



HONORS IN ART PRACTICE: GUIDELINES & OVERVIEW

The Department of Art & Art History honors program is open to Art Practice Majors. To be considered for the honors program, a student must do the following:

1. Discuss their project and receive approval from a [faculty member](#) as thesis advisor.
2. Submit an [intent form](#) with a thesis advisor's signature to the Student Services Specialist **by Friday of Winter Quarter Finals Week.**
3. Complete at least five Art Practice courses at Stanford by the end of their junior year. Four must be completed by the end of winter quarter junior year.
4. Work with the thesis advisor and graduate mentor to develop a proposal.
5. Submit **an honors thesis exhibition project proposal, a proposed study plan, and an unofficial transcript** to the Student Services Specialist **by Friday of Spring Quarter Week 3.**

Project proposals and study plans must outline your proposed course schedule for the remainder of the junior and senior year.

6. Submit **artwork samples*** and **artwork descriptions**** through **SlideRoom by Friday of Spring Quarter Week 3.**

*Artwork Samples are submitted via SlideRoom. Please submit up to 10 jpegs of recent work scaled to 8" x 10", no larger than 1mb each or 5 minutes of video/audio clips.

**Sample Description Template – Title, date, medium, dimensions, description if necessary

HOW DO I APPLY?

Students wishing to do an honors exhibition must announce their plans by submitting an [Intent to Submit an Honors Thesis Exhibition Project Proposal](#) form signed by the thesis advisor by February 28th of their junior year. A thesis advisor need not be a student's academic advisor. **Proposals will not be considered from students who do not submit this form.**

Students must discuss their proposal with their thesis advisor throughout the proposal writing process. The beginning of Spring quarter is usually busy for everyone, and students who wait until after Spring break to discuss their projects with their advisors often are not able to get significant

feedback before the proposal due date. It is required that the thesis advisor be on campus and in-residence during the fall quarter of the candidate's senior year. It is highly recommended that they are on campus and in residence throughout the candidate's entire senior year. The faculty member teaching the year long Honors Seminar assigns a different faculty and graduate mentor each quarter.

The purpose of the honors thesis exhibition is to extend and deepen artwork students have done in Art Practice classes. The thesis exhibition is not an exploration of an area that the student has never studied before. The topic should have focus and clear parameters. It is expected that students have a solid background in their field of study prior to applying to the honors program. Exposure to a wide range of courses and familiarity with faculty will benefit you in this process.

Candidates must submit a short **honors thesis exhibition project proposal** (guidelines [below](#)) including artwork samples and description sheet. See [sample thesis proposals](#). Examples of past thesis exhibitions are available to interested students upon request to the Student Services Specialist.

This complete proposal must be submitted to the Student Services Specialist no later than the **Week 2 of Spring Quarter (April 11, 2025)** of the candidate's junior year.

Candidates must also submit a **proposed study plan** for the remainder of the junior and senior year. This should include courses to fulfill major requirements and 10 required honors thesis units in senior year.

Admission to the honors program is decided at the faculty meeting in May. An honors thesis exhibition requires much dedicated time and commitment. The Department of Art and Art History is looking for students and proposals that can take on this extra challenge. Committing to an honors thesis exhibition can be extremely rewarding not just professionally for students but also personally, intellectually, and artistically.

IMPORTANT DATES & DEADLINES

[See Website for Annually Updated Senior Year Deadlines.](#)

Finals Week, Winter Quarter	Art Practice Honors Intent Form due
Week 3, Spring Quarter	Art Practice Honors Exhibition Proposal, Proposed Study Plan, and unofficial transcript due
Early May	Students notified of faculty decisions

ELEMENTS OF THE HONORS THESIS PROPOSAL

1) A two-page **Honors Thesis Exhibition Project Proposal** description of the artwork/project, including an outline of research and goals signed by the thesis advisor:

A description that highlights the kinds of questions/issues you are interested in pursuing in relation to the defined topic in greater detail. Give more information about the mediums and materials you will use, why you have selected them, how they relate to one another, and the kinds of interesting questions they open up. What artists are you influenced by and will you be looking at while working on this body of work?

You may also want to discuss how you became interested in the topic in this section – did you start thinking about this as a result of a previous artwork you made? An exhibition you saw? An experience you had? Give a sense of how this project will help you to synthesize your interests and why it is important to you.

