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| HNRS 3500: Thesis Proposal DevelopmentFall 2025 |

Instructor

Dr. Julie Leventhal, CFLE

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**Office Phone:** (940) 565-2255

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays from 3:30 pm – 4:30 pm and by appointment.

**Class Meeting Time:** Tuesday & Thursday, 2:00 – 3:20 pm

**Class Meeting Place:** Lang 214

**Required Textbook:**

There is no required textbook for this class. All required readings will be provided on Canvas.

**Recommended Textbook(s):**

The following are the three most commonly used style manuals (Chicago, APA, MLA); it is highly suggested that you obtain the style manual for *your specific discipline*.

* MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. (2016). New York, NY: Modern Language Association.
* Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association. (2020). Washington, D.C.: The American Psychological Association.
* The Chicago Manual of Style. (2017). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

**Course Description**

Students will work towards a finished draft of a proposal for an undergraduate Honors thesis. With the guidance of an identified faculty mentor, students will work to develop a thesis proposal that will incorporate relevant literature and demonstrate knowledge of applicable research methodologies.

**Course Objectives**

The overall objective of the course is to develop an honors thesis proposal. After completing this course, students will be able to:

* Identify a research topic and articulate subsequent research questions or hypotheses.
* Review, evaluate, and synthesize existing theory and research relevant to a project.
* Select appropriate research methods for the given research question(s).
* Identify potential limitations and ethical risks specific to their research design.
* Formulate a plan with a realistic timeline to achieve desired research goals.
* Locate appropriate professional meetings and journals for the dissemination of research.

**Course Requirements**

1. Students are expected to attend class as scheduled. If you think you will need to miss a lot of classes or you are just not interested in attending class, it is suggested that you drop this class as soon as possible. In addition to attending and participating in class, students are also expected to keep up with the readings posted on Canvas at <https://unt.instructure.com/>. There will also be days where we work various parts of finding literature, your proposal, or other relevant work in class. It is recommended that you bring a laptop/tablet (if you have one) on those days. Alternatives include bringing handwritten notes/drafts, phones, or other modes of technology. You may be able to check out a laptop from your department or Willis if needed.
2. **In-Class Assignments:** During the semester, short written assignments will be completed during class that will count as your in-class attendances. You must be in class to complete them andno make-up opportunities will be available unless there is an excused absence. In-class assignments will be worth **15%** of your final grade.
3. **Mentor 1:1 Meetings:** Twice during the semester, each student will be required to schedule a 1:1 meeting with their mentor to review their goals, plans, and progress.These meetings are worth **10%** of your final grade and must be scheduled during this specific time period. Your mentor must sign-off on each meeting and you will submit a progress report provided on Canvas after each meeting.
4. **Thesis/Dissertation Review:** After reading Boote & Beile (2005), each student will choosea master’s thesis or dissertation on a topic of interest and analyze the literature review of the given document. Students will apply the scoring rubric from the article and provide examples for each classification. A template will be provided on Canvas. The thesis/dissertation review is due **Tuesday, October 7th** and is worth **10%** your final grade; no late submissions will be accepted.
5. **RQs and Proposal Outline:** Students will be asked to provide aminimum of **2** research questions on a topic they want to explore as an undergraduate thesis project, followed by a tentative outline regarding the various areas that will be covered in each section of their thesis proposal. More information on this portion of your proposal will be provided on Canvas. The RQs and Proposal Outline are due **Tuesday, September 9th** and is worth **3%** of your final grade; no late submissions will be accepted.
6. **Introduction Draft:** Students will complete a brief introduction for their research proposal, including their purpose statement, research questions, and potential hypotheses or expectations. This draft must be a minimum of **1 full page** and you will build upon this section further for your full proposal. More information on this portion of your proposal will be provided on Canvas. The Introduction Draft is due **Thursday, September 25th** and is worth **10%** of your final grade; no late submissions will be accepted.
7. **Review of Literature Draft:** Students will complete a comprehensive literature review over their research topic. This draft must be a minimum of **6 full pages** and you will build upon this section further for your full proposal. More information on this portion of your proposal will be provided on Canvas. The Review of Literature Draft is due **Tuesday, October 14th** and is worth **15%** of your final grade; no later submissions will be accepted.
8. **Methodology Draft:** Students will brainstorm and outline their chosen methodology based on their research topic and type of research they would like to conduct; their target population, sample size, measures, and IRB considerations will be included in this section. This draft must be a minimum of **2 full pages** and you will build upon this section further for your full proposal. More information on this portion of your proposal will be provided on Canvas. The Methodology Draft is due **Thursday, October 23rd** and is worth **5%** of your final grade; no later submissions will be accepted.
9. **Abstract:** In conference format (to help with presentations) but also as the thing you will modify and use for thesis defense day. The Abstract Draft is due **Thursday, October 30th** and is worth **2%** of your final grade; no later submissions will be accepted.
10. **Full Proposal:** Students will submit a full thesis proposal by the end of the semester. The full proposal should build off of all the previously submitted drafts and feedback provided, be a minimum of **10 full pages long** (NOT including the title page, abstract, and references), and contain the following sections: *introduction, literature review, and the methodology (with sample/population, measures, and proposed data collection), and discussion*. More specific guidelines and a grading rubric will be provided on Canvas. The Full Proposal is due **Tuesday, December 2nd** and is worth **20%** of your final grade; no late submissions will be accepted.
11. **Proposal Presentation:** Each student will conduct a brief presentation on their proposal during the weeks of **November 18th and December 2nd**. More information and a sample template for the presentation will be posted on Canvas. The proposal presentation is worth **10%** your final grade and no late work will be accepted.

