

Anthropology Honors Thesis Manual

Interested in writing an honors thesis in Anthropology?

What is a Senior Thesis? A senior thesis is an opportunity to develop your own novel contribution to an area of anthropology you find interesting. It is a chance to delve deeply into a topic that inspires your curiosity and construct a sustained argument on a subject of importance to you and to the field of anthropology. No two theses are alike, but ideally each thesis will present original research or original interpretations of others' findings in a professional manner, comparable to an academic publication. To that end, the research, reading, analysis, and writing that goes into a thesis are done under the guidance of a faculty supervisor to develop students' skills as a researcher, scholar, and writer.

Can I write a Senior Thesis? Writing a thesis should provide a culminating experience for your studies in anthropology at the University. It is not the place to explore anthropology for the first time. The thesis is part of the requirements for departmental honors, and so presupposes that you have done excellent work in anthropology. Other than that, the main prerequisite for a thesis is that you want to write one. A thesis can provide a rigorous focus for your intellectual curiosity and academic acumen. You should certainly take into account your own record of achievement and your personal history with research and writing. If you are unsure, talk with the honors adviser and/or undergraduate advisor.

What benefit is there in writing an honors thesis? Successful completion of a senior thesis is first and foremost a way to satisfy your own curiosity. Identifying a research problem, investigating it in depth, and formulating your own novel answer to it is an engrossing challenge and an enriching experience. Successful completion of a senior thesis is also part of the requirements for departmental honors, an honor that appears on your transcript. Finally, completion of a thesis is a valuable credential for graduate school and employment. Admissions boards, employers, and colleagues regard a thesis with respect due to the motivation and discipline required.

Still interested? How to apply to the Honors program

Students should apply to the Honors program no later than three semesters prior to graduation. In most cases, students will submit the first part of their application during the Spring semester of their third year. The first part of the application asks for:

1. A one-page statement discussing your primary interests in anthropology and why you wish to write an honors thesis.
2. The names of one or more faculty members who you are considering as thesis supervisors.
3. A copy of an academic paper that you have written for an anthropology course.

Once students have been provisionally accepted to the Honors program, they may register for the Honors Tutorial (ANT 679HA) for the Fall semester. To complete their application and continue in the Honors program, students must submit the second part of the honors application by the first day of Fall semester classes. The second part of the application asks for:

1. A two-page research prospectus detailing: a) the proposed topic of your research; b) the research question or problem you plan to address; c) your hypothesis concerning the answer to this question or the resolution of this problem; d) the kind of data you will use to test your hypothesis; and e) your preparation for researching this topic.
2. A one-page bibliography of at least five academic sources that you propose to use in your research.
3. Written approval in the form of a signature from an anthropology faculty member who has agreed to be your thesis supervisor.

Applications are available through the departmental website:

<https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/anthropology/undergraduate/Honors.php>

To be accepted to the honors program, students must meet the following requirements:

- UT GPA of 3.0 or better
- Anthropology GPA of 3.5 or better
- Upper-division standing
- Strong interest in anthropology as demonstrated by previous coursework
- Submission of Part 1 of the application (semester before you start the Honors program)
- Submission of Part 2 of the application (first day of the semester you start the program)
- Approval from an anthropology professor willing to supervise the thesis
- Consent of the Honors Advisor

Students interested in starting the Honors program in Spring semester should contact the Undergraduate Advisor or the Honors Advisor for information about application deadlines.

Questions about the application

What if I don't have a clear idea of the topic of my thesis, the question my thesis will address, or my hypothesis? Initial ideas for the topic of a scholarly project rarely resemble the final product. Ideas are transformed through the process of reading, research, careful thought, discussion with others, and writing. That is all to say that the topic of your thesis will change dramatically over the course of the year and that is to be expected. But you need an initial idea to get the process started. A great way to formulate a topic, question, and hypothesis is to talk with potential thesis supervisors about your interests. Was there a topic discussed in class you would like to go into further? Talk to your instructor. Do you have interests from outside of school that might make for an interesting anthropological study? Look at the list of faculty on the department website for professors who research related issues. Or, speak to the honors advisor about your interests and they may be able to point you to someone who knows more about the subject. Ideally, the application process will provide you an opportunity to work out an initial topic, problem, and hypothesis for your thesis. Talking over your ideas with faculty as you figure out who your thesis supervisor will be will provide you a chance to start developing your ideas. The better developed they are by the time you start your Honors Tutorial, the easier the thesis writing process will be. That being said, nobody expects you to have your topic, problem, and hypothesis in their final form at the start of the year.

