



Directing a Bachelor's Essay

This document is designed to provide you with a workflow process to follow if an honors student approaches you to direct a senior thesis (the bachelor's essay). This is a six credit project completed over two semesters (the six hours of credit assumes that the student completes approximately 10 hours of engagement in the project per week). It should be a project that reflects the scholarly and/or creative work of the discipline.

All honors students are advised that they should approach a faculty advisor at least one semester before their project is scheduled to begin. We suggest that they bring a short (one page) project description accompanied by a short bibliography/list of materials to the meeting, although they may be interested in joining a project that you have already launched or may have a fairly unformed idea about which they seek your guidance. Generally, the Honors College prefers that the student registers for the project through the departmental 499 (e.g., PSYC 499, BIOL 499). However, in cases where a project is interdisciplinary or where the student would like to complete a project outside of the major, the student may petition to complete the project as an HONS 499.

We understand that directing a senior thesis is a significant time commitment and that generally the college does not provide remuneration. However, we recommend that you consult your department chair if you are considering the possibility of taking on a bachelor's essay project - some departments have workload management plans or other ways of supporting your supervision of students in these types of projects. Most departments also have guidelines about how many students any one faculty member should supervise, as well as policies about how to manage bachelor essay proposals. In all cases, the Honors College supports these departmental standards.

The document below is designed to give you a workflow process from the time the student approaches you, through the registration process, to the actual direction of the thesis, and finally the procedure for entering grades. Please feel free to contact the Honors College if you have any questions.

1. If a student approaches you to oversee a project and you agree to be the advisor, first check with your department chair to confirm that you are credentialed to oversee it.

2. Also, check with your department to see if there is an official application process for the BE. Some departments (like English and History) require students to write a proposal, while others simply require the approval of the department chair. Any departmental processes must be completed before you begin the individual enrollment form.
3. Complete the individual enrollment form for the BE located on your "Faculty Tab" in MyCharleston. This form contains instructions for the supporting information that must be submitted with your application. You must attach a completed syllabus with specific learning outcomes and the student must provide a degree audit.
4. After the form is completed have the student sign it. You then countersign and bring the completed packet to the department chair. After the chair signs, the entire packet goes to the Registrar who will create the BE course.
5. The deadline for individual enrollment courses is usually about three weeks in to the semester. So if you were signing up a student to begin the BE in the fall, you would need to have everything done by the end of the first week in September.
6. The vast majority of students use a BE number within the major (PHIL 499, CHEM 499, ACCT 499). However, there are some instances (a student writing a senior thesis in a discipline with no BE number, a student writing a senior thesis outside of the major, a student researching a truly interdisciplinary project) where you may not be able to use your departmental number. In that case, the student may sign up for HONS 499. This adds one more step to the process. The student must write a letter of petition, fill out a second short form, and attach a letter of support from you - all of this documentation goes to the Dean of the Honors College. Assuming your student is not using the HONS 499 number, you do not need to worry about this step.
7. You and your student will need to set up a regular schedule of meetings in order to monitor progress. What this schedule looks like will depend on your discipline and the nature of the project.
8. Grading. The Registrar has a specific process in place for grading the BE. Assuming the student is making normal progress at the end of the first semester, the grade for that semester should always be "IP", or in progress. This is not one of the options for normal grade entry. The simplest way to enter the grade is to contact Ms. Laetitia Sobiesuo at the Registrar (sobiesuol@cofc.edu). She will manually enter the grade for you. At the end of the second semester you may enter the grade for that semester normally.

However, you must change the grade for the first semester. To change the grade for the first semester you may:

- Log-in to MyCharleston
- Click on the Faculty Tab
- Click on the undergraduate "change of grade" link (2nd channel in the middle of the page)
- Follow the steps to complete the form