Preparing the Senior Honors Thesis:
Guidelines for Students Completing English Departmental Honors
Appalachian State University

Overview: Suggested Timeline for Thesis Work

Registered for ENG 4510; Thesis packet read 1st week of term
Prospectus written & signed; forms filed with English Dept. Honors Director 2nd week
(and with the Honors College if also pursuing University Honors)
All paperwork is attached in this packet.
Full draft to Thesis Director 8th week
Thesis Director returns draft with suggested changes 9th week
Revisions to draft completed 10th week
Revised thesis to entire committee 11th week
Defense 13th week
Final revisions completed, formatting, printing, fees 14th week
Appointment with University Honors to deliver thesis Last day of classes

General Information

To graduate with English departmental honors, a student needs to complete the sequence of
Junior-Senior Honors Seminars, English 4508 and 4509, receiving a B or better in each class, and
should also enroll for, complete, and successfully defend the honors thesis, English 4510. In some
English concentrations (film and literature, for example), the honors thesis can take the place of
the Capstone paper.

Honors students who wish to write a thesis should first consult with the English Department’s
Honors Director and then should register for English 4510 via a special course form, available in
the English department office. Save your copy of this form.

Students in English 4510 must complete the attached forms, Prospectus for Senior Honors Thesis
and the Thesis/Project Application Form and return these to the English Honors Director by the
end of the second week of classes for that semester. Students in the University Honors College
must also turn in the prospectus, the Thesis/Project Application form, and the Application for
Honors Graduation Form to the Honors College Office in Appalachian Hall.

The thesis committee includes the major professor and two additional readers. If a student is
completing departmental honors only, all committee members must be tenure-track faculty
members in the Department of English. Students who are completing both university and
departmental honors must have a major professor and one reader in English, plus a second reader
from a different field.

The major professor and the student will negotiate a meeting schedule and a timeline for
completion of the thesis. Second and third readers should be given time to read and respond to the
draft and return a copy with suggestions to the student before the oral examination. At the very
latest, readers should get a complete thesis draft three weeks before the end of the semester.
**Preliminary Formatting**

Although the value of a thesis does not depend on its length, a paper of about thirty-five typed pages seems to be typical. The major professor and members of the thesis committee should be the final judges of appropriate length for the thesis.


**Oral Examination**

Each student who completes a senior thesis in the English Department’s Honors Program is required to give an oral presentation and defense of the honors thesis to the thesis committee and to invite the members of the Junior/Senior Honors Seminar. The writer will give a twenty-minute presentation of the paper, discussing the choice of subject, the research methods, the specific methods of procedure, and a summary of the thesis. The writer will then answer questions posed by members of the thesis committee and by others in the audience. The chair of the thesis committee moderates the oral examination; at the end of the examination, all members of the thesis committee will determine the student’s final grade for English 4510.

Please bring at least two copies of the thesis title page to the oral examination (plus additional ones for any personal copies of the thesis you plan to order). These title pages should be on ASU watermark paper (available at the University Bookstore or the Honors College Office) and must be formatted according to the sample included in this packet. All members of the thesis committee must sign each title page.

Thesis students also have the opportunity to participate in the English Department’s Capstone Conference at the end of the semester, if they choose to do so.

**Final Formatting**

After the oral examination, the thesis writer should consult with the major professor about any content changes that need to be made and complete them.

An abstract, not to exceed two hundred words, is required for senior honors theses. The purpose of the abstract is to give the reader a concise and accurate synopsis of the significant elements of the manuscript. The abstract should be placed in the appendix section of the manuscript and should bear a page number.

Please print one separate, unpaginated copy of the abstract to be placed in a notebook which serves as an index and guide to those students or professors who want to use senior theses in their research.

A vita, not to exceed one page, is required for senior theses. The vita should include the following information:
Birth - place, date
Parents' names and address
Secondary education - institution, location, major honors
Higher education - institution, location, major, type of degree pursued
College honors
Future professional plans

The vita should be placed in the appendix section of the manuscript as the last item and should bear a page number.

**Printing the Final Copies of the Thesis**

See attached "Honors Thesis Checklist"

**Payment**

Students should complete the attached "Honors Thesis Payment Form" and visit the Cashier's Office to pay for the binding of the thesis (two official copies, one for the department and one for the library, plus any personal copies). You will need the receipt from the Cashier's Office when delivering the thesis to the Honors College Office.