How do I choose a faculty supervisor and what is their role? Thesis supervisors must be a member of the anthropology faculty at UT Austin. In general it is best to work with a professor who is familiar with your work and ability, but successful theses have also been written under the direction of a supervisor who has never taught the student. Ideally you will find a supervisor whose own scholarship addresses your topic of interest, but that too is not necessary. Some familiarity with the topical area, an interest in guiding the project, and a good rapport with the student are key. You should approach prospective supervising professors during your 3rd year or the summer before your senior year at the latest. Many faculty are away from campus during the summer conducting research so it is highly recommended that you contact potential thesis supervisors in your 3rd year. Provide an initial prospectus of your project, as this will greatly increase your chances of getting a positive answer from the professor in question. Use this as an opportunity to draft your prospectus for the Honors application and get feedback from faculty members. Once a faculty member has agreed to be your supervisor, remember that the thesis writing process is not like any other course you have taken and the role of your supervisor is not like that of a course instructor. You will work out a plan for research, reading, and writing together, and meet on a schedule you two decide on. You must communicate clearly with one another about your expectations and needs. Your supervisor's role is not to instruct you; they will provide advice and input, but you must be self-motivated in pursuing your thesis project.

Can my research include human subjects or interviews? It can, but projects that involve research with human subjects must receive the approval of the Office of Research Support and Compliance. You should discuss this as soon as possible with your thesis supervisor as it can be a lengthy process to secure the necessary permission. For more information, see <http://www.utexas.edu/research/rsc/humanresearch/undergraduate.php>.

Can I get funding for thesis research? There are various research fellowships and scholarships to help with undergraduate theses, and we encourage students to apply for them. The Liberal Arts Honors Program sponsors the Rapoport-King scholarship, which provides \$2,000 to student researchers in their senior year. The Vice President for Research sponsors Undergraduate Research Fellowships, or URFs, which provide up to \$1,000 in support of research. In addition, other entities such as the Liberal Arts Honors program have scholarship opportunities. You may need to do some footwork to find out more. Begin by contacting the undergraduate advisor and Liberal Arts Honors. Usually, a proposal and letter of recommendation from your supervisor are required. The research prospectus you submit as part of your application to the Honors program will provide a good starting point for your funding applications.

For Admitted Students: Suggested Deadlines

NOTE: Discuss with your thesis supervisor their expectations for precisely what you will submit and when you will submit it. Working out a schedule for the year with them during your first meeting will help to ensure your thesis project goes smoothly. The deadlines below are general guidelines and different faculty members may operate with a different schedule. You can use the schedule below as a starting point in discussing your plan for the year with your supervisor. Be sure to talk with them about what they expect you to submit at the end of the first semester so that you can receive a quality grade for the Honors Tutorial course.

First Semester

The first semester is generally devoted to completing necessary literature reviews, and designing and initiating any lab or field research you may be conducting.

First class day:

- Submit a complete application for the honors program to the undergraduate advisor, including the signature of your first reader as well as your research prospectus and bibliography.
- Submit the prospectus and bibliography to your thesis supervisor as well.

Mid- to late-September:

- Applications for the Rapoport-King scholarship and Undergraduate Research Fellowships are usually due around this time.

Mid-semester deadline (eighth/ninth week):

- Complete the initial research and reading phase
- Submit a one page summary of your research findings and/or an annotated bibliography of sources you have reviewed. Discuss with your supervisor.
- Identify possible second readers with the help of your supervisor and request their participation. Share with them an updated version of your research prospectus.

