

Alternatives to Thesis: HONS 4912

Alternative projects have the same goal as completing an honors thesis, which is to demonstrate a student's capability to initiate, conduct, complete, and present research that is worthy of recognition in their own fields of study. However, for many disciplines an alternative presentation may be better suited to illustrate an honors student's capabilities. The most common alternatives are juried lecture-recitals, but may also include a wide variety of artistic displays, films, performances, software development, etc. For example, in theatre, the thesis alternative could involve a set design or other impressive project that is accompanied by a written bound work. For music students, the alternative to thesis must be a lecture recital that is a synthesis of performance and scholarship and may include, for example, aspects of performance practice, analysis, or pedagogy pertaining to music programmed on the student's senior recital. The format of the lecture recital includes reading a prepared paper (illustrated with performed excerpts) followed by a complete performance of the work.

Note: Music students are encouraged to attend other honors lecture recitals as early as their freshman year in order to become acquainted with this requirement of the Honors College.

To complete the requirements of HONS 4912 students should be familiar with:

- Preparation guidelines for alternative to thesis
- Juried lecture recitals & performances
- Oral defense committees & project defenses
- Submit the approved written project for binding

Preparation Guidelines for Alternative to Thesis

All projects must result in a written bound project and must be reviewed by a jury or oral defense committee. The length written work will vary based upon the nature of the discipline and project and should be delineated in the senior project proposal, along with any citation method utilized (APA, MLA, Turabian, Chicago, etc.) Some departments or disciplines view student projects as something not only that should be presented in conferences (state, regional, national or international) but also should produce a manuscript submission for journals. For these situations, the Honors College Dean and Senior Project Advisor will collaboratively set length requirements. All final drafts of the written portion of the project should be submitted to the Jury or Oral Defense Committee for review at least one week prior to the juried performance or defense. To complete the Honors College requirements and receive the Honors Seal, graduating students must successfully complete all aspects of their senior project prior to the end of the semester in which they will graduate.

Thesis Presentations

The options for thesis presentations include a Juried Lecture Recital and a Project Defense. Students selecting the juried lecture recital option will present their work first to a jury, and if the performance/recital is successful, they will present their work to the public. Juried lecture recitals must occur three weeks prior to the public lecture. The Senior Project Advisor, in consultation with the honors student, will select one or two other faculty members with expertise related to the senior project to serve as voting members on the Jury or on the Oral Defense Committee. The Senior Project Advisor will Chair and be a voting member of the jury or committee. The CSU Honors College Dean will appoint one non-voting member (which could be the Dean) from the Honors Education Committee to serve on jury or committee.

All students are encouraged to defend their thesis or project at least three weeks prior to the end of the term to allow for revisions, if required. The student will give jury or committee members a final draft of the written portion of their project at least one week prior to the juried performance or defense. The performance must be attended by all voting jury or committee members who will meet immediately following student presentation to discuss both oral and written work, make suggested edits (if any), and to decide whether or not student passes "as is," "with minor edits," "substantial changes under oversight of Senior Project Advisor," or "needs to make major changes in written and/or oral work." Should the jury or committee suggest the latter, the student and Senior Project Advisor would need to set another recital or defense

date – meeting the same timeline expectations provided for the first jury or defense. In this case, the student either could defend before semester's end (if the 2nd recital or defense date allows sufficient time before semester's end).

An unsuccessful juried recital or defense will not in itself interfere with a student's graduation unless the course hours are needed for graduation. If the recital or defense is unsuccessful, the student may revise the project according to the recommendations of the jury or committee and may perform a second time. If the second attempt is unsuccessful, the student will not have satisfied the requirements of the Honors College, even though all other requirements of the college may be fulfilled. Academic misconduct, including plagiarism, associated with an honors senior project will result in an unsatisfactory grade for the course.

Students should prepare copies of the Thesis Cover Page prior to the recital or defense, and if the defense is successful, members of the jury or committee will sign the cover page at the end of their deliberations. View the required format and an example of the [Thesis Cover Page](#).

Written Project Binding

Two copies of the bound thesis will be placed in the Simon Schwob Library; one copy will be given to the Honors College. Students should also check with their academic department to determine if a bound copy is desired. Students completing projects that include an alternative performance, lecture recital, etc, should include a DVD which may be placed in pockets adhered to the back cover of the thesis. For current instructions on preparing a thesis for binding, please contact the [CSU Libraries](#).

It is the responsibility of the Honors student to provide CSU with at least three bound copies of the thesis. The student may order more copies for personal use.

Senior Project Process for Biology Majors

Since the biology program imbeds undergraduate research into its curriculum, honors students are expected to complete the course sequence BIOL 4391, 4392, and 4393 at an honors level and **do not** complete HONS 4902 or HONS 4912. This course sequence completes a senior project in biology, which undergoes an approval process which includes presentations to peers and professors within the department. In addition, honors students must present their research at a professional meeting, such as Beta Beta Beta, Association of Southeast Biologists, or the Georgia Academy of Science. The approved project is bound and otherwise treated as a thesis. Biology majors should consult with their academic advisor regarding all deadlines with respect to developing and completing their undergraduate research project, but must (1) present research proposals and the final thesis draft to the Honors College for review; (2) invite the Honors Dean in the campus presentation; (3) adhere to the thesis preparation instructions and binding deadlines.

English Majors in the Creative Writing Track

English Majors who are completing the Creative Writing Track should plan to write their thesis in one of the three major genres—poetry, fiction, or creative nonfiction. They must take the advanced writing workshop in that genre and meet the requirements for a senior thesis in that genre as established in the [Academic Catalog](#). Rather than taking ENGL 4999: Creative Writing Senior Thesis, however, they should plan to take HONS 4901 and HONS 4912. This course sequence completes an Honors project in creative writing, which undergoes an approval process that includes submission of the creative work in the portfolio to literary journals and contests deemed suitable for students' specific material. They will consult with their thesis director (selected based on the genre in which they write their thesis) on which journals and/or contests would be promising candidates for submitting their work, composing a cover letter, and preparing the manuscript. They will be required to submit their work to at least five literary journals, though up to two approved writing contests may be substituted for a corresponding number of journals. Creative Writing Track majors should consult with their academic advisor regarding all deadlines with respect to developing and completing their senior thesis, but they must (1) present research proposals and the final thesis draft to the Honors College for review; (2) invite the Honors Dean to the thesis defense; (3) adhere to the thesis preparation instructions and binding deadlines.