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I. Introduction

Starting in 2009, the Geography Department implemented a new process for achieving honors, which is described in this Student Guide. The privilege of pursuing honors is granted to the Department’s best students. The procedures and processes outlined here are designed to identify honors candidates at the very beginning of the senior year, quickly match students with the appropriate faculty supervisor, and encourage steady progress towards a strong project by the end of the spring semester. The Department faculty are excited to work closely with students and will do all they can to ensure honors candidates have a positive and fulfilling senior year experience. Achieving honors isn’t easy, however. The best projects, and indeed the most rewarding research experiences, result from at least two semesters of work. Successful development and completion of an honors thesis requires students to be self-motivated, effective at time-management, and willing to stretch intellectually. Each year some of the Department’s top students demonstrate their capacity to achieve the high standards that honors work entails.

II. Eligibility and overview of the process

Normally, in the summer after the junior year, students with a grade point average of 3.5 or higher in Geography and an overall grade point average of 3.3 or higher are contacted by the Geography Department. These students receive a description of the topics that Geography faculty members are willing to supervise. Subsequently, students should contact the appropriate faculty member to discuss the kind of honors project that interests them. By the end of the first week of classes in the fall semester students should submit to the Department Chair a project description. These descriptions are reviewed by the Geography faculty and a select number of students are awarded the opportunity to pursue honors. Please note that becoming eligible for honors work via GPA does not automatically mean you will be allowed to pursue honors: only projects with strong potential will be accepted.

In the fall semester each honors student works with her or his supervisor as part of a half-credit independent study (GEOG 491), which is offered on an S/U basis. Note that this course (as is the case with all courses offered as S/U) counts towards your graduation credit but not for your concentration credit. At the end of the fall semester students must have achieved two things to be eligible to continue to pursue honors in the spring: maintained a grade point average
of 3.5 or higher in Geography and an overall grade point average of at least 3.3; and made adequate progress in their research project as assessed by the faculty supervisor (an “S” does not automatically mean adequate progress has been made). If these two elements have been achieved students continue the honors project in the spring as part of Geog 499, a full-credit course that counts towards the major and for which students will receive a letter grade (at the discretion of the faculty supervisor GEOG 491 students who aren’t successful in meeting the fall requirements may be allowed to continue the project as an independent study in the spring).

At the end of the spring semester the work of students enrolled in Geog 499 is evaluated for honors in two ways: first, the supervisor and a second reader (normally another Geography professor) assess the quality of the written thesis; and, second, the geography faculty observe and evaluate the quality of a public 20-minute oral presentation. Students who do not achieve honors-level work will still receive graduation credit for as long as they receive a passing grade.

III. Research Topics

This year the following faculty are available as honors supervisors. Here is the list of topics they are willing to supervise:

Jessica Graybill studies nature-society relationships and urban issues and will accept proposals for honors research considering these topics, especially research related to human dimensions of resource use, urban and/or environmental transformation, and urban political ecology.

Maureen Hays-Mitchell studies development issues in the context of the Global South, with particular emphasis on Latin America. She is accepting proposals on development-related issues, particularly those relating to conflict and development, post-conflict reconciliation/reconstruction, human rights, politics of memory, and gender and development.

Peter Klepeis studies nature-society relationships and is accepting proposals for honors research that explore environmental history, land-use change, the human dimensions of invasive species, or the environmental implications of changes in rural land ownership.

Ellen Percy Kraly studies population and medical geography and is accepting proposals for honors research that consider international migration and displaced populations, population and environment interactions or community health processes and analysis.
William Meyer studies nature-society relations, urban geography, and historical geography, with a regional focus on North American (particularly New York State and New England).

Daisaku Yamamoto studies economic geography and regional development, and is accepting proposals for honors research that consider spatial economic inequality, sustainable rural development, or globalization and local industries.

