript at the end of Spring Quarter. If, however,
you need a posted grade for financial aid purposes, you will be assigned a tentative grade, which may be changed Spring Quarter after your thesis has been graded.

If you take both 491 and 492, you will receive a grade for all 10 credits after your thesis has been graded and the grades will appear on your transcript at the end of Spring Quarter. If you decide to leave the program at any point, you will receive an appropriate grade for the work done so far. If you haven’t done enough work to warrant a grade, be sure to drop the class if that is possible.

If you receive an Incomplete for Autumn Quarter, you cannot sign up for JSIS 492 until you have made up that “I.” This does not necessarily mean that you must drop out of the program, but simply that you cannot sign up for more credits. No grade will be given for an “I”, even for financial aid purposes. You must make up the “I” by the end of the following quarter or a grade of 0.0 will result.

IV. Withdrawing from the Program

If you contemplate withdrawing from the Honors Program, be sure to discuss your situation with the honors associate and the director of student services. Sometimes a fresh perspective on the difficulty you face can be enough to get you back on track. Even if you are certain that you are no longer able to finish the program, it is important to keep your instructor, thesis adviser, and academic adviser fully informed.

If you decide to withdraw, your requirements for the bachelor’s degree generally revert to those in force before you enrolled in the program. There are some special considerations, however. First, if you were also in University Honors, you must consult with Julie Villegas, Associate Director of University Honors, Dr. to learn how your general education requirements will be affected. Second, your senior writing project (if required in your major) may be affected. If you are majoring in one of the regional studies programs, a less-ambitious version of the thesis will most likely be accepted in lieu of the paper required in your senior seminar. If you are an International Studies major, you must submit an acceptable qualifying paper, normally based on your partially completed thesis. The thesis-as-qualifying-paper must meet the regular standards for qualifying papers, must have a faculty supervisor (probably your thesis adviser), and must be submitted also to the honors associate because it will constitute the basis for your grade in JSIS 491 or 492 (see Grading Practices, above). Finally, International Studies majors must complete the course from which they were excused at the time they enrolled in Honors (JSIS 498, Readings in International Studies).

A student whose completed honors thesis is judged not to be of honors quality, or who does not pass the oral examination at the end of the senior year, is not considered “withdrawn” and normally is not subject to the Jackson School requirements described above. See the director of student services or the honors associate for more information.