

BBS Honors Program Information

- **Should I complete BBS Honors?** Completion of honors theses are important for developing needed skills and for admission for some career paths, i.e., students planning to pursue experimental/research doctoral programs. Completion of Honors is not especially helpful for admission into other programs that are not research-focused, i.e., MS in speech-language pathology. In other words, students should consider their career paths and whether completing an honors program is instrumental and important for their educational and career goals. An honors thesis is a lengthy, very intense process and requires much commitment of time and energy.
- **What is the commitment for BBS Honors?** Honors theses require a two-year commitment. During this time, students will learn about the writing process, develop a thesis question, run studies, gather and analyze data, and write their final theses. Different types of research vary in the amount of time needed to train in the lab methods, and some may require one or two semesters of training before students can implement an independent project. Faculty mentors also have different time requirements for students working in their labs before they are allowed to complete an honors thesis and faculty have a limited number of students they can supervise for honors theses.
- **Who can serve as my Thesis Mentor?** In order to participate in the BBS Honors Program, students must have a BBS tenure-track Faculty Member. This includes those with the title of Professor, Associate Professor, or Assistant Professor. Any other titles may serve as your second reader. Exceptions are made for those in the Green Fellowship Program. Other full-time UTD faculty may eligible to serve as mentors if approved by the program faculty and Associate Dean.
- **What will I write about in my thesis?** Students must determine their own research interests and establish contact and a working relationship with a BBS research mentor who will ultimately become the thesis mentor.
- **What is the difference between the Honors Seminar and the Alternate Track?**
 - **Honors Seminar**

Students who have had limited exposure to research issues or writing experience may benefit from taking the Honors Seminar (CGS/CLDP/NSC/PSY/SPAU 4V75) during spring semester of the junior year. This seminar will focus on research issues, will require writing and revision of drafts, and students will review and provide feedback on other students' papers. This class is scheduled on Tuesdays from 1-3:45pm.
 - **Alternate Track**

If students have had sufficient research and writing experience, the Associate Dean may approve students to complete the alternate option track for honors rather than enrolling in the Honors Seminar. You will have a list of major-related activities that you will need to complete by the end of your final semester. Students majoring in Neuroscience should consult with Dr. Tres Thompson for more information on the NSC Alternate Honors track. Students in other BBS majors should contact the BBS Undergraduate Associate Dean's office (BBSHonors@utdallas.edu) for more information.

- **What is the different between the two types of theses?**

- **Empirical Research**

An empirical-research honors thesis generally reports the results of a project in which students gathered experimental data to answer a research question(s). In most cases, students work with their faculty mentors and second readers to derive a well-defined research question(s) and design and conduct a study that yields evidence to answer the question. This includes developing the method and procedure, collecting data, analyzing the data, and interpreting the results. The structure of the resulting thesis is in scientific format, similar to a journal article with sections that introduce the research question; describe the methodology; report, analyze and discuss the results; and draw conclusions. In some cases, students who work in the research laboratories of their faculty mentors and/or second readers may derive a research question consistent with the lab's goals and answer the question with an analysis of the lab's archival data. Writing an empirical research thesis (roughly 15-25 pages) usually requires at least two semesters for completion. Conduct of the research and the writing is done under the supervision of the BBS mentor.

- **Library Research**

A library-research honors thesis generally reports an integrative, analytic and novel synthesis of the academic evidence in order to address a research question(s). In most cases, students work with their faculty mentors and second readers to derive a well-defined research question(s) and identify the body of peer-reviewed, published research that yields evidence to answer the question. The structure of the resulting theses varies. Excellent models of some appropriate structures may be found in Pan, M. Ling (2011). *Preparing literature reviews. Qualitative and quantitative approaches, 4th Edition*. Los Angeles: Pyczak Publishing. ISBN 1-884585-76-0. A library research thesis (roughly 25 to 35 pages) requires at least two semesters for the development of research questions, writing and review process.

- **How is BBS Honors different than Latin Honors?** Students who qualify may earn both School and University Latin Honors by meeting the requirements of both programs. Requirements for graduating with BBS School Honors are detailed below. Requirements for graduating with University Latin Honors can be found at <https://www.utdallas.edu/registrar/graduation/latin-honors/>.

BBS Honors requires that students complete an honors thesis. Students may complete either an empirical-research thesis or a library-research thesis. More specific information about each type of thesis is outlined below. However, writing of both types of theses is done under the supervision of the faculty mentor and students should expect to submit multiple drafts of the paper to the mentor for review. Faculty mentors will provide feedback, students will edit the paper, then students will revise, etc., until the paper is considered an outstanding product worthy of honors. Students who write an honors thesis will enroll in 3 hours of Thesis Research (4V97) during the semester that they complete the thesis. This is a graded class.