

DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY – HONOURS PROGRAM PROPOSAL

FACULTY OF ENVIRONMENT

(COMPLETED FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT BY THE END OF WEEK 1)

INTRODUCTION

The honours program in Archaeology is designed for a relatively small number of majors who wish to pursue a research topic independently and in greater depth than can be achieved in a single semester. A significant increase in the number of majors over the last few years has not been matched by an increase in faculty, and it will therefore be more difficult for students to enroll in this program. This guide is designed to help you decide whether you should enroll as an honors student, and to give you some idea of what you can expect if you do enroll.

QUALIFICATIONS AND REGULATIONS

The formal requirements for entry to and completion of the honours program are described in the University Calendar, which should be consulted for details. Please note that the Department cannot waive the minimum CGPA requirement, even for a student whose CGPA is only just below the minimum. You should also note that at least two semesters are required to complete the two honours courses. Both honours courses require supervision by a faculty member (sessional instructors are not eligible to supervise), and you must obtain agreement from a faculty member (in writing) *prior to* consulting the Academic Advisor for assistance with registering in an honors course.

SHOULD YOU TAKE THE HONOURS PROGRAM?

The honours program is not required for admission to graduate school, and can delay your graduation from the B.A. program because of the extra credits required. You should think carefully about entering the program as it is very time-consuming. In this section we have listed some of the criteria, which may help you make an informed decision.

Work Habits

If you have a history of deferred grades for regular courses (i.e., *any* deferred grades in the last two years) you should not enter the honours program. You will be expected to work independently and set your own deadlines. If you haven't been able to meet imposed deadlines in previous courses, you won't be able to set and meet your own deadlines. Similarly, if you tend to leave term paper research to the last four weeks of the semester, you should probably not be in the program.

Performance in Term Papers

Most honours research builds on skills you use in term papers. Critically review your performance on term papers in upper division courses. If term papers are your strong point, honours may be for you. If term paper grades tend to be lower than grades for exams and quizzes, you should not enroll in the honours program.

Research Problem

If you have a specific research problem to tackle, then honours research may be a good way to investigate it. If you don't have a research problem in mind, don't enroll in honours. Do not rely on faculty members to find research problems for you. (Most faculty members will not agree to supervise honors students until they have a good idea of what research will be undertaken.)

Research Skills and Background

Do you have the necessary background knowledge and skills to undertake the research in which you are interested? Your honours supervisor will expect you to have some background knowledge and to have some experience in any analytical skills you may employ. For example, if you're

planning a lithic analysis, have you taken the lithics course? A lack of basic knowledge could cause delays in the research.

Time

Assume that you will spend 20 hours per week on the honours readings and honours thesis, and that there will be half a dozen full weekends devoted to this in the second semester as well. Do you have time for this?

FINDING A SUPERVISOR

Normally your supervisor will be someone with a permanent faculty position at SFU. Usually this person will be a member of the Department of Archaeology, but adjunct faculty from other departments may also supervise. The best way to find someone willing to supervise you is to decide what sort of research you would like to do and then approach a faculty member whose research and/or teaching interests correspond. It helps if you provide a short (1 page) summary of your research interests and skills, and a copy of your transcript. The best time to begin the search for a supervisor is two semesters before you plan to start. For example, if you plan to start your honours work in the fall, look for a supervisor in the preceding spring semester. Once you and your supervisor have agreed on a research area, you should obtain a letter from him/her which states his/her willingness to act as supervisor for the two honours courses in the two semesters when you wish to take them. This letter should be taken to the Academic Advisor who will register you as an honours student.

SETTING UP A RESEARCH PROGRAM

There are two types of honours research programs in Archaeology. *Library research* is generally based on data which has already been published or is accessible in some other way as a data base. The originality of the honours thesis depends on your ability to use this existing knowledge in new ways. The advantages of library research are that it is generally less time-consuming and builds on skills developed when writing term papers. The disadvantages are that someone else may already have done a similar project and that the research is less likely to be publishable. *Lab research* is generally based on the original analysis of objects which have not been studied previously. The originality of the honours thesis is guaranteed by the fact that you are the first person to study the collection, or the first person to collect a certain type of data about the collection. The advantages of lab research are that it is guaranteed to be original and that it is more likely to result in a publishable paper. The disadvantages are that it is much more time-consuming and that the results might not be very exciting.