Last class day:

- Submit a detailed outline of your thesis, a report of your research findings, and an annotated bibliography of sources you have reviewed
- Ensure that you have a second reader for your thesis at this point

Second semester

The second semester is largely devoted to writing your thesis. Most of the research and background reading should be complete by the start of the semester.

First class day:

- Submit a draft of one section of your thesis, for instance, the introduction, a literature review, or the methods section.

Early-semester deadline (second/third week):

- Meet with your supervisor to discuss the outline of your thesis, your research report, annotated bibliography, and the first draft section you turned in.
- Set specific goals for completing the remaining sections you have outlined.

Mid-semester deadline (eighth/ninth week):

- Submit a completed first draft to your supervisor and your second reader no later than the end of the ninth week. This will leave three weeks for comments and revisions before submitting a revised draft.

Twelfth week of classes:

- Submit a final draft to both readers. This will leave two weeks for final corrections, revisions, binding, and collecting signatures.

Last class day:

- Submit bound, signed copies of your thesis in regulation format as discussed below.

Honors Thesis Requirements & Suggestions

Requirements to Earn Special Honors in Anthropology. Students will have to meet the following requirements in order to earn “Special Honors in Anthropology”:

- Maintain UT GPA of 3.0 or better
- Maintain Anthropology GPA of 3.5 or better
- Complete ANT 679HA Honors Tutorial Course: Readings with a grade of A-
- Complete ANT 679HB Honors Tutorial Course: Thesis with a grade of A-
- Complete an Honors Thesis approved by your supervisor and a second reader
- Give a public presentation of a synopsis of your thesis
- Receive approval from the anthropology department honors advisor

The Thesis Supervisor (First Reader). The thesis supervisor (first reader) is the student’s primary source of feedback for the honors thesis project. Your thesis supervisor must be a member of the anthropology faculty at UT Austin. Usually, your supervisor should be a professor with whom you have previously worked. A successful student-supervisor match is one of the most important elements for a successful thesis.

The most common complaint from thesis students across the Liberal Arts is that they do not get enough feedback and are not sure where they stand in the project. The anthropology department recommends that thesis students enter into an explicit agreement with their advisor on the following points:

- the topic and the limits of the research
- the times for regular meetings or communications (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly)
- a timeline for completing outlines, bibliographies, drafts, revisions
- advice on choosing a second reader for the thesis
- requirements for receiving a quality grade at the end of the first semester
- requirements for the final thesis, including length

Beyond these guidelines, you and your thesis supervisor should discuss any other issues that are relevant to your project, including research funding and securing the necessary approvals for research with human subjects. Last minute difficulties can be avoided by regular and explicit communication about expectations and needs throughout the thesis writing process. If you suspect you may be mismatched with your supervisor, speak with the honors advisor for advice on how to proceed as soon as possible.

The Second Reader. Second readers offer general advice on the content of your thesis, providing an additional perspective as you draft it. Consequently, you should plan to share with them one or more early drafts so they can provide substantive feedback that will improve the final product. The second reader is usually a faculty member at UT Austin (not necessarily in the anthropology department), but may in some cases be an expert in a relevant field from outside

of the university. Approval for non-faculty readers should always be obtained from your thesis supervisor and the honors advisor before making any firm commitments.

Although you may only meet a couple of times with your second reader, it is nonetheless important that you arrive at an explicit agreement of mutual expectations. In particular, the anthropology department recommends that you explicitly discuss the following points with your second reader:

- the topic and the limits of the research
- a timeline for turning in drafts and receiving feedback
- expectations for the final thesis, including length

Leave plenty of time to follow your second reader's suggestions on your final draft. The second reader is not obligated to approve your thesis just because your first reader has approved it.

Thesis Submission. By the final day of classes in the spring semester, you should file copies of your thesis signed by your two faculty readers.

