BEMIDJI STATE UNIVERSITY
Honors Program

The Little Blue Book: Thesis Guidelines

Revised November 2016
"We must continue to develop our honors programs and independent study, for the task of becoming educated cannot be completed in college. And we must help our students to become self-motivated, self-directed, autonomous learners."

Dr. Harry Bangsberg

Revised November 2016
Bemidji State University
Bemidji, MN
# Table of Contents

Purpose .................................................................................................................................................. 4

Honors Thesis Requirements .................................................................................................................. 5

Types of Honors Theses .......................................................................................................................... 6

Choosing a Topic and Advisor ............................................................................................................... 7

Major Capstone & the Honors Thesis ...................................................................................................... 8

What is Required within my Thesis ....................................................................................................... 9

  Front Cover Template .......................................................................................................................... 10

  Cover/Signature Page Template .......................................................................................................... 11

  Table of Contents Template ............................................................................................................... 12

How to Write an Abstract (required in thesis) ...................................................................................... 13

How to Write an Annotated Bibliography (req. in thesis) ..................................................................... 20

Body of Thesis (formatting) .................................................................................................................. 23

Appendices ............................................................................................................................................. 24

Completing my Thesis ............................................................................................................................ 25

Assessment ............................................................................................................................................ 26

Thesis Checklist & Timeline ................................................................................................................... 27

Expectations of Thesis Advisors ........................................................................................................... 29

Thesis Proposal Cover Page, Course Substitution Form ...................................................................... 30

Rubrics ................................................................................................................................................... 32+
Purpose of the Thesis Project

PURPOSE:
The thesis is required for completion of the Honors Program.

The Honors thesis provides a valuable educational opportunity for an Honors Scholar to engage in an in-depth investigation of a topic while working with the guidance of a faculty member of the scholar’s choice. The thesis experience can be a source of intellectual stimulation for the student and the faculty member. One of the by-products of the thesis is that each Honors Scholar has the opportunity to be an "expert" on a topic of his/her choosing. Completion of the Honors thesis is a requirement of the Honors Program. Students are encouraged to begin work on the thesis in the junior year. DO NOT postpone your Honors thesis until the second semester of your senior year.

AIM:
The aim of this "little blue book" is to clarify the process and lead you to a successful completion of your Honors thesis. Please read and follow the guidelines. If you have comments or questions, contact the Honors Program office. These guidelines are written with the intent of clarifying what needs to be done, when and by whom. If the guidelines fall short of that mark for you, we need to know.
Honors Thesis Requirements

**HONORS THESIS REQUIREMENTS:**

The Honors Thesis requirement is satisfied with two Honors courses,

- HOPR 3899 Pre-Thesis Seminar (1 credit)
- HOPR 4899 Honors Thesis (2 credits)

**HOPR 3899: Pre-Thesis Seminar (1 credit)**

Pre-thesis Seminar is required in the junior year for Honors Scholars. This course lays a foundation for students to begin thinking about and planning their Honors thesis. Seminar activities include:

- Brainstorming topics or artistic approaches of interest for the thesis
- Exploring questions and possible solutions to a problem and/or exploring potential themes or approaches to creative work
- Generating and refining a thesis topic
- Using library databases and evaluating evidence and/or sources
- Developing an annotated bibliography
- Practice writing thesis statements
- Understanding Human Subjects Research
- Selecting a thesis advisor and arranging to work with the advisor
- Crafting a thesis proposal, including a research/development plan
- Engaging in a peer-review and thorough editing/revision process
- Submitting the thesis proposal to the Honors Council for approval and/or suggestions for revision

Successful completion of HOPR 3899 is a pre-requisite to register for HOPR 4899: Honors Thesis.

**HOPR 4899: Honors Thesis (2 credits)**

To be taken in the senior year on an arranged basis. To earn these credits, students will work directly with their thesis advisor and the Honors Director to research, draft, edit, revise, finish, and defend the final product—the thesis.

**Development of the Thesis**

You will work individually with your faculty advisor to detail your thesis, conduct your research and report your results and/or reflective analysis in written and oral form. The thesis should demonstrate your ability to analyze, integrate, and synthesize concepts as well as your ability to use techniques employed in your field of investigation.
Types of Honors Theses

Types of Honors Theses

There are four types of theses available for Honors Students (see rubrics for each thesis type to see how these theses will be assessed):

1. Traditional scholarly paper
2. Empirical study
3. Creative thesis
4. Application of scholarship in a project

The four types of theses differ in terms of the final product, but all four share certain characteristics that make the work worthy of the honors designation. All theses must contain:

1. An appropriate demonstration of relevant scholarship as an annotated bibliography or a literature review
2. A high quality presentation
3. Demonstrated high quality of writing
4. A final product appropriate to the type of thesis
5. A thesis/portfolio presentation and defense

The final product will follow these recommendations:

a. A scholarly paper presents analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of research from a particular field or a combination of fields
b. An empirical study presents and interprets data collected by the student
c. A creative thesis consists of the creative work itself, evidence of pre-planning and an artist’s statement (philosophy), and a reflective analysis following the close of the work
d. An applied thesis will consist of a conducted, research-based project, a process paper, and a reflection paper.

