

Honors in Classics

Overview of the program and instructions for students

1. General Requirements

Majors with outstanding records may be nominated for graduation with department honors. To be eligible for such nomination, a student:

- must complete Classics 395, Research Seminar for Majors. In exceptional cases, students who have not completed this course (perhaps due to a study abroad schedule) may also be considered for honors.
- must submit a short research proposal, supported by a preliminary bibliography, normally by the end of WCAS reading week, spring quarter of the junior year. In exceptional cases, a student may submit a proposal by the start of reading week, fall quarter of the senior year.
- must complete with distinction two quarters of independent study (Classics 399). In exceptional cases students may substitute one or two quarters of a 400-level course. These two courses may count toward the major.
- must complete a project which culminates in an honors thesis.
- must have a grade point average greater than or equal to 3.3 in courses which satisfy major requirements (in this calculation, courses in the language sequence which are prerequisites for the major are not counted).

2. The Honors Thesis

An honors thesis must be a substantial and original work of classical scholarship demonstrating the student's ability to use both primary sources and relevant scholarly literature, and to develop ideas, judgments, and conclusions based upon this material. Normally the thesis will be an essay of between 7,500 and 10,000 words; the thesis adviser is free to approve work that falls below or above this range.

There are various general forms such a project may take. Please consult faculty as early in the junior year as possible.

In the case of projects that require students to consult material evidence and/or other resources available off-campus (i.e., in Greece or Italy or possibly in a library or museum collection), the Department encourages students to apply for WCAS programs that fund research study for undergraduates (<http://www.classics.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/research.html>), especially those that support summer study following the junior year.

3. The Honors Advisor & Course Credit

A student's work towards an honors thesis shall be supervised by a faculty member of the department (the "adviser"), who helps the student frame the project and provides necessary guidance and motivation. A student must take the initiative to seek out an appropriate advisor who is a full-time

member of the faculty of classics. The student may seek the assistance of the Department's Honors Coordinator, if necessary.

Course credit for work on the thesis is obtained by enrollment in two quarters of independent study credit (Classics 399) with the adviser. These are normally the fall and winter of the senior year but, in exceptional circumstances, it is possible to complete them in the winter and spring of the senior year.

4. Procedural Matters

Students interested in pursuing work that may lead to nomination for department honors should speak with the department's Honors Coordinator by the end of the junior year (in exceptional circumstances, they may do so no later than the fall quarter of the senior year). Students should come prepared with some ideas of what they might wish to pursue as a topic for honors work and the name of a member of the faculty with whom the student might wish to work as an honors adviser (this might be someone who has taught the student in a 300-level course, or an expert in the subject which the student wishes to pursue). The first step is to prepare a research proposal for review by the proposed honors adviser.

Students work independently under supervision of the adviser for two quarters (normally enrollment in Classics 399 in the fall and winter of the senior year but, in exceptional circumstances, the winter and spring of the senior year). Should a student have concerns about the supervision he or she is receiving, the student should speak with the Department Honors Coordinator, Prof. John Schafer (*mailto:John.Schafer@northwestern.edu*), unless the honors adviser is the Department Honors Coordinator, in which case the student should speak with the Chair of the department.

Two copies of the student's completed honors project must be submitted to the honors adviser no later than three weeks before the end of Spring quarter classes (the exact date will be set annually; be mindful of the deadline for departmental nominations to the WCAS Committee on Superior Students and Honors) to allow adequate time to examine the project and submit a reader's report and recommendation regarding honors to the Departmental Honors Committee (composed of the departmental Honors Coordinator and one other member of the faculty of classics appointed by the chair). The Honors Committee must, in a recorded vote, unanimously agree on the department's nomination and prepare a recommendation to the WCAS Committee on Superior Students and Honors. In the case of a dispute between the project supervisor and the student as to the merits of the project, the Department Honors Committee shall act as a committee of appeal. This two-person group has the final authority with respect to the Department's nomination.