

HISTORY HONORS PROGRAM WORKSHEET

Selecting the Honors Track

We encourage students with the requisite qualifications to begin thinking about the Honors Program as early as possible once they have declared a history major. This will enable them to plan their upper division coursework, develop their concentrations and thesis topic through their 400-level seminars, and plan research fieldwork. Ideally, one's concentration will relate to the choice of thesis topic.

Candidates for the Honors Program are expected to:

- Complete the History Honors Program (eleven courses, 44 units) which is the history major plus HIST 492, "Honors Thesis" (4 units)
- Maintain a minimum GPA of 3.5 in all USC history coursework (a USC honors requirement)
- Earn a grade of B+ or better in HIST 201 (formerly HIST 300)
- Complete at least one 400-level seminar which will lead to their honors thesis
- Find a faculty advisor to supervise the writing of the thesis
- Complete an honors thesis in History 492 in the fall (usually of your senior year, but some students complete the thesis as juniors)

Administration

Students can join the honors track at any point early in their academic career. They can sign up to be on the honors program mailing list and if they meet the qualifications for the honors program, they will be invited to the History Honors Day in the spring semester to hear about the theses written that year and to meet other interested students. To join they should email the Director of Undergraduate Studies: Dr. Lindsay O'Neill (ljoneill@usc.edu)

Then, students who proceed will sign up to take HIST 492, the fall of their senior year (although exceptions can be made for juniors who need to take it early). Students apply the semester before and must submit a thesis proposal, and fill out a form that, among other things, identifies a thesis advisor who has agreed to work with them.

The Coursework

Ideally, an honors student should begin developing his/her thesis project in an approved 400-level seminar taken with a faculty member who has agreed to direct the work. It is incumbent on both the faculty member and student to establish a track that will not only fulfill the requirements of the seminar and lay all of the necessary methodological and historiographical groundwork for the thesis, but also to allow the student to produce a first draft of a significant piece of the thesis. If an appropriate 400-level seminar is not available, the student may arrange to take a HIST 490 ("Directed Research") honors tutorial with his/her thesis director to meet these ends.

Often students apply for funding and do research for their senior thesis the summer of their junior year. Female students or any student working on gender can apply for a Foulke Travel Fellowship (due early in the spring semester) and all students can apply for the Provost's Undergrad Research Fellowship (Due Dec 6).

During the fall semester of the senior year (junior year is possible if all appropriate preparation is complete), the student will complete HIST 492, Honors Thesis seminar. This seminar will be devoted to the last stages of research, the writing, and to the discussion/critique of each part of the student's thesis as the work evolves. HIST 492 meets one afternoon a week for three hours.

Honors Thesis

The completion of an honors thesis is the core focus and requirement of this program. We envisage a thesis that may focus in research in original primary sources or in extensive analysis of a methodological problem or a historiographical development. Thesis directors and the HIST 492 instructor will keep honors students on tight schedule in terms of producing partial and full drafts. The final draft must be ready by the end of fall classes in order to allow time for consideration by readers – the student's director, the HIST 492 instructor, and an outside reader from the History Department, another department, or an area institution. For a list of past theses, please see the Departmental website.

For more information contact Lindsay O'Neill, Director of Undergraduate Studies
(ljoneill@usc.edu)

Progress Check List

- _____ Join the History Honors Email List
- _____ Maintain a 3.5 GPA in history classes
- _____ Receive a B+ or better in History 201 (formerly History 300)
- _____ Attend the History Honors Day in the Spring (if possible)
- _____ Take a 400-level course that will provide basis for honors thesis
- _____ Apply for funding for fieldwork (optional, usually apply in spring Junior year)
- _____ Honors advisor who will supervise thesis: _____
- _____ Complete a proposal and apply for admission to History 492