Style Guide:

In concert with your thesis advisor, choose and follow the style guide that is appropriate for your field. Make sure you follow the guide consistently and accurately throughout the thesis document.
Choosing a Topic & Thesis Advisor

CHOOSING A TOPIC
You are encouraged to investigate a topic and to look for an advisor prior to taking
HOPR 3899. The topic you choose is often but not always in your major discipline. In fact, you may certainly consider an interdisciplinary topic or a topic outside of your major. Take time to think about your passions, course topics that piqued your curiosity, topics you desired to investigate further in class but didn't have the time, topics that you want to explore in more depth to become a "local expert," topics you find especially relevant to your life or a component of your life, burning questions you want to address, if not answer. Make a list of topics that interest you and do some preliminary investigation of those topics online and in the library.

CHOOSING A THESIS ADVISOR
Once you discern some tentative topics, you should begin thinking about a faculty thesis advisor. The faculty thesis advisor may be any member of the faculty; they need not be your academic advisor nor do they need to be a member of the Honors Council. The topics you have listed as your interests can help narrow your list of faculty members. Choose a faculty member whose interests are close to yours and with whom you feel rapport. Keep in mind that the thesis is an opportunity for you, as an outstanding student, to perform serious research under the close supervision of a faculty member with similar interests.

Set up an appointment to talk to that faculty member about your thesis topic ideas. An open discussion can focus the thesis topic, redirect you if the topic is dead-ended, or inspire you to deeper pursuit of the topic. When you have decided with which faculty member you wish to work, be sure to formally ask the faculty member if they would be willing to be your thesis advisor (do not make assumptions here - the faculty member may be interested but unable to take on the additional work load).

You may also want to consult with the Director of the Honors Program to explore possible topics and an appropriate thesis advisor. Further, the Honors office has a copy of each completed thesis on file, arranged by academic area. Stop by the office to see and read examples of theses in your academic discipline.

Work with your new thesis advisor to ensure you are conducting adequate research, to hone your ideas, and to craft your thesis. [TIP: Do NOT defend your thesis until your advisor has given you the green light. Doing so can be detrimental to your defense experience.]
ACADEMIC AREA THESIS/CAPSTONE & HONORS THESIS

There are many academic areas on campus that require a senior thesis for the academic major. If your academic area requires a senior thesis and you would like to combine the Honors thesis requirement with the academic area senior thesis requirement, doing so is possible.

The first step to combine these requirements is to request from your major program permission to have your thesis count for both the major and for Honors. Then, you must notify the Honors Director of your intent to satisfy both requirements with one thesis.

It is important that you make this decision early in the process so that the Honors Program is a full participant in the development of the major thesis. Ideally, co-program theses should be collaborative between the major area and the Honors Program.

HOPR 3899 remains required. The thesis proposal must be submitted as described in HOPR 3899 and all requirements for the Honors thesis including your oral defense and any additional honors requirements must be met to the satisfaction of the Director and the Honors Council. Often, this means reformatting, or revising pieces of your major area thesis or capstone to fit Honors Program requirements. Think of it as 1.5 thesis projects vs. 2 entirely different thesis projects.

You may have your academic area advisor serve as your Honors thesis advisor, and when your proposal is accepted, you will register for the thesis under your academic area’s course number. You will NOT use the arranged course form as described above because you will be meeting both requirements with one course (the course in your academic area). You pay for and receive thesis credits in your academic area. Upon successful completion of the thesis, including the oral defense, the Honors Director will send a memo to the Records office, with copies to you, your advisor and your file, indicating that the academic area course satisfies the Honors’ thesis requirement. Note that you will have two free elective credits that may be taken in your major or in any area that you choose.
What is Required within my Thesis?

REQUIRED ELEMENTS:

1. Cover and Signature Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Abstract
4. Annotated Bibliography OR Literature Review
5. Primary Writing Component (differs depending on the field of study and type of thesis project)
   a. Research Paper: Clear introduction and arguable thesis statement, Supporting body paragraphs with evidence (may be divided into sections), Clear conclusion
   b. Empirical: Introduction, Methods, Results, Discussion, Limitations, Summary, Conclusion
   c. Applied Scholarship: Combination of A & B
   d. Creative: Artistic Statement (Philosophy), Plan to Execute, Evidence of Process, Evidence of Product (if written, then the product itself), Post-Reflection and Analysis
6. Appendices
   a. Include Thesis Proposal
   b. Including IRB information
   c. Copyright information if needed
7. Bibliography/Works Cited/References (depending on Style Manual)
What is Required within my Thesis?

Front Cover

BSU Honors Program

Student Name

Title of Thesis
May go on multiple lines

Major Area
Date of Final Submission (after any revisions)
What is Required within my Thesis?

Cover & Signature Page

Bemidji State University
Honors Program
Department of XXX

Title of Thesis
Author

_______________________________________  Date: _____________________
XXX, Degree
Title, Advisor

_______________________________________  Date: ______________________
Season Ellison, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies
Director of Honors and Liberal Education Programs

_______________________________________  Date: ______________________
XXX, Degree
Title, Reader
What is Required within my Thesis?

