

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY STUDIES

THE HONORS PROGRAM S&TS 4991/4992

The Honors Program is designed to provide independent research opportunities for academically talented S&TS majors. Students who enroll in the honors program are expected to do independent study and research, with faculty guidance on issues in science and technology studies. Students who participate in the program should find the experience intellectually stimulating and rewarding whether or not they intend to pursue a research career.

SELECTION OF STUDENTS

S&TS majors are considered for entry into the honors program at the end of the second semester of their junior year. Application forms for the honors program are available in the S&TS office, 303 Morrill Hall. To qualify for the S&TS honors program, students must have an overall Cornell cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.00 and a 3.30 cumulative GPA in courses taken for the major. Additionally, the student must have formulated a research topic, and have found a project supervisor and a second faculty member willing to serve as the advisors. Both must hold academic appointments at Cornell, and at least one must be a member of S&TS. A committee headed by the director of undergraduate studies, who will notify students directly of the outcome, will review applications. Applications are due by Friday of the 2nd week of classes.

Students will be permitted to register for the honors program only by permission of the department. Students must register for 4 credits each semester in STS 4991 (fall) and 4992 (spring), The Honors Project I and II. At the end of the first semester, the student will receive a grade of "R" for satisfactory progress. The grade recorded at the end of the second term evaluates the student's performance in the course for the entire year.

If, after admission to the honors program, a student fails to maintain a high scholastic average, or for any other reason is considered unsuited for honors work, the student reverts to candidacy for the regular Bachelor's degree. The student who does not continue in the honors program must change the first semester to Independent Study in order to receive a grade, and is not eligible for the honors degree.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to complete two semesters of honors project research and to write an honors thesis. The project must include substantial research and the completed work should be of wider scope and greater originality than is normal for an upper-level course.

The student has primary responsibility for constituting a committee of two faculty advisors, formulating ideas, developing the proposal, carrying out the study, and preparing a suitable thesis. Honors projects will be carried out under the direction of the two faculty advisors mentioned above. Both must be members of the Cornell faculty; at least one must be a member of S&TS. The project supervisor should be expert in the topic and willing to serve as the primary advisor. In the second semester of the senior year, the DUS will appoint a third reader of the completed honors thesis.

Students must register for 4 credits each semester in STS 4991 (fall) and 4992 (spring), The Honors Project I and II. At the end of the first semester, the student will receive a grade of "R" for satisfactory progress. The grade recorded at the end of the second term evaluates the student's performance in the course for the entire year. Students should note that S&TS 4991/4992 may not be used to fulfill any major requirements. The student and the thesis advisor must reach clear agreement at the outset as to what sort of work will need to be completed during the first semester. Minimally an honors thesis outline and bibliography should be accomplished. The advisors, in consultation with the director of undergraduate studies, will evaluate whether or not the student should continue working on an honors project. Students who do continue in the honors program for the second semester will receive a letter grade at the end of their final term for the entire year whether or not they complete a thesis and whether or not they are recommended for honors.

Students should meet regularly with their project supervisor during the period of research and writing for the honors thesis. The responsibility for scheduling these meetings, and for carrying out the research in timely fashion, rests with the student. Advisors are expected to make themselves available for discussion and to offer advice on the plan of research, as well as provide critical and constructive comments on the written work as it is completed. They are not expected, however, to pursue students to ensure that the research and writing are being done on schedule.

THE HONORS THESIS

There is no prescribed length for a thesis, since different topics may require longer or shorter treatment, but it should normally be in the range of 70 - 100 double-spaced typed pages. The thesis must be completed in a form satisfactory for purposes of evaluation and submitted by April 15* to the two thesis advisors and to one other faculty member appointed by the director of undergraduate studies. The candidate must meet with the three readers for a formal defense of the thesis by May 10. *

One copy of the completed and defended thesis (suitably bound in a plastic or hard-backed cover), together with the advisors' recommendations, must be submitted to the director of undergraduate studies by May 15. *

Following the formal thesis defense, the thesis advisors will submit to the director of undergraduate studies a recommendation to include: 1) the evaluation of the honors thesis by the three readers; 2) an evaluation of the student's academic record in the Science & Technology Studies major; and 3) a recommendation for or against awarding honors, as well as a recommendation for the level of honors.

As the director of undergraduate studies may have little knowledge of the subject area of the thesis, recommendations should be carefully prepared by the committed to help ensure consistency within the Honors Program. If there is disagreement among the readers, the director of undergraduate studies will make the final decision after consultation with the interested parties.

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANT DATES

- Last week of second semester junior year: Application for honors program submitted
- April 15* Thesis completed in a form satisfactory for evaluation and submitted to the three readers
- April 29-May 10* Thesis defense accomplished
- May 13* Bound copy of completed and defended thesis submitted to director of undergraduate studies

* If these dates fall on a weekend, the deadline will be the previous Friday.

PEOPLE TO CONTACT FOR STS HONORS INFORMATION:

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