Once you and your supervisor have established what research will be done, it is essential to set up a schedule which defines how the work will proceed over two semesters. While different faculty will have their own ways of doing this, the Department requires that a written document describing the planned work and the grading system be filed with the Academic Advisor for the honours readings and honours thesis courses. These documents must be signed by supervisor and student. Specimen copies are attached.

During the first semester, you will be taking the honours readings course. This is designed to provide you with the background necessary to undertake the research. At the start of the semester you and your supervisor should define what topics are to be covered, and set some deadlines for covering those topics. Typically, this course results in a term paper which consists of the first half of the honours thesis, usually covering method, theory, and background to the research.

In the second semester, you take the honours thesis course. This should be a closely supervised period in which you develop the original component of your research, and write the complete thesis.

Again, you and your supervisor should develop a schedule of the work required to complete the thesis on time. You should particularly note the deadlines for grade submission if you are planning to graduate at the end of the semester. You can't graduate with a deferred grade!

TIME PROBLEMS

The most severe time problems are usually experienced by students doing lab research. Often the first semester is required to develop a research problem, define how data will be collected, and learn the skills necessary to undertake the lab work. This leaves the second semester to do the lab work *and* write the honours thesis. Frequently this leaves a student very short of time, because most of the second semester is consumed by the analysis, leaving little time for writing the thesis after the analysis is complete. There are a number of ways to solve this problem. Some students leave a one semester gap between the two honours courses and work on their analysis during that semester. Other students spend the semester prior to the honours reading in preparing their analytical skills and beginning the analysis. If it is only possible to do the work in two semesters, it is important to begin the analysis as soon as possible in the first semester, and to be prepared to spend many evenings and weekends in the lab. All students with a lab component to their honours research should plan to have it completed before the beginning of the semester in which they write their honours thesis.

Although students with library research may run into problems if they leave too short a time to acquire inter-library loans or to arrange visits to archives, two semesters should be plenty of time to complete a library-based project.

SUBMISSION OF THESIS

You are required to submit three copies of your thesis to the Department. You should check the *Regulations and Guidelines for the Preparation of Theses* on the Archaeology Graduate Program Website for style and formatting information. You are responsible for making these copies and for other costs (e.g., photographic reproduction, binding etc.). Your supervisor should be given a cirlox bound copy of the final version. Your supervisor may suggest colleagues to whom you should send a copy.

PUBLICATION

Some SFU honours theses have been published as monographs and others have been shortened and published as journal articles. You should consult your supervisor about publication. Should you decide to publish, please remember the following:

- No faculty member has the right to publish a student's work under his/her name.
- If the faculty member had significant input into the conception and execution of the research, she or he may wish to be a co-author; usually the student is first author and the faculty member is second.
- If your supervisor is not a co-author, it is courteous to acknowledge his/her assistance in the article or monograph.

PROBLEMS

If problems arise during the course of your honours research, which cannot be solved by you and your supervisor, consult the Department Chair.

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STUDENT NAME: _____

STUDENT #: _____

SUPERVISOR NAME: _____

SEMESTER: _____

ARCH 498-5 (Honours Reading)

ARCH 499-5 (Honours Thesis)

TOPIC (one sentence):

GOAL OF RESEARCH / ACADEMIC COMPONENT (paragraph):

DUTIES:

GRADING SCHEME WITH PERCENTAGE VALUES:

DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION:

*Attach the following:

1. Weekly schedule including duties and meeting times (if applicable).
2. Preliminary bibliography (if applicable).

Signed Student

Date

Signed Supervisor

Date

Return to Department of Archaeology Academic Advisor to obtain department approval.

Department Approval

Date

To Be Completed by Department Administrators



Instructor entered into SIMS



Student registered and paper filed by Advisor