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments (if any, do not number)
Abstract .............................................................................................................. pg
Annotated Bibliography (OR) Literature Review .............................................. pg

[For a Research Paper]
Introduction ........................................................................................................ pg
Any Named Sections .............................................................................................. pg
Conclusion .............................................................................................................. pg

[For an Empirical Study]
Introduction ........................................................................................................ pg
Methods .................................................................................................................. pg
Results ..................................................................................................................... pg
Discussion ............................................................................................................. pg
Limitations ............................................................................................................ pg
Summary ................................................................................................................ pg
Conclusion .............................................................................................................. pg

[For Applied Scholarship]
Combination of 1 & 2 as necessary ................................................................. pg

[For a Creative Project]
Artistic Statement (philosophy) ........................................................................ pg
Plan to Execute ....................................................................................................... pg
Evidence of Process .............................................................................................. pg
Evidence of Product (or, if written, the product itself) ........................................ pg
  o IF separate written pieces, put each on its own content line w/ pg, #
Post Reflection & Analysis ................................................................................ pg

Include Thesis Proposal ...................................................................................... pg
Appendices, including IRB information or Copyright information if needed...... pg
Bibliography/Works Cited/References (depending on Style Manual) .............. pg
WHAT THIS SECTION IS ABOUT
This handout provides definitions and examples of the two main types of abstracts: descriptive and informative. It also provides guidelines for constructing an abstract and general tips for you to keep in mind when drafting. Finally, it includes a few examples of abstracts broken down into their component parts.

WHAT IS AN ABSTRACT?
An abstract is a self-contained, short, and powerful statement that describes a larger work. Components vary according to discipline. An abstract of a social science or scientific work may contain the scope, purpose, results, and contents of the work. An abstract of a humanities work may contain the thesis, background, and conclusion of the larger work. An abstract is not a review, nor does it evaluate the work being abstracted. While it contains key words found in the larger work, the abstract is an original document rather than an excerpted passage.

WHY WRITE AN ABSTRACT?
You may write an abstract for various reasons. The two most important are selection and indexing. Abstracts allow readers who may be interested in a longer work to quickly decide whether it is worth their time to read it. Also, many online databases use abstracts to index larger works. Therefore, abstracts should contain keywords and phrases that allow for easy searching.

Selection
Say you are beginning a research project on how Brazilian newspapers helped Brazil’s ultra-liberal president Luiz Ignácio da Silva wrest power from the traditional, conservative power base. A good first place to start your research is to search Dissertation Abstracts International for all dissertations that deal with the interaction between newspapers and politics. “Newspapers and politics” returned 569 hits. A more selective search of “newspapers and Brazil” returned 22 hits. That is still a fair number of dissertations. Titles can sometimes help winnow the field, but many titles are not very descriptive. For example, one dissertation is titled “Rhetoric and Riot in Rio de
Janeiro.” It is unclear from the title what this dissertation has to do with newspapers in Brazil. One option would be to download or order the entire dissertation on the chance that it might speak specifically to the topic. A better option is to read the abstract. In this case, the abstract reveals the main focus of the dissertation:

This dissertation examines the role of newspaper editors in the political turmoil and strife that characterized late First Empire Rio de Janeiro (1827-1831). Newspaper editors and their journals helped change the political culture of late First Empire Rio de Janeiro by involving the people in the discussion of state. This change in political culture is apparent in Emperor Pedro I’s gradual loss of control over the mechanisms of power. As the newspapers became more numerous and powerful, the Emperor lost his legitimacy in the eyes of the people. To explore the role of the newspapers in the political events of the late First Empire, this dissertation analyzes all available newspapers published in Rio de Janeiro from 1827 to 1831. Newspapers and their editors were leading forces in the effort to remove power from the hands of the ruling elite and place it under the control of the people. In the process, newspapers helped change how politics operated in the constitutional monarchy of Brazil.

From this abstract you now know that although the dissertation has nothing to do with modern Brazilian politics, it does cover the role of newspapers in changing traditional mechanisms of power. After reading the abstract, you can make an informed judgment about whether the dissertation would be worthwhile to read.

Indexing
Besides selection, the other main purpose of the abstract is for indexing. Most article databases in the online catalog of the library enable you to search abstracts. This allows for quick retrieval by users and limits the extraneous items recalled by a “full-text” search. However, for an abstract to be useful in an online retrieval system, it must incorporate the key terms that a potential researcher would use to search. For example, if you search Dissertation Abstracts International using the keywords “France” “revolution” and “politics,” the search engine would search through all the abstracts in the database that included those three words. Without an abstract, the search engine would be forced to search titles, which, as we have seen, may not be fruitful, or else search the full text. It’s likely that a lot more than 60 dissertations have been written with those three words somewhere in the body of the entire work. By incorporating keywords into the abstract, the author emphasizes the central topics of the work and gives prospective readers enough information to make an informed judgment about the applicability of the work.
When do people write abstracts?
When submitting articles to journals (especially online journals); when applying for research grants; when writing a book proposal; when completing a thesis; when writing a conference paper; when writing a proposal for a book chapter; as required by professors in classes.

TYPES OF ABSTRACTS
There are two types of abstracts: **descriptive** and **informative**. They have different aims, so as a consequence they have different components and styles. There is also a third type called **critical**, but it is rarely used. If you are unsure which type of abstract you should write, speak with your thesis advisor or the Honors Director.

**Descriptive abstracts**
A descriptive abstract indicates the type of information found in the work. It makes no judgments about the work, nor does it provide results or conclusions of the research. It does incorporate key words found in the text and may include the purpose, methods, and scope of the research. Essentially, the descriptive abstract describes the work being abstracted. Some people consider it an outline of the work, rather than a summary. Descriptive abstracts are usually very short—100 words or less.

