

**HON 3100**  
**(and combined 3100 & 3101)**  
**ADVANCED READINGS & RESEARCH**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS**  
**Fall 2024**

**Meeting Place and Time:** Wednesdays, 4:00-5:15 pm, Draper 130 (Bennett Auditorium)  
(asynchronous online students: weekly recordings will be posted to Canvas on Thursdays or Fridays following class)

**Instructor:** Mary Ziehe, M.A. (thesis: “*Ana on Orde*: Isolation and Community in the Life of the Hero in *Beowulf*”;  
disciplines: Old English literature, historical linguistics)

**Email:** [Mary.Ziehe@baylor.edu](mailto:Mary.Ziehe@baylor.edu)

**Office:** Alexander GL 30.03  
appointments by prior arrangement but email is often the quickest way to reach me :)

In Advanced Readings & Research, students begin the undergraduate honors thesis. Here, they will explore their research field(s); discuss research topics with professors, librarians, and others; develop organizational and time management skills for the thesis process; and begin independent readings, laboratory or fieldwork procedures, and (quite possibly) initial writing.

Students enrolled in HON 3100 only (*this will be most students*) will:

- identify a research topic,
- work with a research librarian to begin compiling readings for the thesis,
- find a faculty mentor to work with during HON 3101,
- and, by the end of the semester, **submit a Research Contract signed by the faculty mentor**, to guide their work during HON 3101.

Students enrolled in both HON 3100 and HON 3101 (“combined 3100/3101”) will complete the above tasks AND ALSO

- complete research with the faculty mentor,
- develop a substantial bibliography,
- confirm a faculty mentor for HON 4V87 Honors Thesis (this is usually but not always the HON 3101 mentor),
- and ultimately **submit a signed Thesis Proposal**.
- Some 3101 students may, at the discretion of the faculty mentor, also begin drafting a tentative first chapter of the thesis project.

After completing HON 3101, students will register for the HON 4V87 Honors Thesis courses (a total of four credit hours usually split over two semesters), during which they will complete the writing and defense of their thesis.

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**CLASS PROCEDURES AND EXPECTATIONS:**

1. **Practice focus – learn how NOT to multitask.** Give yourself the gift of at least this one hour per week of uninterrupted, undistracted attention to your thesis. Do not use electronics in class unless specifically directed to on the course calendar or by Ms. Ziehe. Instead, always bring your Thesis Notebook (given to you on the first day of class) and a writing utensil for note-taking and brainstorming.
2. **Take initiative – participate actively.** You will get most out of this semester by asking questions and taking advantage of all opportunities to brainstorm, workshop ideas, and problem-solve with your peers, faculty, and other mentors. Silence never did anyone’s thesis any good.

3. **Take initiative – don't procrastinate.** Procrastination is deadly to a thesis. Waiting until deadlines loom will not work well long-term, so start practicing good habits of long-term thinking now. You may find that many of the assignments for this class will take either more or less time than you expect to simply because they are things you haven't done in quite this way before. My advice: start early on all assignments, but *\*particularly\** those that require meetings with other people.
  4. **Take initiative – move ahead if and when you're ready.** As conversations with possible mentors and others develop, you may find that you are ready to submit some assignments ahead of time. Please do! Do not hold up your thesis work due to arbitrary deadlines. This is *your* thesis; the directions and deadlines I, your mentor, and the Honors Program give you are minimum guidelines. Being self-directed is crucial to your success and enjoyment of the thesis process.
  5. **Be kind—to yourself and others.** The thesis project, which starts right now, is the capstone of your Honors experience, and you want to be proud of what you accomplish with it. That can all be a bit intimidating. But you cannot scale that mountain all at once and most of the time you will learn by doing, so the journey will not always look neat and tidy. The goal of this class is to help you *get started well*, and help you connect to some climbing buddies. If you are unsure of something or hit a bump in the road, rejoice! Many times, what start as obstacles turn into spurs to better and more creative work. Celebrate every victory, no matter how small, for yourself and for other thesis writers. The thesis is not a zero-sum game, and you are not competing with each other. The more you help others be excellent, the more excellent you yourself will become.
  6. **When in doubt, reach out.** Once you connect with your thesis mentor, they will be an invaluable resource for you. Before, during, and after that point, I and the other Honors Program folks are also here to help. We are always happy to brainstorm ideas and solutions and to help you find other resources and expert guidance if there's something you and we together don't know.
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## ADDITIONAL COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES

### Academic Integrity

Plagiarism or any form of cheating involves a breach of student-teacher trust. This means that any work submitted under your name is expected to be your own, neither composed by anyone else as a whole or in part, nor handed over to another person for complete or partial revision. (Feedback from your mentor and others is different, and encouraged; but all revisions including from that feedback should be done by you.) Be sure to document all ideas that are not your own. Instances of plagiarism or any other act of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Honor Council and may result in failure of the course. Not understanding plagiarism is not an excuse. As a Baylor student, I expect you to be intimately familiar with the Honor Code at: <https://honorcode.web.baylor.edu/honor-code>.

