

GUIDE TO HONORS AT THE SCHOOL OF NURSING: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the honors program?

The honors program is a way for motivated students to undertake additional studies in an area of interest under the advisement of a faculty member. The student completes an honors project and graduates with a diploma that states “With Honors” or “With Highest Honors.” The honors program at the School of Nursing is administered through the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) by the Director of Undergraduate Programs. The UNC-CH University Honors Office determines official university policies and makes the final award of honors on your diploma; however specific School of Nursing (SON) policies are developed and approved by the faculty.

Am I eligible to participate?

Students who are eligible and interested in participating are cleared by the SON registrar. You must have earned a 3.2 cumulative university grade point average based on all courses that contribute to the nursing degree. Students must also have earned a GPA of 3.4 in all required upper division nursing courses.

When/How do I apply if I want to participate?

Information seminars are held for interested students each semester. The decision to participate is usually made prior to or at the beginning of the last two semesters of study, though other timing is possible. Honors involves two semesters of work. Once you have decided to participate, you should see the SON Registrar, in the Office of Admission and Student Services (OASS) to register for N691H in the first semester, and N692H in the second semester.

In addition, the “Intent to Participate” form must be completed and signed by the student’s advisor. The form contains a brief statement of what you tentatively plan to do for your project. This form should be turned in to the OAA within the first month of your enrollment in N691H. Complete information is available on the School of Nursing Honors website.

How do I choose an advisor?

Your advisor is a faculty member you may have worked closely with in the past or one who shares an interest in the topic you wish to develop. If you are not sure whom to ask, you have several resources:

- Review previous honors abstracts located on the website
- Review previous honors projects located in the
- Talk with Beverly Foster, who will help refer you based on your area of interest
- Ask friends and other faculty members for suggestions
- Use the faculty resource identified on the University website located at www.unc.edu/depts/our
- You will need to approach the faculty member and talk about your ideas. If faculty need more information about honors program requirements, you can refer them to the website. Once the faculty member agrees to be your advisor, have them sign your Intent to Participate form (on the website).

What is the advisor’s responsibility?

The advisor will guide you through the development and completion of your project. This process involves regular office meetings and feedback to guide and evaluate your work. Grades for N691H/N692H are assigned by the advisor, and determination of satisfactory completion of the project and/or highest honors recommendations will be his/her responsibility.

When do I complete the honors work?

Honors work is begun and completed in the last two semesters of study in the SON. Typically, the first semester is used for deciding on a topic & advisor, gathering materials & data and seeking Institutional Review Board approval where required.. The second semester is usually used to complete the final project and prepare for the presentation. At the presentation all honors students present their work to peers, faculty, family and friends. Any additional awards are noted/given out at that time, and a reception follows.

See the undergraduate program website for important due dates. Watch email and bulletin board postings for final date confirmations.

What additional awards am I eligible for?

Highest Honors is awarded to students who have completed exceptional work at a level beyond the usual high expectations. The student's work must be nominated by his/her advisor to OAA by the posted deadline. Projects submitted for highest honors will be reviewed blind by a panel of undergraduate faculty familiar with the Honors process but not currently advising a student. Evaluation criteria used are that the paper demonstrates evidence of independent, abstract, analytical and critical thinking at the highest level. Recommendations of the review panel are final.

Other awards may be available, including monetary awards. For instance, the Tammy Flake Fund provides a cash stipend to all honors graduates. Sigma Theta Tau, the nursing honor society, may offer competitive cash awards to several projects. The OAA will notify you of any other opportunities for awards.

Do I have to write a research paper?

Your project can be whatever you and your advisor agree is an acceptable honors project to meet the criteria. Students in the past have done educational pamphlets, literature reviews, as well as traditional research papers. You may wish to look through the files of [previous honors projects](#) in the OAA or at abstracts on the website. School of Nursing guidelines require that the project "show evidence of independent, abstract, analytical, and critical thinking."

What do I have to do if I am writing a research paper?

University and SON guidelines for research projects are available at <http://nursing.unc.edu/current/handbook> under "Research Regulations and Policies."

Where can I get help with research, writing and presentation skills?

The OAA holds seminars to address these topics. Watch for posting of dates and times. These seminars are required. If you need assistance outside of these seminars, speak with your advisor about possible resources within the School and university. If you have further questions, Beverly Foster may be able to assist you.

Who/Where can I get help with statistical analysis of my data?

Honors students needing help with research data and statistics can see the Teaching Assistant (TA) in the School's Research Support Center. The TA can give instructions on how to enter data and also help with programming problems. The TA is a consultant to the student and his or her Honors adviser, and should not take the place of the adviser for this work. Also, the student is expected to do the work (data entry, programming, etc.), so the advisor should be certain not to suggest/allow a project that the student is not capable of handling (with consultation, of course). See "Statistical Support for Honors Students" on the SON Honors website.

What Websites are available for honor participants?

1. University Honors Office website is: www.unc.edu/depts/honors
2. Undergraduate Program website is: <http://nursing.unc.edu/son-bin/son/departments/ugradprogram.php>
3. Undergraduate Research Office website is: www.unc.edu/depts/our

What are the guidelines for the Honors presentation?

A reception is held for honors students completing the requirements in May. August graduates present their work at the end of program celebration. December graduates may present their work as part of the SON graduation celebration. At these events, students present their work to family, peers, friends and faculty. The honors presentation may be either a podium or poster presentation. This may include transparencies, slides, videotapes or other visual media. Podium presentations should be approximately 10 minutes, depending on the number of students presenting. This is a presentation, not a defense.

Who can I talk to if I have questions?

Dr. Beverly Foster, Undergraduate Program Director and Janet Hughes, administrative assistant in the OAA, will be able to answer most of your questions about honors. Janet Hughes' office is located in Room 1000 of the new wing of Carrington Hall; the phone number is 919-966-7511. Dr. Foster's office is located in Room 1008 of Carrington Hall; the phone number is 919-966-4995. Email is useful for quick questions. Dr. Foster and Ms. Hughes can be reached at Bev_Foster@unc.edu and jmhughes@email.unc.edu, respectively.