

Honors Thesis Program and Global Business Honors Program Guidelines for Faculty Thesis Advisors (Fall 2014, S. Raymar, S. Veliotis, B. Dunn)

Introduction

Honors Thesis Program (HT) and Global Business Honors Program (GBHP) students reach the culmination of their Gabelli School of Business experience by developing their own research. This is often a student's first significant attempt at original academic inquiry.

The thesis progression was devised to utilize the research experience of faculty members in advising and guiding the students in creation of their thesis. The three-semester thesis sequence engages students with faculty in a two-tier structure. The thesis directors, Associate Professors Stan Veliotis for HT and Steve Raymar for GBHP, work with the students throughout the thesis progression and focus on "big picture" items. The faculty advisors work directly with students during the senior year, providing crucial guidance in terms of mentoring and critiquing student work as well as identifying best practices in researching a topic.

The HT and GBHP programs both entail 1.5 credits in the spring semesters of junior and senior year and 3 credits in fall of senior year. GBHP (but not HT) students may work in pairs on the project/thesis. Theses typically include data or survey analysis but may be instead be qualitative.

The expectation is for students to produce a thesis paper worthy of submission to research conferences and academic journals. Please contact Professor Raymar, Professor Veliotis or Brian Dunn to review past theses for examples of what has been produced by HT and GBHP graduates.

Research Progression Timeline

Junior Year, Spring Semester

- Students meet regularly with thesis director to develop a research proposal
- Students conduct initial literature review
- Students present their research topic to faculty and peers for critiquing
- Students conduct further literature review
- Students begin to connect with potential faculty advisors
- **Major Deliverable #1** – Formal presentation of focused research proposal (late April)
- **Major Deliverable #2** – Written research proposal (late April/earlyMay)

Senior Year, Fall Semester

- Students meet with thesis director bi-weekly for group feedback sessions and research methodology lectures
- Students communicate weekly with their faculty advisor
- Students begin data collection phase of research (if an empirical paper)

- For research involving human subjects, students start IRB approval process
- Students and faculty advisors identify research conferences (e.g., NCUR) to apply for
- **Major Deliverable #3** – Formal presentation of research progress (December)

Senior Year, Spring Semester

- Students begin analyzing collected data
- Students continue to communicate weekly with faculty advisor
- Students write up their analysis conclusion
- **Major Deliverable #4** – Formal presentation of research and findings (April)
- **Major Deliverable #5** – Completed thesis paper (early May)
- Students submit their work to academic journals or the Fordham Business Student Research Journal

Thesis Director Responsibilities

- Oversee the three-semester research progression sequence.
- Establish expectations and timelines for student deliverables.
- Lead group sessions with students, which are heaviest in spring of junior year and fall of senior year.
- Guide students through the idea-development process.
- Connect students with potential faculty advisors.
- Coordinate research methodology introductory sessions.
- Serve as a resource for students and faculty advisors.
- Grade students on their work, with input from faculty advisors.

Faculty Advisor Responsibilities

- Meet, speak and/or e-mail weekly with assigned student researcher and possibly more frequently prior to deadlines. Provide feedback on students' research process and semester grades to the respective thesis directors and inform them and Brian Dunn if the student has particular research needs or, more significantly, is having difficulties.
- Mentor students on the importance of developing a research timeline, particularly when data-collection requires IRB approval, and the commitment required throughout the process. Thesis directors will do the same, but reinforcement from faculty advisors is appreciated.
- Assist assigned student early in his or her senior year with identifying relevant research (e.g. literature-review papers and relevant texts), research methodologies and data sources.
- Advise student on standard academic paper format (i.e., introduction, goals or hypotheses, literature review, research method, findings, conclusion). Given that the work does not need to be empirical, however, and instead can be descriptive, normative, a law review, policy-oriented or of another type, the project's format and style should be consistent with the norm for that area and type of project.

- Attend the end-of-semester presentations (December, April). Attendance also is appreciated at the students' in-semester progress mini-presentations. This in-class assistance includes providing feedback to students as they develop their research.
- OPTIONAL: Lead a faculty lecture on a specific relevant topic, such as research methodology. Contact Professors Raymar or Veliotis to express interest in conducting a session.

Student Responsibilities

- Take responsibility for the progression of research.
- Be an engaged and proactive researcher.
- Submit all deliverables on time and attend all mandatory thesis sessions.
- Maintain continual contact with faculty advisor and thesis director.
- Fully utilize the expertise and experience of the faculty advisor.
- Provide faculty advisor with advance notice of upcoming deliverables to afford sufficient time for relevant feedback.

Research Support Resources

The Gabelli School and Fordham University have a wide array of databases for students to utilize in support of their research. There may be a budget for student research, should data beyond the school's current subscriptions be needed.

Students should e-mail their thesis director and Brian Dunn, copying their faculty advisor, if they have a funding request for data. The request should include a description of the data (e.g., database, survey), proposed vendor, approximate pricing and how the data will contribute to the research. Neither the student nor the faculty advisor should incur any expenses related to the funding proposal until a decision is rendered on the request.

Contact:

Please contact Professors Raymar and Veliotis or Brian Dunn with any questions or concerns related to this document.