ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM

Guidelines for Honors Thesis

Students majoring in Asian Studies (ASIA) are encouraged to participate in the Asian Studies Program Honors Program. Writing an honors thesis is good preparation for future professional positions and graduate studies. It provides an opportunity to develop your research and writing skills. Graduating with honors demonstrates a high level of initiative and ability to work independently. An honors thesis is a way to become an expert on a topic of interest and gain recognition for your outstanding academic work. Finally, writing an honors thesis gives students the opportunity to explore in detail an area or topic which will be important later in their lives or careers, and encourages them to synthesize the diverse offerings taken in this interdisciplinary program.

Students who have an overall **GPA of 3.70 or higher** and want to graduate with honors in Asian Studies are required to write an Honors Thesis. The thesis must address an international or cross-cultural topic relevant to Asian Studies, it must make meaningful use of at least two Asian language sources. Because the typical page number varies by topic and discipline, we do not have an official minimum or maximum number of required pages. An honors thesis represents a shift to professional writing: away from "how long is the assignment" to "what information is needed to answer the central question(s) of my work." That said, successful theses typically average 30-50 pages in length.

The honors thesis may be combined with Honors College or other departmental exit project requirements *as long as the minimum ASIA honors thesis requirements are met*.

The student must complete and submit the Honors Thesis Agreement form at least two terms prior to graduation (i.e., during Fall term if graduating in the Spring). This form confirms that a faculty member has agreed to be the advisor, and that the advisor AND the Director of the Asian Studies Program approve the proposed topic. The completed thesis must be awarded a grade of “pass” by the advisor (“pass” for Honors College thesis) and be approved as meeting thesis guidelines by the Director of the Asian Studies Program. This includes the use of **foreign language sources** for all projects, including the Honors College thesis. **The deadline for submitting a final, clean copy of the thesis is one week prior to the end of the term *(be sure to leave ample time to your adviser for grading!)*.** Students should consult with their faculty advisor and Program Director to find out how much time the faculty member needs to read and evaluate the thesis and plan a deadline accordingly. **Earlier submissions are encouraged.**

The student may register for a combination of the following for a total of up to six credit hours. Students may apply up to four Research (401) or Thesis (403) credits toward the appropriate block of the 48 credits required for the Asian Studies major. There are several ways of completing the honors thesis:

\* Students may write an honors thesis without registering for credits if they have already fulfilled UO and program requirements. The students are still required to work with an approved adviser and meet all other requirements for completion of an honors thesis.

\* Students may enroll in ASIA 611 (1 credit), usually taught in fall term of each year. This course introduces Masters students to the writing of a thesis, but would be an appropriate level for undergraduate seniors as well.

\* Students may enroll in an approved 4 credit hour 400-level class on the subject of the thesis. The professor offering the course must sign the written statement acknowledging his/her agreement to serve as the honors thesis advisor. The professor thereby agrees to meet with the senior on a regular basis to guide the student’s work and evaluate the thesis paper. The thesis is written in addition to any other course requirements except when substituted for a less difficult term paper.

\* Register for ASIA 401 Research or ASIA 403 Thesis under the supervision of an ASIA faculty member or another faculty member who has indicated in writing his/her willingness to serve as the honors thesis adviser. Seniors may complete an independent research paper on an original topic that conforms to all other honors thesis guidelines. A student may register for ASIA 401 during the first or second term of the project, but not during the final term. If the student wishes to register for credit during the final term, they should register for ASIA 403 Thesis credits.

\* Students may also write their thesis as part of a practicum by registering for ASIA 409 Practicum and fulfilling all honors thesis requirements. This option is especially attractive for students doing internships which afford them unique research opportunities. When appropriate, the senior should work with an approved adviser in the field as well as an ASIA faculty adviser. If appropriate arrangements are made well in advance, the honors thesis can be completed while a student is studying or working abroad.

Students registering for ASIA 401 Research, ASIA 403 Thesis, or ASIA 409 Practicum, need to pick up a **Permission to Register for Individualized Study form** at the Asian Studies Program office (175 PLC). The form should be filled out and signed by the faculty member who will oversee their work, and returned to the ASIA office. Once the form is returned, students will be pre-authorized to register for the independent study. Students will then need to log on DuckWeb to register.