### Academic Integrity & Artificial Intelligence (specifically generative AI)

As discussed in the section above, work submitted under your name, including on the thesis and assignments for this course, is expected to be your own. Generative AI (ChatGPT, etc.) is a new and growing area of both opportunity and challenge for students and faculty. For the thesis writer, including students in this class, **generative AI should NOT be used to produce written assignments for this class or your thesis content.** However, there may indeed be ways that generative AI can serve as a helpful tool for some research and brainstorming. Baylor Libraries has created some resources for students and faculty on generative AI (see especially <https://libguides.baylor.edu/students-chatGPT/generate-topics-chatGPT>).

### University Writing Center

Located in Moody Library 2nd floor West, the University Writing Center (UWC) offers free assistance to you at any stage of the writing process (brainstorming, researching, outlining, drafting, revising, editing). In their feedback, the consultants focus on higher order concerns, such as content, thesis, evidence, and organization, before grammar or style. The UWC tutors will not proofread, edit, or write your paper for you, but they will equip you with a toolbox of strategies to improve your writing, research, and editing skills. You can set up an appointment online at <https://uwc.artsandsciences.baylor.edu/>, call the UWC at (254)710-4849, or stop by in person. They also have provided helpful handouts on a variety of writing topics: <https://uwc.artsandsciences.baylor.edu/faculty-services/helpful-writing-handouts>.

### Academic Success

Be sure to take advantage of the many resources available for academic success, including individual communication with me and coming to see me during my office hours. While Honors Program students sometimes do not think to utilize them, note that students who regularly utilize the resources in the Paul L. Foster Success Center (<https://successcenter.web.baylor.edu/>) are among Baylor's most successful. If your academic performance in this class is substandard, I will submit an Academic Progress Report to the Success Center so that the team of coordinated care

professionals can help connect you to the resources you need.

### **Students Needing Accommodations**

Any student who needs academic accommodations related to a documented disability should inform me immediately at the beginning of the semester. You are required to obtain appropriate documentation and information regarding accommodations from the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation (OALA). Contact Information: <https://oala.web.baylor.edu/>; (254) 710-3605 - Paul L. Foster Success Center, basement level of the East Wing of Sid Richardson.

### **Title IX Office – Title IX Coordinator**

Baylor University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities, and it does not tolerate discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex or gender. If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving sexual or gender-based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, or retaliation for reporting one of these type of prohibited conduct, please contact the Equity, Civil Rights, and Title IX Office at (254)710-8454 or report online at <https://equity.web.baylor.edu/>. The Title IX office understands the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on- and off-campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, university housing, and other forms of assistance that may be available. Staff members at the office can also explain your rights and procedural options if you contact the Title IX Office. You will not be required to share your experience. **If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the Baylor Police Department (254-710-2222) or Waco Police Department (9-1-1) immediately.** For more information on the Title IX Office, the *Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment and Interpersonal Violence policy*, reporting, and resources available, please visit the website provided above.

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## GRADES

### **HON 3100** (*Grade issued by Ms. Ziehe in all cases.*)

- You will be graded on the assignments listed below. See “Grading Scale” below as well as the points assigned to individual assignments for the impact of each on your final course grade.
- **You must submit a signed Research Contract (worth 40% of the course grade) to earn credit for this course.** Unsigned contracts will not be accepted. Later adjustments to the contract may be made at the discretion of the faculty mentor.
- **Late work:** late submission will result in a one-time 10% grade reduction on any assignment, beginning one minute after the deadline. No extensions will be granted except under the direst of circumstances (to be determined by Ms. Ziehe).
  - **Late work procedure for the Research Contract:** In the rare event that a student is unable to solidify plans with a thesis mentor and therefore cannot submit the contract by the stated deadline, that student must fill out an Application for an Incomplete in the course. This application will be reviewed by Ms. Ziehe and the Honors Program directors. If approved, new deadlines will be established between the student and Ms. Ziehe and the 10% late penalty may be waived on this assignment ONLY.

#### **3100 Grading Scale (no rounding):**

900 - 1000 pts.	= A
870 – 899 pts.	= B+
800-869 pts.	= B
770 - 799 pts.	= C+
700 – 769 pts.	= C
670 - 699 pts.	= D+
600 - 669 pts.	= D
0 - 599 pts.	= F

**HON 3101** (*Grade issued by faculty mentor. However, some students may be enrolled in HON 3101-01, the “placeholder section” of the course. In this case Ms. Ziehe will report the grade to Baylor based on the faculty mentor’s recommendation.*)

- Your mentor will assign your grade for this second Readings & Research course based on their assessment of your progress through the Research Contract created for HON 3100 and the formal Thesis Proposal due at the end of the semester.