**Informative abstract**
The majority of abstracts are informative. While they still do not critique or evaluate a work, they do more than describe it. A good informative abstract acts as a surrogate for the work itself. That is, the writer presents and explains all the main arguments and the important results and evidence in the complete article/paper/book. An informative abstract includes the information that can be found in a descriptive abstract (purpose, methods, scope) but also includes the results and conclusions of the research and the recommendations of the author. The length varies according to discipline, but an informative abstract is rarely more than 10% of the length of the entire work. In the case of a longer work, it may be much less.

HOW DO I WRITE AN ABSTRACT?
The format of your abstract will depend on the work being abstracted. An abstract of a scientific research paper will contain elements not found in an abstract of a literature article, or a creative project. However, all abstracts share several mandatory components, and there are also some optional parts that you can decide to include or not. When preparing to draft your abstract, keep the following **key process elements** in mind:
• **Reason for writing:**
  What is the importance of the research? Why would a reader be interested in the larger work?

• **Problem:**
  What problem does this work attempt to solve? What is the scope of the project? What is the main argument/thesis/claim?

• **Methodology:**
  An abstract of a scientific work may include specific models or approaches used in the larger study. Other abstracts may describe the types of evidence used in the research.

• **Results:**
  Again, an abstract of a scientific work may include specific data that indicates the results of the project. Other abstracts may discuss the findings in a more general way.

• **Implications:**
  What changes should be implemented as a result of the findings of the work? How does this work add to the body of knowledge on the topic?

**All abstracts include:**
The most important information first. The same type and style of language found in the main thesis. Key words and phrases that quickly identify the content and focus of the work. Clear, concise, and powerful language.

**Abstracts may include:**
These thesis of the work, usually in the first sentence. Background information that places the work in the larger body of literature. The same chronological (or thematic, or etc…) structure as the original work.

**EXAMPLE # 1: HUMANITIES ABSTRACT**

>This dissertation examines the impacts of social movements through a multi-layered study of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement from its peak in the early 1960s through the early 1980s. By examining this historically important case, I clarify the
process by which movements transform social structures and the constraints movements face when they try to do so. The time period studied includes the expansion of voting rights and gains in black political power, the desegregation of public schools and the emergence of white-flight academies, and the rise and fall of federal anti-poverty programs. I use two major research strategies: (1) a quantitative analysis of county-level data and (2) three case studies. Data have been collected from archives, interviews, newspapers, and published reports. This dissertation challenges the argument that movements are inconsequential. Some view federal agencies, courts, political parties, or economic elites as the agents driving institutional change, but typically these groups acted in response to the leverage brought to bear by the civil rights movement. The Mississippi movement attempted to forge independent structures for sustaining challenges to local inequities and injustices. By propelling change in an array of local institutions, movement infrastructures had an enduring legacy in Mississippi.

ANALYSIS OF EXAMPLE #1

Now let’s break down this abstract into its component parts to see how the author has distilled his entire dissertation into a ~200-word abstract.

**What the dissertation does**

This dissertation examines the impacts of social movements through a multi-layered study of the Mississippi Civil Rights Movement from its peak in the early 1960s through the early 1980s. By examining this historically important case, I clarify the process by which movements transform social structures and the constraints movements face when they try to do so.

**How the dissertation does it**

The time period studied in this dissertation includes the expansion of voting rights and gains in black political power, the desegregation of public schools and the emergence of white-flight academies, and the rise and fall of federal anti-poverty programs. I use two major research strategies: (1) a quantitative analysis of county-level data and (2) three case studies.

**What materials are used**

Data have been collected from archives, interviews, newspapers, and published reports.
Conclusion
This dissertation challenges the argument that movements are inconsequential. Some view federal agencies, courts, political parties, or economic elites as the agents driving institutional change, but typically these groups acted in response to movement demands and the leverage brought to bear by the civil rights movement. The Mississippi movement attempted to forge independent structures for sustaining challenges to local inequities and injustices. By propelling change in an array of local institutions, movement infrastructures had an enduring legacy in Mississippi.

EXAMPLE # 2: SCIENTIFIC ABSTRACT

The problem of detecting gravitational radiation is receiving considerable attention with the construction of new detectors in the United States, Europe, and Japan. The theoretical modeling of the wave forms that would be produced in particular systems will expedite the search for and analysis of detected signals. The characteristic formulation of GR is implemented to obtain an algorithm capable of evolving black holes in 3D asymptotically flat spacetimes. Using compactification techniques, future null infinity is included in the evolved region, which enables the unambiguous calculation of the radiation produced by some compact source. A module to calculate the waveforms is constructed and included in the evolution algorithm. This code is shown to be second-order convergent and to handle highly non-linear spacetimes. In particular, we have shown that the code can handle spacetimes whose radiation is equivalent to a galaxy converting its whole mass into gravitational radiation in one second. We further use the characteristic formulation to treat the region close to the singularity in black hole spacetimes. The code carefully excises a region surrounding the singularity and accurately evolves generic black hole spacetimes with apparently unlimited stability.

ANALYSIS OF EXAMPLE #2
This science abstract covers much of the same ground as the humanities one, but it asks slightly different questions.
Why do this study
The problem of detecting gravitational radiation is receiving considerable attention with the construction of new detectors in the United States, Europe, and Japan. The theoretical modeling of the wave forms that would be produced in particular systems will expedite the search and analysis of the detected signals.