- One hard copy of the signed Title & Signature page should be submitted to the undergraduate advisor by the last day of classes, along with an electronic copy in PDF format of the thesis. The PDF should include the Title & Signature page as well, but the signatures need not be included in the electronic copy.
- An electronic copy of the thesis in PDF format should be submitted to the Texas ScholarWorks repository. Unless students object to having their thesis available in the Texas ScholarWorks or their supervising professor does not want the data made available prior to formal publication, students should submit an electronic copy of their thesis to Scholarworks. Instructions for how to do so will be provided.
- The department recommends that you print and bind hard copies to give to your two readers as a courtesy. The department will cover the cost for you to print and bind two copies of your thesis at Jenn's Copies (<http://www.jennscopies.com/>). Give them your name and let them know you are printing an honors thesis for the anthropology department. Be sure to have your two readers sign the cover pages of the hard copies.
- You are of course welcome to print more copies for yourself and others at your own expense.

Public Presentation. You will need to publicly present a synopsis of your thesis during either:

- the College of Liberal Arts Honors Day Poster Presentation, usually in April.
- a departmental colloquium held at the end of the Spring semester, typically on one of the designated "no-class days" prior to final exams.

Honors Thesis Style Guide

Electronic Copies. Electronic copies of your thesis must be in PDF format.

Hard Copies. Hard copies should be bound in a simple tape flat binding (not spiral bound). A black vinyl report cover is preferred. The copy should be on 100% cotton acid-free paper.

Thesis Sections. The sections of your thesis should be arranged in the following order. Underlined sections are obligatory. Italicized sections are optional.

1. *Copyright Page* (Sample A). Include this page in the pretext page count, but do not place a page number on it.
2. Title & Signature Page (Sample B). Include this page in the pretext page count, but do not place a page number on it.
3. *Dedication and/or Epigraph*. Include this page in the pretext page count, but do not place a page number on it.
4. *Acknowledgments and/or Preface*. Begin placing pretext lowercase Roman numerals at the bottom of this page, counting all preceding pretext material. Page numbers are centered one inch from the bottom of the page.
5. Abstract (Sample C). Begin or continue pretext page numbering with lowercase Roman numerals. Page numbers are centered one inch from the bottom of the page.
6. *Table of Contents* (Sample D). Continue pretext page numbering with lowercase Roman numerals.
7. *List of Tables*. Continue pretext page numbering with lowercase Roman numerals.
8. *List of Figures*. Continue pretext page numbering with lowercase Roman numerals.
9. *List of Illustrations/Maps/Slides*. Continue pretext page numbering with lowercase Roman numerals.
10. Text (Sample E). All pages from the first page of Text through the References are numbered consecutively in Arabic numerals, beginning with Arabic numeral "1" on the first page of the text.
11. *Appendix*. Continue page numbering with Arabic numerals.
12. *Glossary*. Continue page numbering with Arabic numerals.
13. References (Sample F). Continue page numbering with Arabic numerals. References is the last section of the thesis.

Page Format and Layout. The following are the formatting requirements for the thesis as a whole and its sections.

Font. Your thesis must be correct in spelling and punctuation and presented in a consistent, structured format. A single, legible font must be used throughout, the only exceptions being in tables, figures, graphs, appendices, and supplemental files. The font size should be sufficient for the average person to read the document on a computer monitor without difficulty. 12-pt Times New Roman is recommended. Headings may be bolded and not more than 2 points larger than the rest of the text. Accuracy and consistency in presentation and form make your thesis a usable research tool for other readers.

Margins. Recommended margins for your thesis are 1.25 inch, and they cannot be less than 1 inch. These margins should be consistent throughout the document, including pages in the appendix. All page numbers should be placed at the center of the page, 1 inch from the bottom.

Spacing and Page Arrangement. Your thesis must be double-spaced or 1.5-spaced; however, single spacing may be used in the Lists of Tables, Figures, and Illustrations, as well as in footnotes, endnotes, charts, graphs, figures, tables, captions, Glossary, Appendices, and References. Paragraph indentions may be five to ten spaces. Prose quotations over four lines long should be in block quote, double or single-spaced, and indented on the left. Do not use quotation marks in the block quote except when indicating quotations within the block quote. Each new chapter or major section (i.e., Chapter 1, Chapter 2, Appendix, References) must begin on a new page.