Preparation and Research: A brief discussion of the kind of research and techniques used to make the artwork that the project will require and how you intend to carry this out. You may ask the Art and Architecture Library a month in advance of your deadline for a workshop on how to best use Library resources.

Students should also discuss in this section the relevant course work/experiences they have had prior to their senior year that have helped to prepare them to pursue a year-long research project. If, for example, you have already started to think about your project in another artwork, an internship or a study abroad experience, it is helpful to indicate this here. This section is also a good place to show off other relevant skills –relevant work experiences like art internships, artist assistantships, residencies, skills you have been developing, etc.

2) Submit Artwork Samples and Artwork Sample Descriptions through SlideRoom:

- a) Artwork Samples: 10 JPEGs of recent work (scaled to 8"x 10", no larger than 1MB each or 5 minutes of video/audio clips. If you are submitting video/audio work only, you can submit up to 15 minutes of clips.)
- b) Artwork Sample Descriptions: Printed sheet listing each artwork and descriptions of submitted artwork (title, date, medium, dimensions, length if applicable, explanation if needed)
- c) You can include preparatory sketches of proposed artworks.
- d) Use the Slideroom description panel for each art work sample to give the faculty as much information as possible to understand the work: Title, date, medium, brief description.

3) Course plan for senior year

4) Copy of academic transcript

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I AM ACCEPTED TO THE PROGRAM?

Once admitted to the **honors thesis exhibition** program, students work with their thesis advisor to define the scope of the exhibition and to establish a research and production timetable. Students may request other faculty members to work with each quarter. Students should also meet with their advisor before the end of their junior year to discuss their topic and any summer research plans.

Many students dedicate the summer between junior and senior years to refining the topic and pursuing off-campus research including visiting art exhibitions worldwide, working as a studio assistant for an artist or working at a gallery/museum. Students may apply for major research grants to help finance trips or expenses relative to preparing the research for their honors thesis exhibition.

During their senior year, students must register for 7 units of ARTSTUDI 297 Honors Thesis Exhibition and 3 units of ARTSTUDI 297S AP HONORS SEMINAR, for a total of 10 units.

- 3 units total of ARTSTUDI 297 Honors Faculty Tutorial, which is independent study with their assigned faculty mentor. Enroll in 1 unit of ARTSTUDI 297 each quarter (Autumn, Winter, and Spring) with your faculty mentor assigned that quarter.
- 7 units total of ARTSTUDI 297S AP Honors Seminar which is a regular group meeting with the honors cohort and honors Faculty Director. Enroll in 3 units of ARTSTUDI 297S in the fall, and 2 units each in Winter and Spring

At the beginning of autumn quarter senior year, students must meet with their advisor to discuss expectations, guidelines, and the honors thesis exhibition timeline. Students are required to meet with their thesis advisor at least three times per quarter (more frequently is recommended). Students are required to meet with their graduate student advisor two times each quarter they are enrolled in an honor thesis exhibition.

Students will participate in group critiques each quarter with faculty and visiting artists from the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. By the end of fall quarter, students are expected to submit 3-10 new artworks, gallery layout and an outline/project narrative to both their faculty and graduate student advisor.

All artwork for the exhibition should be completed by the beginning of spring quarter to allow for scheduling of all honors thesis exhibitions in the gallery spaces during spring quarter. This time varies from installing in spring quarter week 1 to week 3 depending on the Gallery Manager's Exhibition schedule. **The final honors thesis exhibition should pose a series of questions and answer them visually. This should be a focused theme or concept and may be in a variety of mediums.** The artwork should be of the highest caliber. The number of artworks will depend on the medium(s) to which the student is working in and must be approved by your faculty thesis advisor. If a student is not meeting deadlines or attending required meetings, they may be dropped from the honors program.

Students and thesis advisors should plan their schedule of work so that the final exhibition is installed in a department gallery viewable by all members of the thesis exhibition committee while

the exhibition is up. The thesis advisor is the only faculty who assigns a letter grade, but all faculty advisors must approve the thesis exhibition for honors before the student is qualified to graduate with that distinction.

REQUIREMENTS

During their senior year, students must register for 6 units of ARTSTUDI 297 Honors Thesis Exhibition and 4 units of ARTSTUDI 297S AP HONORS SEMINAR, for a total of 10 units.

