

Guidelines and Procedures for the Honors Thesis in Women's Studies

I. Eligibility

- To graduate *cum laude*, a student must have a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher in upper division classes (classes taken after achieving her 60th credit, *not* all classes at the 3000+ level).
- To graduate *magna cum laude* or *summa cum laude*, students must enroll in WST4970 and complete an Honors Thesis in the semester in which they are to graduate.
- Only students who have taken or are currently enrolled in WST4935 may pursue an Honors Thesis.
- Work done for thesis cannot be used to fulfill requirements for another class (e.g. WST4935), although the thesis may build on, extend, and refine work done in another class.

II. Procedures and Timeline

- At the Beginning:
 - By the first week of the semester, AT THE LATEST, the student must submit to his/her advisor and receive approval on a formal research Proposal and a statement of who will serve as the 2nd Reader for the thesis (for Proposal details, see Section III).
 - By the last day of drop/add, AT THE LATEST, the student must submit a copy of the approved proposal to the CWSGR UGC along with a completed Application Form.
 - When the Proposal and the Application have been approved by the CWSGR UGC, s/he will enroll the student in WST4970, Women's Studies Honors Thesis.
 - WST4970 may count as fill the spot of either a Humanities or a Social Science Women's Studies elective in the Women's Studies major.
 - Once the student is enrolled in WST4970, the CWSGR UGC will contact the student and Committee and give an overview of the protocols for submitting the thesis and conveying the grade in WST4970 and the honors designation.
- At the End:
 - Ten days before the last day of classes (see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/Pages/dates-and-deadlines.aspx>), the student must submit copies of the thesis to the Committee for evaluation (copy may be bound or unbound).
 - The Committee will confer about a grade for the thesis and about the level of honors (*cum laude*, *magna cum laude*, or *summa cum laude*) to be awarded. They may request revisions before reaching a final decision. They will convey their determination to the Undergraduate Coordinator of Women's Studies, who will enter the grade and convey the honors designation to the registrar.
 - On the last day of classes, students must
 - Upload the final version of the thesis to the Honors Program website, completing the online information form there.
 - Submit a TYPED "Thesis Submission Form" to CLAS graduation coordinator Linda O'Donnell in her office in Farrior Hall.

- The upload link and the Thesis Submission Form is available on the Honors Program website: <http://www.honors.ufl.edu/Thesis.aspx>.

NOTE: It is students' responsibility to acquaint themselves with the deadlines established by the Graduation Coordinator and to inform the Committee of those deadlines. The Committee should establish its own deadlines for receipt and revisions of drafts, etc.

III. Proposal Specs and Work with Committee

- The Committee consists of an Advisor and a 2nd Reader, at least one of whom is a Core or Affiliate Faculty member in WST.
- Ideally, students should identify a topic and organize a Committee in the semester **before** they plan to write the thesis. The most successful Honors Theses often follow a semester of WST4905, Independent Study, where the student acquaints her/himself with the scholarly field about which s/he is writing.
- The student should present the Committee with a Timeline of relevant deadlines established by the Graduation Coordinator's office regarding dates that grades and honors designations must be received.
- Student and Advisor should agree upon the form, scope, and content of the Proposal that will be written at the start of the project. Generally, a Proposal will include a statement of a research question or problem, some review of current scholarship in the area, and working bibliography. It should also contain a timeline for completing relevant stages of the thesis (e.g. "Finish historiography section, Jan 31"; "Complete data collection, Feb. 28"; "Turn in complete first draft, 10 April," etc.).
- If all Committee members agree in advance, the 2nd Reader may participate in the framing of the project and work with the student as the thesis develops. However, the 2nd Reader may also have a more limited role, weighing in on the project only once it is completed (see "Evaluation").
- Student and advisor should meet at regular, agreed-upon intervals to discuss student's progress and address any problems that may arise.

IV. Substantive Criteria for Thesis

The thesis should be a piece of original, high-quality research and writing, which demonstrates both the student's mastery of the subject and ability to analyze it using tools drawn from the range of her Women's Studies experience. It should address questions of gender and/or sexuality within the context of social hierarchies and difference. When appropriate, the project should provide insights about the practical implications of the research in regard to social policy and activism, and/or incorporate the student's reflections and explanations about the ways in which her or his social experiences helped shape the research (research questions, choice of methods, recommendations, etc.).

The thesis should be in clear and correct Standard Written English. The text should be formatted and all the references should be cited consistently and accurately in the style best suited to the student's research—MLA, Chicago, APA, etc. The quality of the written work and the correctness and completeness of citations will be taken into account when the Committee evaluates the thesis and decides on what degree of distinction (*cum laude*, *magna*, or *summa*) to award.

A NOTE on overlaps between the Honors Thesis & the Capstone Seminar (WST4935):

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UF's Honor Code does not permit students to submit the same work for credit in two different classes. Students doing a Thesis while also taking the Capstone Seminar should be aware that they must complete the requirements for BOTH courses (WST4970, WST4935) separately. But common sense and professional scholarly practice allow for some overlap. It is possible, for instance, that students will use similar reading lists for the Capstone project and the Thesis, and/or use some of the same primary sources. If you find yourself cutting and pasting from one document to another, that is a danger sign, and should be addressed at once. Overlap between two research projects is a legitimate gray area and should be negotiated carefully with the Capstone instructor and the Thesis committee.

V. Evaluation Process and Awarding of Grade and Honors

- After receiving the thesis, the Advisor and 2nd Reader should review the “Criteria” above and clarify any questions they have about it before reading and evaluating the thesis.
- The Advisor determines the grade for WST4970, and communicates it to the Undergraduate Coordinator in Women’s Studies, who will enter it during the grading period. A grade of “A” in WST4970 does not correlate to any specific degree of honors distinction.
- The Advisor and 2nd Reader confer to determine the degree of distinction (*cum laude*, *magna*, or *summa*) to award. If they cannot agree, the WST Undergraduate Coordinator will act as a third reader and move the Committee to a decision.
- Once the Committee has reached a consensus, the UGC communicates its decision to the Graduation Coordinator via email on or before the established deadline.
- NOTE: Completing a thesis does not automatically mean that a student will be awarded a *magna* or *summa cum laude* designation. The Committee may judge the thesis to be acceptable but not laudable, in which case the student will simply graduate *cum laude*.

If you are interested in seeing what a completed, successful Honors Thesis looks like, examples can be viewed through the Honors Program website.