Title & Signature page (Sample B). Your thesis readers names must be typed under the signature lines on this page. While educational or professional titles (Ph.D. or Dr.) are not included on the signature lines for readers, the titles indicating their supervisory status (“Thesis Supervisor” or “Second Reader”) must follow the names of your two readers. The hard copy of the Title & Signature page that is submitted to the undergraduate advisor MUST contain your readers’ signatures. Your supervisor must sign on the top line and your second reader on the second line. Signatures should all be on a single title and signature page. Scanned or electronic signatures will be accepted as long as they are legible and dark enough to be imaged. Typed names as a signature are not allowed. The Title & Signature page in the electronic copy of the thesis you submit to the undergraduate advisor and to Texas ScholarWorks does not need to contain your readers’ signatures.

Abstracts (Sample C). The abstract is a concise statement of the nature and content of your thesis, indicating its significance as a piece of research. It should be continuous prose, not disconnected notes or an outline; and it should not exceed 350 words. It should be 1.5 or double spaced, not single spaced. The title on the abstract must match exactly the title of the finished thesis.

Table of Contents (Sample D). Students may omit a Table of Contents if their thesis does not have multiple chapters or multiple major sections (e.g., List of Tables, Glossary, Appendix). Or, they may include a minimal Table of Contents consisting only of the sections Text and References with their respective page numbers. Include a Table of Contents if your thesis has chapters or several major sections.

The Table of Contents must include the major section headings in the thesis (e.g., References, Appendix) as well as all the chapters in the Text, with their respective page numbers. All chapter titles listed in the Table of Contents must exactly match the titles as presented in the text. For example, a chapter labeled “Chapter 3” in the Table of Contents should not appear as “Chapter III” within the text.

The Table of Contents is 1.5 or double spaced. Major sections and chapters within the document are listed on the Table of Contents with left-justified headings (not indented.) Each of these major sections should begin on a new page within the text. Inclusion of subheadings in the Table of Contents is optional. If you do include subheadings (which do not need to begin on new pages within the text) they must be indented under the appropriate chapter heading on the Table of Contents. The page numbers for all sections listed on the Table of Contents are right-justified and preceded by a dot leader.

Citations and References (Sample F). Every thesis must include a comprehensive reference section, which is the last section of the thesis. The reference section may be omitted only in theses that are wholly original, creative works. In the reference section include every source cited in the text and no others, listed alphabetically by author. When including multiple works by the same author, list them chronologically, from oldest to most recent. For works published by the same author in the same year, add a, b, and so on, and list them alphabetically by title. Follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th edition author-date formatting for references. Examples can be found below and at:

https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html
http://www.aaanet.org/publications/style_guide.pdf

In-text citations appear in parentheses and include the author's name and the source's year of publication, with no intervening punctuation: (Herzfeld 2005). In-text citations should appear at the end of a sentence or before a comma or semicolon whenever possible. Always include page numbers for quotations or extensive paraphrases, using an en dash for page ranges: (Herzfeld 2005, 146–47). Use semicolons to separate two or more references in a single parenthetical citation and list them alphabetically: (Bessire and Bond 2014; Comaroff 1996; Daser 2014; Foucault 2000). Do not include “ed.” or “trans.” in citations, as this information will be included on the reference list. Use the first author's last name and et al. for works with four or more authors.

Sample Pages

(Sample A: Copyright Page (optional))

Copyright

by

Full Official Name

2018

(Sample B: Title & Signature Page)

Women of Empire: Gender and Politics in Colonial Brazil

Mary Margaret Portman

ANT 679HB
Special Honors in the Department of Anthropology
The University of Texas at Austin

May 2006

_____[first reader's signature]_____

Elisabet Kubitszek
Department of Anthropology
Supervising Professor

_____[second reader's signature]_____

Peter St.Giles Frothingale
Department of Spanish and Portuguese
Second Reader

Sample C: Abstract

Title of Thesis:

Centered and Double-Spaced

by

Full Official Name, BA

The University of Texas at Austin, (year)

SUPERVISOR: Name of Supervisor(s), no titles or degrees

Indent and begin abstract here. It should be a concise statement of the nature and content of the ETD. The text must be either double-spaced or 1.5- spaced. Abstracts should be limited to 350 words.