Honors theses should be written in thesis style, such as described in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. Citation style for the thesis may be the student’s choice, but must remain consistent.

Further questions or concerns about the honors thesis may be directed to the ASIA undergraduate coordinator.

# Requirements for Honors Thesis

Faculty Advisers (readers of the thesis) should check to see that the following requirements are met:

* Title page
* Approval page (signed by faculty advisor and Director of Asian Studies Program)
* One page abstract
* Table of Contents
* Must be a topic related to Asian Studies
* Foreign language references (at least two specifically cited in the paper)
* Length, 30-50 pages
* Footnotes, endnotes or embedded citations, e.g. (Thurber 1978:3). Style used is consistent.
* Bibliography
* Spiral bound, with clear front cover and black back cover

See the **form** SUGGESTED PROJECT TIMLINE for more information, but below includes some more in-depth information, suggestions, and information for completing the different steps of the honors thesis.

***1. Fall Term: Meet with your academic advisor, and secure a faculty thesis advisor***

In late Spring or Early fall of each year, the Asian Studies Program will identify and notify all students eligible for honors (students who will graduate the following Spring). You may also inquire if you are unsure.

Sign up for an advising appointment to meet with a potential faculty thesis advisor to discuss your topic and how you might use credits to fulfill major requirements. Be prepared to discuss timelines and other logistics. Your topic must be Asia-related. You will ask a faculty member who has expertise in your topic to serve as your advisor. Most students conduct their own independent research under the guidance of a faculty advisor. Some students complete honors theses linked to their study abroad programs or internship projects.

With your advisor, complete and submit the Honors Thesis Agreement form. This must be completed and submitted at least two terms prior to graduation (i.e., during Fall term if graduating in the Spring). This form confirms that a faculty member has agreed to be your advisor, and that the advisor AND the Director of the Asian Studies Program approve your proposed topic.

Consider registering for ASIA 611 or a similar course (discuss first with Program Director), or registering for a 400-level course on the subject of the thesis (most likely taught by the faculty advisor), or registering for ASIA 401 Research credits.

We recommend that you look at past undergraduate theses to see what an undergraduate thesis looks like, and how other students have researched and written about their topics. See Scholar’s Bank, <https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/7558>

Students enrolled in Clark Honors College (CHC) may complete a single thesis for both CHC and ASIA as long as the content is Asia focused and *as long as the minimum ASIA honors thesis requirements are met*. The honors thesis may be combined with other departmental exit project requirements *as long as the minimum ASIA honors thesis requirements are met*.

***2. Winter Term: Complete your prospectus***

In order to become familiar with the literature and articulate your intended methods, students should write a 6-8 page prospectus (double-spaced except for bibliography section). The purpose of the prospectus is to ensure that students have done appropriate background work to be successful in the research phase. Depending on the nature of your research, you may wish to complete this step either just prior to taking ASIA 401 (e.g., if you are doing summer field work) or while you are taking ASIA 401 (e.g., as your first assignment), or while you are taking a 400-level course related to your topic. You will submit your prospectus to your faculty thesis advisor, so we recommend that you check in with them to determine the best approach. The prospectus is required during the term you take ASIA 401 if you will count those credits toward the major; otherwise, it is strongly recommended but up to the discretion of the thesis advisor.

The first step is to conduct a literature search to 1) become familiar with what is known and not known about your topic, 2) write your prospectus introduction, 3) refine your methods, and 4) find literature that might be helpful as you write your thesis. We recommend a minimum of 15 high-quality, peer-reviewed sources. The UO Libraries webpage has advice on conducting a literature search and has links to free literature management software <https://researchguides.uoregon.edu/c.php?g=318981>

Although the prospectus structure may vary by discipline and topic, we recommend the following outline. However, you may include different content as approved by your faculty advisor.

1. 1)  Introduction – The introduction should summarize essential background so the reader can understand the context, purpose and methods for the thesis. The Introduction should synthesize and cite literature in the bibliography.
2. 2)  Research questions or project goal – Summarize what hypotheses you plan on testing, what questions you hope to answer or – for creative projects – what goals you hope to achieve.
3. 3)  Methods – What specific methods will you use to answer those questions or achieve those goals?