What the study does
The characteristic formulation of GR is implemented to obtain an algorithm capable of evolving black holes in 3D asymptotically flat spacetimes. Using compactification techniques, future null infinity is included in the evolved region, which enables the unambiguous calculation of the radiation produced by some compact source. A module to calculate the waveforms is constructed and included in the evolution algorithm.

Results
This code is shown to be second-order convergent and to handle highly non-linear spacetimes. In particular, we have shown that the code can handle spacetimes whose radiation is equivalent to a galaxy converting its whole mass into gravitational radiation in one second. We further use the characteristic formulation to treat the region close to the singularity in black hole spacetimes. The code carefully excises a region surrounding the singularity and accurately evolves generic black hole spacetimes with apparently unlimited stability.

ATTRIBUTION:
This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 2.5 License. You may reproduce it for non-commercial use if you use the entire handout and attribute the source: The Writing Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
What is Required within my Thesis?

Creating a Strong and Useful Annotated Bibliography

COMPLETE THIS EXERCISE BEFORE ANNOTATING A SOURCE:

1. Identify the THESIS.
2. Identify the INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION.
3. Identify TOPIC SENTENCES.
4. Create a visual map OR outline (whichever works for you) that incorporates all of these above components (1-3) alongside a brief snapshot of supporting evidence for each component.
5. Identify to the side, any words you looked up and their definitions.
6. What is the purpose of the article? DID THE AUTHOR SUCCEED IN THE PURPOSE?
7. Describe the tone of the article (the author’s voice). How does the tone/voice help or hinder the author in achieving his or her purpose?
8. To which rhetorical approach does the author appeal (ethos, logos, or pathos)? And what is the significance of this appeal?
9. What assumptions does the author make and how do those assumptions affect your understanding of his/her purpose?
10. What questions remain after your final read?

STEPS TO CREATE A STRONG ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY:

1. Conduct some casual, on-line research to determine what kinds of secondary sources are available. Do you find your topic located in a number of scholarly books and journals? Do you find that your topic is also discussed in complete (full-text) on-line web journals? Do you find that your topic is discussed as a chapter in a collection of essays? Make note of the journal articles, books, and chapters in books that pertain to your topic.

2. Conduct formal research on your topic. Use the Library’s home page to get started. Click on the “research resources” link on their home page in order to start finding books, complete journals, chapters in books, articles in journals, and other media (such as DVDs or CDs) related to your topic. The EBSCOhost Database Searches and many others will be appropriate for your topics. Start sending bibliographic information to yourself through these resource links, writing down call numbers of books and journals, or printing/saving full-text articles from refereed journals.

3. Select 8-10 secondary sources from your list above and read them carefully. Go through the above exercise and begin making notes.
4. Write an annotation for this bibliographic source. Annotations include
   a. Work’s topic & thesis
   b. A one-sentence summary of the work’s essential ideas
   c. Your evaluation of the source. Use the exercise above to guide your evaluation.
   d. Your summation of HOW the work is useful (or not) as support for your research paper. Do NOT simply state it is or is not useful. State HOW clearly and precisely. If you are unsure, say that and assess why.

5. Consult the Purdue OWL Online MLA style guide to familiarize yourself with the general guidelines for a “Works Cited” page as well as specific guidelines for citing a book with a single author, a book with an editor, a chapter in a book, a chapter in an edition, a newspaper article or magazine article, etc. Use MLA format. If in doubt, see BSU’s Writing Center or make an appointment with me for help. [If your field uses a different style-guide, please follow the same practices of that style guide.]

6. Write the specific citation that accompanies your annotation.

7. Miscellaneous guidelines: Good sources to cite include journal articles, magazine articles (of quality research), chapters from books, newspaper articles (again, of quality research), interviews, video/DVD sources, online full-text web sources from a reputable website, interviews, scientific studies, and so forth.

8. PARTICULARS:
   a. 200-250 words PER annotation
   b. 12-15 annotations (You will need 15+ for your thesis.)
   c. Double-spaced
   d. Alphabetize

SIDENOTE! These resources will become, for the most part, the resources for your thesis. You will cite from these sources as you complete the thesis. The stronger the quality of your annotations, the more likely you are to ease into your thesis argument.

STRONG SAMPLE ENTRIES FOR ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY [using correct MLA formatting, except it should be double-spaced.]

   In The American West, David Hamilton Murdoch illustrates the many ways in which the popular conception of the American West (Wild West) is a constructed myth. To begin his book, he sets forth a series of questions, which he then attempts to answer:
Where did the myth come from? If myth is a response to disturbing tensions in a society, why did the United States pick on the West as a source? In all the long process of conquering the wilderness, why is the cattleman’s west so central and why is the cowboy, of all types, the hero? And what had the inhabitants of the West of reality to say about the West of myth? (xi)

It is this final question that intrigues me as I prepare to study horsewomen. Although I am not yet sure that I can make the following distinction, perhaps the question of how to gauge the horsewomen’s (reality?) reaction to the cowgirl (myth?) will figure in my research. The remainder of Murdoch’s book traces the development of the Western myth through politics, film, and popular literature. In his conclusion, the author worries that Americans tend to believe in the historical “truth” of the American western mythology and he argues that “myth cannot indefinitely act as a substitute for a sense of history” (120). He further questions “What happens, as Gary Wills has asked, ‘if, when we look into our historical rearview mirror, all we can see is a movie?’” (120). These questions are relevant to my study because contemporary conceptions of “cowgirl” are often based on mythological and cinematic images as opposed to the actual working woman of the American west. [276 words]


