

HONORS HANDBOOK

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHAPEL HILL
UNC PUBLIC POLICY
2024-2025



COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Public Policy

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Honors Thesis Program Description

A Senior Honors Thesis option is available to UNC Public Policy majors who have demonstrated their ability to produce independent research. The honors thesis program provides students with the opportunity to pursue a substantial, original policy-oriented research project under the supervision of a faculty advisor over a two-semester period.

Students who wish to undertake a senior honors thesis project must have a cumulative, overall grade point average of 3.30 or higher, and a GPA of at least 3.50 in the core public policy courses in order to be admitted to the honors sequence. Students must maintain these minimums in order to progress to the second semester of thesis work and to graduate with Honors. They should also have completed at least four core courses in the public policy major including the prerequisites for PLCY 691H (PLCY 460 and PLCY 581). Core public policy courses include PLCY 210/210H, 220/220H, 310 (or ECON 410), 340/340H, 460, and 581. In addition, students should have a written recommendation from at least one faculty member in Public Policy agreeing to serve as their thesis advisor.

Students begin the program by taking PLCY 691H, Honors in Public Policy, in the fall semester of their senior year. During this course, students will work under the direction of their thesis advisors to conduct their research and complete the first three chapters of their thesis. At the end of the first semester, the PLCY 691H instructor and thesis adviser will evaluate students' progress and determine whether they should continue their projects. If the first three chapters are approved by the thesis advisor and the student has maintained the GPA standards, the student may continue thesis research the following semester in PLCY 692H.

The honors thesis provides a total of six (6) credit hours. Coursework must be completed in two consecutive semesters. In addition to completing a thesis, honors thesis students are expected to elect a field concentration. The completion of 691H provides 3 credits towards the policy field (concentration). For May graduates, the honors thesis must be submitted to UNC Public Policy and approved by early April. For December graduates, the honors thesis must be submitted to UNC Public Policy and approved by early November. Students may register and receive credit for only one semester of PLCY 692H.

Students who fail to meet the GPA standard at the end of the first semester may not enroll in PLCY 692H or continue as candidates for graduation with honors or highest honors. They will receive graded course credit for the work completed in PLCY 691H and may, at the discretion of their thesis advisor, continue their projects by way of independent study. Students who continue on that basis are not eligible to graduate with honors or highest honors. Students who do not complete PLCY 692H must complete the Public Policy Capstone (PLCY 698) in order to earn a degree in Public Policy.

Students interested in participating in the Honors Thesis Program should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Student Services Officer to submit an application prior to registering for enrollment in PLCY 691H.

Identifying a Faculty Advisor

Students interested in pursuing a thesis must obtain the support of a faculty member in Public Policy who will chair the thesis committee, supervise the student's work, and serve as the instructor for PLCY 692H. Advisors must have a permanent or adjunct appointment in Public Policy. Tenured and tenure-track faculty, postdoctoral fellows with teaching appointments, and fixed-term faculty who have been teaching in UNC Public Policy for at least one year may serve as senior honors thesis advisors. Graduate students may not serve as thesis advisors or as instructors for senior honors thesis courses. Due to the number of contact hours required, faculty members who are on research and study leave during your senior year may not serve as your primary advisor.

Each thesis committee must have one additional member to serve as a second reader. The second committee member may be a faculty member in any department at UNC-Chapel Hill, a Ph.D. candidate in Public Policy (with special permission), or a faculty member at another accredited college or university, as deemed appropriate and approved by the thesis advisor.

Research Funding

Honors Carolina (<http://honorscarolina.unc.edu/research/senior-honors-thesis/>) offers financial awards to support senior honors thesis research. There are two funding cycles per year, with deadlines announced by the Honors Carolina office. The Call for Applications is distributed to academic units early each semester. Students must apply through UNC Public Policy and may not submit applications directly to Honors Carolina. These awards, up to \$500, may be used to cover any legitimate cost directly connected to a thesis project: laboratory equipment and supplies, computer software and hardware, travel, artistic supplies, books and periodicals not available through normal library sources, illustrations and duplication, etc.

Funding is also available through the Office for Undergraduate Research (<https://our.unc.edu/>). The OUR supports Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowships (SURFs). SURF applicants should plan to engage in undergraduate research for at least nine weeks, working a minimum of 20 hours per week, during the summer. Projects must be supervised by a UNC faculty research advisor, and additional collaboration with a postdoctoral fellow or graduate student mentor is encouraged. Students who have received a SURF award in previous years are not eligible to apply. Students who receive funding to participate in other summer experiences may not accept SURF funding for the same summer. In addition, seniors who will be graduating prior to the completion of the summer fellowship are not eligible to apply.

The Duncan MacRae Jr. Honors Thesis Grant is available from UNC Public Policy. For more information on that award, please see the selection guidelines in Appendix C.

Evaluation for Honors or Highest Honors

Upon the completion of their projects and approval by their thesis advisor, students should schedule an oral defense of their thesis with their committee. Honors thesis committee members have three options following the oral defense:

- 1) they may award only course credit for a student's thesis work;
- 2) they may recommend that the student graduate with honors; or
- 3) they may recommend that the student graduate with highest honors.

Theses recommended for honors or highest honors will be evaluated by UNC Public Policy's Undergraduate Affairs Committee, which will make the final decision on awarding highest honors. To graduate with honors or highest honors in public policy, students must have an overall GPA of at least 3.300 and at least a 3.500 GPA in core public policy courses. Students must also meet all requirements and deadlines set forth for honors by Honors Carolina. Students who complete a thesis but do not achieve the GPA requirement will be recognized for completing the thesis but cannot graduate with honors or highest honors.

Highest honors will be awarded only to students who have met the most rigorous standards of scholarly excellence. The University recognizes students' overall academic achievement by graduating them with distinction or highest distinction. Honors and highest honors are awarded more specifically for outstanding scholarly achievement within a specific field of study. In light of this fact, Public Policy will consider a student's GPA within the major (not their overall GPA) as a factor in awarding highest honors.

