THE HONORS MAJOR IN PSYCHOLOGY

Students who maintain an excellent academic record may wish to pursue the Honors Major in Psychology. To qualify students must maintain a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.4 in Psychology courses and an overall grade-point average of 3.0 by the end of the junior year. The Honors Major is an enhancement of the standard major where students complete a 3-credit Honors Research Seminar (830:490) and 6 credits of Honors Research (830:497/830:498) their senior year beyond the standard psychology major requirements (830:490 may be used to satisfy the 400-level elective requirement). Students are strongly encouraged to get involved in research during their junior year.

Here's the procedure:

Find an SAS Psychology faculty member who is willing to sponsor your honors research project. You may begin your search on our research opportunities site: https://sas.rutgers.edu/cms/psych/research-opportunities

You and the faculty member jointly fill out and submit the honors proposal by the 1st week of September.

Meanwhile, go ahead and enroll in the next semester as though it were not going to be approved.

Once the proposal has been approved, you receive special permission numbers to enroll in the courses.

Once the project is underway, the department sends a list to the registrar to code all the students in the honors courses as Honors Majors in Psychology

Upon successful completion of your psychology honors major requirements the Psychology Department Honors Committee recommends that the student receive the BA with Honors in Psychology and the transcript will designate the student as a ***Research Scholar in Psychology.***

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01:830:497 and 830:498:01

Index No. _____Index No _____

Special Permission (Fall)# _____ Faculty Supervisor _____

(Spring)#_____

1. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of **3.4 or better in all Psychology courses** (830 subject index), an **overall grade point average of 3.0 or better** by the end of the junior year and the agreement of an SAS faculty member to supervise the research. ***Please attach an unofficial Transcript.***
2. Students who plan to complete the Honors Major in Psychology are strongly encouraged to get involved in research in their junior year.
3. At least nine of the 3- or 4-credit courses counting toward the Honors Major must be taken at Rutgers, New Brunswick (01:830).
4. Successful completion of the Honors Seminar (01:830:490) given in the Fall and Honors Research in Psychology (01:830:497-498) taken during each of the final two semesters and full participation in the departmental honors program. The total of 9 credits of honors courses count toward the major GPA. January graduates are permitted to complete the honors major off-cycle.
5. A special permission number will be issued after the form is signed by your faculty supervisor, the Honors Committee Chair, and the Vice-Chair of Undergraduate Studies, Room 101, Tillett Hall, Livingston Campus.
6. **Proposal Guidelines** information is attached.
7. 830:490 fulfills the 400 level requirement for the major. 830:497 & 498 are requirements beyond the requirements for the standard major. **Honors in Psychology does not fulfill the lab requirement for the psychology major.**
8. **Please note:** If student does not receive Honors, 497/498 will be replaced by our regular Research in Psych 495/496 and the Honors Research seminar will fulfill the 400-level elective requirement.

CONTACT and PROJECT INFORMATION

STUDENT NAME _____FACULTY SUPERVISOR_____

(Please print clearly)

RUID# _____ - _____ - _____ SEMESTER_____ YEAR _____

SCHOOL NUMBER _____ GRADUATION DATE _____ CURRICULUM _____

Overall G.P.A._____

Psychology G.P.A._____

PLEASE PRINT

P.O. Box # _____

(College Address) _____

_____

[**Cell Phone**] _____

It is imperative that we have a current campus phone number

☐ Transcript Attached

[**E-mail Address]** _____

[**Home Address**] _____

_____

[Home Phone] _____

TENTATIVE PROJECT TITLE: _____

_____

FINAL PRODUCT & EVALUATION: The final product will be in the form of a research paper and an oral presentation which are both evaluated by a departmental honors committee. Students who produce high quality work will receive a notation of distinction on their diplomas.

How often will you meet with your faculty supervisor? _____

_____
Student (signature required)

_____ _____
Supervisor (signature required) Supervisor (print name)

_____
Honors Committee Chair

_____
Vice Chair for Undergraduate Studies
In Psychology

Honors In Psychology: Proposal Guidelines

This is a brief set of guidelines to help you submit a coherent and thoughtful thesis proposal. Consult with your advisor to gain the best possible advice for the particular area of research you are conducting (especially justification of statistics). Also make sure that the work has been approved by the Rutgers IRB or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee.

The proposal should not be longer than **five double-spaced** pages in length (excluding the References list – keep this as short as possible for the proposal; otherwise too many citations in the body of the proposal will limit what you actually want to write). Text size should not be set smaller than size 12 font.

Citing and Referencing the Literature

The citation style and listing of references for Honors in Psychology has historically asked students to be consistent with the American Psychological Association format. A number of websites provide examples of how to write the References list (eg., http://www.crk.umn.edu/library/links/apa5th.htm). On this website, scroll down to the example for '**Reference Citations in Text.**' This is an example of how to cite a paper(s) that supports a particular statement of fact within the body of your proposal.

Do not be confused that the APA format differs from some or all papers that you read. As you know, there are many subdisciplines in Psychology, and in your reading of the literature you will notice that different journals vary in their format. Citation styles in journals publishing articles in behavioral neuroscience or cognition or social/clinical psychology may overlap or not, as the case may be.

In the final analysis, the main principle is that a reader of your article has sufficient information to locate in the library the volume and issue (or number) of any listed citation in your reference list.

Writing The Proposal

The challenge in writing a proposal is to demonstrate a balance of conciseness and detail that effectively communicates your goals, methods, expected results and interpretation of the data (your ability to write at length on a topic should be reserved for your thesis - which will be discussed in the Honors seminar). This skill becomes finely honed over the years and is the basis of faculty effectively applying for funds to private and federal funding agencies (eg,. National Science Foundation; National Institutes of Health; Fetzer Foundation; NARSAD). You will learn more about this in the Honors Seminar. As well as how to apply for predoctoral fellowships from these institutions should you ever go to graduate school.

Proposal Structure and Quality

Evaluation will be based on the scientific scholarship involved in presenting the following structure.

- Introduction/background;
- Statement of the problem;
- Hypotheses/research questions;
- Methods/planned analyses;
- Appropriate citations

In general, try to avoid writing more than 2 pages for sections A, B and C. Give yourself 2 pages to attend to the description and justification of the methodology and analytical approach (section D). The final page should briefly state what type of data (or analytical outcome) will support the hypothesis. For example, certain groups of subjects will score more or less in a given behavioral test.

Here are general suggestions to guide the process.

Introduction/Background

If you have been reading the literature, then you should already have a fair idea of how an introduction is written. However, in the present case, you do not have the luxury of a thorough review (as you will have for the thesis). But you should have the following:

- Clear statement of objectives, design and overall interpretation of data once it is obtained.
- Evolution of argument justifying the final statement of hypothesis and/or aims
- Clarity of writing and originality of thought
- Evidence of intelligent reading and interpretation of the literature

Methods/Planned Analyses

- Clear understanding of methodology and analysis
- Justify why the specific measurement tools/tests will accurately address the hypothesis or question
- Why were the particular statistical analyses appropriate for the study

Interpretation

- What type of data will confirm the hypothesis
- What will be the general significance of the information once collected (i.e. clear understanding of the “big picture”)