- You must keep your faculty mentor apprised of any problems hindering your progress.
- Your signed thesis proposal must be submitted to [thesis@baylor.edu](mailto:thesis@baylor.edu) as well as on Canvas. UNSC majors must also submit to [university\\_scholars@baylor.edu](mailto:university_scholars@baylor.edu). (There's a reason we're having you do this in triplicate, I promise.)
- **Please note that you cannot earn credit for HON 3101 without submitting the signed Thesis Proposal to the Honors Program (and UNSC if applicable).** Unsigned proposals will not be accepted.

## COURSE CALENDAR

This schedule is a general outline of the assignments that you will be required to complete during this course. More detailed discussion of each assignment is included in the next section of this **course syllabus**. Especially as we have so many guest speakers, this schedule is subject to change; therefore, it is important that you check Canvas and your Baylor email regularly. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get announcements, class notes, and any updates to assignments from a classmate.

You are responsible for pacing yourself throughout the semester, as you will be through the entire thesis process. **Start early!** Plan out when you will complete each assignment so that you do not feel overwhelmed when deadlines approach, as many assignments will take longer than you might expect. Always give yourself a cushion! On that note, **early submission is allowed**, if you are able to work ahead on a particular task (some are fully independent, while some require outside participation or will benefit from discussion with the thesis mentor). For all meetings, take into account other people's busy schedules and the turnaround time required for email and other communication. **When communicating with possible mentors and other people, be polite, but persistent. Again: start early!**

**\*\* = Attendance at ONE of the "subject seminars" is required.** You are allowed and encouraged to attend multiple, not only if you are not 100% sure of your topic, disciplinary approach, or thesis mentor, but also so that you can hear multiple perspectives on the thesis process and how best to work with a mentor. You might be surprised at what resonates with you.

DATE	TOPICS UNDER DISCUSSION	ASSIGNMENTS DUE (to Canvas by 11:59 pm on this date unless otherwise noted)
<b>Week 1</b> W – 8/28	Intro/overview of thesis process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is a thesis?</li> <li>- How do you complete one?</li> <li>- How can you use this class?</li> </ul>	Complete Self Assessment Part 1 (#1a below)
<b>Week 2</b> W – 9/4	The thesis mentor & the research topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What is research?</li> <li>- Why write a thesis?</li> <li>- Who will you write it with?</li> <li>- What will it be about?</li> </ul> <p><u>Guests:</u> Dr. Erika Abel (BIO, HP clinical professor) Dr. Elizabeth Corey (PSC, HP director)</p>	<u>All students:</u> Review at least 5 "outstanding" theses (#2 below)  <u>HON 3100-02 (online) and Combined HON 3100 + 3101 students only:</u> By Friday, 9/6, have a brief individual meeting with Ms. Ziche (#1c below)

<p><b>Week 3</b> W – 9/11</p>	<p>The research process and research partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentor outreach and other professional communication</li> <li>- Personal background, academic preparation, and future goals as ways to refine and focus research</li> <li>- Incorporating statistical analysis</li> <li>- AI and the thesis</li> </ul> <p><u>Guests:</u> Dr. Erika Abel (HP clinical prof) Dr. Rod Sturdivant (STA, head of Statistics Consulting Services)</p>	<p><u>After today's class:</u> start reaching out NOW to faculty members to set up a time to discuss your thesis/the research process. See #5 below. Note that you must have at least TWO of these meetings <b>COMPLETED by Friday, 11/1</b> (#7 below).</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b> W—9/18</p>	<p>Organizing your research through a long-term project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The annotated bibliography</li> <li>- Zotero workshop</li> </ul> <p><u>Guest:</u> Ms. Ellen Filgo, Director of the Liaison Program for Baylor Libraries</p>	<p>Bring your laptop to class today, with Zotero already installed (#3a below)</p> <p>Faculty Outreach Log &amp; Faculty Meeting Requests (#5a and #5b below)</p>
<p><b>***Extra Credit Event***</b>  W – 9/18, 5:30-6:30 (Bennett)</p>	<p><b>“Straw to Bread and Student Research: Connecting Interests and Passions to Tangible Needs”</b></p> <p><b>--Drs. Lisa Baker and Troy Abell (medical anthropology, public health; Straw to Bread)</b></p>	<p>Sign-in sheet will be provided at the event for those seeking 10 points extra credit.</p>
<p><b>**Week 5</b> W – 9/25</p>	<p>Library resources &amp; how to work with a research librarian</p> <p><u>Guests from University Libraries:</u> Ms. Ellen Filgo (Liaison Director) Mr. Josh Been (Digital Scholarship) Ms. Millicent Weber (Data Science) Dr. Christina Chan-Park (STEM) Dr. Joseph Meyer (Experiential Learning Commons) Ms. KJ Mikulencak (Exper. Lrn. Commons, tentative)</p>	<p>Statement of Purpose (#4 below)</p> <p><u>After today's class:</u> Reach out to your subject librarian and schedule a meeting to discuss your potential research direction, sources, and databases. Begin building a source list, part of which will likely go toward your <b>annotated bibliography</b>. To match you with the best subject librarian, review the librarian directory here: <a href="https://researchguides.baylor.edu/subjectliaisonlibrarians">https://researchguides.baylor.edu/subjectliaisonlibrarians</a> Note that this meeting must be <b>COMPLETED by Friday, 11/1</b> (#6 below).</p>
<p><b>**Week 6</b> W – 10/2</p>	<p><b>**Subject Seminar: Wet lab/dry lab research; scientific lit. review</b></p> <p><u>Guests:</u> Dr. Erika Abel (HP clinical prof) Dr. Erica Bruce (ENV) Dr. Leigh Greathouse (HSD) Dr. Christie Sayes (ENV)</p>	<p>Nothing due – keep working on meetings, solidifying your mentor and narrowing your topic, and on the annotated bibliography (#8 below). Once you have confirmed your mentor, submit the mentor confirmation (#9 below) and start work on the Research Contract (#10 below).</p>