Honors Carolina Guidelines

For additional guidelines from Honors Carolina, see

https://rise.articulate.com/share/SwgtXD8pSygVeuhR5KgpxGg6zh94Oa43#/lessons/Qp64R_zn42Hr4gyCbNITvp_RAfcB6FJa.

Honors Thesis Deadlines

691H Fall Semester Deadlines

DATE	DUE
August	Complete Human Subjects Certification (https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/#CITICOURSE)
August 29	Submit Human Subjects Certification to Student Services Officer
Sept. 13	IRB Application (including data collection instruments) due
Sept. 16	Honors Research Grant Applications Due to Student Services Officer by 4 pm
October	Complete Chapter 1 (Key Question and Significance)
Oct. 16	Submit IRB approval or exemption to Student Services Officer
October	Complete Chapter 2 (Literature Review)
November	Complete Chapter 3 (Methods and Data Collection)
December 4	Submit revised Chapters 1-3 to PLCY 691H Instructor and Honors Thesis Advisor

692H Spring Semester Deadlines

DATE	DUE
January	Complete Data Collection
February	Complete Data Analysis
February	Complete Chapter 4 (Results)
March	Complete Chapter 5 (Conclusions and Recommendations)
Late March	Defend thesis (20 minute presentation required). Students should defend their thesis no later than April 1.
April 1	Submit draft of theses recommended for Highest Honors or consideration for Best Thesis Award. Due to Student Services Officer by 5:00 pm. Thesis should be submitted as a single pdf document titled with the last name and year of graduation (e.g., 2020_Collins).
April 4	Honors Thesis Defense Reporting Form Due to Student Services Officer by 5:00 pm. This form must be submitted by the student's thesis committee. Students who have not completed their defense and have not been recommended for Honors by this date will not receive recognition in the University Commencement program.
April 29	Submit final thesis. Submissions are due to the Carolina Digital Repository (CDR) by the last day of class. The University Library will catalog electronic theses and make them available to the public.

Advice for Honors Students (Frequently Asked Questions)

How will a student's Core Public Policy GPA be calculated?

For entry into PLCY 691H, the core public policy GPA will be calculated based on an average of the following classes: PLCY 210/210H, 220/220H, 310 (or ECON 310 or 410), 340/340H, 460, and 581. If you have not taken one or more of these classes, the GPA will be calculated across the core courses that you have taken. However, you must have completed at least PLCY 460, 581, and two other core courses. To convert letter grades to GPA, use the following: A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0.

Can a student expecting to graduate in December complete an honors thesis?

Yes. If you are a student who expects to graduate early, you may enroll in PLCY 691H in the Spring semester of your junior year and PLCY 692H in the Fall of your senior year with permission of the DUS. You will still need to have met all the requirements for enrolling in PLCY 691H and 692H.

When should students begin to develop their senior thesis and collect data for their projects?

Students should begin thinking about the design of their thesis in PLCY 581. Most research projects will draw on existing secondary datasets. These projects can easily be completed within the time frame provided by PLCY 691H and 692H. A few students wish to design projects requiring primary data collection. Primary data collection requires considerably more time and may require funding. Students considering primary data collection are strongly encouraged to identify a thesis advisor early in their junior year. Students expecting to collect their own data should also plan on spending time designing their study and collecting data prior to their senior year. Students who plan to collect data for their thesis must complete their IRB application prior to beginning any data collection.

How do students planning to collect data for their research obtain IRB approval of an honors thesis research project?

To obtain IRB approval, students must first complete human subject training. Human subjects training can be completed at any time via the web-based CITI module for Group 2, Social and Behavioral Research, available at <https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/>. After completing human subjects training, and **before** beginning data collection, students must complete an "Application for Approval of Human Subjects Research" (see <https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/online-submission/>). This application requires the student to have a complete research proposal, which the faculty advisor must review before submission to the IRB. Theses that do not require primary data collection may be exempt from IRB approval; to determine if a student's project is exempt, the student must complete the IRB application.

For an overview of the research process, see <https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/submission-instructions/>.

How often should Honors thesis students meet with their advisors?

Students enrolled in 691H and 692H should meet with their primary thesis advisor at least every 2 weeks. All research designs and analysis must ultimately be approved by the primary thesis advisor. **Please notify the Director of Undergraduate Studies if your primary advisor is not available to meet with you on a regular basis.**

Where can students find additional assistance with qualitative and quantitative data analysis?

The Odum Institute for Research in Social Science provides additional training and consultation for students analyzing survey data or qualitative interview data. For more information on the services available, please see <https://odum.unc.edu/>.

I've completed PLCY 691H but no longer want to continue with my honors thesis. Can I enroll in PLCY 698?

Yes. Some students who complete PLCY 691H decide not to continue into PLCY 692H. Students who complete PLCY 691H receive credit towards the completion of their concentration for this course. Students should only continue with PLCY 692H if they have completed all the requirements of 691H and continue to be interested in finalizing their thesis research. If it does not look like you will be able to complete your thesis research in the time provided or if other coursework, school activities, or family activities must take priority, you should not continue into PLCY 692H.

PLCY 691H

Course Description

PLCY 691H is designed as an independent study to provide guidance and instruction on researching and writing an honors thesis to students in the UNC Public Policy Honors Program. The course is writing intensive. You will be expected to provide drafts of your chapters to your faculty adviser throughout the semester; you will be given substantial feedback on the content and quality of your writing; and you will be asked to revise your chapters based on the feedback provided by your faculty adviser. You will be asked to present your work to your faculty adviser and second reader. By the end of the semester, all students will have written their research plan, applied for IRB approval if needed, and drafted the first three chapters of their thesis.

Pre-Requisites: PLCY 460; PLCY 581.

Additional Requirement(s): Overall GPA of 3.3; PLCY core GPA of 3.5; Completion of at least 4 core public policy courses; completion of application for admission to PLCY 691H.