Success in this course on all the aforementioned requirements is your choice! If you choose to be successful, I will be happy to help you. If you do not choose to be successful, I will honor your choice. Every student has the potential to succeed in this class.

**Course Evaluation**

In short, final grades will be based on the following:

In-Class Assignments 15%

Mentor 1:1 Meetings 10%

Thesis/Dissertation Review 10%

RQs and Proposal Outline 3%

Introduction Draft 10%

Review of Literature Draft 15%

Methodology Draft 5%

Abstract 2%

Full Proposal 20%

Proposal Presentation 10%

Total 100%

The following grading scale will be used:

89.5-100% A  
79.5-89.4% B

69.5-79.4% C

59.5-69.4% D

Below 59.4% F

**Academic Integrity and Professional Conduct**

It is expected that students will conform to the University of North Texas Code of Student Conduct and Discipline as outlined in the undergraduate catalog and online through the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a "0" for that particular assignment or exam and possible grade consequences for the class; a second offense may result in an automatic “F” for the course. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students, who may impose further penalty. According to the UNT catalog, the term "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: a. use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; b. dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; c. the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a faculty or staff member of the university; d. dual submission of a paper or project, or resubmission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor(s); or e. any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage. The term "plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to: a. the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment; and b. the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

Students are also expected to conduct themselves as mature and responsible adults while enrolled in this course. This includes displaying respect for peers and faculty, accepting personal responsibility for coming to class, maintaining class notes, and completing given assignments.

**Acceptable Student Behavior**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor’s ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional

forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [http://deanofstudents.unt.edu.](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/)

**Access to Information – Eagle Connect**

Your access point for business and academic services at UNT occurs at [http://www.my.unt.edu.](http://www.my.unt.edu/) All official communication from the university will be delivered to your Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward your e‐mail: <http://eagleconnect.unt.edu/>

**ADA Statement**

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding

your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Access website at [http://disability.unt.edu.](http://disability.unt.edu/) You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565‐4323.

