

The Senior Honors Thesis/Project

Any student who wishes to complete the Honors in Music Program must complete a Senior Thesis or Project. The two names, “thesis” and “project,” will be used interchangeably. This is to indicate that the “thesis” may be a traditional paper, but might also be a project that is substantially different from a paper.

The project must be original scholarship. It is not simply a review; it must contain an original contribution to a body of knowledge. Typically the student will develop a thesis or hypothesis, present the background information necessary to introduce the problem, and evaluate the position taken using methods appropriate to the problem. The work culminates in an original essay, an annotated creative work or performance, or a scientific report or other special project, depending on one’s area of specialization.

Though the thesis must have a written component, the central portion of the project need not be written. For example, a student in sculpture or instrumental music might sculpt a statue or perform a concerto, complementing artistic work with written annotation summarizing the original interpretation or theme emphasized, or the historical or artistic context in which the work was produced. Students in performance fields also typically include a description of the process they underwent in coming up with their particular interpretation.

The thesis can focus on any topic of the student’s choosing, but should be related to the student’s major. A University faculty member must supervise the project with a specialty appropriate to the topic. For examples of past School of Music Projects, consult the collection of approved proposals housed in the School of Music Library.

Length of the thesis depends greatly on the topic and focus of the project. Traditional written theses in the humanities normally range from 30 to 50 pages while those in the sciences are sometimes somewhat shorter. When the central portion of the project is not a written document, the length of the required written portion of the project should provide for completeness, yet not overshadow the central focus of the project.

Adapted from the University Honors Program at UNCG Handbook for Students and Faculty 1998-99 Edition. (page 11)