

Honors Thesis Template

Complete template for undergraduate honors thesis. Adaptable to any citation style (APA, MLA, Chicago).

TITLE PAGE

[Centered on page]

[Full Title of Your Honors Thesis:*
****Subtitle if Applicable]**

An Honors Thesis Presented to the

[Department Name]

[University Name]

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of Bachelor of [Arts/Science]

with Honors in [Major]

by

[Your Full Name]

[Month Year]

Thesis Advisor: [Advisor Name, Title]

APPROVAL PAGE

[Check if your university requires this]

This Honors Thesis by [Your Name] has been approved by:

[Advisor Name, Title], Thesis Advisor

[Second Reader Name, Title], Second Reader

[Honors Director Name], Director of Honors Program

Date: _____

ABSTRACT

[Page number: iii]

Abstract

[Write 150-250 words summarizing your thesis: research question, methods, key findings, conclusions. Single paragraph.]

Keywords: [3-5 keywords]

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

[Page number: iv]

Acknowledgments

[Thank your advisor, readers, research participants, funding sources, family. Keep to 1 page.]

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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LIST OF TABLES (if applicable)

List of Tables

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LIST OF FIGURES (if applicable)

List of Figures

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|------------|--------|
| 1. [Title] | [page] |
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INTRODUCTION

[Start Arabic page numbering: 1]

Introduction

[Opening paragraph: Hook readers with compelling context, establish significance of your topic.]

Background

[Provide necessary background for understanding your research. What's already known about this topic?]

Research Question/Thesis Statement

This thesis addresses the following question: [Your specific research question]

OR

This thesis argues that [Your central argument/claim].

Significance

[Why does this research matter? Who benefits from understanding this?]

This research contributes to [field] by [specific contribution]. Understanding [your topic] is important because [real-world relevance].

Scope and Limitations

This study focuses on [what you're examining—time period, population, geographic area, specific texts/cases].

Limitations include: - [Limitation 1] - [Limitation 2] - [Limitation 3]

Methodology Overview

[Brief description of your approach—will be detailed in methods chapter if applicable]

This thesis employs [research method/approach] to [what you're doing]. Data comes from [sources: archives, surveys, experiments, textual analysis, etc.].

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 examines [topic/argument].

Chapter 2 analyzes [topic/argument].

Chapter 3 explores [topic/argument].

Chapter 4 discusses [topic/argument].

The **Conclusion** synthesizes findings and suggests future research directions.

CHAPTER 1: [TITLE]

Chapter 1: [Descriptive Title in Title Case]

[Opening paragraph: Introduce what this chapter covers and how it relates to your thesis.]

[Section Heading]

[Main content of chapter organized by clear sections]

[For humanities: close reading of texts, historical analysis, theoretical framework]

[For sciences: literature review, theoretical background, previous research]

[For social sciences: theoretical framework, prior studies, conceptual model]

[Section Heading]

[Continue developing your argument or analysis]

[Include evidence: quotes, data, examples, case studies]

Summary

[Brief summary of chapter's main points and transition to next chapter]

CHAPTER 2: [TITLE]

Chapter 2: [Descriptive Title]

[For empirical research, this might be your Methodology chapter. For humanities, might be continued analysis/argument.]

Research Design (if empirical)

[Describe your methodological approach]

Type: [Qualitative/Quantitative/Mixed/Archival/Textual Analysis]

Justification: [Why this approach is appropriate]

Sample/Sources

[Describe what you studied]

- Population/texts/archives examined
- Sample size or number of cases
- Selection criteria

Data Collection

[How you gathered information]

Materials/Instruments: [Surveys, interview protocols, archival sources, primary texts]

Procedures: [Step-by-step process]

Data Analysis

[How you analyzed findings]

[For quantitative: statistical methods]

[For qualitative: coding approach, thematic analysis]

[For humanities: analytical framework, close reading method]

Ethical Considerations (if applicable)

[IRB approval status, informed consent, confidentiality measures]

CHAPTER 3: [TITLE]

Chapter 3: [Results/Findings/Analysis—depending on your field]

[For empirical research: Present your findings objectively]

[For humanities: Continue developing your argument with evidence]

[Theme/Finding 1]

[Present evidence, data, or analysis]

[For sciences/social sciences: Include tables, figures, statistics]

Table 1. [Title]

| [data] | [data] | [data] |
|--------|--------|--------|
|--------|--------|--------|

[For humanities: Textual evidence, quotes, close analysis]

[Theme/Finding 2]

[Continue presenting findings or developing argument]

[Theme/Finding 3]

[Additional evidence or analysis]

CHAPTER 4: [TITLE]

Chapter 4: [Discussion/Further Analysis—depending on your field]

[For empirical research: Interpret findings and connect to literature]

[For humanities: Conclude your analytical argument]

Interpretation of Findings

[What do your results mean?]

[How do they relate to existing scholarship?]

[What's surprising or confirms expectations?]

Implications

Theoretical: [How this advances understanding in your field]

Practical: [Real-world applications or relevance]

Limitations

[Be honest about constraints on your research]

Recommendations for Future Research

[What questions remain? What should scholars study next?]

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

[Recap your main arguments/findings briefly]

Contribution to Field

[What does your thesis add to existing knowledge?]

This research contributes to [field] by [specific contribution]. The findings [what they demonstrate].

Broader Implications

[Zoom out: Why does this matter beyond your specific topic?]