Credits: Students will receive a maximum of 3 credits for PLCY 691H and may not repeat PLCY 691H for additional credit. PLCY 691H will count as an elective course for the PLCY major. Students will enroll in PLCY 692H in the spring semester.

Evaluation

At the end of the first semester of senior honors thesis work, faculty advisers will evaluate students' progress and determine whether they will continue their projects. Students making satisfactory progress will be enrolled in the second semester of senior honors thesis work. Students whose performance is unsatisfactory will receive a permanent grade for the work completed and be enrolled in PLCY 698 the following semester.

Students enrolled in PLCY 691H will receive a grade based on their performance throughout the semester, assigned by the course instructor in consultation with their faculty adviser. Faculty vary slightly in their assessment of the grade; discuss expectations with your faculty adviser at the start of the semester.

Honor Code and Plagiarism

You are expected to complete all analyses for your thesis and undertake the actual writing of your thesis entirely independently, apart from class-based writing workshops.

Plagiarism of published work is a violation of the honor code (<http://honor.unc.edu/>). If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, please speak with your thesis adviser or ask for assistance from the writing center. Plagiarism is a serious offense which can result in failure of the course and suspension from the University. To make sure that you understand what plagiarism is, please read <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/plagiarism/>. Also see the following link for an animated tutorial on plagiarism that is recommended for UNC students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/plagiarism>

PLCY 692H

Pre-Requisites: PLCY 691H

Additional Requirement(s): Overall GPA of 3.3; PLCY core GPA of 3.5; recommendation for continuation from your thesis advisor.

Introduction

PLCY 692H is designed as an independent study with your faculty advisor to provide guidance and instruction to students in UNC Public Policy's honors program in researching and writing an honors thesis. The course is writing and presentation intensive. You will be expected to provide drafts of your chapters to your faculty advisor throughout the semester; you will be given substantial feedback on the content and quality of your writing; and will be asked to revise your chapters based on the feedback provided by your faculty advisor. You will also be asked to present your work to your faculty advisor and second reader. You will receive feedback on your presentation skills and opportunities to further develop these skills. By the end of the semester, all students will have written and defended their honors thesis.

Meeting Times

Each honors thesis student and faculty advisor are expected to designate a meeting time of at least 1 hour every other week.

Grades

Students enrolled in 692H will receive a grade based on their performance throughout the semester. Faculty may vary slightly in their assessment of the grade and this should be discussed with your faculty advisor at the start of the semester. In general, grades will be determined as follows:

Due Dates

Please see the appropriate section of the Honors Handbook for due dates for each thesis chapter and other materials. Your advisor may set additional deadlines for each component of your research.

Recommendation for Honors

Based on your performance throughout the semester and the quality of your final thesis, your faculty advisor and second reader will recommend to the Undergraduate Affairs Committee that you receive: (1) Highest Honors, (2) Honors, or (3) An Acknowledgement of Completion of 692H. Completion of a thesis is only one of the criteria used to determine whether you will receive highest honors or honors. In addition, the Undergraduate Affairs Committee will review your transcript and evaluate your GPA in public policy core classes.

Suggested Thesis Format

There is no single format or organizational structure that is appropriate for all possible Senior Honors Theses. However, below is one example of a thesis outline that illustrates the kind of organization essential to the completion of a coherent, cohesive project. Note that this is a model of thesis organization, not a research guide. Also note that the organization of your own thesis may differ, reflecting the type of topic you undertake. You should consult your thesis advisor for guidance on the proper model of organization for your particular project.

Length

There is no standard length for a thesis. You are not given credit for being overly verbose. The point is not to write something long but to make a unique contribution to the field and to communicate your research clearly, concisely, and effectively. Typically, senior theses will be between 40-100 pages including all tables and references.

Abstract

Provide at most a 1-page summary (225 words) of your work. It should include 1-2 sentences each on Significance, Specific Aims, Methods, Results, and Conclusions.

Acknowledgement

Thank the people who have helped you with your thesis.

Table of Contents

This should list each Chapter title and major subtitles within the chapters. It should provide page numbers for the beginning of each chapter and sub-section. The references section and appendices should also be noted here.

Table of Figures

This should provide the number, title, and page location of each Figure in your thesis.

Chapter 1: Introduction, Key Questions and Significance

This section will describe the policy context, primary hypotheses or research questions to be addressed by the thesis, and the organization of the thesis.

Key Questions to Consider

- Out of what policy debate or issues does your topic grow?
- Why is the research problem a significant one in terms of what we already know or don't know?
- What contributions will the study make to public policy making?
- What difference might the research results make for choosing alternative courses of action?
- What are the principal questions to be answered/hypotheses to be tested in this study?
- How will you organize your thesis? How are the chapters laid out?

Chapter 2: Background and Conceptual Framework

This section is what most of you have been referring to as a literature review. However, it may be more helpful to think of this as a background section leading up to a conceptual framework for understanding your approach to the specific aims outlined in Chapter 1.

The idea of a literature review is not to summarize existing research. Instead, you must analyze existing research to identify gaps, missing links, and oversights in the existing research. This helps you defend your choice of questions and tell the reader more about the contribution that you will be making to the field. You will also be analyzing the existing research to identify appropriate methods for studying your questions and to develop a conceptual framework or causal model for your research.

The primary objectives of this section are as follows:

- To identify the relevant conceptual and empirical literature that will support your research questions/hypotheses;
- To provide a logical and comprehensible framework for the conduct of the study; to help establish the specific, hypothetical relationships to be tested or investigated;
- To provide guidance on the most appropriate research methods including means for defining and measuring relevant concepts and variables, etc.

Key Questions to Consider

- What general information does the reader need to know to understand your topic? Don't overwhelm them with too much but give them enough to understand the issues.
- What prior studies have been conducted, or articles/monographs/books written about the problem, and what has been learned that is relevant for designing your study?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of prior research?
- What concepts, empirical questions, methods and approaches are suggested by this literature?
- How can this material be used to provide a "frame" for your study? What factors should affect the outcome that you are interested in? How are these factors measured?

