The purpose of this course is to guide students in the production of a finished draft of a proposal for an undergraduate Honors thesis. The course will be taught using an interdisciplinary approach. Participants in the course will be doing research in many different disciplines and using many different research methods. The course will concentrate on common elements in the research process.

A first task for all students is to identify a mentor, if one has not already been identified. The course instructor can help in this effort. Mentors and students will work closely to develop a proposal that is acceptable in the students major area of study. Class readings and discussions are designed to help students learn the finer points of creating a thesis and to participate in discussions about the research process.

Course Materials
While there is no required book for this class, it is not a bad idea to obtain the style manual for your discipline. The most common citation styles are Chicago, APA, and MLA. Here are the manuals:


Course Objectives
1. Participants will learn to write research proposals, including developing the following specific skills:
   - Identify a feasible research topic and thesis,
   - Review relevant theory and literature,
   - Formulate specific research questions and/or hypotheses,
   - Identify appropriate research methods for answering questions or testing hypotheses,
• Identify research limitations of a project,
• Identify ethical and safety risks of a project and take appropriate precautions,
• Develop realistic budgets for research projects,
• Identify potential funding sources for research, and
• Develop realistic timelines for projects.

2. A second major goal is for participants to learn to publish and present research results, including acquiring the following specific skills:

• Develop realistic dissemination plans for research results;
• Develop oral research presentations, using PowerPoint, suitable for presentation at professional meetings, and
• Choose appropriate professional meetings and journals for dissemination.

Course Requirements

**Mentoring and Critiques of Classmates, 20%** Students will be required, as a part of this seminar class, to present their progress on their proposal most weeks. Other students, as well as the instructor, will make constructive suggestions for the improvement of the work of each student. No work is ever complete. Learning to critically evaluate the work of others will make your own work better. Learning to take constructive criticism from others is vitally important for your professional development; critical evaluation of the work of others is at the core of academic research and is the major way research advances.

**Thesis Proposal and Weekly Assignments, 80%** The major course requirement is to produce a proposal for a research thesis in Honors and to defend it to the faculty mentor and Honors College faculty. You will work your way through the preparation in a series of discrete assignments that, when combined together, can be polished into a final complete draft. Interim in-class reports will be required along the way to help the participants move through the research process as efficiently as possible. Periodic presentations of ideas to the class and the development of a PowerPoint presentation of final ideas are also required. These presentations will also prepare you for your presentation of your preliminary research at University Scholars Day, as well as presentations with your faculty mentors at professional meetings. It is expected that participants will revise their work until it is A quality.

**Blackboard** A Blackboard conference is maintained for this course. Students are responsible for checking Blackboard for assignments and notices. You should check Blackboard frequently to ensure that you are up to date on all class-related information. All assignments will be submitted via Blackboard and grades will be posted there as well.

**General Class Expectations**
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. The university’s expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, etc.

Academic Integrity: The instructor will adhere to and enforce UNT’s policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). Violations of academic integrity in this course will be addressed in compliance with the procedures laid out in this policy.

Accommodations: If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Office of Disability Accommodation in order to obtain the required official notification of your accommodation needs. Please plan to meet with me by appointment or during office hours to discuss approved accommodations and how my course requirements and activities may impact your ability to fully participate. Full information can be found at www.disability.unt.edu

Emergency Notification & Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify you with critical information in an event of emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). The system sends voice messages (and text messages upon permission) to the phones of all active faculty staff, and students. Please make certain to update your phone numbers at www.my.unt.edu. Some helpful emergency preparedness actions include: ensuring you know the evacuation routes and severe weather shelter areas, determining how you will contact family and friends if phones are temporarily unavailable, and identifying where you will go if you need to evacuate the Denton area suddenly. In the event of a university closure, your instructor will communicate with you through Blackboard regarding assignments, exams, field trips, and other items that may be impacted by the closure.

Course Outline

The following represents an approximate calendar of class discussions.

- **Week One** (June 5 & 7)
  - **Topic:** Research question; formulating a thesis statement and hypotheses. We will discuss the function and structure of a research proposal.
    - The proposal basically does two things: it states the problem that will be investigated, drawing on what we know from previous research (hence the literature review); and it lays out a plan for doing the research.
    - We will talk about how to make a plan to develop the proposal in this semester and how to overcome problems that might keep us from getting it written.
    - It is expected that students will be at different places in the process some will have a firm thesis topic, others will not; some will have selected a thesis mentor already. We will discuss these topics in class.
Assignment 1: Research Topic, Mentor, and Timeline, due June 9.

Assignment 2: Responsible Conduct of Research Certification, due June 9.

- **Week Two** (June 12 & 14)
  - **Topic:** Making a plan and identifying sources
    - This week we will discuss sources of literature across disciplines. We will discuss note-taking strategies, what works, and what does not. We will also discuss the reference systems we are using in the class.
    - We will also discuss application process for applying for scholarships, fellowships, NSF REUs, and internships (including NIH), as well as the process of asking for letters of recommendation for such things.

Assignment 3: Notes and Bibliography, due by June 16.

- **Week Three** (June 19 & 21)
  - **Topic:** Methodology and Sources of Data.
    - What kinds of data are appropriate for your paper and where can you go to find them?
    - If not using data, what are other methods you can employ to answer your question? What about experiments? Be prepared with questions and comments.

Assignment 4: First Draft of Methodology, due by June 23.

- **Week Four** (June 26 & 28)
  - **Topic:** Writing the Literature Review.
    - We will discuss pulling summaries of literature together into a coherent literature review.
    - We will review the examples of literature posted on Blackboard Vista and share examples from TEF.

Assignment 5: First Draft of Lit Review, due by June 30.

- **Week Five** (July 3 & 5)
  - Powerpoint Presentations.

Assignment 6: Presentation Slides, due July 3.

Final Proposal, due July 6.