

Department of Agricultural Education and Communication Undergraduate Thesis Submission Process

UF's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences (CALs) requires an undergraduate thesis to be successfully completed in order to receive Latin honors [high honors] (*magna cum laude* [3.75-3.84 UF GPA] and *summa cum laude* [3.85-4.0 UF GPA]). Students who do not complete a thesis will receive *cum laude* if they have a 3.5 or higher UF grade point average.

Writing a thesis not only benefits you by allowing you to graduate with high honors, but it will also give you these opportunities:

- Develop rewarding relationships with faculty.
- Showcase great credentials on your resume, particularly for pre-professional students or graduate school-bound students.
- Provide an opportunity to exercise creativity, enhance research-development skills, and even contribute to the published literature in a discipline.
- Possibly win a University of Florida Scholars Program award worth \$2,000.

To help you along the way in the thesis-development process, the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication has created this document to assist you in the completion of a successful undergraduate thesis. This document provides some helpful hints and deadline dates. AEC students at any location around the state are eligible to conduct a thesis in order to receive high honors. **Please contact the department's Honors Coordinator, Dr. Ricky Telg (rwtelg@ufl.edu) or your faculty mentor/advisor if you have questions about the thesis requirements.**

NOTE: This document is to accompany the CALs thesis submission process. If there is ever any conflict between this document and information provided by the college, you should follow the CALs information: http://cals.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students/thesis.shtml

Faculty Mentor/Advisor

The first step in the thesis development process should be to identify a faculty mentor/advisor early in your academic career. The faculty mentor will assist you in determining a research project idea. This should be done by mid-semester of the student's junior year's second semester (March 1 for students admitted in the fall, and Nov. 1 for students admitted in the spring). A thesis proposal (see below) must be completed and submitted to the Dean's Office early in the semester prior to when a student graduates. A student should select a faculty mentor who shares the student's interests.

Thesis Proposal

CALs requires a brief **thesis proposal** (2 to 3 pages). The thesis proposal is due to the Dean's Office by the third week of class in the semester PRIOR to your graduation. In other words, if a student will graduate in MAY, the proposal must be submitted to the Dean's Office (Associate Dean Mark Rieger) by the third week of the FALL semester.

BEFORE the thesis proposal is submitted to the Dean's Office, it must be submitted to a student's faculty mentor ONE WEEK prior to the CALs Dean's Office deadline. This will provide time for the faculty mentor to have another faculty member review the proposal. The proposal then must be submitted to the department's Honors Coordinator, in order to receive his signature. At that point, it is cleared to go to the CALs Dean's Office.

The proposal should include the following information:

- One to two pages of text containing the following sections:
 - Research objective and anticipated results
 - Justification
 - Methodology/timeline/analysis plan
 - Literature review
- At least one page for literature cited

Thesis

Submission Information

Every semester the CALS Dean's Office provides the submission deadlines for undergraduate theses.

- The thesis first submission has *typically* occurred at the following times each year:
 - **FALL:** Third week of November
 - **SPRING:** Third week of March (depending on Spring Break)
 - **SUMMER:** Third week of May for Summer A, and third week of July for Summer B/C
- Final submission of the thesis *typically* is the last day of class each semester.

BEFORE you provide your **first submission** of your thesis to the CALS Dean's Office for first review, it must be submitted to your faculty mentor TWO WEEKS prior to the CALS deadline. The thesis will be reviewed by your mentor and at least one other faculty member. Then, provide the first submission to CALS Associate Dean Dr. Mark Rieger (mrieger@ufl.edu) via email as either a Word document (.doc or .docx file) or as a PDF. The entire thesis, including the abstract, should be reviewed for format and organization, content, grammar and spelling, economy of expression, and appropriate data presentation and statistical analysis before you submit it to the college.