Chapter 3. Research Design: Methods and Data Collection

This chapter should describe how the study was conducted, and depending on the method chosen, should include such issues as operationally defining relevant variables, defining the study population and describing the sampling procedure, describing the sources of data including any "instruments" (i.e., questionnaires, interview guides) used to collect data, introducing the methods that will be used to analyze the data/information collected, and indicating how the results of the analysis will be used to answer/test the questions/hypotheses.

Key Questions to Consider

- How will you collect data (qualitative or quantitative) to test your questions/hypotheses? If you are interviewing individuals, you should provide a copy of your questionnaire(s) in an Appendix and refer to that Appendix in your text.
- How will you measure each of the factors identified in Chapter 2 as contributing to your outcome?

- How will you analyze the data you've collected?
- What are the key limitations and/or advantages of the methods you have chosen to use?

Chapter 4: Results or Findings

Here you should display and analyze your empirical results and—if appropriate—perform relevant statistical tests. Also, you should discuss the meaning, strength and weaknesses of your findings, and relate your findings to those of earlier studies.

The results chapter should be organized by major themes. In other words, you should group your findings together. You don't want to provide an endless, unorganized stream of results. You want to make 3-5 major points about what you have learned.

If much of your work was done using qualitative interviews: You do not want to provide a complete transcript of your interviews. You need to analyze your interviews for major themes. Then, you might show data on the characteristics of the respondents that you've interviewed, how many respondents brought up a given theme/issue, or how many of the respondents agreed or disagreed about a particular issue. You can then provide representative quotes. You want to look for quotes that illustrate your specific point well. Too many quotes overwhelm the reader and distract from the analytic content.

If your work was done using statistical analysis of a dataset, you want to prepare tables on (1) means of the variables used in your analysis and (2) regression results. You should then walk the reader through the primary relationships between your independent variables and your dependent variables.

PLEASE REVIEW THE STYLE GUIDE (BELOW) FOR GOOD TABLES.

Tables must be clearly labeled with a number and title. They must be referred to in the text and they must include information on the source of the data. They should be self-explanatory. The reader should be able to look at them and understand them without reading the text.

Chapter 5: Recommendations and Conclusions

This is where you sum up your findings in a nice neat package. You want the reader to walk away with a sense of accomplishment and 3-5 main take-home points.

Key Questions to Consider

- How are your findings related to your questions/hypotheses?
- To what extent were your research questions answered/hypotheses confirmed? What were the limitations of your findings?
- How generalizable are your results? What potential biases/errors may have been contributed by methods of data collection or measurement? Are there "rival" or alternative hypotheses that can explain your findings?
- What are the possible policy implications of your findings?
- Based upon your study, do you have any suggestions for further research in this area?

References

Throughout your thesis, you must cite key ideas and facts. The failure to properly cite and reference previous research results in plagiarism and is a violation of the honor code. To be sure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism, please review <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/plagiarism/>.

Throughout your text your citations should follow the APA author-date citation format (see <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/citing-information/apa-sample>). Your references should also follow the APA reference guidelines. The important idea to keep in mind about documenting sources is that they must supply full bibliographic information so that the reader who wishes to do so can quickly confirm a point under discussion. “Proper form” in documentation is essential to the efficient and uniform accomplishment of this task. It is not a matter of good taste, but of scholarly obligation.

The key to making this form of documentation work is the appropriate and accurate structure of the bibliography. Here are some basic rules:

- All items in the bibliography are entered in alphabetical order according to the last name of the (first) author (note that bibliographic items are not numbered).
- Multiple entries for the same author are entered chronologically by year of publication.
- Multiple entries of the same author in the same year are distinguished by the use of letters (a, b, c, etc...) attached to the year of publication in the text and in the bibliography.

Sample References

Adams, W. (ed.) (1990) *The Structure of American Industry*, New York: Macmillan.

Coase, R. (1960) The problem of social cost, *Journal of Law and Economics* 3 (1): 1-44.

Dill, D. D. (1992a). Administration: Academic. In B. R. Clark and G. Neave (eds.) *The Encyclopedia of Higher Education*, Vol. 3. Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Dill, D. D. (1992b). Quality by design: Towards a framework for academic quality management. In J. Smart (ed.), *Higher Education: Handbook of Theory and Research*, Vol. VIII. New York: Agathon Press.

Kazemzadeh, F., Schacher, M. and Steube, W. (1994) *International Comparison of Higher Education Statistical Indicators: France, Germany, Great Britain, Netherlands*, Hannover: HIS.

Ko, S. (1993) *The Incidence of High Technology Start-ups and Spin-offs in a Technology-Oriented Branch Plant Complex*, Chapel Hill, NC: Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina, at Chapel Hill.

Lindblom, C. E. (1977) *Politics and Markets: The World's Political-Economic Systems*, New York: Basic Books.

Luger, M. I. and Goldstein, H. A. (1991) *Technology in the Garden: Research Parks and Regional Economic Development*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

National Center for Education Statistics (1994) *The Condition of Education*, Washington, DC: United States Department of Education.

OECD (1993) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*, Paris: OECD.

Ratchford, T. (1994) *New Challenges in Research Funding: Is There a Need for a New Social Contract?* Paper presented at conference on Strategies for National Support of Basic Research: An International Comparison, Jerusalem, October.

Sirbu, M. A. et al. (1976) *The Formation of a Technology-Oriented Complex: Lessons from North America and European Experiences*, Cambridge, MA: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Center for Policy Alternatives.

Smelser, N. (1995) Private communication.

Appendices

All appendices should be placed AFTER the reference section of the thesis.

Additional Style Guidelines

In-Text Citations

All citations to articles, books, monographs, newspapers or other forms of written and oral communication are to be identified at appropriate places in the text by the last name of the author, year of publication, and, if direct quotation or paraphrasing is involved, by the relevant page number(s), all in parentheses as in (Lindblom, 1977: 45). Subsequent citations of the same source will be dealt with in the same way as the first citation.