<p><b>**Week 7</b> W – 10/9</p>	<p><b>**Subject Seminar: Clinical/field research + social sciences (incl. some medical humanities); IRB proposals</b></p> <p><u>Guests:</u>  Dr. Gia Chevis (ACC) (tentative)  Deborah Holland, JD (Compliance director)  Dr. Jeff Levin (ISR, biomedical science)  Dr. Chuck North (ECO) (tentative)  Dr. Chris Pieper (SOC)  Mr. Robbie Ridder (postbacc, PSY/NSC)  Dr. Wade Rowatt (PSY/NSC; IRB chair)  Dr. Don Shafer (FDM; IRB assoc. chair)</p>	<p>Nothing due – keep working on meetings, solidifying your mentor and narrowing your topic, and on the annotated bibliography (#8 below). Once you have confirmed your mentor, submit the mentor confirmation (#9 below) and start work on the Research Contract (#10 below).</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b> W – 10/16</p>	<p><b>**Subject Seminar: Humanities; writing an argument</b></p> <p><u>Guests:</u>  Dr. Jill Cornish (MLC- French)  Dr. Rebecca Flavin (PSC)  Dr. Jeff Hunt (CLA, UNSC director)  Dr. Richard Jordan (PSC; tentative)  Dr. Jason Whitt (REL, HRC faculty in res.)</p>	<p>Nothing due – keep working on meetings, solidifying your mentor and narrowing your topic, and on the annotated bibliography (#8 below). Once you have confirmed your mentor, submit the mentor confirmation (#9 below) and start work on the Research Contract (#10 below).</p>
<p><b>**Week 9</b> W – 10/23</p>	<p><b>**Subject Seminar: fine arts, “creative” theses; the academic ‘artist’s statement’</b></p> <p><u>Guests:</u>  Dr. Tim DeJong (ENG)  Dr. Stan Denman (THEA)  Ms. KJ Mikulencak (Makerspace; tentative)  Dr. Joseph Meyer (Digital Media)</p>	<p>Nothing due – keep working on meetings, solidifying your mentor and narrowing your topic, and on the annotated bibliography (#8 below). Once you have confirmed your mentor, submit the mentor confirmation (#9 below) and start work on the Research Contract (#10 below).</p>
<p><b>Week 10</b> W – 10/30</p>	<p>Advice from those who’ve been there:  Student/Alumni Panel</p> <p><u>Guests:</u>  Ms. Rachel Baud (CFS-OT)  Ms. Cara Hoekstra (UNSC – SOC)  Mr. Alan Hollinger (CMUS, GRK; tentative)  Ms. Jessica James (MH-PM)  Mr. Robbie Ridder (postbacc, PSY/NSC)  <b>**Possible other guests TBA**</b></p>	<p><b>DUE FRIDAY, 11/1 (11:59 PM)</b>  <u>ALL students:</u>  Subject Librarian Report (#6 below)  Faculty Meeting Reports (#7 below)</p> <p><u>Students in combined HON 3100/3101 only:</u>  Mentor Confirmation (#9 below) and  Research Contract (#10 below)</p>
<p><b>Week 11</b> W – 11/6</p>	<p>On Writing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When to start, <b>when to stop</b></li> <li>- Editing</li> <li>- Momentum</li> <li>- Issues with a long-term project</li> <li>- Note on student publication (<i>The Pulse</i>, <i>Scientia</i>, and beyond)</li> </ul> <p><u>Guest:</u> Dr. Kara Alexander (director, University Writing Center)</p>	<p>Nothing due – but note that the mentor agreement and annotated bibliography due dates are coming soon!</p>
<p><b>Week 12</b> W – 11/13</p>	<p>Class Workday:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mentor Agreement</li> <li>- Reading &amp; Research Contract</li> <li>- Formatting the Thesis (HP Rules)</li> <li>- Annotated Bib. Workday</li> </ul>	<p>Bring your laptop to class today, with a blank Microsoft Word document saved as “Thesis Formatting” (#3b below)</p>