Adam Burnett is in Australia in the fall, Peter Scull is on sabbatical leave in the fall semester, and Dan Monk is on sabbatical leave all year: these faculty are, therefore, unavailable to supervise honors theses. After two years at Colgate as a visiting assistant professor Jake Brenner has been hired at Ithaca College in a tenure stream appointment. Ethan Frost will be joining us next year as a visiting assistant professor with expertise in physical geography.

IV. Research Project Description

In advance of the fall semester the eligible student is advised to contact a Geography professor with whom she or he would like to work and to receive advice on crafting a project description. In no more than 700 words the description identifies the phenomenon to be investigated and its significance. Students are encouraged to explain their entry into the topic of study (e.g., research paper from a course at Colgate, internship or other off-campus experience, summer research, etc.). The description is due to the Department Chair by September 3, the end of the first week of classes.

Note that honors candidates are required to select a research approach that reflects appropriate training (as demonstrated via coursework, work experience, or summer research experience). The 700 word project description should explain how this training has or will be obtained.

V. GEOG 491: Research in Geography (1/2 credit course on S/U basis in fall — does not count for concentration credit)

Once the Department makes its decisions about whom to award the opportunity to pursue honors, the students register for GEOG 491. The research supervisor meets with the student right away and creates a research plan for the semester. The expectation is that the student and faculty supervisor meet at least once a week throughout the semester. In addition, a formal research proposal and progress report are required of all GEOG 491 students.
Research Proposal and Progress Report (due before Thanksgiving)

The formal proposal (not including figures, tables, and bibliography) should be a maximum of five double-spaced pages. Please keep the following guidelines in mind:

- Clearly identify the question(s) to be addressed by the research project, and describe its (their) significance.
- Describe the approach and methods used in conducting the research.
- Reference and incorporate germane literature. Use the Geography Style Guide formatting specifications.

In addition, present a progress report in no more than two-double-spaced pages. The report should provide a succinct statement of work accomplished to date, including any new literature discovered, methodological obstacles encountered, foreseeable challenges and/or pitfalls, and a tentative timeline for completion.

VI. GEOG 499: Honor Studies in Geography (full credit course that receives a letter grade — counts for concentration credit)

Students who make adequate progress towards their research project in the fall are allowed to continue their work towards honors in the spring as part of GEOG 499. In addition to working with the same faculty supervisor from the fall all of the students enrolled in GEOG 499 may meet regularly with a designated geography professor to discuss general aspects of the honors experience (e.g., the writing process, giving a good oral presentation).

The Written Thesis

The best honors theses are written iteratively over the course of the senior year. Please refer to the “Geography Honors Thesis Style Guide” below for important guidelines. Each faculty supervisor will direct the writing process; however, four elements are required of all GEOG 499 students:

- Progress report and timeline (due January 26, 2011)
  - In no more than 750 words, provide a succinct statement of work accomplished to date. If you have begun to collect data, summarize the results.
  - Provide a timeline of the necessary tasks to create a first draft.
• First draft (before Spring Break)
  o Use final-draft form and include all sections of the honors thesis (i.e., introduction, literature review, research direction, results, review, conclusions, acknowledgements, and references).
• Final Draft (due April 29)
  o Submit directly to your advisor and second reader by 5 pm. Do not bind this draft. All formatting must follow the Geography Department’s Style Guide. The evaluation of the honors project is determined on the basis of this draft and subsequent oral presentation.
• Finalized Honors Thesis Copies
  o Revisions to the thesis must be completed and turned in shortly after graduation. Please provide the following by the end of May 2011:
    ▪ Two unbound copies of the honors thesis to administrative assistant.
    ▪ One PDF copy for departmental records to administrative assistant.
    ▪ A paper and electronic copy to your advisor.