Sample Citations

- If the author's name appears in the text, follow it with the year in parentheses, e.g., "As Lindblom (1977) argues,...."
- If the author's name is not in the text, insert the author's last name and the year, separated by a comma in parentheses, e.g., "The contest between politics and markets (Lindblom, 1977) has existed for several hundred years...."
- If more than one source is cited on a single point, give name and year for each, but separate the sources with a semicolon within the parentheses, e.g., (Ko, 1993; Luger and Goldstein, 1991; Sirbu, et. al, 1976). As this example also illustrates, multiple authors should be cited in alphabetical order.
- In case of multiple authorship, give the last names of the authors and the year. If there are more than two authors, you may use "et al." as a substitution for the additional authors' names (see previous example for both situations).
- If there is reference to more than one work by the same author in the same year, distinguish them by the use of letters (a, b, etc.) attached to the year of publication in the text and the Bibliography, e.g., (Dill, 1992a).
- The page reference (: number) must be given every time you quote or paraphrase a source, e.g., (Luger and Goldstein, 1991: 25).
- If no author is given, and an agency or other identifiable group is responsible for the publication, use the agency or group name as author, e.g., (OECD, 1995).
- If the word pattern identifying an author is excessively complex or long, and if there are a number of references to such a source, it is acceptable (even desirable) following the first citation to use a shortened form of the name, so long as it is clear from the shortened form what is the reference, e.g., (Realizing our Potential [ROP], 1993).
- Report your source even if it is not the original source. Occasionally you will want to use a quotation, concept, or item of information from one source whose author cited the material from another source, e.g., Clark, 1983; cited in Dill, 1992a: 40). The source you use must appear in your Bibliography.
- In citing newspapers use the title of the article in place of an author (History is Politics, 1991). If the article has a by-line you can use the author's name directly, e.g., Thatcher, 1991) and include the article in the Bibliographical entry along with the newspaper source, e.g., Thatcher M. (1991) History is Politics, *Times Higher Education Supplement* (April 19): 28.

Footnotes

Footnotes should be numbered consecutively within chapters. Since you will not need footnotes for references if you use the author-date method, notes should be reserved for descriptive or explanatory purposes. These are used to provide additional information or comment not deemed appropriate for the main text. In general, be parsimonious in the use of descriptive or explanatory footnotes. Try to accomplish the needed explanation or description in the text of the paper.

Tables and Figures

Tables and figures should be numbered in separate series with Arabic numbers, e.g., Table 1, Table 2, etc., Figure 1, Figure 2, etc. At the end of every table or figure you should indicate the source(s) regardless of whether or not it is mentioned in the text. These sources should also appear in the reference section of the paper. An example of a figure and table appear below.

TABLE 1. Percentage of Higher Education Income from Private Sources

	1980	1985	1990	1991
Canada	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14
France	9	10	11	12
Germany	5	7	9	n.a.
Great Britain	10	13	20	20
Ireland	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	14
Netherlands	3	9	17	n.a.
Spain	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	18
U.S.A.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	44

SOURCE: OECD, 1993.

Sample Title Page

HONORS THESIS TITLE

By
(Student's Name)

Honors Thesis
(Student's Major Department)
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

(date)

Approved:

(Student's Chair)

(Second Reader)

Guidelines for Submission of Thesis

College of Arts and Sciences Requirements (see honorscarolina.unc.edu)

Students will submit the final version of their thesis electronically via the Carolina Digital Repository (CDR). Submissions are due by the last day of class in the semester in which students complete their thesis, which should provide ample time for any minor edits suggested by the defense committee. The University Library will catalog electronic theses and make them available to the public.

Students should follow these steps to submit their completed thesis to the CDR:

1. Visit the CDR homepage at <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/> and click on the “Student Papers” icon.
2. Select “Undergraduate Honors Thesis” from the menu and click the “Create Work” button.
3. Click the “Add files” button at the top of the page to upload your thesis.
4. Fill out the form with information about your thesis. Be sure to select the correct Affiliation from the drop-down menu. The department that you select here will generate an automated email to your department. For more information about the review process, contact Honors Carolina at honorscarolina@unc.edu.
5. Select a visibility option on the right side of the page. The settings available to you are determined by Honors Carolina. If you would like different settings to be applied, contact Honors Carolina at honorscarolina@unc.edu for authorization.
6. Check the box next to “I have read and agree to the Deposit Agreement”
7. Click “save.”

Each student’s thesis will be held in the CDR until that student’s graduation date, when Honors Carolina will clear the thesis for online publication. Once published, theses will be publicly accessible via the [Carolina Digital Repository website](#).

Students may request a one- or two-year delayed release of their work via the CDR. Such requests must be submitted in writing to honorscarolina@unc.edu before the last day of class in the semester of submission.

Additional Requirements for Submission to UNC Public Policy

- Times New Roman, 12-point font should be used throughout
- All pages should be numbered sequentially
- APA-style author-date citation formats should be used
- All paragraphs should be double spaced and the first line indented
- Chapter titles should be centered and bolded
- First Heading should be left aligned and bolded
- Second Heading should be underlined
- Third Heading should be indented and italicized

Appendix A: Application Form

HONORS THESIS APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT INTO 691H

Instructions: Please submit this form and the required attachments (your transcript and research plan) to the Public Policy Students Services Officer by **April 1 (rising seniors only)**. We prefer that you submit your documents electronically, but hard copies are also acceptable.

Name (First, Middle, Last): _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

PID: _____ **Expected date of graduation:** _____

Primary Major: _____

Additional Major(s) or Minor(s): _____

Field Concentration in Public Policy: _____

1.0 Completion of Core Public Policy Courses: Enrollment in PLCY 691H requires completion of PLCY 460, PLCY 581 and at least 2 additional core public policy course. Please check each of the courses you have completed and attach an unofficial copy of your transcript that shows the grades you've received in each course.

