

Benefits of Writing a Departmental Honors Thesis:

- ◆ Develop a deeper understanding of the historical profession and your topic
- ◆ Enjoy collaboration with faculty experts
- ◆ Present your work at the annual College of Liberal Arts Research Symposium or other conferences
- ◆ Develop talking points based on extended research for job interviews
- ◆ Build confidence in your skills and knowledge
- ◆ Earn credit in the major (can count for HIST 4300) and graduate with departmental honors
- ◆ Increase your chances for acceptance into a top graduate school through a polished example of writing and research
- ◆ Signal to employers that you are able to complete a sustained, detail-oriented project
- ◆ Help professors write more detailed letters of recommendation

For more information: uca.edu/history

"My advice to students is mostly that writing a thesis is really worth the work!" – Jennifer Barker

Some Past Thesis Titles

"Masculinity in Crisis: An Examination of Society and *Life* Advertising in 1940s America" by Jennifer Barker

"The Anchor of Faith: Cultural Preservation and Assimilation in the St. Joseph Colony (1890-1930)" by Kyle Zinno

"'Arkansas at Odds: Capital Punishment in the State, 1973-2001'" by Laura Choate

"The Show Must Go On: Governmental Policies in the Control of Equine Disease" by Kayla Griffis

"From Prosperity to Poverty: The Story of American Economic Decline in the 1920s" by Marcus Witcher (who had his published!)

"Defending the Defenseless: Language and the Law in *Briggs v. State*" by Dylan Tillman

"From Housekeeping to Hooking Up: An Examination of Teenage Sexuality as Portrayed in *Seventeen Magazine* from 1963 to 2006" by Rachel Ringlaben

"The opportunity to write an honors thesis is a great chance to really dig into historical research and determine whether you like doing that sort of thing (say for grad school and beyond). Words of wisdom: use index cards to organize your notes from your various sources!!" – Kyle Zinno

We Want YOU, Historian!



Plan Ahead!

**SOPHOMORES
JUNIORS • SENIORS**

NOW is the time to prepare for writing a History Departmental Honors Thesis.

If there is a topic that particularly interests you in one of your 4000-level classes, talk to your professor about how it might become a Departmental Honors Thesis.

Who Should Write a Thesis?

- ✓ Outstanding students who are considering applying to graduate school in history.
- ✓ Curious students who have a question they would love to investigate independently doing original research.
- ✓ Aspiring historians who want to learn how professional historians do their scholarly work.



The Departmental Honors Thesis

is the most substantial piece of scholarly writing that an undergraduate can undertake. These are normally 40-50 pages in length, grounded in primary sources, contribute an original argument, and include an abstract, footnotes, and a bibliography.

The Six Steps to Success!

1. Pick a Thesis Advisor

Students work under the direction of a faculty member in the department. It is your responsibility to identify an advisor. Professors are not likely to accept students whom they have not had in an upper-division course. Advisor must be a regular, tenure-track faculty member or lecturer in the department. You and your Thesis Advisor will work together to refine the topic.

2. Register for HIST 4313 & Research

This class takes you through some of the early steps of the research process. To facilitate the first stages of the project, you should identify a set of research questions, work to familiarize yourself thoroughly with the existing scholarship on the topic, and begin to formulate an argument. Regular consultation with your thesis advisor also helps keep research on track and productive.

3. Register for HIST 4314 & Write

Writing ideally takes place concurrently with research. Keeping a research journal and beginning to outline helps bring the project into focus. Writing in earnest should begin toward the end of the first semester. Begin writing even if the research seems incomplete. You may have never

written a paper longer than 15-20 pages, so it is critical to make steady progress. You should work with your Thesis Advisor to come up with a writing schedule that leaves plenty of time for the revision process. Most advisors will want to read individual chapters or sections as well as one complete draft of the thesis. Remember a polished thesis requires significant revisions.

4. Pick a Second Reader

Find another professor on campus whose area of expertise complements your thesis topic. Your Thesis Advisor should be able to help you with this. The Second Reader will also provide feedback on your work.

5. Final Copy & Title to Registrar

See Departmental Honors Thesis Guidelines for specific formatting rules and other important information.

6. You're Done! Now Do Something With All Your Hard Work!

Don't put your thesis in a drawer! Talk with your advisor about the possibility of presenting it at a conference or of submitting it for publication.

Requirements: During Your Junior Or Senior Year

1. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.25 and a 3.50 grade point average in the major
2. Successful completion of HIST 4313 Department Honors Thesis Research and HIST 4314 Departmental Honors Thesis Writing (successful completion of your thesis can replace HIST 4300)
3. Submission and approval of a Departmental Honors Thesis