<b>Week 13</b> W – 11/20    	“Office hours” with Ms. Ziehe: come with any questions about the thesis (mentor, topic, timeline, approach, etc.)  <b>Attendance optional but strongly recommended if you have not yet identified your thesis mentor.</b>	Annotated Bibliography (#8 below) Mentor Agreement (#9 below)
<b>Week 14</b> W – 11/27	<b><i>THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – NO CLASS</i></b>	
<b>Week 15</b> W – 12/4  *last regular day of class*	Wrap-up and review  Looking ahead: - HON 3101 (continuation of reading/research) - HON 4V87 and the thesis defense	<u>All students:</u> complete Self Assessment Part Two (#1b below)  <u>Students in HON 3100 only:</u> Research Contract (#10 below) *This assignment is worth 40% of your HON 3100 grade.*  <u>Students in combined HON 3100/3101 only:</u> Thesis Proposal (#2 under “Additional Assignments” below) *You cannot earn a grade in HON 3101 until you have submitted the signed proposal.*
<b>Week 16</b> W – 12/11  *university study day*	“Office hours” with Ms. Ziehe: come with any questions about the thesis (mentor, topic, timeline, approach, etc.)  <b>Attendance optional but strongly recommended if you have any missing work (especially the Research Contract)</b>	<u>All students:</u> <b>Last day to submit any late work.</b> If you have not completed the Research Contract, you must apply for an <b>incomplete</b> in the class. (see “Late Work Cutoff” section below)

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## DESCRIPTIONS OF COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

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### HON 3100 Assignments – All Students

#### 1) Participation (50 points)

**\*This grade will be calculated holistically at the end of the semester. Occasionally, other brief assignments or surveys may be given that are not on this syllabus. If so, these will also become part of the holistic participation grade.\***

- a. **All students:** By the end of the first class day (11:59 pm on 8/28), complete Self-Assessment Part 1: <https://forms.gle/fmHpEkWgRLD7SYKd8>
- b. **All students:** By the end of the last regular class day (11:59 pm on 12/4), complete Self-Assessment Part 2: <https://forms.gle/zS4QqUf8Rp3DcMPB9>
- c. **For HON 3100-02 (online) and combined 3100 + 3101 students only:** By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of class (by Friday, 9/6), have a brief individual meeting with Ms. Ziehe to discuss your thesis ideas and timeline, and make sure you are set up well for your slightly-off-the-beaten path semester ahead. You will be invited to sign up for a meeting online through the Navigate app (Zoom appointments available upon request).
- d. In order to get the most out of this class, **attendance** is expected at all sessions unless otherwise noted on the course calendar. For online students, this means viewing 100% of a class recording posted to Canvas. Failure to attend at least one of the four “subject seminars” listed there will negatively affect this part of your participation grade. The same goes for failure to abide by the electronics policy or to engage fully during class.
- e. Honest, curious, and encouraging **participation** in class activities, discussions, and assignments will positively impact this grade—and more importantly, will do a lot to help yourself and your peers as you set out on the thesis journey together.

#### 2) Review Outstanding Theses (50 points) (typed and double-spaced with appropriate header)

**\*Due Wednesday, 9/4 by 11:59 pm**

- a. You can find theses that have earned the “outstanding” designation in two ways:
  - a. (OK, but limited: ) Go to the Honors Program website <https://program.honors.baylor.edu/current-students/thesis/outstanding-theses> and select the theses you would like to review. This site showcases a number of theses on various topics that have earned the “outstanding” designation. However, it does not give you access to ALL “outstanding” theses.
  - b. (Most complete collection: ) You may also review ALL theses, housed in the Honors Program/UNSC suite’s lobby in Draper 154. There is a binder on the shelves in that room which will help you find theses that relate to your interests. Those marked with a **gold dot on the spine** have earned the “outstanding” designation.
- b. Read through at least 5 outstanding theses (and as many others as you like!). Read the abstract in detail and review the scope and layout of each project by skimming through the various body chapters/sections as well as the front and back matter.
- c. Submit a brief report on 5 of the outstanding theses you reviewed. For each report, list the author’s name, thesis director (mentor)’s name, full title of the thesis, and the year it was defended. Then write a short description of what each one has done well and how it might help shape your own thesis (in terms of content, structure, approach, etc.). Note that “what this thesis writer has done well in this project” is not necessarily the same thing as “what I found interesting” or “what I liked about this thesis.” Be precise in your language—such linguistic precision is an important skill to practice as you prepare to write a thesis.
- d. **Extra credit opportunity:** you may earn 10 points extra credit on this assignment by going in person to the thesis shelves in Draper 154 (the Honors Program/UNSC main lobby) to complete it. When you submit the finished assignment to Canvas, include a selfie as a second attachment. That photo should show you holding the thesis binder and standing (or sitting) in front of the thesis bookshelves.

