The Anthropology Honors Thesis program provides outstanding seniors the opportunity to conduct original scholarly research under the mentorship of an anthropology faculty member, to write an honors thesis, and ultimately to graduate with departmental honors.

It is a yearlong program that may begin in either fall or spring semester of the senior year, usually beginning in the fall semester of senior year.

The first semester is normally spent in the formulation of the topic, exploration of the published literature, methodological development, primary data collection/research/analysis, and beginning to write; the second semester is normally dedicated to writing the thesis, submitting drafts to both main and second readers for critical comments and suggestions in a timely manner, and polishing the final thesis for submission by the third week of April.

Although there is no specific length requirement, a typical undergraduate Honors Thesis contains 40-100 pages of double-spaced text, along with a bibliography, and often includes illustrations and tables. To get a sense of what is expected, take a look at undergraduate theses on file in the Anthropology Library (search for "Anthropology senior thesis" in UC Library Search).

**Requirements**

- Overall UC GPA must be 3.5 or higher before enrolling in Anthropology H195A.
- Major GPA must be 3.6 or higher before enrolling in Anthropology H195A.

  **NOTE:** The major GPA is based solely on courses completed at Berkeley.

- Anthropology 114 and the Method requirement must be completed or in progress by the semester of the thesis proposal and recruitment of faculty sponsor. If in progress, they should be completed before enrolling in Anthropology H195A.

- A minimum of 8 upper-division units in Anthropology courses taken at UC Berkeley must be completed at the time of the thesis proposal and recruitment of faculty sponsor, with no fewer than 8 additional upper-division units in Anthropology courses in progress (to total a minimum of 16 units completed before enrolling in Anthropology H195A).

- A well-designed research proposal must be developed and the sponsorship of an Anthropology faculty member confirmed before enrolling in Anthropology H195A.
• No incompletes can be on record at the time of enrollment in Anth H195A, which marks the formal beginning of the thesis program. This includes incompletes that have been given an extension of time--work must be finished on all incompletes before a student will be allowed to enroll in Anthropology H195A.

Getting Started

*If you will not meet all the GPA and course requirements listed above,* you are not eligible for the program. You should discuss your situation with the Undergraduate Major Advisor. Your first priority is settling on a general topic and a particular faculty advisor. If you are unsure which faculty member in the Anthropology Department might best help you, consult with the undergraduate advisor in 215 Anthropology and Art Practice Building (formerly known as Kroeber Hall). Prepare a brief thesis proposal--a statement of the research question and your plan of action including a discussion of the research methods you will employ. Reach out to your prospective thesis advisor with your proposal thoughts and ask if they are able to sponsor you. If the response is "yes,"* and if you meet all the requirements listed above,* then defining the subsequent process is up to you and your thesis advisor. If the faculty sponsor's answer is "no" (the faculty member may be on leave the coming year, unable to commit the time that you and your project merit, etc.), you may meet with additional faculty until you find sponsorship.

In addition to the sponsorship of an Anthropology professor as thesis advisor, the honors program requires you to identify and gain the agreement of a second faculty member, commonly referred to as the second reader. The second reader is only required to read and comment on a near-final version of the thesis but may choose to play a greater role. In unique circumstances, the second reader may be a professor from another department, if approved by the Anthropology thesis advisor. Discuss with your thesis advisor who would make a good reader for your project and arrange to meet with the prospective reader(s). If they agree to work with you and your thesis advisor, your thesis plan is complete. Although it is often best to secure both your main thesis faculty advisor and second reader at the start of the process, the second reader is sometimes identified later, within the first semester of being enrolled in the Honors thesis course sequence.

**NOTE:** It is recommended that the student find out early that both readers agree on the same research methodology and range of required readings, that the project is not too large to be completed in two semesters, and that both readers be available (not on sabbatical or leave) for both semesters.

Once you obtain sponsorship from an Anthropology faculty member (and possibly the second reader), request that your main faculty advisor email the undergraduate academic advisor to request your enrollment into the first semester of the Senior Honors Thesis Program, Anthropology H195A, under that professor’s code. For your second semester, please reach out to the undergraduate advisor to request enrollment into the second half of the Senior Honors Thesis program, Anthropology H195B. The honors courses (Anthropology H195A & H195B) are each 4 unit courses and will count as 2 of the 5 upper division elective requirements for the major and are taken for a letter grade.
NOTE: Anthropology H195A and H195B are independent study courses; there is no set instruction or class time involved. All the work for the thesis and these 2 semester courses is done independently and in coordination with your main faculty advisor.

**Application Timeline**

- Begin preparing for a thesis no later than February of Junior Year (for a Fall/Spring thesis of your senior year) or September of Junior year if graduating in Fall (for a Spring/Fall thesis). During this semester, which precedes admission into the honors thesis course sequence, take the following steps:
  
  Prepare brief thesis proposal and meet with the prospective faculty advisor(s).

  Get the consent of a faculty member of the Anthropology Department to serve as your primary advisor and sponsor.

  Discuss the project, appropriate methodology and research methods, and preparation of bibliography with the faculty sponsor and second reader.

  Apply for research funding if appropriate and, if needed, approval from the Committee on the Protection of Human Subjects.

- Your thesis course enrollment for the following semester should be requested by the main faculty advisor sending an email to the undergraduate major advisor before the semester begins.

**Level of Honors**

Only work of high caliber will qualify for graduation with Honors on the diploma. The criteria for the determination of the level of Honors are the quality and originality of the thesis, as well as the student’s performance in coursework. The Honors categories are Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors. If the thesis is not of the quality expected a student may receive course credit only (and a final letter grade for the two-course honors thesis sequence). The level of honors is usually decided by the main faculty advisor, but may include consultation with the second reader at the discretion of the main advisor.