

The Senior Honors Project

Proposal Guidelines

John Carroll University
Honors Program

The proposal is a crucial part of the Senior Honors Project. It is in the proposal that the student outlines the area of study, the methodology to be employed, the resources to be enlisted, the anticipated form of the final project, and the timetable for the completion of the final project. All students who either complete HP450 or a research project in a department in place of HP450 must write a proposal.

Before any significant work begins on the project itself, the proposal must be approved by the student, the advisor of the project, by the Director of the Honors Program, by the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or the Bolser School of Business, and the Associate Academic Vice President for Academic Programs and Faculty Diversity.

The proposal is the Senior Honors Project in microcosm. It should therefore be written in formal language, clearly argued and convincingly supported, integrating relevant resources of the chosen discipline. However, it should also be written in language and with background information that renders the project accessible to an audience outside the student's discipline. Proposals or Senior Honors Projects that fail to meet these requirements will not be accepted.

Each proposal should be composed of three parts: a **narrative** of the proposed project; a **bibliography**; and a tentative **timetable**. All portions of the proposal should be paginated consecutively and include the following components:

1. **Narrative** of the proposed project (3-6 pages, double spaced)

The narrative account should clearly and concisely outline the project. It should state what is being proposed, why it is being proposed and how the student expects to complete the project. Thus, the account must include the following:

- a. an introductory paragraph that provides a concise summary of your proposed project with a thesis statement that indicates a working hypothesis or tentative argument

- b. your rationale for the project. Explain how this particular project will serve as a capstone to your undergraduate career,

and possibly how it will help you prepare for your studies or career after JCU

c. a sense of the scholarly context in which the project is set, such as previous work in the area, historical background, and limits

d. a demonstration of your knowledge of the relevant scholarly issues and questions related to your topic by means of a literature review

e. an explanation of your proposed research approach or methodology, including comments on what research, laboratory work, interviews, surveys, etc., you will undertake. If you are intending to conduct and analyze a survey as part of your project, you must also include a draft of the survey with your proposal

f. your plans for the dissemination of your work. This might be a poster or paper presentation at a conference (such as Celebration of Scholarship) or a publication submission.

g. some comments on what you anticipate the final form of your project will be.

2. Bibliography

Your proposal must include a preliminary bibliography of those sources which you anticipate being essential to your project. For most disciplines and most projects, you will need to provide both primary and secondary sources. Your bibliography should be approximately one page in length, and it should be in proper format (e.g., Turabian, MLA).

3. Timetable

Your proposal must include a timetable. This timetable should indicate approximate dates for completion of the various parts of your project. Among the dates you should present are ones for acceptance of the proposal, for beginning your research, for completion of research, for first draft of final project, and for final completion date. The timetable might also include dates for meetings with your project advisor. Remember that the final project must be submitted no later than one week before the last class day of the semester in which one is registered for HP 450 or for a course in your major department.

Sample copies of previously approved Senior Honors Project Proposals are on file in the Honors Office and may be consulted by the applicant.

Students who expect to do any form of human experimentation, including surveys, must submit their proposal to the JCU Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval. A student who intends to do any form of animal experimentation must file a protocol review form with The Institutional Animal Care & Use Committee (IACUC). Information about these processes is available from the Honors Office or the Office of Sponsored Research. Proposals will be submitted to the Dean until IRB or IACUC approval (or waiver) has been granted.

A student must submit a draft of the Senior Honors Project proposal by the end of the third week of the semester during which he or she wishes to register for the senior project. This draft should have already been reviewed by the faculty advisor and appropriate revisions undertaken. Comments on this draft will be sent to both the student and the faculty advisor.

A student must submit a final draft of the Senior Honors Project proposal **by the end of the fourth week of the semester** for which he or she plans to complete the project. A hard copy of the proposal, including the application form, the narrative of your project, a bibliography, a schedule, and IRB/IACUC approval if required, should be submitted to the Honors Program Office. The proposal will then be forwarded on to the Dean of Arts and Sciences or the Boler School of Business (depending on the discipline in which the student completes the project) and subsequently the Associate Academic Vice President for Academic Programs and Faculty Diversity. **No new proposals will be accepted for formal submission to the Dean after the end of the fourth week of the semester.**

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