**3) Install Zotero & Microsoft Word on your laptop  
(no grade; needed for class activities on 9/11 (Zotero) and 11/13 (Word))**

- a. To install Zotero, go to Baylor Libraries’ Research Guide on Zotero (<https://libguides.baylor.edu/c.php?g=194879&p=5167486>) and follow the instructions to install the program. If you need assistance, go to the Info Desk in Moody or Jones libraries for help.
- b. If you do not already have MS Word on your computer, Baylor students can use the Microsoft 365 suite for free on up to five devices. You can access this here: <https://helpdeskplus.web.baylor.edu/microsoft-365>.

**4) Statement of Purpose (100 points) (~500 to 1,000 words; typed and double-spaced with appropriate header)**

**\*Due Wednesday, 9/25 by 11:59 pm**

- a. Purpose of the assignment: As you begin to discuss your ideas for developing an Honors thesis with possible faculty mentors, they will expect you to be able to sum up your academic interests, background and goals effectively in a concise manner. This assignment is a brainstorming and self-analysis exercise that is meant to help you do so. It is highly unlikely that you will hand a full copy of this document to those with whom you meet (it would be far too long, in most instances!); instead, think of it as a source text from which you can pull and refine elements as needed to fit a specific audience and communication purpose (written or spoken, formal or informal). Ultimately, it should help you clarify, for yourself as much as others, both **WHAT** you want to focus your attention on for the thesis, and **WHY**. Such clarity is necessary to sustain quality work and help a mentor know how best to guide you.
- b. Content: Your statement of purpose must address each of the following points. You should describe the first point in some detail and will at least touch on the other points **as they pertain to point #1**. The order in which you address things in this document is up to you – look for the common threads to find what is a logical way to tell *your* thesis story.



1. Specific areas of research which interest you and in which you might pursue an Honors thesis. Do not simply say, “I want to work on the intersection of faith and politics in Supreme Court cases” or “I will be using my work in Dr. Greathouse’s gut biome lab for my thesis.” These are great starts, but dig in further—what specifically interests you here? What areas would you like to dive into deeper? What **questions** do you have about the topic that can help you direct your thesis? You don’t have to know your exact thesis topic yet—that will evolve with time, research, and guidance from your thesis mentor—but do spend some time understanding your own interests.

2. Your higher education and intellectual development. That is, are there some threads in your educational background that have contributed to your current thesis ideas?

3. Particularly significant experience(s) (a book, a class, an internship, etc.) that have contributed to your research interests, and how it has/they have done so.

4. Work experience, internships, and/or prospective educational or career goals, and how you expect pursuing the thesis to help you grow from or toward them.

5. The current state of your expertise in your area(s) of interest. There are no right or wrong answers here, although the less background you have in an area that is vital to your thesis, the more work you will need to do to be ready to tackle it. What specific skills and knowledge do you already have that would relate to this thesis? What are the gaps or areas of weakness, and how might you seek to address them? It’s OK not to have all the answers here but do list what you can think of.

- c. If you are having trouble coming up with a thesis topic, I’ve excerpted some sections from *Where Research Begins* by Thomas S. Mullaney and Christopher Rea that may prove helpful as you begin the Statement of Purpose assignment. They are posted to Canvas under Documents: Files, as “Topic Brainstorming Exercises.”

## 5) Faculty outreach log (25 pts.) and faculty meeting requests (25 points):

**\*Due Wednesday, 9/18 by 11:59 pm**

- a. Outreach log: You will use this log through the semester, and possibly beyond, to organize conversations you have with potential thesis mentors as well as those who are not officially your mentor but with whom you have important conversations regarding your ideas and the thesis process.
- Brainstorm a list of at least 5 faculty and others with whom you could discuss your thesis project, from at least two academic departments/disciplines. **If you don’t yet have a thesis mentor confirmed (most students), focus on people that are potential mentors or who might help you find your mentor. However, you will do this even if you have a thesis mentor.** For everyone: remember that these conversations also count as thesis research—into your possible topic(s), into related or sub-questions that are pertinent to your thesis, into the process of completing a thesis, and even (in some cases) into the question of how you might want to think about and communicate the thesis process as you look toward applications for jobs/grad school/professional programs.
    - Some places to look for possible mentors/conversation partners: classes you’ve taken, other personal experience, personal reference from a trusted source, departmental directories (which often list faculty’s research interests), Baylor’s [online directory](#) (search by department, then individual; most recent and upcoming courses taught are listed here); the [Schedule of Classes](#) for current/recent/upcoming semesters (use in conjunction with the Undergraduate Catalog list of all [courses of instruction](#) for areas of interest). See also the flowchart in Canvas under Documents: Files, called “How to Find a Thesis Mentor.”
  - Create a chart (either in your Thesis Journal or on your computer using a program like Excel) with the following **columns**: Name, Department, Source (directory, referred by \_\_\_\_, etc.), Connection to Your Thesis, Outreach #1, Outreach #2, Outreach #3, etc. (later, add more “Outreach” columns as needed).