Prior to the **final submission** to the college, you will submit your final thesis to your faculty mentor to be reviewed once again. The thesis will be reviewed by your mentor and at least one other faculty member. The reviewed thesis then must be submitted to the department's Honors Coordinator to receive his signature at least THREE DAYS prior to the Dean's Office deadline. Then, provide the submission to Dr. Rieger. Following is the information needed for the **final submission** to Dr. Rieger:

- Email the final version of your honors thesis as a PDF or Word document attachment to Dr. Rieger (mrieger@ufl.edu).
- Upload your final revised thesis as a PDF at <http://www.honors.ufl.edu/webapps/thesis/submit/>.
- **Hand-deliver** the final submission to 2002 McCarty D. You must include the CALS Certification for Honors form **with appropriate signatures**.

The signature page can be found on the **Honors Packet PDF** that is provided each semester to students completing a thesis. It also is being provided as the last page of this document; however, please refer to the CALS Honors Packet each semester to compare the two documents to see if any changes have been made. If there is a conflict, ALWAYS use the form provided in the CALS Honors Packet PDF.

Off-Campus Students

Please note you must have the signature form completed and submitted with the thesis. Plan a little in advance so that you can get everything completed in time for the final submission.

Tips to Assist in the Thesis Development Process

Please refer to these Web pages for helpful information during the thesis development process:

- **Honors Program/Thesis:** http://cals.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students/thesis.shtml
- **Thesis Guidelines and Tips:** http://cals.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students/documents/Thesisguidelines_001.pdf
- **Honors Thesis Tips:** <http://cals.ufl.edu/honors/documents/Honorsthesistips.pdf>
- **Honors Coordinators (by Department):** http://cals.ifas.ufl.edu/current_students/honors_department_coordinators.shtml

You also may wish to visit UF's new **Center for Undergraduate Research** (<http://cur.aa.ufl.edu/>). This new office (begun in July 2010) will help students "navigate the research process, increasing the visibility of existing programs and developing new ones."

Deadlines

Faculty Mentor/Advisor

- **Identify a faculty mentor/advisor:** This should be done by mid-semester of a student's second semester in their junior year (March 1 for students admitted in the fall, and Nov. 1 for students admitted in the spring).
- **Begin the process of developing a thesis proposal.**

Thesis Proposal

- **Submit to Faculty Mentor/Advisor:** One full week prior to CALS Dean's Office Deadline. This means it will be due the end of the second week of the semester prior to when you graduate.
- **Submit to Department Honors Coordinator:** At least one day prior to the CALS Dean's Office deadline to receive his/her signature.
- **Submit to CALS Dean's Office:** By the end of the third week of the semester prior to when you graduate.

Data Collection for Thesis

- This should be **completed no later than** the second week of the semester in which you plan to graduate. (So for May, data collection should be completed by the end of January.) Realistically, it should be completed by the end of the semester prior to when you graduate.

Thesis

- **FIRST SUBMISSION**
 - **Submit to Faculty Mentor/Advisor:** Two weeks prior to CALS Dean's Office deadline.
 - **Submit to CALS Dean's Office:** The first submission deadline dates are announced each semester. But *typically* the deadlines have been as follows. Please use these as target dates, but understand that they are subject to change:
 - **FALL:** Third week of November
 - **SPRING:** Third week of March (depending on Spring Break)
 - **SUMMER:** Third week of May for Summer A, and third week of July for Summer B/C
- **FINAL SUBMISSION**
 - **Submit to Faculty Mentor/Advisor:** Two weeks prior to CALS Dean's Office Deadline.
 - **Submit to Departmental Honors Coordinator:** At least three days prior to CALS Dean's Office deadline, in order to obtain the coordinator's signature.

- **Submit to CALS Dean's Office:** The final submission deadline is *typically* the last day of class. It must be submitted in the format requested by the Dean's Office, ***including the formal signature page.***

College of Agricultural and Life Sciences

Certification for Honors

I certify that I have read this thesis and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate to satisfy the thesis requirements for the granting of magna cum laude or summa cum laude.

Student: _____

UF ID #: _____

Summa cum laude* _____

Magna cum laude* _____

Honors Mentor / Advisor's Signature

Honors Departmental Coordinator's Signature

Dr. Mark Rieger, Associate Dean
CALs Honors Program Director

Summa cum laude will be granted provided student has acceptable thesis and 3.85 or higher upper division GPA.

Magna cum laude will be granted provided student has acceptable thesis and 3.75 or higher upper division GPA.