(Sample D: Table of Contents (if applicable))

Table of Contents

List of Tables [if any]

.....#

List of Figures [if any]#

Chapter 1: Title of Chapter#

Chapter 2: Title of Chapter#

Appendix A: Name of Appendix [if any]#

Glossary [if any]#

References.....#

(Sample E: Chapter opening)

Chapter 1
Title of Chapter

Sectional Heading (optional)

You should indent the first line of your paragraphs one-half inch. Then, the paragraph should be double-spaced and left-aligned or justified on both sides. If you have quotes that run longer than three lines, then you would do a block quote format which looks something like this:

Here is your block quote. You will use this format for longer quotes. If you don't use a block quote format, then your reader may not realize that it is not your writing. This can take away from the power of the quote, or just be misleading for your audience. (Author Date, Page #)

Here you return to your normal format. All citations should be provided in the text and correspond to an entry in the references (Author Date). The first page of Chapter 1 or the first page of your body text if you do not have chapters should be numbered with the Arabic numeral 1.

(Sample F: Reference Style)

Books

- Asad, Talal. 2003. *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Bender, Courtney, and Pamela E. Klassen. 2010. *After Pluralism: Reimagining Religious Engagement*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Book Chapters

- Bielo, James S. 2016. "Creationist History-Making: Producing a Heterodox Past." In *Lost City, Found Pyramid: Understanding Alternative Archaeologies and Pseudoscientific Practices*, edited by J. J. Card and D. S. Anderson, 81-101. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Comaroff, Jean. 1996. "The Empire's Old Clothes: Fashioning the Colonial Subject." In *Cross-Cultural Consumption: Global Markets, Local Realities*, edited by David Howes, 19-38. London: Routledge.

Chapter in Multivolume Work

- Foucault, Michel. 2000. "Lives of Infamous Men." In *Power*, edited by James Faubion and translated by Robert Hurley, 157-77. Vol. 3 of *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954-1984*, edited by Paul Rabinow. New York: New Press. First published 1977.

Edited Volume

- Stoler, Ann, ed. 2013. *Imperial Debris: On Ruins and Ruination*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Translated Work

- Mauss, Marcel. 2016. *The Gift*. Edited and translated by Jane I. Guyer. Chicago: Hau Books. Distributed by University of Chicago Press. First published 1925.

Journal Articles

- Bessire, Lucas, and David Bond. 2014. "Ontological Anthropology and the Deferral of

- Critique.” *American Ethnologist* 41 (3): 440–56.
- Bialecki, Jon. 2016. “Apostolic Networks in the Third Wave of the Spirit: John Wimber and the Vineyard.” *Pneuma* 38 (1-2): 23–32.

Online Resources

- *Daser, Deniz. 2014. “AE Interviews Catherine Lutz (Brown University).” *American Ethnologist* website, May 9. Accessed [Month Day, Year].
<https://americanethnologist.org/features/interviews/ae-interviews-catherine-lutz-brown-university>

*Note that online references require an access date.

Multimedia Source

- Lemelson, Robert, dir. 2009. *40 Years of Silence: An Indonesian Tragedy*. Los Angeles: Elemental Productions. DVD.

Single Author and Coauthors

- Meyer, Birgit. 2010. “Aesthetics of Persuasion: Global Christianity and Pentecostalism's Sensational Forms.” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 109 (4): 741-63.
- Meyer, Birgit, and Annelies Moors. 2006. *Religion, Media, and the Public Sphere*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Multiple References by the Same Author

- Stout, Noelle. 2014. “Bootlegged: Unauthorized Circulation and the Dilemmas of Collaboration in the Digital Age.” *Visual Anthropology Review* 30 (2): 177–87.
- Stout, Noelle. 2015a. “Generating Home.” *Cultural Anthropology Online*, March 30. Accessed [Month Day, Year]. <http://culanth.org/fieldsights/655-generating-home>.
- Stout, Noelle. 2015b. “When a Yuma Meets Mama: Commodified Kin and the Affective Economies of Queer Tourism in Cuba.” *Anthropological Quarterly* 8 (33): 663–90.