- For each “outreach” box, include the following **subdivisions**: Date, Format (email, in person, Zoom, etc.), Results (ex: “still awaiting response,” “meeting set for \_\_,” “met to discuss \_\_,” etc.), and Other Notes (any other pertinent information from this outreach/contact)
- Fill out this chart with your list of brainstormed faculty and as many points of outreach as you have with them so far. **You must have all columns through at least “Outreach #1” filled out for AT LEAST the first two people on the list in order to receive full credit for this assignment.** The grade on this assignment is based on those two entries only. The rest of the log is for you to continue using if you are finding it helpful (as I and others have in the past).
- **\*Note:** If you already have a thesis mentor identified, they should be your first entry. Here, “Outreach #1” should specifically be an email requesting a meeting to start work on the Research Contract (see #4b below). Attach the blank Research Contract form to that email.

b. Faculty Meeting Requests:

- Email at least 2 people from your Outreach Log (but as many as you have in mind!) asking to set up an appointment to discuss your intended research topic. *Note that these initial meetings are intended to be exploratory, to help you further develop ideas and background for your thesis as well as feel out possible mentors. They may or may not lead toward a request for a person you meet with to be your thesis mentor (at least right away!). Try to meet with these two (or more) folks as early as you can, so you have time for further meetings with those people or others as needed.*
- Submit a screen shot or copy of the email on Canvas. Include the professor’s response if you have received it.
- If you already have a thesis mentor identified, one of the two meeting requests should be an email with your that person to confirm this agreement and begin working on the Research Contract (see “Note” above). The second email should be to one of the other people on your list of 5 in the Outreach Log.

**6) Subject Librarian Meeting Report (50 points)** –form available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments

**\*Due FRIDAY, 11/1 at 11:59 pm**

- To ensure that you are matched with the best subject librarian for your thesis topic, review the librarian directory at <https://researchguides.baylor.edu/subjectliaisonlibrarians>.
- Once you have selected your librarian, use the scheduling link by the person’s name or email them directly to make an appointment. For questions and guidance on selecting a librarian you can contact [Ellen\\_Filgo@baylor.edu](mailto:Ellen_Filgo@baylor.edu).
- Schedule your appointment as soon as possible! The assignment is due in November **only** to accommodate the busy schedules of our research librarians; make sure you go online to set up your appointment as soon as you can after they visit our class, so that you can reserve a spot before the deadline (and the earlier the better!).
  - Note for STEM students: Dr. Chan-Park’s calendar can quickly get overbooked. If that is the case, see if there is another subject librarian that may be appropriate for your research that you can meet with sooner.
- Meet with the appropriate subject librarian for your discipline(s) and complete the form available on Canvas. This form **must be signed**, so you should take it with you to the meeting. However, handwritten or typed forms are fine, as are physical or e-signatures. If you handwrite, you may submit a screenshot of the completed form to Canvas as long as it is legible.

**7) Professor meeting reports (100 points)** –form available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments  
**\*Due FRIDAY, 11/1 by 11:59 pm**

- You will need to meet with a minimum of 2 professors (see #5b above) and submit a reflection on these meetings.
- Use the “Professor Meeting Report” form posted in Canvas. Add your name and the date, and type your answers before submission. **Here, do not submit a handwritten form or screenshot.** I recommend that you take freeform notes in your Thesis Journal during the meetings and reflect on them later before you type your responses on the form, as this is shown to be one of the best ways to organize your impressions and solidify your takeaways (and continuing questions).

- c. Start requesting these meetings as soon as possible! The assignment is due in November only to accommodate the busy schedules of our faculty (and others), and to give you time to adjust if you aren't able to meet with your first choices, or if they aren't able to help you and refer you elsewhere. Be polite, but persistent!

**8) Annotated Bibliography (150 points)** –guide available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments (typed and double-spaced with appropriate header)

**\*Due Wednesday, 11/20 by 11:59 pm**

Create an annotated bibliography of at least 6 books or articles you compiled with your subject librarian, independently and/or with your thesis mentor or others. Choose what you consider the best of those you have found so far. Use the citation style (MLA, APA, etc.) most appropriate for your intended discipline. Further instructions and a sample annotation available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments.

**9) Mentor Confirmation (50 points)**

**\*Due Wednesday, 11/20 by 11:59 pm (For combined 3100 & 3101 students, this is due on Friday, 11/1 by 11:59 pm.)**

- a. When you have confirmed your faculty mentor for HON 3101 (who will usually, although not always, be the thesis mentor all the way through your defense), fill out this Google form: <https://forms.gle/nVUURJgP6s1fjTPp8>
- b. This is a tool to help us know that everyone is on schedule and has found their faculty mentor. It will also be used to issue the override you will need to register for the correct section of HON 3101 and HON 4V87 in the future.
- c. Submit this confirmation **as soon as** you and your faculty mentor are ready to do so. Once you do, **immediately** share the Research Contract (see #10 below) with your mentor and begin working on it together.

