

## **GRADUATION WITH HONORS RESEARCH DISTINCTION INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE FINAL ORAL DEFENSE**

The final defense for graduation *with honors research distinction* must include a one-hour oral examination before at least three members of the teaching faculty. The purpose of the defense is to allow the faculty committee to determine whether the work of the student who is a candidate for graduation *with honors research distinction* is truly outstanding. The project advisor should discuss with the student the scope of this oral defense.

Candidates for graduation *with honors research distinction* must submit a Defense Committee Proposal form (available at <http://aschonors.osu.edu/oralexam>) to the Arts and Sciences (ASC) Honors Office by the sixth Friday of the semester in which the candidate plans to defend the thesis (or by the date specified for students graduating in summer). In this form, the candidate will provide a proposed date for the defense and the names of the faculty members who have agreed to be on the defense committee. The candidate and project advisor will work together to determine a time and place for the defense that does not conflict with the student's other academic obligations, such as class attendance.

### **The Oral Defense Committee**

A satisfactory **oral defense** of the thesis or project is required. The oral defense will last one hour, and the candidate and project advisor will work together to determine a time and place for the defense that does not conflict with the student's other academic obligations, such as class attendance. The candidate and project advisor will assemble a committee of no fewer than three faculty members to evaluate and certify the oral defense. The project advisor will be the first member and chair the committee. The faculty members who make up the committee will, together, fulfill the following criteria:

1. At least **two** committee members must be tenured or tenure-track faculty.
2. At least **two** committee members must have appointments in the College of Arts and Sciences.
3. At least **one** committee member must NOT have an appointment in the same department as the field of distinction. (For example, if the field of distinction is Political Science, and a faculty member from the History Department also has a "partial" or "courtesy" appointment in the Political Science Department, they are welcome to serve on the committee, but their presence would **not** fulfill of this requirement.)
4. At least three members must be Ohio State "faculty" as defined in Faculty Rule 3335-5-19.

These four criteria can usually be met with just three faculty members on the committee, but for students pursuing research in interdisciplinary fields or outside of the College of Arts and Sciences, it may be necessary to have four or more committee members. The typical committee includes a second faculty member (other than the Project Advisor) from the field of distinction, but this is not required.

In the rare instance that a student has obtained prior approval from the ASC Honors Committee for an interdisciplinary thesis (resulting, for example, in graduation "with Honors Research Distinction in French and Arabic"), both project advisors must sit on the committee, and the third committee member should come from outside both of the fields of distinction.

The presence of a committee member who has no affiliation with the department of distinction serves the purpose of providing an outside perspective and helping to ensure consistency across departments. For students and project advisors who are having difficulty finding a faculty member outside of the field of distinction to sit on the committee, the ASC Honors Office makes available a list faculty who have previously served in this or other related capacities. (Available at <https://aschonors.osu.edu/oralExam>.) This is by no means an exhaustive list, and **any OSU faculty member may sit on a Defense Committee.**

The committee should be chosen early in the term of the projected examination. All members of the committee must receive a copy of the thesis at least one week before the oral examination. Please note that all committee members must be present at the oral examination in order to certify the student for graduation *with honors research distinction*. (Video conferencing is allowed if necessary.) Should a committee member be unable to serve, the advisor is responsible for finding a replacement and informing the ASC Honors Office of the change. At the conclusion of the defense, the members of the committee will each sign the Certification for Graduation *with Honors Research Distinction*, verifying that the candidate has successfully completed and defended the thesis. The certification form must then be submitted to the ASC Honors Office, 3180 Smith Laboratory, 174 West 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue. (The certification may also be faxed to (614) 688-8791 or e-mailed to [braund.11@osu.edu](mailto:braund.11@osu.edu).)

### **Format for the Final Copy and Title Page**

A final copy of the thesis must be submitted to the University Libraries' Knowledge Bank **no later than** the last day of final examination week of the term in which the examination takes place and/or the student will graduate. The Knowledge Bank employs an authorization process which may delay submission by up to two business days. Therefore, it is recommended that students begin the Knowledge Bank submission process before the final deadline. See <http://kb.osu.edu/dspace/handle/1811/133> for submission details.

The ASC Honors Office does not require any particular manuscript format and leaves that decision to the project advisor, who is familiar with the practices of the discipline. All theses are required to be submitted electronically to the Knowledge Bank. The title page for the thesis should follow the example below.

Beowulf and Anglo-Saxon Perspectives on Kingship

Undergraduate Research Thesis

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation  
*with honors research distinction* in Medieval and Renaissance Studies\* in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio  
State University

by

Jane Doe

The Ohio State University  
May 2015

Project Advisor: Professor John Smith, Department of English

**\*NOTE:** Students pursuing graduation *with honors research distinction* (thesis in an area outside the major field) should not include the area of distinction on the title page. Using the example above, if the student was not majoring in Medieval and Renaissance Studies, she would have written, "Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation *with honors research distinction* in the undergraduate colleges of The Ohio State University."

If you have any further questions, please contact Rachel Steele, Academic Advisor, Arts and Sciences Honors Program, at [steele.682@osu.edu](mailto:steele.682@osu.edu) or (614) 292-5104, or any honors advisor in the ASC Honors Office in 3180 Smith Laboratory, 174 West 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

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