Senior Honors Thesis Timeline

It is recommended that all thesis students develop a timeline for completing their thesis before beginning the process. This timeline is a general breakdown for completion, but every thesis project will vary depending on the specifics of the research project.

First Semester
Month of September

- Meet with thesis director to determine timeline for completion and to schedule weekly meetings throughout the two-semester project
- Begin working on literature review (background reading list)

Month of October

- Continue background reading
- Draft 3-5 page paper on background readings
  - Should outline main arguments or topics in your field
  - Should associate specific authors with different positions
  - Might include your perspective on the debate
  - Might include your preliminary thesis statement
- Plan to meet with second reader and Honors Reader this month

Month of November

- Continue researching and/or running experiments
  - write informally as you research; don’t postpone the prewriting
  - separate out the writing tasks, so that you write the sections that do not depend on having results
- Revise your argument and thesis statement as you continue researching and writing

Month of December

- Sort your research and notes
- Establish central outline for your paper
- Look for gaps in research and begin filling them
- Begin prewriting of middle sections of thesis
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Second Semester
Month of January

• Focused research and planning with thesis director
• Begin writing of middle sections
• Begin prewriting of introduction and conclusion

Month of February

• Begin writing of introduction and conclusion
• Meet with second reader and Honors Reader this month
• Complete first draft of thesis by end of month

Month of March

• Continue revising drafts of thesis
• Final rough draft due to committee members by end of month

Month of April

• Schedule defense at beginning of month
• Prepare with thesis director for defense
• After defense, make revisions required by committee
• Once revisions have been made, take signature pages to thesis committee members to sign
• Make copies of thesis: dean’s office needs three original copies and they will secure dean’s signature for you; be sure to also make personal copies for yourself

Month of May

• Final version of thesis due to college’s dean’s office