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Honours Supervision
Policy English
202301

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Objectives:

- Under the supervison of an instructor, the student will propose, develop, and complete an independent undergraduate research project, making appropriate use of primary and/or secondary sources. Such a project can be digital or community-engaged (if relevant, the project must be approved by the Human Research Ethics Board). All proposed projects are subject to approval by the Honours Committee.
- The student will become familiar with the relevant methodological problems of research as well as with the techniques and problems of scholarly writing.
- The student will present and defend the project at an oral examination.

The Supervisory Relationship:

- Every student doing an Honours project will have a primary academic supervisor, who is a mentor and advisor for the Honours research, and who develops a professional relationship with the student that supports their scholarly activities, intellectual enhancement, and professional development.
- Every student doing an Honours project will have a supervisory committee consisting of the supervisor plus one additional member (henceforth referred to as the second reader).

Duties of the Supervisor:

- The supervisor will maintain a professional relationship with the student at all times, meeting regularly, reviewing drafts in a timely manner, and guiding the project according to the standards of the discipline and the policies of the university.
- Supervisors must be knowledgeable in the academic discipline in which the research is conducted and guide the student in this discipline.
- Supervisors will normally be available for supervision during the term, on working days, and during standard business hours.

Duties normally include
- meeting with the student in advance of the term in which the project is to be completed to help the student prepare an acceptable proposal (if the student and supervisor are available to do so);
- assisting in selection and delimitation of topic;

- assisting the student in developing an appropriate program of research and a realistic timeline for the completion of the various requirements of the honours project;
- ensuring that the student is aware of normal expectations concerning the length, quality, style, and standard presentation of the project;
- providing advice, guidance and training on research methods;
- providing continuity of supervision;
- when required by the project, helping the student obtain ethics approval from the Human Research Ethics Board (http://www.uvic.ca/research/conduct/home/regapproval/humanethics/index.php); ethics review typically takes 4–6 weeks and approval must be in place before the research is undertaken;
- providing guidance on community-based research;
- consulting with the student on any changes to the proposal required by the Honours Committee;
- advising on scholarly resources;
- being available for consultation on research methods and essay planning;
- providing timely and constructive written responses to the student's drafts;
- determining whether or not the draft (or portions thereof) is ready for submission to the second reader and, if deemed not to be ready, to provide a rationale to the student in writing;
- coordinating supervision with the student's second reader;
- helping the student prepare for the final oral;
- participating in the final oral examination;
- recommending a final grade;
- debriefing with the student after the examination, if necessary;
- organizing submission of the final project to the Department.

If the student is also taking English 490 (Directed Reading) to prepare for the graduating project, duties additionally include
- ensuring that the Pro Forma and syllabus are signed and submitted by the deadline (the end of the first week of classes in the term when the 490 will occur), in case the supervisor is also the 490 instructor;
- liaising with the English 490 instructor in case the instructor is not the supervisor, to provide continuity of supervision;
- ensuring that the Directed Reading prove relevant to the student's proposed final research project;
- holding weekly hourlong meetings with the student, unless the Directed Reading is linked to another course;
- ensuring that the guidelines for English 490, as set forth on the Honours Program website, are properly followed;
- ensuring that material submitted for English 490 credit not be used again for English 499 as per the University's Policy on Academic Integrity.

Potential problems in supervision that cannot be resolved between the student and the supervisor will be referred to the Honours Adviser in the first instance and, if further guidance is needed, to the Department Chair.

Supervisors should be aware that students from different cultural backgrounds may have different expectations in the supervisory relationship and provide clear expectations as to their role.

When supervising Indigenous students, supervisors should seek University-sponsored training on Indigenous methods of instruction, ways of learning, and student assessment, such as Indigenous Cultural Acumen Training (ICAT). For more information on ICAT, see https://www.uvic.ca/services/indigenous/facultystaff/icat/index.php

Duties of the Second Reader:

The reader will maintain a professional relationship with the student at all times, reviewing a draft of the project in a timely manner and providing constructive feedback well before the final submission deadline for the project. Readers must not be in a conflict of interest with respect to the project, the student, or other supervisory members.

Duties include:

- offering constructive feedback on the project, with the understanding that this feedback will help the student create a final draft;
- being available to meet with the student as necessary;
- participating in the oral exam;
- recommending a final grade.

Responsibilities of the Student:

The student will maintain a professional relationship with the supervisor at all times, meeting regularly, producing drafts in a timely manner, and observing academic integrity as well as the policies of the university. It is also the student's responsibility to maintain contact with the supervisor through mutually agreed-upon regular communication; the student must inform the supervisor of holidays or extended absences that may affect the project timetable. It is strongly recommended that students and supervisors create a work schedule to keep the project on track, and it is the student's responsibility to follow this schedule. Students should also accept objectively and respond professionally to the advice and criticism received from the supervisor, second reader, and Honours Committee.

Timeline for Completion:

- Students are normally invited to enrol in English 310 in May, June, and July;

- Students who complete English 310 with a grade of B+ or higher are approved to declare honours;
- Students who will take English 490 (Directed Reading) must submit a Pro Forma and syllabus by the end of the first week of classes in the term they plan to take English 490;
- Students must find a supervisor before they submit a 499 proposal;
- A timetable of recommended and required project submission dates will be emailed to students and supervisors by the Honours Adviser or honours administrator (specific dates will change from year to year, but guidelines can be accessed on the 499 Graduating Essay Instructions page on the English Department's honours website)

For more information on typical timelines for completion and specific program requirements, please see the honours website:
https://www.uvic.ca/humanities/english/undergraduate/programs/honoursprogram/honours.php.
This website also has detailed instructions on the project proposal, instructions for preparing the final project, and a description of the final oral examination format. This information is contained under the "Further information and documents" rubric.