Relaunching the Honours Thesis in Sociology

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology is excited to announce the relaunching of the Honours Thesis in Sociology.

This is a great opportunity to enhance transferable skills for the workforce, or for further education whether it’s an MA programme, education, law or other professional training paths.

What is the Honours Thesis?

The Honours Thesis is an independent research project that students carry out under the supervision of a faculty member.

Students who do the Honours Thesis will also attend the Honours Seminar that will take place, normally, every second week over the course of Fall and Winter Terms. This seminar will be to build skills and support your research and writing process.

The Honours Thesis (including the seminar) is worth 1.0 course credits. These course credits are included in your normal programme requirements, so you are not taking additional credits.

Why should I want to do this?

There are tons of benefits to doing an Honours Thesis:

1. **Skills:**
   - You will bring together the skills you’ve gained over the course of your degree and apply them (such as research design, methods, analysis etc.).
   - You will strengthen those skills through supervised practice, and learn new skills.
   - These skills are “transferable skills”, which means you’ll be developing skills that you could apply in the workforce, and that will better prepare you for grad school, law school, teachers’ college and other professional training avenues.
   - The key skills you’ll develop are: (a) advanced research design, (b) advanced qualitative or quantitate methods, (c) effective management and execution of a project, (d) time management, project management skills and organisational skill, and (e) strong communication skills.

2. **Build your resume/portfolio:** Doing an Honours Thesis is a significant achievement!
   - Employers and educational programmes recognise that completing an Honours Thesis a big deal. Doing an Honours Thesis demonstrates you are a talented student, and you are now someone who has superior skills and capacity.
   - Doing an Honours Thesis will strengthen your resume because of the skills you’ll develop.
✓ You can include your final Honours Thesis project as part of a portfolio to demonstrate your ability to conceive of, manage and execute a major project.

✓ You can use your final Honours Thesis project as a writing sample to include in applications for grad school and professional career training.

3. **Independence:** You will pick and focus on a topic that interests you.

✓ Your research project will be about something important to you and something you want to know.

✓ There will be deadlines and structures to keep you on track, but you will also enjoy a lot of flexibility.

4. **Support:** While you’ll be carrying out an independent study, support is built into the Honours Thesis experience. You’re not on your own! You will receive:

  ✓ One-on-one guidance from your faculty research supervisor,
  ✓ Ongoing support from the Honours Seminar instructor,
  ✓ Regular, structured guidance in the Seminar setting.

5. **Establishing Real Contacts:** Do you want a meaningful relationship with the people who teach you or faculty who share your interests? You will develop relationships with:

  ✓ Your faculty research supervisor
  ✓ The Honours seminar instructor.

These contacts can be very valuable for mentorship, reference letters etc. And, you will also develop stronger bonds with the other students in the seminar.

6. **Grad school:** If you’re considering doing an MA:

  ✓ The Honours Thesis is a great practice run for what you’ll do in a Master’s programme.

  ✓ Your thesis can be the writing sample that you provide when you apply for MA programmes.

  ✓ In the Honours seminar, you will also get hands-on training and support on developing applications for MA programmes and scholarship applications.

**That sounds pretty good... What do I need to do?**

There are a bunch of things you do need to do:

1. **Figure out if you’re eligible:** See below on eligibility criteria.
2. **Talk to the Seminar instructor**: Professor Augustine Park is running the seminar in 2017-2018. Set up a meeting to talk with her to make sure this is a good fit for you and she will walk you through next steps.

3. **Register in SOCI 4900: Honours Thesis** (1.0 credits). Registering in this seminar means that you’re registered both in the Thesis project and in the Honours Thesis Seminar.

**How do I get in? Am I eligible?**

You need to check whether you’re eligible. To get into the Honours Thesis, you need:

- To be a Sociology BA Honours student, or Sociology Combined Honours student,
- To have fourth-year standing by the time you commence the seminar (i.e., fourth year standing by September 2017),
- To have GPA of 9.0 or higher going into the Seminar,
- If your GPA is not high enough, you could potentially still get into the Thesis with special permission of the Seminar instructor. Set up a meeting to talk to Augustine to figure out if you can get in.

**This opportunity sounds right for me. But, how do I find out more?**

Feel free to contact the Seminar instructor at Augustine.Park@carleton.ca to set up a time to talk.