The Oral Presentation

Formal oral presentations are normally scheduled during the week of final exams. Traditionally, students have 20 minutes to present their work followed by 10-15 minutes of questions. You are required to attend the presentations by all honors candidates. These presentations are part of the evaluation of your honors project.
VII. Checklist of Important Dates

The following schedule of deadlines shows the requirements necessary for completing the honors thesis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completed?</th>
<th>Due date (on or before)</th>
<th>Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>May to August, 2010</td>
<td>Discuss project options with Geography faculty member and write project proposal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 3</td>
<td>Project description due to the Geography Department Chair, Maureen Hays-Mitchell, by 5PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 7</td>
<td>Notification of acceptance to pursue honors in Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Enroll in GEOG 491: Research in Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 23 (Tuesday before Thanksgiving)*</td>
<td>Formal research proposal and progress report due to faculty supervisor and second reader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-January, 2011</td>
<td>Notification of acceptance to pursue honors in Geography in spring</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|            | January 26              | 1. Add Geog 499 to your Spring schedule  
                               2. Conduct a first meeting of the semester with your thesis advisor and second reader where, among other things, the choice of a second reader is considered  
                               3. Progress report and timeline due |
|            | March Before Spring Break* | First draft of thesis to thesis advisor and second reader |
|            | Early April*            | Draft returned to student |
|            | April 29                | Final draft (unbound) of thesis to advisor and second reader |
|            | May 4                   | Oral presentations |
|            | May 6                   | Notification of acceptance or rejection of the honors thesis by the Geography faculty |
|            | May 31                  | Finalized printed honors thesis copies to Geography administrative assistant and faculty supervisor as well as digital versions of the thesis and PowerPoint presentation |

* Exact date at the discretion of the faculty supervisor.
VIII. Geography Research Paper Style Guide

Title Page

The title page should contain a carefully chosen descriptive title for the paper, your name and the course for which the paper is being submitted.

Text

Unless you are told to do otherwise, type papers double-spaced, with generous margins (one to one and one-half inches) to give the instructor room for constructive comment. Use standard, accepted techniques of grammar and punctuation. Be clear and concise; say exactly what you mean and don’t try to dress it up with fancy prose. You will be graded on how clearly your ideas are conveyed, not on the poetic effect achieved. Leave yourself enough time to edit your paper carefully. Use a dictionary (or spell checker) to check your spelling and word usage. Don’t use vocabulary you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with. Avoid jargon or slang.

Beginnings and Endings

Your introduction should identify clearly the agenda you have set out for the paper. There are a variety of ways of doing this. One recommended way is to provide a statement of objectives which identifies what you wish to accomplish. It is often helpful to elaborate the statement of objectives by posing a series of questions you feel must be answered to achieve the objectives you have set for yourself. The introduction should also include (i) at least an overview of the methods used and (ii) an outline (i.e., road map) of what follows – that is, how the thesis is organized.

This format for an introduction may appear to be very systematic, but it has advantages. You establish the criteria for judging your paper. Without a statement of objectives, you leave yourself wide open to criticism. But if you state your objectives clearly and meet them, what you have accomplished is clear. Remember, it is very frustrating for a reader to have to guess what your objectives are. This systematic setting of an agenda also makes it easier for you to use your source material to write your paper. You are not simply creating a paper from bits and pieces of books and articles you have read. From the beginning, you are using this source material to answer your questions. It permits you to use your sources more actively and critically and to assess their usefulness with respect to the agenda you have set.

Your concluding paragraph(s) may involve a summary of your findings, or conclusions about your findings. Don’t present new material in the conclusion.

References--With Examples
Your paper must be fully referenced. This means that you must give appropriate credit for all ideas and factual information acquired from your source material. We strongly prefer that you use an in-text citation system (such as the APA style).

Cite published references in the text by typing in parentheses the last name(s) of the author(s), followed by the year the work was published. Two or more publications by the same author that appear in the same year should be distinguished by a, b, c, etc. after the year; e.g., (Weston 1981b). A reference to a specific page or pages within the work, is indicated as follows: (Easton 1986: 24) or (Corwin 1987: 45-50). What if you are using an internet source and there are no page numbers to the item being used? Then you would give the number(s) of the paragraph(s) or screen(s) as well as the URL and date consulted. Sometimes you will find it more convenient to incorporate the author’s name right into the text of your paper. In that case the reference style will look like this:

Portes (1987) found that more that 60 percent of a sample of Mexicans legally residing in the U.S. had been undocumented at one time.