While it is unlikely that Barbara Welter’s text will directly contribute to my essay, I believe it is important for me to be familiar with “The Cult of True Womanhood” because it is a foundational text in the study of femininity. In her essay, Welter reads across the various women’s magazines that were popular in the nineteenth century in order to critique the contemporary perceptions of femininity, or what she terms the “attributes of True Womanhood” (152). Four attributes come to the fore in her study: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. She spends the remainder of the essay exploring how women’s magazines perpetuate and support these attributes. Late in the essay, Welter proposes that the “true woman” developed into the “new woman” but not before arguing that women who fell outside the realm of “true woman” were severely chastised: “Mary Wollstonecraft, Frances Wright and Harriet Martineau were condemned in the strongest possible language” (173). Cowgirl contemporaries of these women would have been similarly condemned. Welters essay focuses primarily on a white, middle-class ideal and while many cowgirls certainly would have solidly fit within this ideal, other histories of early cowgirls place their subjects firmly within a lower class that the women Welter focuses on in her study. [207 words]
What is Required within my Thesis?

Introduction

In this section, you’ll write the body of your thesis, which will vary depending on the type of thesis you construct. You should double space the body of the thesis and the heading, here, reflects how your thesis should be formatted overall. Ensure that each paragraph has at least one topic sentence, support, analysis of that support (in your own words), and a summative sentence at the end of the paragraph that can help you lead to the next paragraph.

Thesis Body

If you’re using subdivisions within your thesis, you will see how I’ve properly formatted those subdivisions here. Please follow these formatting guidelines to ensure that Honors theses have continuity. Continue with body paragraphs until it’s time to create the next section. All paragraphs should have at least four sentences—one topic sentence, one to two of evidence, analysis of evidence, and a conclusory/transitional sentence.

Conclusion

Insert conclusion here. Make sure that you include the significance of your study and/or creative work. Address the “so what,” which means, why should your reader care about what you’ve written?
What is Required within my Thesis?

Appendices & Works Cited/References/Bibliography

APPENDICES

Insert appendices as needed. **Appendices are always lettered and each goes on a separate page.**

A. Thesis Proposal (include proposal)
B. IRB Application and Approval (include full package and approval)
C. Copyright information (if you used copyrighted info that needs special documentation)
D. Tables or charts
E. Images
F. Any other information as required at the end within the appendix

WORKS CITED (REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY)
The title of this section varies depending on the field and style guide you’re using. Each citation should be listed in alphabetical order and should be double-spaced. You should otherwise follow the instructions of the style-guide. You need 15+ resources for your final thesis.

EXAMPLE OF A PROPER MLA WORKS CITED PAGE:


Completing my Thesis
Completion, Oral Committee, and Defense

Oral Committee:
As you near completion of your thesis, you will need to establish your oral thesis committee. In addition to your thesis advisor and the Honors Director, you will need to have at least one additional reader from the BSU faculty (of your choice) on your oral committee.

Planning for the Oral Defense:
The semester before your Oral Defense, you need to schedule your formal Thesis Defense between your Thesis Advisor, the Honors Director, and your Additional Reader for the following semester. Ideally you will schedule your defense at least three weeks before you plan to graduate so that you have time to revise should the committee require revisions of you in order to pass the thesis requirement. YOU are responsible for ensuring the defense is properly scheduled at a common time for all three committee members and yourself. The Honors office is typically used as the site for the defense but the nature of the thesis may require another site such as a lab or a classroom.

You should have a hard copy of your thesis into the hands of your committee members at least two weeks before the scheduled defense, which means that you must have a final draft of your thesis five weeks before graduation at the latest.

Oral Defense:
The "oral defense" is an opportunity for you to present and comment on your thesis. The faculty will have the opportunity to ask questions. Each committee member will have read your thesis so a detailed presentation is not required, but an overview of your results is appreciated. The thesis defense should not be an obstacle. The thesis is reviewed by the thesis advisor as well as the faculty on the committee prior to the defense. Serious concerns about the thesis should be raised in the two weeks prior to the defense. Concerns about the thesis should be brought to the attention of the scholar, the thesis advisor and the Director. The thesis defense allows you and faculty who have read your work, are interested in your topic, and want to hear what you have to say about it, the opportunity to interact and discuss ideas.

A final component of the thesis defense is for you to present to the Committee members your e-folio, which you have maintained since your first year in honors [for incoming students, as of 2016]. In your e-folio presentation, you should outline how your learning has grown since your start in the Honors Program. Give specific examples and try to apply the examples to the Honors mission and Learning Outcomes.
Thesis Assessment

Assessing your thesis.

Thesis Grade
It is anticipated that the thesis will take more than one semester to complete. The appropriate grade of a thesis that has not been completed is "IP" (in progress). In progress grades can be carried as long as you are registered for classes and for one year beyond the term of last registration. If the thesis is not complete by that time, the "IP" grade will change to an "F."

The decision as to an appropriate final letter grade is left to the thesis advisor in concert with the Director of Honors. Grading of the thesis should be based on the appropriate rubric (found at the end of this document). The grade is submitted after the successful completion of the oral defense, submission of any required revisions, and with the approval of the thesis committee.

