**Honors Theses in Psychology** (rev. July 2023)

**What is an Honors Thesis in Psychology?** An Honors Thesis in Psychology is a project of original empirical research that adds to existing knowledge in the discipline. As such, the projects are most successful when students work with psychology research faculty (i.e., tenure-track and research faculty members) to devise a project that is both manageable and informative (using the PSY prefix).

**Requirements:** **1)** the thesis is an empirical project; **2)** the mentor is a research-active psychology faculty member (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, Research Professor); and **3)** the second committee member is a research-active Ph.D. level faculty member in psychology or a related discipline (e.g., social work, human development, public health). We encourage but do not require that the honors committee include a third committee member, who can be another faculty member, a post-doctoral scholar, or a graduate student. We also encourage students to enroll in PSY 330 (Advanced Statistics), if it is available.

**What if a project like this doesn’t fit your interests or goals?** Some psychology students want to pursue an honors thesis topic that is outside of psychology and/or does not involve empirical research. These students can complete an honors project through the Barrett Honors College (using the HON prefix), and should seek guidance from their advisors in the Honors College.

If a psychology major proposes thesis work under the supervision of a faculty member in another department, then the expectation would be that the honors project would be completed using the prefix of that other department, unless the student arranged for, and was approved for, to have a Psychology tenure line faculty member as co-director. In this case, the honors project could be completed using the PSY prefix, but only if the project met the criteria for a psychology honors project.

**Students planning to complete a Psychology Honors Thesis**

1. Students planning to pursue a Psychology Honors Thesis can do so via **one of two pathways**:
2. **By participating in the *Psychology Honors Sequence***, which is a strong departmental two-semester program designed to guide and support students through the entire process of completing a Psychology Honors Thesis

The Psychology Honors Thesis Sequence includes a spring and fall semester seminar [PSY 497] for students developing and completing thesis projects in a calendar year. A new sequence begins each January, with applications due in November (the Friday before Thanksgiving). Students are **highly encouraged to have identified a faculty mentor** who has agreed to supervise their thesis **prior to applying** to the honors sequence. Along with the seminar, students enroll in directed study with the faculty member who serves as their thesis advisor [PSY 492/493]. **The Sequence (including the seminar) is strongly recommended for Psychology majors aiming to go on to graduate school and professional study**.

1. **By working with psychology faculty outside of the Sequence**

If a student applies to do a Psychology Honors Thesis outside the Honors Sequence, **they have the same expectations for preparation and the same requirements for committee structure.**

1. How to Apply to pursue a Psychology Honors Thesis.

All students wishing to complete a Psychology Honors Thesis (using PSY prefix) need to complete an application process to ensure that they have prerequisites by the time they propose starting a thesis. Students should include all preparation in progress that will be completed before the Spring semester.

**Application due dates:**

**Applicants for the Psychology Sequence:** November, by the Friday before Thanksgiving (sequence begins in January)

OR

**Applicants outside of the Psychology Sequence:** Prior to registering for PSY 492 and no later than the first day of class in the Spring semester.

1. **Preparing to apply for a Psychology Honors Thesis**

Before beginning a psychology honors thesis, students should acquire key skills and background by completing:

* 1. PSY230 (or PSY 231, preferred) and PSY 290; with a GPA of 3.4
  2. Six (6) credit hours of upper division PSY content courses (more is encouraged) with a GPA of 3.5
  3. At least one empirical research experience, beyond PSY290 or other in-class experience. This is usually done by PSY 399 study with Psychology faculty.

1. **Apply**
   1. All students need to complete the application (attached).
   2. For students joining the recommended sequence (PSY 497), we encourage you to identify a faculty mentor ahead of time.
   3. For students proposing to do a Psychology Honors Thesis (PSY492/493) outside the recommended sequence:

i. You must identify the faculty mentor who will supervise the project and obtain a signature from that faculty member confirming their mentorship role.

1. You must acknowledge the expectations as to committee composition and the Barrett requirements for due dates.
2. **COMPLETE** the thesis project.
   * 1. Before enrolling in PSY 493, students must complete a formal prospectus document detailing the Honors project.
     2. Upon completion of the prospectus paper (in the semester enrolled for PSY 492) and the final defense (in the semester enrolled for PSY493), the mentor will file the student’s grades.

