

CALS Honors Thesis Proposal Guidelines

An [Undergraduate Honors Thesis](#) is required of all students pursuing graduating with honors from UF at the *magna* or *summa cum laude* levels, and of all students in the CALS Honors Program. A brief thesis proposal is required no later than the 6th full week of the semester prior to the student's final semester. For example, the proposal is due 6th week of Fall semester for students graduating in Spring semester. Earlier submissions are strongly encouraged as some theses require three or more semesters for planning, execution and writing. The following guidelines describe the format and basic content of a thesis proposal, and were adapted from the CALS guidelines for the [University Scholars Program](#).

Page limit: two pages, single spaced, plus a cover page. The text should be no more than one page, and the second page should include literature citations and optional items such as figures or tables. Include the project title, names and signatures of the student, faculty mentor, and Departmental Honors Coordinator on the cover page. Please use the [CALS Thesis Proposal Cover Page](#) form.

Format: Arrange the text in three parts, using the subheadings listed below. Address the items listed under each section.

I. Literature review and justification:

- Briefly describe the background and overall context of the research, citing references. Point out the gap in the literature that this project will fill.
- Justify that the project includes the original, creative work of the student as informed and directed by the faculty mentor (i.e., the student is not simply helping a graduate student or post-doc with his/her research)
- Describe the impact of the research on the scientific discipline, society, or plants, animals or humans (as the case may be); what is the benefit?

II. Research objective, anticipated results:

- State the objective(s), research question(s), or hypothesis clearly and concisely.
- Describe the anticipated results; the most likely among the possibilities.
- Will the project be worthwhile only if the student finds the anticipated results, or can a quality thesis be written regardless? What is the backup plan?

III. Methodology, timeline, analysis plan:

- Briefly describe the methods, citing a reference to published protocol if available.
- Provide sufficient detail to give a reader confidence that the student understands what to do and how to do it.
- Include a timeline, indicating how much time will be devoted to various aspects of the study (e.g., planning/training, data collection, analysis, writing, etc); is it realistic given the anticipated graduation date?
- Describe how the data/results will be analyzed, interpreted and presented.

Submission: Thesis proposals must be submitted through the [Departmental Honors Coordinator](#); contact them for department-specific deadlines (*which are in advance of the CALS deadline each semester*). The Departmental Honors Coordinator will review the proposal and forward to the CALS Dean's office (2020 McCarty Hall) for final approval. The Dean's office will notify the student, faculty mentor, and Departmental Honors Coordinator if revisions are required or if the research can proceed as proposed.