Thesis Copy to the Honors Office
A good, final copy of your thesis is required for the Honors Program files. The copy is due in the office upon completion of the oral defense and must be received before your grade is officially entered.

Presentation at Student Academic and Creative Achievement Conference
Each Honors Scholar is encouraged to present their thesis topics at the annual spring semester Student Academic and Creative Achievement Conference. The conference is typically held on a Wednesday in April. This on-campus conference affords Honors Scholars a valuable experience in presenting their thesis results in either a presentation or poster format. The thesis does not have to be completed prior to the conference. This opportunity is an excellent one for each scholar to communicate learning experiences to the University community.

Congratulations
You have met the challenge and have completed your Honors thesis. Bask in the glow of your accomplishment. You may want to present your work at a conference in your academic area, reference your work when you apply for graduate school, and/or include your thesis in your vita when you apply for a position.
THESIS CHECKLIST
1. Submit your thesis proposal to the Honors Office for approval by the Honors Council.

2. Begin work on your thesis with your advisor’s guidance as soon as you submit your proposal. If your proposal needs revision, you will be able to adjust your work accordingly.

3. Upon thesis proposal approval by the Honors Council, complete an Arranged Course form for HOPR 4899 Honors Thesis (2 credits).

4. Return the Arranged Course form to the Honors Office.

5. Develop your thesis with the guidance of your advisor.

6. Rewrite the thesis until your advisor, the Honors Director, and you deem necessary to create the strongest work possible, consider your thesis to be in its final stages.

7. Choose at least one additional faculty member be a member of your oral committee. Contact the additional faculty member to ensure that faculty member is available to read for your committee.

8. You are responsible to determine a time that is agreeable to all members of the committee. Plan 90 minutes for the defense [including thesis presentation, e-folio presentation, a discussion about your ideas, and committee deliberation].

9. Make copies and distribute a copy of your thesis to each member of your oral committee (2 weeks—minimum--before the scheduled date of your defense).

10. We will use the Honors Office (Hagg-Sauer 357) for your oral, unless you choose another venue.

11. You are asked to give a presentation at the start of the oral about your thesis, the process of creating the thesis, and also your growth through the e-folio. The committee has read the thesis and viewed your e-folio so you may want to address the questions of how you came to the thesis topic, where you might have had difficulties, what surprised you and/or what extensions you could make, what and how you have learned over time.
12. The committee will then deal with questions, comments and conversation specific to your thesis and/or e-folio.

13. Submit TWO good final copies of your thesis to the Honors Office in the proper format. One should be a hard-copy and the other should be digital, sent to Dr. Ellison at sellison@bemidjistate.edu

14. Your grade is submitted to the Records Office.

15. Accept congratulations and acknowledge your accomplishments at the completion of your thesis.

TIMELINE FOR THESIS & PRESENTATION

**Junior Year**
- Register for HOPR 3899 Pre-Thesis Seminar (Fall, 1 credit)
- Discuss your potential thesis with a thesis advisor and obtain agreement from the advisor to work with you through the completion of the thesis
- Create and submit an acceptable Thesis Proposal to be approved by the Honors Council

**Senior Year**
- Register for HOPR 4899 Honors Thesis (Fall, 2 credits)
- Complete the thesis to the satisfaction of your thesis advisor, the Honors Director, and yourself. This will likely take multiple re-writes.
- Schedule and present an Honors Thesis oral and e-folio defense.
1. Advisors are expected to assist the student in the choice of a suitable topic and determining the type of thesis. The student should have topic ideas to discuss and should be encouraged to do preliminary investigation of viable topics. The Advisor should begin working with the student during the semester the student takes the Pre-thesis seminar (usually during the Fall semester of the student’s junior year).

2. Advisors are expected to assist each student to develop the thesis and to use techniques customarily employed in their academic field(s) of investigation.

3. Advisors are expected to carefully read drafts submitted to them and to provide appropriate feedback to the student for the purpose of improving upon the result, saving low order concerns for later drafts (editing and sentence structure) and focusing on high order concerns (ideas, organization, etc…) in earlier drafts.

4. Advisors are expected to make recommendations to the student regarding the readiness of the thesis for presentation to the Honors committee. A student should not schedule an oral defense until the advisor and the student agree that the thesis is complete and ready to be presented. The Committee as a whole, with the guidance of the Thesis Advisor, has final authority for approval of the thesis. Approval and Grade for the thesis is based on the Thesis Grading Rubric appropriate to the type of thesis.
HONORS THESIS PROPOSAL COVER PAGE

Honors Scholar: ________________________________

E-mail address: ________________________________

Thesis Title: __________________________________

____________________________________________

Date Submitted: ________________________________

Notify by: ________________ Actual Date Notified: ________________

Please attach your Honors Thesis Proposal to this Cover Page.

Thesis Advisor: ________________________________

Thesis Advisor E-mail: __________________________

Thesis Advisor: Please write a brief statement indicating your support of this thesis proposal or any concerns you may have about it.

Thesis Advisor Signature: ________________________ Date: __________________________
Honors Thesis
Arranged Course Form

*Obtain the signature of the Thesis Advisor and Honors Director in that order.