Future Directions

[What questions does your research raise? Where should scholarship go next?]

Final Thoughts

[Closing reflection on significance of your work]

REFERENCES (APA) / WORKS CITED (MLA) / BIBLIOGRAPHY (Chicago)

[Choose format based on your field's requirements]

APA Format:

References

[Hanging indent, alphabetical by author]

Author, A. A., & Author, B. B. (Year). Title of article. *Journal Name*, volume(issue), pages. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

MLA Format:

Works Cited

[Hanging indent, alphabetical by author]

Author Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Journal Name*, vol. #, no. #, Year, pp. pages.

Chicago Format:

Bibliography

[Hanging indent, alphabetical by author]

Last Name, First Name. "Title of Article." *Journal Name* volume, no. issue (Year): pages.

APPENDIX A: [TITLE]

Appendix A: [Descriptive Title]

[Include supplementary materials:]

- Survey instruments
- Interview questions
- IRB approval letters
- Consent forms
- Additional data tables
- Transcripts
- Extended quotations
- Technical details

APPENDIX B: [TITLE]

Appendix B: [Descriptive Title]

[Additional supporting materials]

FORMATTING GUIDELINES

Length

Typical honors thesis: 40-80 pages (double-spaced) - Sciences: 40-60 pages - Social Sciences: 50-70 pages - Humanities: 60-80 pages

Check your department's requirements

Format

- **Font:** 12-pt Times New Roman (or department preference)
- **Spacing:** Double-spaced body text
- **Margins:** 1 inch all sides
- **Page numbers:** Top right or bottom center
- **Paragraphs:** Indent 0.5 inches (or no indent with space between)

Front Matter

- Roman numerals (i, ii, iii) for front matter
- Arabic numerals (1, 2, 3) starting with Introduction

Headings

Use consistent hierarchy: - **Chapter titles:** Bold, centered or left-aligned - **Major sections:** Bold - **Subsections:** Italics or bold

Citations

Follow your field's style guide consistently: - **Sciences/Social Sciences:** Usually APA - **Humanities:** Usually MLA or Chicago - **Check with your advisor**

CHAPTER ORGANIZATION OPTIONS

Option 1: Traditional Empirical Structure

- Introduction
- Literature Review
- Methodology
- Results
- Discussion
- Conclusion

Option 2: Humanities/Argument Structure

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: [First major point]

- Chapter 2: [Second major point]
- Chapter 3: [Third major point]
- Chapter 4: [Fourth major point/counterarguments]
- Conclusion

Option 3: Hybrid/Flexible Structure

- Introduction
- Chapter 1: Background/Context/Theory
- Chapter 2: Analysis/Case Study 1
- Chapter 3: Analysis/Case Study 2
- Chapter 4: Synthesis/Implications
- Conclusion

Choose structure that best fits your research

WRITING TIMELINE (Typical Academic Year)

Fall Semester

- **September:** Finalize topic, complete IRB (if needed)
- **October:** Research/data collection, draft introduction
- **November:** Continue research, draft Chapter 1
- **December:** Draft Chapter 2

Spring Semester

- **January:** Complete data collection/research
- **February:** Draft Chapters 3-4
- **March:** Complete full draft, advisor review
- **April:** Revisions, proofreading, formatting
- **Early May:** Final submission, presentation/defense

Adjust based on your program's deadlines

DEFENSE/PRESENTATION PREPARATION

Many honors programs require a thesis defense or presentation.

Typical Format

- 15-20 minute presentation of research
- 10-15 minutes Q&A with committee
- Possible open Q&A with audience

Prepare

- Create slides summarizing key points
- Practice presentation multiple times
- Anticipate questions about methods, findings, implications
- Know limitations of your research
- Be ready to defend your conclusions

Common Questions

- Why is this topic important?
- How did you choose this methodology?
- What surprised you in your findings?
- What are the limitations?
- What would you do differently?
- What's next for this research?

CHECKLIST BEFORE SUBMISSION

Content

- All required chapters complete
- Introduction clearly states thesis/question
- Each chapter flows logically to next
- Conclusion synthesizes findings
- All claims supported by evidence
- Citations for all sources used

Format

- Meets page length requirements
- Proper formatting (font, spacing, margins)
- Page numbers correct (Roman, then Arabic)
- Table of contents matches chapter titles/pages
- All tables/figures numbered and titled
- Consistent heading hierarchy

Citations

- All in-text citations have full references
- All references cited in text
- Citation style consistent throughout
- References formatted correctly
- No missing page numbers or dates

Front Matter

- Title page complete and formatted
- Abstract within word limit
- Acknowledgments included
- Table of contents accurate
- Lists of tables/figures (if applicable)

Final Steps

- Proofread entire document
- Spell-check completed
- Advisor approved final draft
- Required signatures obtained
- Submitted in correct format (PDF, print, etc.)
- Defense/presentation scheduled

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Start Early

Begin research fall semester, aim for complete draft by March.

Meet Regularly with Advisor

Weekly or biweekly meetings keep you on track and provide feedback.

Write as You Research

Don't wait until all research is done to start writing.

Get Feedback

Share drafts with advisor, peers, writing center.

Stay Organized

Keep detailed notes, organize sources, back up your work.

Be Realistic

Choose a manageable scope for one academic year.

Celebrate

Completing an honors thesis is a major achievement!

Template Complete. Adapt structure and citation style to your field.
Good luck!

