

## **Honors College Research Theses**

A scholarly thesis is a substantial inquiry into a topic related to the student's major (or minor), that is based on research. Most Honors students in the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences complete a research thesis.

The topic and scope of the thesis inquiry will be determined in collaboration with the departmental thesis advisor (a professor from your major or minor department). In some fields, especially those in the natural sciences, engineering, and some social sciences, students join a faculty member's existing research endeavor. In these situations, a student's thesis project will be related to and partially determined by the priorities of the research group, especially in situations where a student requires supplies and equipment. In other fields, particularly in the humanities, students frequently pursue projects related to the advisor's area of expertise but not defined by the advisors' research.

Thesis research may include:

- 1) original creation and/or collection of data and evidence. For example, a student in the natural sciences may be in a lab carrying out experiments or in the field collecting data. Students in the social sciences may conduct focus groups, interviews, or surveys.
- 2) original work done with existing data set or body of evidence. For example, posing a question that can be answered using an already existing data set.
- 3) a carefully framed survey of criticism and scholarship on a particular question of key importance to a field. Students can think of this as an extended literature review, or a meta-analysis.