---

**Part I** (to be completed by the student)

Name: ___________________________ SSN or BSU ID: __________________

Last: __________________  First: ______________  Mi: __________________

Date: ________________  E-mail: ________________________________

(Month/Day/Year)

---

**Part II** (to be completed by instructor)

Course Subject: HOPR  Course Number: 4899 – 2 credits  Course Title: Honors Thesis

Year: _________  Term: ____ (F = Fall, S = Spring, I = Summer)

Working Title: ________________________________

Instructor Name: __________________________  Instructor ID: ____________

---

**Part III** (to be signed by designated persons)

Once required signatures are obtained, this form can be submitted to the Records Office, Deputy Hall 101, #12.

Thesis Advisor: ____________________________  Date: ______________

Honors Director: ____________________________  Date: ______________

---

*For Office Use Only*  Course ID: ____________  Date Processed: ____________
| Perspective | Question | Clarification | are pre-conceived notions and positions that are formed by prior experience or education and that may influence a person's interpretation of events.

- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.

Scholarly Theses/Reading Paper (Critical Thinking)

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.

- Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the intellectual virtues of openness, curiosity, and skepticism.
- Critical thinking involves questioning assumptions and recognizing biases.
- Critical thinking requires the ability to think critically about one's own beliefs and values.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scenario</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>and Implementations</td>
<td>and Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementations</td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementations</td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementations</td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementations</td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implications</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
<td>Interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementations</td>
<td>Implementations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with</td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
<td>approved and sponsored interactions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in general</td>
<td>in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interactions</td>
<td>interactions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Design Process:**
- Requirement analysis
- Specification, implementation, and verification

**Academic Model:**
- Theoretical knowledge

**Evaluation:**
- Teamwork and problem-solving
- Communication and collaboration

**Conclusion:**
- An empirical study with process and protocol data collected by the student.

A more detailed understanding of the data has resulted in informed conclusions within the analysis. The process of breaking complex topics into smaller parts to

**Empirical Theories Grading Rubric ( Inquiry and Analysis **
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Comprehending scientific literature</th>
<th>Comprehending technical reports</th>
<th>Comprehending complex technical information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Example sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unacceptable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applied Theoretical Grounded Practice (Integrated Learning)**

In an applied context, this will consist of a conducted, research-based project and a reflection paper.

**Reflection and Self-Assessment:**
- Evaluation of reflective work
- Challenges encountered may be identified and the issues resolved in real time
- Project experience is a learning experience
- Project outcomes are a learning experience
- Reflection is a learning experience
- Self-assessment is a learning experience
- Assessment and self-assessment

**Interactions:**
- Interaction to new situations
- Interaction to new methodologies
- Interactions to new situations
- Interactions to new methodologies
- Interactions to new situations
- Interactions to new methodologies

**Intermediates:**
- Intermediates to new situations
- Intermediates to new methodologies
- Intermediates to new situations
- Intermediates to new methodologies
- Intermediates to new situations
- Intermediates to new methodologies

**Connections to Prerequisites:**
- Connections to prerequisites
- Connections to prerequisites
- Connections to prerequisites
- Connections to prerequisites
- Connections to prerequisites
- Connections to prerequisites

**Connections to Knowledge:**
- Connections to knowledge
- Connections to knowledge
- Connections to knowledge
- Connections to knowledge
- Connections to knowledge
- Connections to knowledge

**Core Connections:**
- Core connections
- Core connections
- Core connections
- Core connections
- Core connections
- Core connections
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>The creative process</th>
<th>Solution</th>
<th>Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of ideas</td>
<td>Creative brainstorming, mind mapping, and lateral thinking</td>
<td>Generate innovative ideas, improve problem-solving skills, and foster creativity</td>
<td>Increased productivity and innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in execution</td>
<td>Prototyping, user testing, and user feedback</td>
<td>Validate ideas, improve product quality, and increase customer satisfaction</td>
<td>Higher success rates and customer loyalty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback loop</td>
<td>Continuous improvement and iteration</td>
<td>Enhance product features, improve customer experience, and increase market competitiveness</td>
<td>Long-term success and market dominance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The creative process will consist of a creative work as well as an artistic statement.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Outstanding</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>Few errors, language in the质感 has</td>
<td>Sometimes includes meaning that is not generally conveyed</td>
<td>Rarely usable, language that is often difficult to comprehend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources and Evidence</td>
<td>Field research and supporting evidence</td>
<td>Relevant sources are cited</td>
<td>Some relevant sources are cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content Appropriateness</td>
<td>Purpose and context clearly stated</td>
<td>Purpose is clear but context is not well defined</td>
<td>Purpose is not clear or context is unclear</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Writing Graduation Rubric**

*Honors Thesis*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameter</th>
<th>Acceptable</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Accuracy</td>
<td>Content is accurate and appropriate.</td>
<td>Content is inaccurate or irrelevant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Introduction and conclusion are clear and cohesive.</td>
<td>Introduction and conclusion are unclear or disconnected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audience Consideration</td>
<td>Appropriate to the audience.</td>
<td>Appropriate to the audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Aids</td>
<td>Appropriate and supportive of the presentation.</td>
<td>Appropriate and supportive of the presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery</td>
<td>Speaker appears confident and engaging.</td>
<td>Speaker appears distracted and unengaging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>Presentation is clear and effective.</td>
<td>Presentation is confusing and ineffective.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentation Organization:
- Introduction
- Main Body
- Conclusion

Professionalism:
- Appropriate attire
- Good eye contact
- Clear and articulate speech
- Good posture