

## **THE UNDERGRADUATE HONORS PROGRAM IN COMMUNICATION SCIENCES AND DISORDERS**

### ***General Information***

Undergraduate students in Communication Sciences and Disorders with an overall 3.2 grade point average and a 3.5 grade point average in Departmental courses are encouraged to apply for the Departmental Honors Program in Communication Sciences and Disorders. The Honors Programs offers students the opportunity to participate in a faculty-mentored research experience. Completion and defense of original research by the end of the senior year will merit graduation with honors.

Students who are double majoring in WCAS and would like to conduct either two separate honors projects or an interdisciplinary honors project must meet the deadlines and fulfill the requirements of each programs: <http://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/honors-awards/honors-two-departments.html>.

Students are encouraged to try to win external support for their research through the Research Opportunities for Undergraduates Program at Northwestern University. Please see <http://www.northwestern.edu/undergrad-research> for more information. This program allows for academic year and summer research grants to support undergraduate research.

### ***Objectives***

1. To provide an opportunity for undergraduate students to complete a substantial research project;
2. To introduce students to graduate-level research;
3. To provide formal honorary recognition to students who have excelled in course work and in research activity.

### ***Requirements***

1. Overall GPA of 3.2 or better and departmental GPA of at least 3.5 by the time of application (a letter of support from a primary advisor is required if GPA requirements are not met);
2. Departmental GPA of 3.5 or better maintained throughout the program;
3. Completion of at least two independent study courses during the junior and/or senior year with a grade average of B+ or better;
4. Participation in four research seminars associated with the Honors Program;
5. Satisfactory oral presentation and defense of research project in the spring quarter;
6. A completed research project of high quality submitted in written form.

Under exceptional circumstances, the first two requirements may be modified for an individual student upon petition to the Honors Committee.

### ***Procedures***

Undergraduate students intending to apply to the Departmental Honors Program should directly contact a primary faculty advisor to direct their project. (See the Timeline section below for recommendations on when such correspondence should occur.) The primary advisor will help the

student plan his or her independent study courses and write a *4-6 page proposal* for the research project. The primary advisor may also have suggestions for whom to request as the secondary reader.

The proposal should include background and rationale for the project, a hypothesis, proposed methodology including statistical analysis, and predicted outcomes. Students must submit an application and the proposal to the Chair of the Honors Committee. These materials must be submitted no later than the end of junior year winter quarter for students graduating at the end of senior year fall quarter, or the middle of spring quarter for all other students. Students can submit their Honor's proposal no earlier than winter quarter of their junior year. Students must receive approval for their Honors plan from the Honors Committee *before proceeding* with the work.

The Honors Program will consist of two or more independent study courses, participation in a series of four research seminars and completion of related assignments, completion of the research project, an oral defense and a written thesis. Coursework in research methods is strongly recommended. The thesis may be completed during the last independent study course. This thesis must be submitted to the primary faculty advisor and secondary faculty reader according to the timeline outlined below. The defense will occur in early May.

The research project can consist of an empirical investigation done in the laboratory, in the field, or in a clinical setting. It can also consist of an original review of an existing body of research literature with a plan for an empirical study or it may be a theoretical paper. The following standards shall be used to judge the written product: the research reported in the thesis should be original, well conceived, and should involve substantial independent effort. The thesis should be a well-written, carefully organized, and concise report of the research project, approximately 25-50 double-spaced typewritten pages in length.

The defense will last approximately 30 minutes. It will begin with a presentation by the student of his or her research to the faculty mentors, the Honors Committee, other students (undergraduate and graduate), and, if the student wishes, invited guests. This presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length. A ten-minute question period will follow. Questions will usually pertain to the student's project, but may also address related methodological, theoretical or empirical issues.

The Honors Committee will determine if the student has the required academic background to accomplish the project. In some instances, approval of the project will be made conditional upon the completion of additional course work (e.g., statistics). The Honors Committee will serve as the arbitrator in cases where the two faculty readers disagree on the quality of the research report.

Honors will be granted to those students enrolled in the program who have satisfied the formal academic requirements and whose thesis and defense performance have been approved by the two faculty readers. An "Honors" designation will become part of the student's official university transcript and will also appear in the graduation program. (No such designation appears on the student's diploma, however.)

### ***Responsibilities of Student***

- Seek a primary advisor and secondary reader for this project
- In direct consultation with the primary advisor, prepare and submit an application for the honors program by the deadline (periodic consultation with the secondary reader is also highly recommended)
- Implement proposed plan
- Attend Honors Program seminars and complete seminar assignments
- Write thesis based on completed project
- Defend thesis during final spring quarter
- Revise and submit final thesis and completion form

### ***Responsibilities of Faculty Advisor***

- Aid in preparation of honors application
- Provide facilities/resources for completing of honors project and/or assist students in seeking these resources, including IRB approval and research funds if necessary
- Provide mentoring (directly or through laboratory personnel) necessary for completion of a project
- Determine grades for independent studies based on project progress and seminar assignments
- Aid student in preparation of written thesis
- Approve thesis for oral defense
- Attend oral defense
- Judge adequacy of honors thesis

### ***Responsibilities of Secondary Faculty Reader***

- Provide feedback on honors plan
- Be available to share expertise related to project
- Provide feedback on honors thesis before oral examination
- Attend oral defense
- Judge adequacy of honors thesis

### ***Responsibilities of Honors Committee***

- Notify qualified juniors of honors opportunities
- Organize Honors Program seminars, and monitor assignments
- Judge honors applications providing suggested modifications where needed
- Organize oral defense
- Attend oral defense
- Determine award of honors in cases where primary and secondary readers disagree
- Notify Dean's office with names of students graduating with honors

***Timeline***

<b>Item</b>	<b>Students Graduating in Fall*</b>	<b>Students Graduating in Winter*, Spring or Summer</b>
Direct consultation with primary advisor	Penultimate fall quarter	Penultimate winter quarter
Honors application	End of prior winter quarter (6 quarters prior to the oral defense)	Middle of prior spring quarter (5 to 7 quarters prior to the oral defense)
Honors Program seminars	Early fall, late fall, winter, early spring	
Seminar assignment 1: 3-minute presentation of proposal	Beginning of final fall quarter	
Seminar assignment 2: Draft of literature review	End of final fall quarter	
Seminar assignment 3: Analysis and presentation of (preliminary) results	Final winter quarter	
Seminar assignment 4: Draft of powerpoint presentation	Beginning of final spring quarter	
Full draft of written thesis due to primary advisor and second reader	Mid-April of final spring quarter or other deadline (prior to oral defense) as agreed upon by primary advisor and second reader	
Oral defense	Early May of final spring quarter	
Final thesis due to primary advisor and second reader	May 25 of final spring quarter	
Final thesis due to Honors Committee	June 1 of final spring quarter	

\* Students who complete their degree requirements in Fall or Winter quarters should petition to graduate at the end of the following Spring quarter so that Honors will appear on the transcript. These students do not need to be registered in classes during the quarter(s) following the completion of degree requirements. However, they do need to be able to participate in the seminars, even if remotely, as well as attend the oral defense in person.