Both Core Required:

PLCY 460 Research Design Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

PLCY 581 Quantitative Analysis Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

At least 2 of the Following Core Required:

PLCY 210 Policy Innovation and Analysis Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

PLCY 220 Politics Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

PLCY 340 Justice Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

PLCY 310/ECON 410 Microeconomics Grade: _____ Semester taken: _____

Current Core Public Policy GPA¹: _____ (3.5 GPA minimum required)

Current Overall GPA: _____ (3.3 GPA minimum required)

¹ To convert letter grades to GPA, use the following: A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, B+ = 3.3, B = 3.0, B- = 2.7, C+ = 2.3, C = 2.0, C- = 1.7, D+ = 1.3, D = 1.0 (see <https://registrar.unc.edu/academic-services/grades/how-to-calculate-your-grade-point-average/>).

2.0 Research Plan: Please attach a brief research plan with answers to the questions below. Your answers should be well written, clear, and include specific responses to the following questions:

- 2.1 **Personal Statement:** How will completing the honors thesis process help you achieve academic, personal, or professional goals? (150 words or less)
- 2.2 **Policy Topic:** Describe the policy and research context surrounding the general policy topic in which you are interested. (150 words or less)
- 2.3 **Specific Aims:** What is your research question? (150 words or less)
- 2.4 **Significance:** What makes your research question important? How will your research contribute new information with policy implications? (150 words or less)
- 2.5 **Data:** What data will you use to answer your research question? If primary data, describe a clear plan for data collection. If secondary data, describe in detail the source(s) and variables you will. (200 words or less)

3.0 Human Research Ethics Training

Nearly all thesis research (even research using secondary data) requires that students complete human subjects training. To complete human subjects training, please go to <https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/training/#CITICOURSE>.

Have you completed UNC’s Human Research Ethics Training?

- YES. Please attach a copy of your certification. To print out a copy, go to https://acap.research.unc.edu/research_training/?event=administration.certificates.pdgCertSelectTraining.
- NO. Please complete your training and provide a copy of your certification to the Student Services Officer by **September 1**.

4.0 IRB Approval

Some research involving secondary data analysis and most research involving primary data collection requires IRB approval. Read the Review Process Overview (<https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/submission-instructions/>). You **must** receive IRB approval or exemption before beginning data collection.

Have you already received IRB approval or exemption?

- YES. Please attach a copy of your IRB approval or exemption letter.
- NO. NO. I understand that I must receive IRB approval or exemption before beginning data collection, and I have spoken to my advisor about the IRB process. If you have not yet received IRB approval, please provide the Student Services Officer with a copy of your IRB approval or exemption by **October 15. Students without IRB approval of their projects may not continue into PLCY 692H.**

5.0 Student Acknowledgements

- Completing an honors thesis requires significant dedication over at least a 12-month period. Students preparing a senior thesis should expect to spend 15-20 hours per week developing their thesis. Therefore, some students may choose to reduce their course load and engagement in other extracurricular activities, especially in the Spring of their senior year.
- The completion of a senior thesis is necessary but not sufficient for graduation with honors. Students must maintain at least a 3.3 overall GPA and a 3.5 GPA in their core public policy courses; the student’s advisor must recommend the senior thesis for honors; and, based on the students’ overall record, the faculty of UNC Public Policy must vote to confer honors or highest honors.
- Students graduating in May must defend their thesis by the end of March. To allow time for review, a final draft should be submitted to your thesis advisor and second reader two weeks prior to your defense. Students will submit the final version of their thesis electronically via the Carolina Digital Repository by the last day of class.

I, _____, have read and understand these acknowledgements.

Student’s Signature

Date

6.0 Faculty Advisor Recommendation

Proposed Thesis Advisor: _____

Please provide your proposed advisor with a copy of this application and your research plan. In addition, please ask him/her to complete the recommendation form below. If you need assistance identifying an advisor please speak with the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

7.0 Director of Honors Program/DUS Approval: _____
Signature and Date

**UNC PUBLIC POLICY
HONORS THESIS ADVISOR RECOMMENDATION FORM**

Student's Name: _____

Advisor's Name: _____

Instructions: The student named above has requested your supervision of their honors thesis. The honors thesis requires a 9-12 month commitment to work with the student and meet on a regular basis during the Fall and Spring semesters of their Senior year. During the Fall and Spring semesters, the student will enroll in an independent honors research study with you (PLCY 691H and 692H). Prior to enrolling in 692H, students are expected to have completed a research proposal, obtained Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval or exemption for their research proposals, and drafted the first three chapters of their proposed thesis. These chapters describe the aims of the research, summarize its significance to the field, and critique the relevant literature. To complete a thesis, students must be highly motivated with a strong capacity to work independently and meet deadlines. In addition, completion of a thesis requires excellent analytic and writing skills. Students who are not fully prepared to complete a thesis should be directed to enroll in PLCY 698.

How strongly do you recommend this student for participation in the honors thesis sequence (circle one)?

Strongly
Recommend

Recommend

Weakly
Recommend

Do Not
Recommend

Please review a copy of the student's research plan and provide a brief assessment of the student relative to others in Public Policy. In your review, consider the student's:

(1) Intellectual ability, (2) Motivation, (3) Imagination and creativity, (4) Ability in oral expression, (5) Writing ability, (6) Research aptitude, and (7) Attention to detail.

Appendix B: Defense Reporting Form

CONFIDENTIAL REPORT

This form is confidential and should be submitted directly to the UNC Public Policy Student Services Officer. **This form is a recommendation only.** Please advise students that your recommendation does not confer honors or highest honors. Students must meet all additional requirements.

Student name: _____

Title of thesis: _____

Committee members:

Name

Department

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Time and location of oral defense: _____

Thesis committee approval of honors thesis:

RECOMMEND (circle one)

Advisor's Signature

HIGHEST HONORS

Reader's Signature

HONORS

HONORS NOT RECOMMENDED

Appendix C: Duncan MacRae Jr. Honors Thesis Grant

The **Duncan MacRae Jr. Honors Thesis Grant** supports public policy majors working on independent honor thesis research under the supervision of a public policy faculty member at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Eligibility

- Current public policy honors thesis students enrolled in PLCY 691H or 692H.