Immediately after the text, under the heading References, list complete reference citations alphabetically by the author’s last name. Examples of correct citations appear below. For further guidance, refer to the APA referencing system in a source like Hacker’s Pocket Style Manual. Titles of periodicals should be given in full. Notice that in the examples, titles of periodicals, books and reports are emboldened rather than underlined. You may do either. Just be consistent. The final example below shows how to list a web source. Begin with the author’s name (if available), followed by the title of the cited work, the title of the complete work (if applicable), and the publication date (if known and if different from the date you visited the site). Conclude with the URL and the date you accessed the site.

References


Notes
Use a footnote or endnote only when you have a comment to make which does not belong in the text. The note should be brief and limited to explaining a point in the text. Notes should be numbered consecutively through the text. They may be typed at the bottom of the page to which they refer or (easier) may be placed in a separate Notes section after the text and before the References section.

Quotations

A short quotation (a phrase or a short sentence) may be included within the sentence in which it is cited. Do this by using quotation marks and appropriate punctuation. For example:

The basis for the environmental approach rests on the “assumption that the decisions of statesmen and people’s attitudes are based upon conceptions of geographic reality” (Sprout and Sprout 1985, 126-27).

For longer quotations, a colon is often used as the introductory punctuation and the quotation is presented as a blocked paragraph (with no quotation marks) indented a few spaces from the left margin. Single space this type of quotation.

The use of quotations is an acceptable way of presenting information to your reader. But students often rely too heavily on quotations and papers become an assemblage of long quotations. Use quotations when the exact words of the author are important to the point you are making. But if it is the basic idea that is important (which is typically the case in geographic research), you should paraphrase. Remember that when you do paraphrase, a reference citation must still be given. You are paraphrasing someone else’s ideas or description.

Tables and Figures

Each table should be discussed in the text, but readers should be able to understand tables without reference to the text. Number tables sequentially with Arabic numbers. Each table should have a descriptive title which is placed at the head of the table and informative column headings. Table titles should be concise and focus on the relationship or pattern presented by the table. Ideally, each table should be placed as close to the first reference as possible. If space permits, however, it is best to finish the paragraph of text in which the reference occurs before inserting the table. All text references to a table should be by number. For example, “As Table 3 shows. . . .” To indicate the source of a table, add a source citation at its foot.

Discuss figures, including maps and graphs, in the text and number them sequentially. They should also have descriptive titles which may be placed above or below the figure. If there is a source, place the source at the foot of the figure. Follow the placement suggestions for tables.

Examples
Table 5. Residential Segregation between Blacks and Whites of the Same Income, Kansas City Metropolitan Area, 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income category</th>
<th>Segregation Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; $2,500</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$5,000-$7,499</td>
<td>80.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10,000-$12,499</td>
<td>83.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$17,499</td>
<td>85.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$20,000-$22,499</td>
<td>86.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$30,000-$34,999</td>
<td>82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>88.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Figure 1. Two Major Types of International Sourcing Systems

Source: Dicken 1998: 215

Final Reminders

Outline your ideas on paper before writing. The organization of your ideas is very important. You should be able to reconstruct your outline from the topic sentences of your paragraphs. Edit and proofread your paper carefully. Number the pages. Staple all of your pages together in the proper order.
IX. Format for Final Bound Thesis

Sections

Title Page

Title
Author
Honors Studies in Geography
May, 2010

Abstract

200 word limit

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Figures

Main Text

No need to label it as such, but use sub-headings of one kind of another, such as Chapter 1 or Introduction…

References Cited

Appendices

For example…IRB approval letter, Survey instrument

Reminders
Print on one side of the page only
Include page numbers (not including the title page)
Double space text
1 ½ inch margins on the left side
Follow Research Style Guide for figures, in text citation, etc