

# Earth and Ocean Sciences 499A/B: Honours Thesis

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Office Hours	By appointment

## Calendar Description

499A: The first stage of a research project conducted under the direction of a faculty member. Open to Honours students only. 1.5 units.

499B: Continuation of a research project conducted under the direction of a faculty member. Open to Honours students only. 1.5 units. Pre-requisites: EOS 499A.

## Overview

The Honours thesis provides students an opportunity to conduct an independent research project under the direction of a faculty member, normally during their final year of study. A student should discuss potential research projects with faculty members (both regular and adjunct) and decide on a project by the beginning of their final year at the latest. The Honours Thesis requires two terms to complete.

*Approximate milestones for students enrolled in EOS 499 from September to April are:*

Beginning of term	Inform Honours Advisor of research supervisor and topic
October 1	Thesis proposal <b>due</b> to Honours Advisor and supervisor(s)
end of 499A	Finish collection and synthesis of data and background material
beginning of 499B	Detailed thesis outline completed
Early February	Introduction, Background and Methods sections written
Mid-March	Public presentation of research
Last Day of Classes 2 <sup>nd</sup> term	Honours thesis <b>due</b> to supervisor(s)

## Logistics:

Register for EOS 499A in the first term and EOS 499B in the second term of your Honours thesis. Both courses require permission to be set by the department for registration. You may do your Honours thesis in any combination of terms (i.e. fall/spring, spring/fall, spring/summer, summer/fall, etc...) as agreed with your supervisor. Initially, you will receive an INP grade for EOS 499A, which will be changed to your final grade when 499B is completed. You receive the same grade for both 499A and 499B. If you do not complete 499B, the INP grade for 499A will be changed to N.

## Late Policy

Your supervisor (if co-supervised, the SEOS faculty member) may grant an extension to the due date of your Honours thesis for legitimate reasons. Potential reasons include delays in obtaining research results that are out of the student's control such as problems with method development,

obtaining samples or instrument time, etc... or significant illness. Inform the Honours Advisor when an extension is granted. Honours theses submitted late (without an extension) will normally be penalized 1% per working day.

### **Topic**

The point of the Honours thesis is to introduce students to the process of conducting independent scientific research. Literature searches do not constitute material for Honours theses unless a significant amount of material from the existing literature is reinterpreted in an original way.

Moreover, excessive literature searches and summaries of previous methods/studies in the thesis are not warranted.

### **Thesis proposal**

A two-page proposal of the thesis is submitted to the Honours Advisor and to your thesis supervisor(s) at the end of the first month of EOS 499A (end of September for fall/spring students). This proposal should summarize the intended project agreed to by the student and supervisor. Points to include are the goals of the project, wider importance, methods to be used in carrying out the project, expectations for the results (if known), and a timeline for the project. The proposal should be sent to the Honours Advisor by email as a pdf file, with filename proposal\_surname.pdf.

### **Honours presentation**

All EOS 499B students must give a 15-minute public presentation describing their research and conclusions in one of two for: a departmental seminar series scheduled in the last three weeks of the Spring term, or a special seminar in the last three weeks of the Summer or Fall terms (intended for students not completing EOS 499B at the end of the Spring term).

### **Honours thesis**

The Honours thesis normally consists of a Title Page, Abstract, List of Tables, List of Figures, Introduction, Background, Methods, Results, Discussion, Conclusions, and Bibliography (References Cited). Typical Honours theses are approximately 50 to 70 pages, but expected length should be discussed with your thesis supervisor(s).

The Honours thesis is due to your thesis supervisor(s) for grading on the last day of classes in the second term.

An electronic copy of the thesis for the SEOS archives should also be provided to the SEOS office. Binding of hard copies of the thesis at the expense of the student or the supervisor can be organized by SEOS, if desired. In this case, submit the number of hard copies desired for binding to the SEOS office unbound, with no holes, in a folder. Students can view other "model" B.Sc. theses from 2012 and earlier in the department office for further details of format, etc.

### **Role of Thesis Supervisor**

The supervisor should oversee the research, and should be a regular SEOS faculty member or an adjunct faculty member. Periodic meetings with the student should occur to check progress. In the event that an adjunct professor or outside expert is supervising a thesis, a regular SEOS faculty member must act as a co-supervisor to help with these duties. The supervisor(s) assigns a grade to the written thesis.

### **Role of Honours Advisor**

The Honours Advisor admits students to the Honours Program, and confirms that rules and regulations for thesis material, content, and submission are being met. This person also schedules the end-of-term seminars, assigns a grade to the presentation (in consultation with a committee), and submits final grades.

### **Assessment**

Evaluation for EOS 499A/B is based upon a written thesis marked by the supervisor and on a public oral presentation. A committee convened by the Honours Advisor determines the oral presentation grade, with criteria including the quality of both the research and the presentation. An award is given each year for the best Honours thesis presentation. A grade of INP is assigned to 499A until 499B is completed, at which point both 499A and 499B receive the same grade.

### **Grade allocation**

Thesis	90%
Oral Presentation	10 %

### **UVic Grading scale**

A+	90-100%	A	85-89%	A-	80-84%
B+	77-79%	B	73-76%	B-	70-72%
C+	65-69%	C	60-64%	D	50-59%
F	0-49%				