**Application for completing a Psychology Honors Thesis** (rev. 7/23)

**I am applying to complete an Honors Thesis in Psychology (PSY 492/493)**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_ As part of the Honors Sequence, with two semester seminar (spring and fall)**

**Applications for the sequence due by the Friday before Thanksgiving**

1. **\_\_\_\_\_ Outside of the sequence, without the seminar [completed applications due before start of semester with PSY 492].**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ ASU ID#: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Overall GPA: \_\_\_\_\_\_ Are you a declared Psychology Major? \_\_\_\_\_ **(priority given to Tempe Psychology majors)**

Which ASU degree program?

Tempe (CLAS): BA- Psychology \_\_\_\_ BS –Psychology \_\_\_\_ BS-Concentration in Psychol. Science\_\_\_\_

Other Psychology degree program at ASU (list) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Additional concurrent (non-Psychology) major(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hours completed at ASU: \_\_\_\_\_ ASU GPA: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Transfer Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ From: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

For what semester do you plan to take PSY 492 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ PSY 493 \_\_\_\_\_\_ (Thesis seminar begins each spring semester)

When do you plan to graduate? \_\_Fall 202\_\_ \_\_\_ Spring 202\_\_

***Expectations for preparation for the Honors Thesis Sequence*** **(A, B, and C):**

**A**) **Completed fundamental courses [minimum GPA of 3.4 in PSY 230/231 (prefer 231) and PSY 290]**

For each of the Fundamental courses listed below indicate when you completed (or plan to complete) the course, the name of the instructor, and the grade you received. Indicate which of these was completed as an Honors Course.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | Honors | On Line? | Instructor (and where taken if not ASU) | Grade |
| PGS/PSY 101: Intro. To Psychology |  |  |  |  |
| PSY 230/231: Statistical Methods |  |  |  |  |
| PSY 290: Research Methods |  |  |  |  |
| PSY 330: Advanced Statistics  (Recommended-co-requisite of PSY497) |  |  |  |  |

**B) Completed at least six (6) credit hours of upper division Psychology Content courses *offered by the Department of Psychology (Tempe)\**, with a minimum GPA of 3.5 expected.** Please list all Psychology courses at or above 300 level (do not include PSY399/499, or other non-content courses)

*\*On-line from other ASU programs do not count toward the six hours minimum*.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Course | Instructor (and where if not ASU) | Semester Completed | On Line? | Grade |
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**C) Completed some empirical research experience beyond a PSY 290-type research experience, usually a 399/499 study with Psychology Faculty.** **(Note: research in PSY 290 or embedded class projects do not satisfy this expectation)** Provide the name(s) of the faculty or other supervising researcher, with whom have you worked on research (beyond PSY 290 level).

Researcher(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Description of** **Research Experience**: Describe your experience(s) conducting psychological research (other than PSY 290 project)? Please describe the research project (e.g., What was the research question?) that you worked on with the instructor or research supervisor you named above and what your role in the project was. Also briefly describe any other research projects on which you have worked.

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What are your career goals and plans for after graduation?

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**If you are applying to complete a Psychology Honors Thesis outside the sequence,** you need to identify a thesis advisor who is a tenure track or research faculty member in the Psychology Department (Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Research Professor) before you register for PSY 492. In addition to completing the rest of application, please also sign the application to confirm the following:

* + I understand that **before** registering for PSY 493, I must submit a paper with a thesis prospectus (this is the product of the PSY 492 semester)
* Further, for the thesis defense, I will need a committee of two faculty members (as described in handout).

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Who is your Thesis Advisor? Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Thesis Advisor to confirm the arrangements: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Your Thesis advisor needs to be a.

\***Return this application to Mary Davis,** Faculty Honors Advisor, Department of Psychology, electronically to [Mary.davis@asu.edu](mailto:Mary.davis@asu.edu). If you have questions or would like further information, please contact Dr. Davis by phone [480-965-2057] or email. Seminar Sequence applications are due by the Friday before Thanksgiving. Out of sequence applications are due by beginning of semester in which you are registering for PSY 492.