Guidelines for B.Sc. Honours in Biology

The goal of the Honours program is to provide experience conducting independent research. At the end of the honours program the student will have written and defended a research based thesis. The program allows you to earn credit for research based work. You can apply the knowledge you learn in lectures and discover if a career in research is for you. There are many perks to working in a lab during your undergraduate program: excitement of making new discoveries; working in an environment that promotes independence; pursue work that is of personal interest; enjoy working in an intellectually stimulating and dynamic environment. Successful completion of an Honours program gives students a competitive advantage for future employment and entrance into graduate school and professional programs.

1) Entrance Into the Honours Program

Students must have completed 6 semesters of courses, have achieved a minimum average of 70% in all courses taken, and a minimum average of 75% in all Biology courses and required cognate courses.

Application into Honours must be made in writing to the Department Head, one month before the end of the sixth semester. A form for application into the program is available in the Biology office. Before applying for entrance into the Honours program, please arrange to have a research supervisor from among the faculty members of the Biology Department (or Associate members of the Department).

2) Honours Research Supervisory Committee

Each Honours student will have a Supervisory Committee consisting of three faculty members: a supervisor, one other faculty member with related research interests and the Honours Coordinator. In cases where the Honours supervisor is the Honours Coordinator, the Department Head will be appointed as the third member. The purpose of the Committee is to approve the research proposal, guide the research, and act as the examining committee.

3) Honours Research Proposal

The Honours student will submit a research proposal and participate in a discussion on the proposal with an Honours Supervisory Committee. The proposal will clearly indicate the working hypothesis (or hypotheses), the experimental design and, if applicable, the manner of statistical analysis. The proposal will be typewritten, double-spaced, and will have a length of 2-5 pages (including references etc.). If possible the proposal meeting should be held before the research begins; if not possible the proposal meeting should be held by the 4th week of the semester in which the student is registered in BIOL 498.
4) Thesis Examination

In the second semester of the honours program students will write their thesis. There will be an oral examination of Honours candidate on their Honours research project and thesis by the supervisory committee. The student will provide the committee with the completed thesis at least one week prior to the date of the defence. Typically, there will be minor revisions to the thesis as a result of the defense; thus there is no need to have the thesis bound at this point. The deadline for thesis submission for the Winter semester of 2007 is April 9th and the deadline for defense is April 23rd. A thesis can be submitted and defended earlier than these dates if so desired.

The oral examination will begin with a brief (10 - 15 minutes) presentation by the student summarizing the research, followed by questions by the supervisory committee. Defenses typically are 45 minutes to one hour in duration.

5) Thesis Format

The thesis should follow the format of M.Sc. or Ph.D. theses, except in length. See the website of the Faculty of Graduate and Research for thesis format details (http://www.uregina.ca/gradstudies/theses%20guide/thesesguide.html). You can also view copies of previous years’s thesis in the Biology Office for further guidance on formatting issues. Figures and tables should be inserted immediately after the location in which they are first mentioned in the text. The Literature Cited section should be modelled on the format of a reputable journal in the sub-discipline (e.g., Canadian Journal of Botany, Canadian Journal of Zoology, Genome).

6) Submission of Final Copy

Two final copies of the thesis (incorporating the minor revisions resulting from the defense) will be submitted to the Department of Biology (one copy for the Department, and one copy for the supervisor). The final copies should be bound in an inexpensive softcover format (e.g., “Cerlox”). Binding (and duplicating) may be done at Printing Services at the University, or off-campus. The student should also retain a copy of the final version of the thesis. Final copies will be submitted in the semester in which the student has registered for Biol 499.

7) Credits/Grading

Six credits are allocated to the research and the thesis. Students will enroll in Biol 498 (Honours Research) and Biol 499 (Honours Thesis). These courses are normally taken in consecutive semesters, but may also be taken concurrently. The grade for the courses will be determined by the Supervisory Committee, based upon the quality of the research and thesis, and the performance on the oral examination of the thesis.
If Biol 498 and 499 are taken in consecutive semesters, then a grade of "incomplete" will initially be assigned for Biol 498. Upon completion of Biol 499, the same grade will be assigned to both courses.

8) **Off-Campus Honours Research**

All students who intend to carry out their research off-campus under the supervision of an external scientist will establish an Honours Research Supervisory Committee, consisting of the Department Head, another faculty member and the supervising scientist. The second faculty member will have direct contact with the scientist who supervised the research, and will help supervise the writing of the thesis.