Students are required to enroll in 2 units of ARTSTUDI 297 and 1-2 units of ARTSTUDI 297S each quarter (Autumn, Winter, and Spring). Up to 4 units may count towards one of the six upper-level courses required for the major.

Students are expected to produce a cohesive body of work* for the Honors Exhibition on campus and work with the faculty member thesis curator and Gabriel Harrison the exhibitions manager. You will install your work with the support of the Exhibitions manager and gallery assistant or preparator.

*Faculty approval required on size, scope of project and number of works. For example, printmaking artwork might mean 10-20 prints while sculptural artwork might mean 5-10 sculptures depending on size, scale and technique

Honors students typically receive ~\$500 towards materials and purchases will be made once in the Autumn and once in the Winter Quarter. Students must work with the Honors Lab Manager to purchase materials around Week 2 of each quarter.

Keep in mind: Equipment cannot be purchased because all equipment purchased becomes Stanford property. Ebay is not allowed. Payments cannot be made with Paypal. The orders take one week to process. The materials will be shipped to McMurtry and delivered to the AG studio unless otherwise specified. Keep Lab Consumables in mind:

Honors students have access to all labs, so long that they have taken the required orientations.

- Examples of items included: Printer ink, chemistry, test prints (Digital Print Studio).
- Examples of items not included: rolls of paper, paint, wood, etc.

Additional Requirements

1. Honors Thesis Statement 3-5 pages in length with images of your work.
2. Participating in group critiques each quarter.
3. Meeting with advisor regularly (at least three times a quarter) and graduate mentor (at least two times a quarter).
4. Participating in Open Studios each quarter of Honors to receive outside feedback.
5. Applying for a grant or exhibition outside of Stanford University with your advisor's guidance.

6. Shared Studio space provided by Department for honors thesis exhibition students.
7. Attending Art Practice visiting artists Studio Lecture Series

THINGS TO CONSIDER

It is never too early to start thinking about an honors thesis exhibition.

The most successful projects usually develop out of a good student/advisor relationship that is developed over the course of one or two years. Get to know your professors early and talk to them about your interests.

Look at past proposals and theses.

Read through sample proposals and past examples of honors exhibitions to get a sense of the structure, organization and kinds of projects that have been successful in the past.

The Gallery Director keeps images of past exhibitions and is happy to provide them on request. The class of [2020](#) and [2021](#) had online exhibitions so check the website for these.

Work with your advisor.

It is important to stay in contact with your thesis advisor throughout the process. Your advisor is an important resource to guide you through your thesis. Your advisor will be assigning a grade and determining if you graduate with honors. If you do not meet with them regularly, they cannot provide feedback on your thesis.

Be as precise as possible about the overall structure of your project in your proposal.

The faculty is interested in seeing that your project is do-able over the course of a year (not as much time as it sounds!) and the more information you can give about your project the better. Remember that your proposal is not a binding document – your project can (and will) change dramatically over the course of your research. Your job at this point is to give the best sense of where you see your project going as of spring quarter of your junior year.

Be enthusiastic!

Ideally the senior honors thesis exhibition should be a culminating experience that brings together your interests as they have developed throughout your time at Stanford. Let your interest and excitement about the project come through in your proposal.

ART PRACTICE HONORS THESIS PAPER GUIDELINES

General Concept

The thesis paper is a major component of the overall requirements for the Honors in Art Practice. This paper is intended to address the development of the student's work over the past one year in the program. It is expected that the paper will disclose fundamental aspects of the work, including some, not necessarily all, of the following:

Underlying concepts, formal issues, matters of style and process, philosophical schema, influences (from experience, other artists, theoretical critique), relation to community, history, politics, art movements, media, popular/high-culture, research processes, cross-disciplinary connections.

What is your ideation and visualization process relative to actual production? What texts have been relevant to your practice? What do you project as the trajectory of your work in its future direction?

Formatting

The paper should be 3-5 pages of writing, with citations where appropriate. Inclusion of images to assist and expand issues presented in the text is encouraged. The form of the text must follow standard style, MLA Style

Resources are available in the Art Library: *The Essentials of MLA Style: A Guide to Documentation for Writers of Research Papers*, *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* *The Chicago Manual of Style*