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| HNRS 3500-001: Thesis Proposal Development (Topics and dates are subject to change) | | | |
| **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading** | **Assignment Due** |
| August 19 | Introduction to the Course | Syllabus |  |
| August 21 | What Does a Proposal & Thesis Look Like? | Devlin (2018) – Ch. 11  Proposal Guidelines |  |
| August 26 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #1 |  |
| August 28 | Working with a Mentor  Planning Your Thesis | Sternad & Power (2023) – Ch. 12-13 | *CITI Training+* |
| September 2 | The Process of Writing  How to Craft a Research Outline | Sample Thesis Proposals  Creswell & Creswell (2018) – Ch. 4 |  |
| September 4 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #2 |  |
| September 9 | Forming/Refining Your Purpose Statement  Research Questions and Hypotheses | Leedy et al. (2019) – Ch. 2  Lambersky (2022) – Ch. 6 | **RQ and Outline** |
| September 11 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #3 |  |
| September 16 | ***Mentor Meetings*** |  |  |
| September 18 | ***Mentor Meetings*** |  | **Mentor 1:1** (1) |
| September 23 | Reviewing/Writing about the Literature Synthesis and Flow | Leedy et al. (2019) – Ch. 5  Clark & Creswell (2015) – p. 136-142  Warwick (n.d.) |  |
| September 25 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #4 | **Introduction** |
| September 30 | Choosing Methods – Who/What/When/How?  Linking Data and Research Methodology |  |  |
| October 2 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #5 |  |
| October 7 | ***Thesis/Dissertation Review Day*** | Boote & Beile (2005) | **Thesis/Dissertation Review** |
| October 9 | Presenting Your Research  Imposter Syndrome | Abramson (2021) |  |
| HNRS 3500-001: Thesis Proposal Development (Topics and dates are subject to change) | | | |
| **Date** | **Topic** | **Reading** | **Assignment Due** |
| October 14 | Literature Review Work Day |  | **Literature Review** |
| October 16 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #6 |  |
| October 21 | Chapters 3, 4, & 5 – Writing Your Methods, Results, & Discussion Sections | Rudestam & Newton (2007) – Ch. 8  Sternad & Power (2023) – Ch. 11 |  |
| October 23 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #7 | **Methodology** |
| October 28 | Putting the Pieces Together  Next Steps for Your Thesis (+ the Defense) | Tips to Keep You Going With Writing |  |
| October 30 | In-Class Writing Activity | HC Thesis #8 | **Abstract** |
| November 4 | ***Mentor Meetings*** |  |  |
| November 6 | ***Mentor Meetings*** |  | **Mentor 1:1** (2) |
| November 11 | Professional Development  CVs/Personal Statements/Jobs/Fellowships |  |  |
| November 13 | In-Class Writing Activity | Sample CVs |  |
| November 18 | Proposal Presentations |  | **Presentation** |
| November 20 | Proposal Presentations |  |  |
| November 25, 27 | *No Class – Thanksgiving Break* |  |  |
| December 2 | Proposal Presentations |  | **Full Proposal** |
| December 4 | Proposal Presentations |  |  |

*+* If you have not yet ever completed the CITI training through the UNT IRB, now is an ideal time to do so, especially if you need it to complete your honors thesis.

**Syllabus Addendum**

The following are important tips/guidelines/requirements that will ensure your success in this class:

1. DO read the syllabus and the assignment guidelines carefully. I do my best to lay everything out for you all in those documents. If you read and follow them carefully, you will successfully complete all the major requirements for the course.
2. If you ever have any questions about anything in the assignment guidelines or other course documents, ASK! I want to help you do well in this class and providing clarification to you all is one way for me to do that.
3. **ENABLE NOTIFICATIONS ON CANVAS! I will send important information as announcements in Canvas so you either need to view announcements regularly or receive notifications when a new one posts (they can be sent as emails). You will miss extremely important information if you do not check these announcements.**
4. Deadlines are deadlines for a reason. I will NOT accept late submissions. When you submit thesis documents to the Honors College and even later (possibly in graduate school), you will have hard deadlines for things. Consider this solid practice in making sure you complete your work on time.
5. Submit your papers in a Word or pages document (I would prefer Word but I know that’s not a reality for everyone; I can open documents on both a PC and a Mac so either way works). If you use Google Docs and add comments in your paper, it will save as a PDF when you upload it to Canvas and I won’t be able to see the comments. Let me know directly if there are comments you want me to respond to and we will figure out a way to share the right document.
6. I will return your papers and feedback to you through the assignment dropbox. When I do this, DO look at them. I will provide feedback through **track changes** and **comments** in Word and I will provide instructions on how to access that feedback. Utilize that feedback because it is similar to what you might get from your faculty mentor.
7. **You should already have a faculty mentor for your thesis. Even though you may not be working with your mentor regularly until your actual thesis semester, it is incredibly beneficial to build up your relationship with them now and to also share drafts and/or get feedback at the same time that I am offering feedback throughout the class. Ultimately, your mentor will be the final say in all of the directions you take so maintaining a relationship with them while in this class is key!**
8. If you are planning to complete a thesis where you survey/interview/observe **humans**, you will absolutely need to go through the UNT IRB for approval. You MUST HAVE AN APPLICATION UNDER REVIEW OR APPROVED in order to enroll in 4951. If you need to go through IRB, we will work parts of that into your proposal to ensure successful completion of all the IRB requirements.