

Honors Thesis Guidelines – SPORT MANAGEMENT (SPT)
Revised: November 2021

THESIS DESCRIPTION

The Honors Thesis provides honors students the opportunity to engage in independent study of a carefully defined research question or problem over the course of several years in consultation with a departmental mentor. This thesis project shall be a substantial work that goes beyond normal requirements of the major and represents students' best academic work in their discipline. Research should represent an effort to make an original contribution to the discipline and be at the highest academic level. Each thesis will demonstrate clear critical thinking, a mastery of disciplinary material, clarity in communication of complex ideas and professional production. Honors thesis (HNR 4998) credit will not be accepted in substitution for any SPT curriculum requirements.

MENTOR

The mentor must have research and/or creative expertise and interests that are consistent with the proposed thesis project. A faculty member may accept one new thesis each year and may supervise up to two thesis projects at the same time.

THESIS COMMITTEE

Three full-time, long-term-contract Elon University faculty members will comprise the thesis committee: the mentor and one other Elon SPT faculty member selected in consultation with the mentor. The Honors Program will select the third member. Members of the committee should be selected based on their ability to contribute and evaluate the completed work.

OVERVIEW OF THE PROCESS

Proper communication and deadlines are considered critical in the honors thesis process; the student shall therefore ideally begin the process during the freshman year.

1. Student declares major and takes SPT 2120 (Contemporary Sport Management).
2. Honors student should become acquainted with all SPT faculty members and their areas of academic interest and expertise. This may be coordinated through SPT 2120.
3. Departmental discussions will take place regarding teaching schedules and other faculty load issues prior to assigning mentors. SPT faculty must understand time requirements of thesis mentoring/supervision prior to being assigned.
4. Conversations with student shall establish interests in potential thesis projects and academic preparation/background required for success with the project.
5. Conversations with student shall establish that the committee is composed of a mentor and one other faculty member from SPT in addition to one additional faculty chosen by the Honors Program. Identification of outside faculty possibilities will be discussed.
6. SPT 2320 (Research Methods in Sport) should be taken during the sophomore year (MUST be taken prior to starting proposal work). Student should begin narrowing consideration of mentor and departmental committee member.
7. Student and honors mentor should discuss potential to apply for the Lumen Prize (application due spring semester of the student's sophomore year).
8. In concert with honors mentor, student should begin to formulate a plan of study to include eight semester hours of HNR 4980 course credit.

ACADEMIC CREDIT/TIMELINE

The distribution of credit hours will be determined in consultation with the mentor and follow the guidelines of the Honors program.

FORMAL WRITTEN PROPOSAL

Discussion and refinement of research question(s) and thesis process, as well as the development of the proposal could take place either in the fall or in the spring Semester of the student's junior year, with submission to the Chair of the SPT department no later than one week prior to the Honors Program deadline. Students should refer to the Honors proposal guidelines for the format of the Formal Written Proposal.

THESIS FORMAT

There are no page expectations. The format for the thesis should first include:

- Title page
- Signature page
- Acknowledgements
- Table of contents

Then, students may choose from two format options for remainder of the thesis. Students, in consultation with his/her mentor, must declare their thesis format option when they submit their proposal to the Chair of the SPT department.

Option 1:

- List of tables
- List of figures
- Abstract
- Chapter 1 Introduction
- Chapter 2 Review of Related Literature
- Chapter 3 Methods or Procedures for Collecting Data
- Chapter 4 Results (analysis of data)
- Chapter 5 Findings, Conclusions, Summary and Recommendations
- References
- Appendices (As needed)

Option 2:

- Extensive Literature Review (Introduce Problem, Background)
- Methods - Participants, Procedures, Instrumentation, Data Analysis
- Manuscript ready to submit for publication*
- References
- Appendices (As needed)

**It is suggested that all honors theses use standard formatting for manuscript and references (e.g., APA Publication Manual) or identify an appropriate journal for publication and follow their guidelines.*