▪ If you are conducting research that involves people, talk with your faculty advisor to determine if you need to submit your project for review from the UO Institutional Review Board.

1. 4) *(Optional)* Preliminary Outline – What will your thesis or project eventually look like? What sections will it have?
2. 5)  Timeline – When will you conduct your research and complete your thesis? Include all benchmarks and check-in points (in other words, work with your faculty thesis advisor to create agreed-upon deadlines).
3. 6)  Bibliography – Include a list of resources that you have consulted or that may be of use to you as you conduct your research.

***3. Winter Term: Take ASIA 401 Research (4 credits) or ASIA 403 Thesis (4 credits)***

For ASIA honors students not in Clark Honors College, we suggest that you take 4 credits each of ASIA 401 Research (one or two terms before your last term, so usually in winter term if you will graduate in spring) and/or ASIA 403 Thesis (your last term, usually in spring term if you are graduating in spring). Up to 4 credits of ASIA 401 or 403 may count towards your ASIA major requirements. The intent of these credits is to ensure that students have time in their schedules to dedicate to research and writing. The expectation is that you will spend approximately 12 hours/week working on researching, then writing, your thesis. Your faculty thesis advisor serves as the instructor of record. Example assignments might include a prospectus (see above), short updates, data summaries, preliminary analysis, detailed thesis outline, draft thesis, etc.

To be approved to register for ASIA 401 and 403, pick up an independent study form from the Asian Studies office. Complete the form, ask your faculty thesis advisor to sign it and return it to the office. You will be notified when you are cleared to register.

***4. Spring Term: Finish writing your thesis, obtain approval from your faculty thesis advisor***

Once your faculty thesis advisor has approved your thesis, ask them to sign the Approval Page (available on the ASIA website link here). Append this signed page to the beginning of your thesis.

We do not have any formatting requirements for your completed thesis other than we require a cover (title) page and approval (abstract) page that is signed by your faculty advisor. The Honors Cover and Approval Pages templates are available on the ASIA website link here. Clark’s Honors College students will follow CHC cover page and formatting requirements.

***5. Submit IRB closure form if applicable***

***6. Submit your approved thesis to ASIA for uploading into Scholar’s Bank.***

Email the following to the ASIA Undergraduate Coordinator:

1. Your approved thesis in pdf format. Please submit a single document that includes the cover and signed approval pages. Do NOT submit the forms separately.
2. Permission Form for Student Submissions to Scholars' Bank (available at

https://library.uoregon.edu/diglib/irg/student\_permission).

Your thesis will be posted in Scholar's Bank to be permanently accessible, available and searchable through the UO libraries, https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/. If you are in CHC, you only need to submit your thesis to CHC (follow their instructions).

**7. Consider sharing your findings with a broader audience!**

1. UO Asian Studies Undergraduate Research Colloquium – You can give a presentation at this annual event celebrating undergraduate research in Asian Studies (usually in May).
2. UO Undergraduate Symposium – You can give a presentation or show a poster at this annual event celebrating undergraduate research and creative work,

http://undergradsymposium.uoregon.edu/.

1. Oregon Undergraduate Research Journal – You can gain experience with the peer-review process and publish your findings through this undergraduate-led journal, http://ourj.uoregon.edu/

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Do I need a second reader?**A: ASIA honors students who are not enrolled in CHC do not need a committee, only one faculty advisor. The Director of the Asian Studies Program will serve as the second reader to approve your thesis. CHC students must follow CHC requirements.

**Q: How long should my thesis be?**

Because the typical page number varies by topic and discipline, we do not have an official minimum or maximum number of required pages. An honors thesis represents a shift to professional writing: away from "how long is the assignment" to "what information is needed to answer the central question(s) of my work." That said, successful theses typically average 30-50 pages in length. We recommend that you look at past undergraduate theses to see how other students have written about their topics. See Scholar’s Bank,

<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/7558>

**Q: Are there particular formatting requirements? Similarly: Are there requirements for the abstract page and cover page aside from them being signed by our faculty advisor (e.g., formatting, length of abstract, etc?).**A: Other than the required cover and signed approval pages, we do not have a strict set of prescriptive formatting guidelines because our students can work with faculty members from many disciplines. Therefore, we count upon the faculty thesis advisor to uphold disciplinary standards. You may also wish to add an Acknowledgements section. There is no official length on abstracts but a common limit for scientific journals is no longer than 300 words.

