

## Guiding Principles

- Thesis can be viewed as a senior capstone project; but it is usually the culmination of undergraduate study and research in the field for two years
- Thesis should be viewed by students as a concentrated focus, not an “add-on” to an already full load
- Some aspects of the timeline are pre-determined and must be followed strictly by all students, including the dates when the proposal is due, defense must be done, and entire thesis is due in Honors Program office
- While the Honors Program sets some standards and requirements, the individual faculty mentor and student work out agreements about direction of the research, their meeting times, all day-to-day work, etc.
- Within certain parameters, credit hours may be distributed in a variety of ways, to accommodate the needs of departments, students, and mentors
- Students are expected to make a public presentation of their results at a suitable venue (SURF is a minimum expectation, others include NCUR, professional conference, etc.)
- Students will be honored and recognized in various ways by the Honors Program and the University (e.g., banquet, receipt of bound copy of the thesis)

## Process and Parameters

- Individual academic departments will discuss what a thesis should look like in their field (acceptable forms), how the thesis fits into departmental requirements, and how mentors will be found. These documents can be found on the honors website <http://www.elon.edu/honors>
- To ensure that a thesis is a sustained effort of qualitatively superior work, a detailed proposal must be reviewed by the thesis mentor, signed by the mentor and the department chair, and then submitted by the date and time indicated. The proposal will then be reviewed by the Honors Advisory Committee. There is only one chance to re-submit; if not approved, can't continue in Honors Program; reasonable progress is also necessary
- The Honors Program will provide students developmental help in preparing for the proposal
- Thesis research money is available (up to \$700); must demonstrate need in the feasibility report of the proposal
- Students will take 8 hours of credit (e.g. HNR 498) – typically no more than 4 hours in one semester
- In registering for credit, students and faculty will be committing to a once a week meeting time so that all the students and faculty working on theses are available for periodic meetings with other students and mentors
- Because the interaction between student and mentor is crucial, the majority of the work on the project is usually done on Elon's campus, although research/fieldwork can be done at labs, archives, in foreign countries, etc.
- Mentors must be Elon full-time faculty on long-term contracts; the number of theses faculty can supervise will be limited
- Three Elon faculty will comprise the thesis committee that will conduct the thesis defense, including the faculty mentor, a representative appointed by the Honors program, and another faculty member chosen by the student and mentor
- Completion of a strong thesis is an Honors Program requirement; students who do not complete an Honors thesis do not graduate with Honors. Faculty and student reports over the two years should indicate sufficient progress to continue; student should NOT be surprised in the senior year and/or just before or during the defense