**10) Research Contract \*\*\* This assignment is worth 40% of your grade (400 points) \*\*\***

**\*Due Wednesday, 12/4 by 11:59 pm (For combined 3100 & 3101 students, this is due on Friday, 11/1 by 11:59 pm.)**

- a. Once you have a faculty mentor who has agreed to work with you on your research, you will establish a list of research activities that you will complete by the end of HON 3101. This contract must be signed by your faculty mentor.
- b. The Research Contract (blank form available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments) should specify the readings and/or research procedures to be undertaken and the manner in which the professor will evaluate your progress. This is an opportunity to set up a clear working relationship (method and frequency of communication, set meeting times, etc.)—don't skimp on this step!  
*(continued on next page)*
- c. These readings/procedures can be updated as needed with the agreement of your thesis mentor. However, making changes later is no substitute for the benefits that accrue to both you and your mentor from having an honest conversation about mutual expectations *now*, as you begin the thesis relationship.

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**Additional Assignments ONLY for Those Enrolled in Combined HON 3100 & 3101**

**\*Due Wednesday, 12/4 (last day of class) by 11:59 pm) – Your faculty mentor will assign your HON 3101 grade holistically based on these items, but #2 must also be submitted to the Honors Program to earn course credit.**

- 1) Complete assigned reading, research, and/or writing tasks according to your faculty mentor's guidelines.
- 2) Signed Thesis Proposal (blank form available in Canvas: Files: Forms for Class Assignments):

- a. This document is an agreement between the Honors student and Baylor faculty member to work together toward the completion of the thesis project. The proposal outlines the thesis project that will be developed during the thesis courses (HON 4V87).
  - b. This form should identify the problems under investigation as precisely as possible at this stage of the research, and it should outline a method for approaching the research questions or topics.
  - c. A specific thesis or argument may not become apparent until the research nears completion. As with other Honors contracts, procedures for regular consultation and for assessment of the student's progress should also be included on the contract form.
  - d. Submit to: (1) Canvas for 3100; (2) [thesis@baylor.edu](mailto:thesis@baylor.edu) for the Honors Program; and in some cases, (3) UNSC majors should cc [university\\_scholars@baylor.edu](mailto:university_scholars@baylor.edu) on that email.
- 3) Some faculty mentors may also expect additional materials to be submitted to them individually and to the HP office as addenda to the thesis proposal; these usually include items such as annotated bibliographies and first-chapter drafts. Furthermore, the thesis proposal form establishes a timeline, agreed upon by both the student and the advisor, for completion of the thesis project. A sample timeline is provided below. The sample timeline outlines the target deadlines for students who will take 2 credit hours of HON 4V87 in both the fall and the spring of senior year. Other timelines are of course possible, depending on circumstances and the approval of the faculty mentor.

***Sample HON 4V87 Writing Timeline (here, for a student taking HON 4V87 in fall and spring of senior year):***

<i>Chapter 1:</i>	<i>End of October</i>
<i>Chapter 2:</i>	<i>Beginning of December</i>
<i>Chapter 3:</i>	<i>Beginning of February</i>
<i>Chapter 4:</i>	<i>Middle of March</i>

***Other defense semester timeline information:***

<i>Early April</i>	<i>Submit thesis defense scheduling form</i>
<i>Early April</i>	<i>One-paragraph thesis abstract due</i>
<i>Early April</i>	<i>Complete draft of thesis due to faculty director</i>
<i>Mid-April</i>	<i>Present 15-min. overview of thesis project to the HC community</i>
<i>Mid April</i>	<i>Distribute complete and polished drafts of thesis to defense committee members and HP office</i>
<i>End of April</i>	<i>Last day to defend the thesis before an examining committee</i>
<i>Early May</i>	<i>Last day to submit approved and formatted final copies to the Honors Program Office</i>

**Late work cutoff and (only if needed) Application for Incomplete in HON 3100**

**\*Due Wednesday, 12/11 by 11:59 pm**

All late work must be submitted by this deadline to earn credit, with the possible exception of the Mentor Confirmation and Research Contract. Rarely, a student will not have a mentor confirmed by this time. Hopefully, this will not be you, but if it is—DON'T PANIC. Most of the time, all that is needed is a little more time or some adjustment of your topic or list of possible mentors. You should still complete the other HON 3100 assignments on the timeline listed in this syllabus, as this will help you continue to refine your thesis ideas and make progress on the mentor search. At the end of the semester, Ms. Ziehe will provide a link to submit an application for an incomplete in the course. We will discuss this process and procedure in more detail at that time. You should also consult with her individually to make a plan specific to your situation.

Now that's all said, you can forget about this section unless and until it is needed. 😊