**Q: Is the thesis typically formatted single or double spaced?**

Check with your faculty thesis advisor, but a thesis is typically double-spaced.

**Q: Can I include pictures and figures in my thesis?**

A: Yes, graphic elements are a common component of theses regardless of discipline.

**Q: Do I have to collect my own data?**

A: No, a thesis can consist of library research or creative work. The ability to collect original data is valuable, but we leave the amount and type of data to the discretion of the student and faculty advisor.

**Q: What if my results aren’t significant?**

A: Results don't have to be "positive" to be meaningful, as you can learn just as much from non-significant results. In fact, negative results may require you to apply important critical thinking skills.

**Asian Studies Program**

**Honors Thesis Agreement**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agree to serve as the faculty advisor

**(faculty name)**

for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on her/his honors’ thesis for the

**(student name)**

Asian Studies Program.

Anticipated Completion Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Taking Thesis Credit? **YES / NO**   
  
If YES, which term(s) and how many credits\* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

*\*Note: You will still need to complete an Individualized Study form to enroll in these credits*

The topic proposed for the thesis is:

**Attach** a **brief description** of the proposed thesis project (**no more than 500 words**).

***By signing this document, you certify that both the student and faculty advisor have read the Asian Studies Program “Guidelines for the Honors Thesis” and understand the requirements and timeline of the honors thesis***.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor Date

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director of Asian Studies Program Date

*Please return this form to the Asian Studies Program Office in 175 PLC for placement in the student’s file.*

**ASIAN STUDIES PROGRAM**

**Undergraduate Honors Thesis Approval Form**

*Please place this form at the back of your honors thesis before stapling or binding.*

I certify that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ received a grade of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ for this project.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Adviser signature Date

I approve this thesis as an Honors Thesis for the International Studies Program:

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director of Asian Studies Program Date

**ASIA STUDIES PROGRAM HONORS THESIS**

**Suggested Project Timeline**

Most students complete their research and writing during their senior year. However, the timeline is flexible if you are conducting research during the summer. Here is a typical schedule:

*Fall Quarter*

a. Asian Studies Program will identify/notify students eligible for honors (can also occur at the end of the previous spring term for the following year).

b. Determine your topic or area of interest

f. Identify, meet with, and confirm your faculty advisor

g. Confirm faculty adviser approval of potential topic

g. Complete and return the Honors Thesis Agreement form

h. Work with advisor to develop overview/outline of thesis, preliminary bibliography

c. Consider: attending ASIA 611 or similar course (discuss first with Program Director)

d. Consider: attending a 400-level course on the subject of the thesis.

e. Consider: reading or at least skimming a few undergraduate theses, to see what they look like and how they are done. You can find some here:

<https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/handle/1794/7558>

*Winter Quarter*  
a. Consider: registering for 4 credits of research (ASIA 401) – optional

d. Consider: attending a 400-level course on the subject of the thesis.   
c. Submit prospectus to your faculty adviser, if required  
d. Complete research

e. Start writing

f. Meet with advisor if/as necessary

*Spring Quarter*  
a. Consider: register for 4 credits of thesis (ENVS 403) – optional   
b. Week 4: Rough draft: submit to advisor

c. Week 7: Second draft, incorporating advisor feedback

b. Week 10: Finalize and submit approved thesis and Approval Form to ASIA office

Helpful Hints:  
\* Use the Writing Lab in the basement of PLC as a resource  
\* Let people know if you see issues or problems coming up with your timeline

for graduation; ADVANCED NOTICE CAN AVERT PROBLEMS

\* Leave your advisor plenty of time and many chances to give you feedback

\* Make sure that your advisor will be on-campus the term you plan to graduate

\* Faculty may not be available summer term.

\* An abstract is a 1-page summary of your paper, including a thesis statement,

main points and conclusion.

*Please Note:* Consider this paper the pinnacle of your academic experiences as an Asian Studies major. You should plan to revise several drafts and leave your advisor *ample time* to provide you with feedback. The final product will be well worth it!