**Requirements for an Honors Thesis in Psychology (Approved May 2012)**

For the honors thesis *proposal*, the psychology department chair (or designee) will focus on the following questions:

1. Is the literature review reasonably complete?
2. Does the literature review motivate the study’s research question and rationale?
3. Are the study’s research question and rationale clearly stated?
4. Is the method for answering the research question appropriate and feasible given the available resources (e.g., time, money, equipment, space)?

**Honors Thesis Types within Psychology**

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<tr>
<th>Minimum Number of Sources Reviewed</th>
<th>Empirical Research</th>
<th>Meta-analysis</th>
<th>Theory or Policy Analysis</th>
<th>Computational Modeling</th>
<th>Creative Work</th>
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**Ethical Considerations**

- Seek and obtain approval from IRB or IACUC if collecting data from human or non-human animal participants; include statement in participant section of paper
- Seek, include, and accurately represent research that might be in opposition to hypothesis
- Identify modeling software, modeling techniques, and sources of data
- Acknowledge sources of inspiration, when possible, in analysis and critique of work

**Process**

- Review literature
- Generate research question
- Develop method to answer research question
- Submit IRB or IACUC forms (if collecting data from human or non-human animals)
- Collect, analyze, and interpret data
- Report process and findings in paper
- Review literature
- Generate research question and hypothesis
- Develop method to test hypothesis
- Generate summary table of research findings
- Analyze and interpret data from summary table
- Report process and findings in paper
- Review literature
- Identify competing theories to examine or policy to analyze
- Conduct analysis, identifying where empirical research supports the theory or policy and where empirical research findings are counter to the theory or policy
- Generate specific avenues for future research designed to resolve contradictions
- Report process and findings in paper
- Review literature
- Generate research question and hypothesis
- Develop method to test hypothesis
- Seek data sources (as needed)
- Generate computational model and demonstrate model performance under varying conditions
- Report process and findings in paper
- Review literature
- Identify medium for artwork
- Create artwork
- Analyze and critique artwork in the context of the research literature
- Document analysis and critique in paper

**Product**

|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Expectations of Faculty Mentor:** While the frequency and duration of meetings will vary across the lifespan of the student’s thesis project, in general, the student and faculty mentor are expected to meet the equivalent of one hour per week during for the duration of the project (from conception to submission of final paper). Faculty mentors are expected to proofread students’ work and check for accuracy and completeness prior to submitting it to the department chair and honors director.

**Grading:** A psychology honors thesis is graded using the psychology department’s writing rubric available: [http://www.capital.edu/psychology-resources/](http://www.capital.edu/psychology-resources/)

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1. Simple literature reviews or annotated bibliographies are not adequate for an honors thesis in psychology.
2. Empirical studies include basic, translational, or applied research; program evaluation; evaluation of community engagement project; content analysis; secondary data analysis.
3. Creative work may include, but is not limited to, creative writing, poetry, and plays; music composition; visual art projects (e.g., printing, drawing, collage, sculpture); multimedia productions.
4. Sources must be from scholarly sources; popular press sources are not included in the citation counts.
5. Secondary data analysis projects involve analysis and interpretation of data previously collected.