

Honors Thesis Guidelines

These guidelines were written with the intention of ensuring Honors students in every AUM major have the option of completing Honors theses that are of consistently high quality across majors, are appropriately rigorous for each major, and allow for disciplinary differences.

	<i>Traditional Research</i>	<i>Applied Research</i>	<i>Scholarly Service</i>	<i>Creative</i>	<i>Professional Disciplines</i>
Products	<p>Your thesis products will include completion of research in your discipline and a thesis reporting on that research.</p> <p>Your thesis will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be similar to a professional journal article in your field ▪ be an appropriate length for theses in your major ▪ be in the style (e.g., APA, MLA) used in your discipline ▪ address the expectations below 	<p>Your thesis products will include applied research in your discipline, which may result in a tangible product or process, and a thesis reporting on your research.</p> <p>Your thesis will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be similar to a professional journal article in your field ▪ be an appropriate length for theses in your major ▪ be in the style (e.g., APA, MLA) used in your discipline ▪ address the expectations below 	<p>Your thesis products will include a project addressing a need related to your discipline and a thesis reporting on the project.</p> <p>Your thesis will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be similar to a professional journal article in your field ▪ be an appropriate length for theses in your major ▪ be in the style (e.g., APA, MLA) used in your discipline ▪ address the expectations below 	<p>Your thesis products will include a finished creative product that represents excellence in your chosen form of expression and a thesis reporting on your creative product.</p> <p>Your thesis will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ include a research essay explaining how the work relates to historical and, especially, current trends in your medium ▪ reflect on your creative choices and results ▪ be an appropriate length for thesis in your major ▪ be in the style (e.g., APA, MLA) of your discipline ▪ address the expectations below 	<p>Your thesis products will include completion of practica, portfolio, and tests required for your certification, along with an annotated bibliography showing evidence of a scholarly approach to practice and reflections on the experience of becoming a professional.</p> <p>Products include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ an annotated bibliography on focus of your professional practice, ▪ a rationale for selection of that topic ▪ documentation of successful completion of related tests and practica ▪ a scholarly reflection on the process of becoming a professional ▪ an oral presentation. <p>Your thesis will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ be in the style (e.g., APA, MLA) of your discipline ▪ address the expectations below

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Professionalism	<p>To ensure you produce the highest quality Honors thesis possible, make sure to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be proactive about contacting and meeting with your faculty mentor. ▪ Stay in regular contact with faculty mentor. When you meet with your faculty mentor, be very organized so that you can optimize the time you spend together and advance your thesis project. ▪ Make each draft as strong as possible before submission for feedback, including proofreading for typographical errors and for the correct style. Faculty mentors can then focus on the substance of your work. Consider using the Writing Center as a resource. ▪ Meet deadlines. 				
Topic	<p>Research question is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ clearly defined ▪ focused ▪ manageable ▪ potentially significant ▪ not fully explored by others 	<p>Research problem is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ clearly defined ▪ focused ▪ manageable ▪ potentially significant ▪ not fully explored by others 	<p>Need is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ clearly defined ▪ focused ▪ manageable ▪ potentially significant ▪ not fully explored by others 	<p>Potential product is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ creative ▪ manageable 	<p>Topic is an area of professional practice that is critical to your successful certification.</p>
Rationale & Context	<p>The reason for and context of the research is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ argued logically ▪ stated clearly ▪ described thoroughly 	<p>The reason for and context of the research is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ argued logically ▪ stated clearly ▪ described thoroughly 	<p>The reason for and context of the research is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ argued logically ▪ stated clearly ▪ described thoroughly 	<p>The reason for and context of the research is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ argued logically ▪ stated clearly ▪ described thoroughly 	<p>The rationale for your selection of professional practice focus is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ argued logically ▪ stated clearly ▪ described thoroughly
Review of Relevant Research	<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sufficient number to explore topic ▪ appropriate to the scope of the topic and discipline <p>Selected based on multiple evaluative criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevance to the research question ▪ currency ▪ authority ▪ accuracy ▪ audience ▪ bias or point of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sources ▪ sufficient number to explore problem ▪ appropriate to the scope of the topic and discipline ▪ Selected based on multiple evaluative criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevance to the research question ▪ currency ▪ authority ▪ accuracy ▪ audience ▪ bias or point of view ▪ Review of related work includes 	<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sufficient number to explore need ▪ appropriate to the scope of the topic and discipline <p>Selected based on multiple evaluative criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevance to the research question ▪ currency ▪ authority ▪ accuracy ▪ audience ▪ bias or point of view <p>Review of related work includes</p>	<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sufficient number to explore historical and current trends ▪ appropriate to the scope and discipline <p>Selected based on multiple evaluative criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevance to the research question ▪ currency ▪ authority ▪ accuracy ▪ audience ▪ bias or point of view 	<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sufficient number to explore topic ▪ appropriate to the scope of the topic and discipline <p>Selected based on multiple evaluative criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ relevance to the research question ▪ currency ▪ authority ▪ accuracy ▪ audience ▪ bias or point of view