Application Process

All eligible students should **FIRST** apply for Honors Carolina research grants, which are available to help offset the cost of conducting a Senior Honors Thesis. The grants, up to \$500, can cover the cost of equipment, supplies, software, publications, transportation, and other expenses. Students must apply through the Director of Undergraduate Studies, Public Policy. See <http://honorscarolina.unc.edu/research/senior-honors-thesis/>.

Applicants can use the Honors Carolina Thesis Research Award application form (including a letter of support from their thesis advisor) for review by the UNC Public Policy Undergraduate Affairs Committee. In addition, applicants should submit the following items:

- A list of any other funding you have applied for or received to support your Senior Honors Thesis. If you receive one of these awards, you must send an updated funding list to the Student Services Officer.
- A copy of your resume.
- A copy of your official UNC transcript.

Applications are due to the Student Services Officer by the departmental Honors Thesis Research Award deadline in mid-September.

Anticipated Number and Amount of Awards

Contingent on availability of endowment funds, a maximum of four awards of \$500 each will support public policy honors thesis applicants through the Duncan MacRae Jr. Public Policy Fund.

Selection Process

The Undergraduate Affairs Committee will review applications and recommend recipient(s) to the Chair of the UNC Public Policy.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants should acknowledge support from the Duncan MacRae Jr. Public Policy Fund in their honor thesis acknowledgements.

Appendix D: PLCY 691H Sample Syllabus

PLCY 691H: Honors Thesis in Public Policy
Department of Public Policy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Fall 2023
Fridays, 11:15 am – 12:05 pm, Venable G307

Instructor

Anna L. Krome-Lukens, PhD

Teaching Associate Professor and Director of Experiential Education, Public Policy

Office: Abernethy 120

Phone: 919-962-4854

Email: annakl@email.unc.edu

Office Hours: Monday, 1:30-2:30 pm, Wednesday, 1-2 pm; book online at

<https://calendly.com/annakl-1/student>

Course Description

PLCY 691H is designed to provide guidance and instruction on researching and writing an honors thesis to students in the UNC Public Policy Honors Program. The course is writing intensive. You will be expected to provide drafts of your chapters to the course instructor and your faculty adviser throughout the semester. You will receive feedback on the content and quality of your writing, and you might be asked to revise your chapters based on the feedback provided by your instructor and/or faculty adviser. You also will present your work to your peers. By the end of the semester, you will have written a research plan, applied for IRB approval if needed, and drafted the first three chapters of your honors thesis.

You should identify [faculty members](#) willing to serve as your thesis advisor and second reader. You are expected to meet with your faculty adviser at least every other week during the fall semester.

Pre-Requisites

PLCY 460; PLCY 581.

Additional Requirement(s)

Overall GPA of 3.3; PLCY core GPA of 3.5; Completion of at least 4 core public policy courses; approval of application for admission to PLCY 691H.

Credits

Students will receive a maximum of 3 credits for PLCY 691H and may not repeat PLCY 691H for additional credit. PLCY 691H will count as an elective course for the PLCY major. Students will enroll in PLCY 692H for additional 3 credits in the spring semester.

Grading

At the end of the first semester of senior honors thesis work, faculty advisers will evaluate students' progress and advise whether they will continue their thesis projects. Students making satisfactory progress will be enrolled in the second semester of senior honors thesis work.

Students whose performance is unsatisfactory will receive a permanent grade for the work completed and can enroll in PLCY 698 the following semester. Students enrolled in PLCY 691H will receive a grade based on their performance throughout the semester, assigned by the course instructor in consultation with their faculty adviser. Incompletes are not allowed for 691H. Students who are unable to complete the requirements of 691H during the Fall semester are advised not to continue in the honors thesis program.

Course grades will be determined as follows:

Assignment	Weight
Human Subjects Certification Exam	5%
Brief Research Plan	5%
IRB Submission	5%
Research Log	20%
Chapter 1 – Key Question and Significance	20%
Chapter 2 – Literature Review	20%
Chapter 3 – Methods and Data Collection	20%
Oral Presentation	5%

The following grading scale will be used:

Grade	GPA	Percentile
A	4.0	94-100%
A-	3.7	90-93%
B+	3.3	87-89%
B	3.0	84-86%
B-	2.7	80-83%
C+	2.3	77-79%
C	2.0	74-76%
C-	1.7	70-73%
D+	1.3	67-70%
D	1.0	60-66%
F	0.0	< 60%

Key Due Dates

Please see the course schedule below for due dates for each thesis chapter and other materials. Critical due dates in red in the Handbook are set by the College of Arts and Science and the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS). Your adviser may set additional deadlines for each component of your research.

Note that most assignments, including weekly research log entries, are due at **12 pm on Thursday** so that I have time to review your work before we meet.

Funding

Honors Carolina offers financial awards to support Senior Honors Thesis research. These awards, up to \$500, may be used to cover any legitimate cost directly connected to a thesis project: laboratory equipment and supplies, computer software and hardware, travel, artistic supplies, books, and periodicals not available through normal library sources, illustrations, and duplication, etc. Students must apply through their major department's Honors director or their faculty thesis advisor (for units without Honors directors). A Call for Applications is sent to departments early each semester. Students may not submit applications directly to Honors Carolina. For more, see <https://honorscarolina.unc.edu/research/senior-honors-thesis/>.

Course Materials

Required texts:

- Ragin, Charles and Lisa Amoroso. 2019. *Constructing Social Research: The Unity and Diversity of Method* (3rd edition). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications. (Available online via [UNC library](#)).
- Wolcott, H.F. (2009). *Writing Up Qualitative Research* (3rd edition). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications. (Available online via [UNC library](#)).
- Other selected readings will be available via Canvas.

Recommended texts:

In addition to required readings, you may find the following texts helpful.

- Becker, Howard S. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article* (2nd edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (On reserve at the UL)
- Turabian, Kate L. 2018. *A Manual for Writers* (9th edition). Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Available at the UL Service Desk and UL Reserves)
- Strunk, William, and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*.

