

# DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION

## HONORS THESIS PROGRAM 2016-17

*comm.stanford.edu/undergrad/honors*

**The Program:** The Honors Thesis Program offers qualified students an opportunity to conduct independent communication research and to write an honors thesis reporting their results. The program provides for close contact between students and thesis advisors so that students can receive intensive guidance and assistance throughout their research and writing. The aim is to help students go through the process of conceptualization, study planning, data collection, analysis and writing, which is essential to excellence in scholarship.

**Eligibility:** Each student should submit an application for the program no later than the last day of classes of spring quarter of the junior year and have a GPA of 3.3 in Communication courses. The Honors Thesis Program is based on the assumption that useful research and writing take time and effort and thus will be ongoing for the three quarters of the senior year. Students should be aware that no faculty member can effectively supervise more than a few theses each year. Normally, the thesis advisor will be a faculty member with whom the student has already taken a course.

**Requirements:** Students wishing to participate in the Honors Thesis Program must be majoring in Communication and must have completed the core requirements (COMM 1A or COMM 1B, 106, 108, STATS 60) and received a grade of B+ or better in Communication Research Methods (COMM 106). A thesis advisor may deem other courses as necessary.

**Writing Consultation Services:** The Hume Center for Writing and Speaking provides many resources to help you with Honors projects. Honors Thesis Boot Camps are offered during the summer and academic year. Students can also seek individual consultation with them about clarifying argument and thesis, framing research, improving transitions, providing revising strategies and other writing issues. Their writing consultants also work with students on scheduling and planning, how to stay motivated, overcoming writer's block, outlining and organizing sections of a thesis, assessing a writing schedule for the honors thesis.

**Funding:** Please contact Brian Thomas, Associate Director, Undergraduate Advising and Research, during the fall quarter of your junior year for more information regarding how to secure funding for your Honors Thesis. He can be reached at [bthomas@stanford.edu](mailto:bthomas@stanford.edu) or (650) 723-0051. Two important sources of funding that you may want to apply for are:

### **Major Grants**

Grants for majors support substantial, in-depth projects that normally span several quarters. Priority is given to projects that culminate in an honors thesis or other capstone product that demonstrates a focused, intellectually rigorous perspective on the topic. Applications are due in winter quarter (check for specific date at <http://studentgrants.stanford.edu>). The budget limit is \$6,400; budget may include a stipend.

### **Small Grants**

Small grants of up to \$1,500 support smaller independent projects, and can also be used to enable particular phases of larger-scale effort. Applications deadlines are found throughout the year, making the Small Grant especially flexible.

### ***Grants Timeline***

The information found on the Student Grants website (search 'timeline & checklist for applying') provides the big picture view for Small Grants of the lead time prior to application through approval and on to disbursement of funds. For Major Grants the review time is about six or seven weeks instead of three weeks. This timeline can be extended further if a student's project is put on hold, rather than initially approved, requiring the applicant to submit a revision.

The interval from approval to fund disbursement is determined by the student meeting certain documentation requirements. For all students, this includes a donor thank-you letter and grant contract/waiver. For other students it may also entail a combination of human subject protocol approval, pre-field documentation (coursework, proof of insurance, field contact letter, emergency contact information, embassy registration), and a PTA for a lab supply reimbursement and/or human subject advance.

If a student has the cash flow to afford it, s/he can spend personal funds on approved grant expenses (except in the case where human subject protocol approval hasn't occurred) and be reimbursed by the grant stipend check we request from the Financial Aid Office, with assistance from Student Financial Services.

From the time we request a stipend disbursement to the time the student receives it is about two work weeks; this can be reduced by a few days if a student has already set up direct deposit with Stanford through Axess.

***Honors Thesis Credit:*** Students admitted to the program will earn honors thesis credit for a total of three quarters and may not receive more than five units of credit in a single quarter. Students are expected to make steady progress on their honors thesis throughout the year. An 'N' grade must be entered in Axess by the thesis advisor at the end of each of the first two quarters, indicating that this is continuing work and that the final grade (posted in spring) will be a letter grade. The honors work may be used to fulfill Communication elective credit. Honors in Communication cannot be awarded retroactively. A student failing to fulfill all honors requirements may still receive independent study credit for work completed which can be applied toward fulfilling major elective requirements. Failure to submit a satisfactory draft of the thesis during fall quarter will result in the student being dropped from the program.

***Submitting Your Honors Thesis:*** A final copy of the paper must be submitted to your thesis advisor for review and grading, (and a second copy to the department), by the end of the eighth week of spring quarter of your senior year. The department copy becomes part of a permanent record held by the department.

***Graduation with Honors:*** The designation *graduation with honors* is awarded by the Department of Communication to those graduating seniors who, in addition to having completed all requirements for the communication major, also achieve the following:

1. Successfully complete an Honors Thesis (B+ or better)
2. Maintain a distinguished grade average in all Communication course work
3. Are recommended by the Communication faculty

This distinction will be noted on the student's diploma and during the department graduation ceremonies.

**DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATION  
HONORS THESIS PROGRAM  
APPLICATION 2016-17**

(submit no later than the last day of classes of spring of junior year)

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Stanford ID** \_\_\_\_\_ **Email address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Overall GPA** \_\_\_\_\_ **Major GPA** \_\_\_\_\_ (attach transcript)

**Grade for Core Courses:**

COMM 1A/B \_\_\_\_\_ COMM 108 \_\_\_\_\_

COMM 106 \_\_\_\_\_ STATS 60 \_\_\_\_\_  
(min B+)

**Student Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Advisor Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Thesis Advisor Signature** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposal** (Please Attach)

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