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	Review of related work includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ description, interpretation, and evaluation of work of others ▪ a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the topic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ description, interpretation, and evaluation of work of others ▪ a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the topic ▪ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ description, interpretation, and evaluation of work of others ▪ a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the topic 	Review of related work includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ description, interpretation, and evaluation of work of others ▪ a comprehensive analysis or synthesis of the topic 	Annotated bibliography includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ summary of each source identified ▪ citation for each in style of your discipline
<i>Methods/Approach</i>	Methodology is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ described clearly ▪ appropriate for discipline 	Methodology/Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ described clearly ▪ appropriate for discipline ▪ identifies several possible approaches and advantages/disadvantages of each solution ▪ proposes a solution that demonstrates a deep comprehension of the problem ▪ evaluation of possible solutions includes history of the problem, feasibility of solution and potential impacts of solution Solution is sensitive to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ context and constraints (materials, resources, etc.) ▪ ethical and cultural dimensions of the problem 	Methodology/Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ described clearly ▪ appropriate for discipline ▪ identifies several possible approaches and advantages/disadvantages of each solution ▪ proposes a solution that demonstrates a deep comprehension of the problem ▪ evaluation of possible solution includes history of the problem, feasibility of solution and potential impacts of solution Solution is sensitive to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ context and constraints (materials, resources, etc.) ▪ ethical and cultural dimensions of the problem 	Methodology/Approach is <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ described clearly ▪ appropriate within discipline 	
Creative Thinking/ Creativity	Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addresses a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product ▪ Creates, deepens, or extends knowledge or 	Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Addresses a novel or unique idea, question, format, or product. ▪ Creates, deepens, or extends knowledge or produces knowledge that crosses boundaries. 	Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifies appropriate and innovative solution to needs. ▪ Creates, deepens, or extends an existing approach to address identified needs. 	Thesis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develops a novel or unique idea, format, or product. ▪ Deepens or extends existing approaches, genres, or use of media or creates new form. 	In your reflection and presentation, you will demonstrate that you <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Understand challenges of professional practice ▪ Understand appropriate and innovative approaches in this area.

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	<p>produces knowledge that crosses boundaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects, synthesizes, or transforms ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects, synthesizes, or transforms ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects, synthesizes, or transforms ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connects, synthesizes, or transforms ideas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect, synthesize, or transform ideas.
Quantitative Literacy	<p><i>Relevant for many theses</i></p> <p>Calculations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate appropriate for addressing the problem presented elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.) assumptions are described <p>Quantitative analysis of data is the basis for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion of research question carefully qualified conclusions 	<p><i>Relevant for most theses</i></p> <p>Calculations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate appropriate for addressing the problem presented elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.) assumptions are described <p>Quantitative analysis of data is the basis for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion of research question carefully qualified conclusions 	<p><i>Relevant for some theses</i></p> <p>Calculations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate appropriate for addressing the problem presented elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.) assumptions are described <p>Quantitative analysis of data is the basis for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion of research question carefully qualified conclusions 		<p><i>Relevant for some theses</i></p> <p>Calculations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> accurate appropriate for addressing the problem presented elegantly (clearly, concisely, etc.) assumptions are described <p>Quantitative analysis of data is the basis for</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discussion of research question carefully qualified conclusions
Discussion and Analysis	<p>The thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses the implementation of the research methods synthesizes evidence gathered reveals insightful patterns, differences, or similarities 	<p>Product/solution is implemented in a manner that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> addresses thoroughly and deeply multiple contextual factors of the problem. <p>The thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses the implementation of the solution/product synthesizes evidence gathered reveals insightful patterns, differences, or similarities 	<p>Service project implements the solution/approach in a manner that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is based on your research addresses thoroughly and deeply multiple contextual factors of the problem. <p>The thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discusses the implementation of the service project synthesizes evidence gathered 	<p>Creative product</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates proficiency in chosen artistic form <p>The thesis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analyzes your work in relation to historical context and work of other artists 	<p>In your reflection and presentation, you will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> address thoroughly and deeply multiple contextual factors of the problem synthesize observations and research discuss your experiences with various approaches as appropriate

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> discuss insightful patterns, differences, or similarities
Conclusions/Reflections	<p>In the thesis, conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review results relative to the research question summarize your findings and analysis are based on evidence are logical reflect your informed evaluation and ability to synthesize evidence and perspectives of other researchers provide specific recommendations for other researchers 	<p>In the thesis, conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review results relative to the problem defined summarize your findings and analysis are based on evidence are logical reflect your informed evaluation and ability to synthesize evidence and perspectives of other researchers provide specific recommendations for others addressing the problem 	<p>In the thesis, conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> review results relative to the need defined summarize your findings and analysis are based on evidence are logical reflect your informed evaluation and ability to synthesize evidence and perspectives of others provide specific recommendations for others addressing the problem 	<p>In the thesis, conclusions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate creative process and product using domain-appropriate criteria. 	<p>In your reflection and presentation, you will summarize your findings, observations, and analysis.</p> <p>Your conclusions will be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> based on evidence logical reflect your informed evaluation and ability to synthesize evidence and perspectives of others provide specific recommendations for others addressing the problem
Written Communication	<p>Context of and Purpose for Writing Demonstrates a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose that is responsive to the assigned task(s) and focuses all elements of the work.</p> <p>Genre and Disciplinary Conventions Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline and/or writing task (s) including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices</p> <p>Control of Syntax and Mechanics Uses graceful language that skillfully communicates meaning to readers with clarity and fluency, and is virtually error free.</p>				
Oral Presentation	<p>Organization Organizational pattern (specific introduction and conclusion, sequenced material within the body, and transitions) is clearly and consistently observable and is skillful and makes the content of the presentation cohesive.</p> <p>Language Language choices are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the presentation. Language in presentation is appropriate to audience.</p>				

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	<p>Delivery Delivery techniques (posture, gesture, eye contact, and vocal expressiveness) make the presentation compelling, and speaker appears polished and confident.</p> <p>Supporting Material A variety of types of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, analogies, quotations from relevant authorities) make appropriate reference to information or analysis that significantly supports the presentation or establishes the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic.</p> <p>Central Message Central message is compelling (precisely stated, appropriately repeated, memorable, and strongly supported.)</p>				