Honor Code and Plagiarism

You are expected to complete all analyses for your thesis and undertake the actual writing of your thesis entirely independently, apart from class-based writing workshops.

Plagiarism of published work is a violation of the honor code (<http://honor.unc.edu/>). In written work (including slides or handouts used in presentations), words drawn from others should be indicated by quotation marks and ideas drawn from others should refer to their source. If you are unsure about what needs to be cited, please speak with your thesis adviser or ask for assistance from the writing center. Plagiarism is a serious offense which can result in failure of the course and suspension from the University. To make sure that you understand what plagiarism is, please read <https://writingcenter.unc.edu/tips-and-tools/plagiarism/>. Also see the following link for an animated tutorial on plagiarism that is recommended for UNC students at both the graduate and undergraduate levels: <https://guides.lib.unc.edu/plagiarism>.

Generative AI

The UNC Generative AI Committee has presented the following information on Generative AI.

Generative AI (Artificial Intelligence) systems such as ChatGPT have emerged from a number of technologies including machine learning and are capable of creating images, text, and other products in response to queries and “prompts.” As a result, generative AI has become a powerful tool for research and scholarship. Systems like ChatGPT can be task-specific and are capable of evolving as information is provided from users and other sources.

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill policy is that its research be carried out with the highest standards of integrity and ethical behavior. To that end, everyone involved in conducting research under the auspices of the University is responsible for ensuring that they use best practices in proposing, performing, and reviewing research, as well as in reporting research results. Authors are ultimately responsible and accountable for the content and methodology of their published and disseminated work.

Please review their [full statement](#). If the University or Honors Carolina provide further guidance on use of Generative AI, I will share it with you.

Policies and Resources

For additional class and university policies, see the Fall 2023 [syllabus insert](#).

Schedule of Topics and Due Dates

Date	Topic	Reading	Due
(Friday) Aug. 26	Introduction	Review UNC Public Policy Honors Handbook (PDF) Review Honors Carolina Thesis Guidelines	Due Aug. 26: Research Log Entry 1
Sept. 1	The Ethics of Research	<i>Constructing Social Research</i> , Ch. 4 (The Ethics of Social Research) UNC IRB, Review Process Overview UNC Generative AI Committee, Generative AI Usage Guidance for the Research Community Optional: Pech, Carol, Nichelle Cob, and John T. Cejka. (2007). Understanding Institutional Review Boards: Practical Guidance to the IRB Review Process. <i>Nutrition in Clinical Practice</i> 22 (6): 618-628.	Due Aug. 31: Human Subjects Certification https://research.unc.edu/human-research-ethics/getting-started/ Draft of IRB application Research Log Entry 2
Sept. 8	Viable Research Questions in Policy/Social Research	<i>Constructing Social Research</i> , Ch. 1 (What Is (and is Not) Social Research?) and Ch. 2 (The Goals of Social Research) Optional: Planning your Project—An Overview; and From Topics to Questions; and From Questions to a Problem, pp. 29-	Due Sept. 7: 1-page statement of policy research topic, key question to be addressed, and its policy significance.

		64, in Booth, W. C. et al. (2016). <i>The Craft of Research</i> . Chicago: University of Chicago Press.	Research Log Entry 3
Sept. 15	Ideas and Evidence; Literature Reviews	<i>Constructing Social Research</i> , Ch. 3 (The Process of Social Research) UNC Writing Center. Literature Reviews . Introduction and Background (pp. 331-335) in Kilburn, K. et al. 2018. Paying for Happiness : Experimental Results from a Large Cash Transfer Program in Malawi. <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> 37 (2): 331-356. Honors Funding Proposal information	Due Sept. 14: Research Log Entry 4 IRB application, if you haven't submitted it yet Honors funding proposal (tentative deadline)
Sept 22	Work Session	Meet with your writing partner for a work session.	Due Sept. 21: Research plan with deadlines Research Log entry 5
Sept. 29	Method: Strategies of Social Research	<i>Constructing Social Research</i> , Part II, Strategies of Social Research , Chapters 5, 6, 7	Due Sept. 28: Working annotated bibliography Research Log entry 6
Oct. 6	Case studies and Qualitative Data Collection	U.S. GAO (1990). Program Evaluation: Case Study Evaluations. (PDF) Ch 2. A Survey of Qualitative Data Collection Methods, and Ch. 3., Quantitative Analytic Methods, in Saldana, J., Leavy, P., and Beretvas, N. (2011). Fundamentals of qualitative research: Understanding qualitative research . New York: Oxford Press.	Due Oct. 5: Outline of Chapter 1 Research Log entry 7
Oct. 13	Writing Workshop	Read assigned partner's Chapter 1	Due Oct 11 (Wed): Draft of Chapter 1 Due Oct. 12: Research Log entry 8
Oct. 20	No Class; Fall Break		
Oct. 27	Writing Bootcamp	Ch. 2, Get Going , in Wolcott, H.F. (2009). <i>Writing Up Qualitative Research</i> (3 rd edition).	Due Oct. 26: Outline of Chapter 3 Research Log Entry 9

Nov. 3	Writing Workshop	Read assigned partner's Chapter 3	Due Nov. 1 (Wed): Draft of Chapter 3 Research Log Entry 10
Nov. 10	Writing Bootcamp	Optional: Ch. 3-6 in Wolcott, H.F. (2009). <i>Writing Up Qualitative Research</i> (3 rd edition).	Due Nov. 9: Outline of Chapter 2 Research Log Entry 11
Nov. 17	Oral presentations		Due Nov. 16: Research Log Entry 12
Nov. 24	No Class; Thanksgiving Break		
Dec. 1	Oral Presentations		Due Nov. 31: Research Log Entry 13
Dec. 6 (No class)	The Promise of Research	<i>Constructing Social Research</i> , Afterword (<i>The Promise of Social Research</i>)	Due Dec 6: Submit revised drafts of Chapters 1-3 to instructor and honors thesis advisor