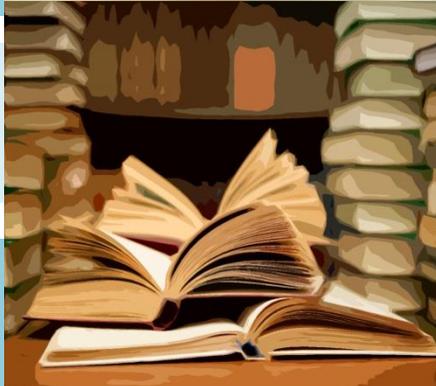


# THE SCHOOL OF **geography**



School of Geography  
**Guide to Undergraduate Honors in the School of Geography**  
Table of Contents

Honors Program Overview.....	3
Program Requirements & Eligibility .....	3
Application Process.....	3
Program Timeline.....	4
Thesis Formatting.....	5
Thesis Defense and Completion .....	6
Thesis Binding.....	6
Poster Presentation .....	7
Special Circumstances .....	7
Honors in Global Environmental Studies and Earth System Science.....	8
Deadlines to Remember.....	9
Honors Application Form .....	10
Honors GPA Calculation Guide .....	11
Honors Thesis Binding Form.....	13

## Honors Program Overview

The honors program in The School of Geography provides qualified students majoring in Geography, Global Environmental Studies, and Earth System Science with the opportunity to conduct a major independent research project.

Honors students must successfully complete a two-semester independent honors project, to be conducted under the supervision of a faculty advisor and one additional faculty member, who together constitute the student's honors committee. The faculty advisor will serve as the primary supervisor for the honors project, and the additional faculty member will serve as the second reader.

Honors projects should make an original contribution to geographical knowledge. In crafting the research project and honors thesis, the student will work closely with a faculty supervisor and will also be able to draw upon the advice of their second reader.

In addition to writing the thesis, the student will prepare a poster for presentation at Academic Spree Day (or Fall Fest, depending on the semesters of Honors) and may have the opportunity to participate in a poster session at the annual Association of American Geographers [AAG] meeting as well. See page 7 for more information on poster presentation.

## Program Requirements & Eligibility

In order to be eligible for honors, a student must meet **all** of the following requirements:

- Student must be entering either the Spring semester of their Junior year or the Fall semester of their Senior year
- Student must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.25
- Student must have a minimum Geography GPA of 3.50
- Student must have taken GEOG 141 Research Methods

A notice will be sent out to all students during the fall semester of their junior year introducing the program. This notice will include an application to the program and GPA calculation worksheet.

## Application Process

To apply for honors, students should fill out an Honors Application (page 9) as well as the Honors GPA Calculation Guide as proof of interest and eligibility. The student will need to provide their cumulative GPA as well as their Major GPA on their application, along with a brief description of their intended honors work, signed and approved by their intended faculty honors supervisor.

Students can look up their cumulative GPAs through their online accounts, but students will need to calculate their own GPA based on the courses they have taken in the major and the grades they received in those courses to determine if they are fully eligible for honors (see page 10 for the Major GPA Calculation form and instructions).

- Applications and calculations should be submitted to the Program Administrator **two weeks before course registration for the following semester**.
  - This will allow for the department to make a decision regarding the students' acceptance and create the Honors "course" (GEOG/GES/EN 297) with the Registrar's office before registration begins, so that you can enroll in a timely fashion.

- Applications are confirmed or denied. Accepted students will be formally notified of their acceptance to the program before course registration for the following semester begins.

## Program Timeline

### Participation

Most students will produce their honors theses during their senior year in order to have the two consecutive semester experience, although in some cases students may opt to enroll in the honors program for the spring semester of their junior year and complete their thesis during the fall semester of their senior year.

Due to the two-semester commitment of these honors projects, completing a thesis often involves research during the summer before their senior year, in addition to the two semesters. This allows the student to explore the topic in considerable depth.

### Registering for Honors

Students pursuing honors should register for GEOG (or GES or EN) 279: Honors Directed Research (Honors) in the spring term of their junior year AND the fall term of their senior year, OR they should enroll in GEOG 297 (or GES or EN) in the fall and spring semesters of their senior year. Each unit is worth 1.00 credit – students must complete a total of 2.00 credits for honors completion.

If the student is a junior and adding another course exceeds their maximum course load, they must either drop another course, or get special approval to add a fifth course from Academic Advising.

### FOR FACULTY

Once the student is all set to enroll in Honors, their faculty supervisor should send an email to the Registrar's office ([registrar@clarku.edu](mailto:registrar@clarku.edu)) with the following information:

- Student Name and Banner ID Number
- Honors course number (GEOG/GES/EN 297)
- Semester to be enrolled in Honors

The faculty supervisor should later receive a reply from the Registrar's office confirming that a course has been created for this student's Honors registration. The faculty sponsor can then grant permission to the student online to enroll in the course. The student should then be able to register.

\*The student should register for their Honors course for BOTH semesters of the year-long commitment, so they will need to repeat this process for the second semester of their project as well.\*

The two semesters of Honors (GEOG/GES/EN 297) can fulfill the Capstone requirement within the Geography and Global Environmental Studies majors.

### Honors Progress

Once students have spoken with their faculty supervisor, identified a second faculty member who agrees to serve on their committee as second reader, and registered for honors, the student will then need to decide what specific topic of research and what methodology they will use to collect data.

Students should expect to meet with their faculty supervisor every two or three weeks during the semesters they are enrolled in the honors program, and they should consult with their second reader once or twice per semester. It is the responsibility of the student to seek out their supervisor to initiate these meetings.

Before the student begins to collect data and write their thesis, they should consult with their supervisor and second reader after they have drafted an outline for the honors research project and established a timeline for submitting drafts of different parts of the thesis.

At least once per semester, students should have a formal meeting with their committee to assess progress through the Honors program. Ideally, preliminary drafts of portions of the thesis should be the focus of these meetings so that the committee can read, comment, and provide feedback on the drafts.

During the final semester of Honors thesis work, the student should present a poster at Academic Spree Day (or Fall Fest, if completing in the fall semester).

### Completing Honors

The final draft of the thesis should be finished well before the end of the students' second semester in the Honors program. This draft is considered a "working draft" and is the document that will be defended before the committee. See page 5 for guidelines on thesis formatting.

The final draft of the thesis is due to the committee **two weeks before the date for the student's defense of the thesis**, but in no case should it be handed in later than April 1st (or if completing in the fall semester, deadlines can be arranged with the committee).

No defense should take place after **April 15th** for spring completion. For fall completion, defense dates should be arranged with the committee, but should be set for a date before the winter break. After the defense of the thesis, the student has two weeks in which to revise the document and submit a final version of the thesis meets with the supervisor's approval.

After the thesis is defended, the student's honors supervisor and second reader will grade the thesis and determine the level of honors. On the basis of the thesis and the student's overall academic performance, the committee (subject to the approval of the Director of the School of Geography) will also determine whether or not Honors will be recognized at Commencement, and the level of honors that will be awarded (No Honors, Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors).

The student's Honors supervisor is responsible for notifying the Program Administrator of the level of honors given. The Program Administrator will then notify the Registrar of this information so that it may appear appropriately on the student's diploma and in the Commencement program.

### **Thesis Formatting**

Thesis format should follow the current accepted practice of the Graduate School at Clark University. The assistant to the Dean of the Graduate School or the [Graduate School's website](#) can provide the basic format information students will need.

Students should settle on the format for references, headings, and style early in the research and writing process with their honors supervisor. The simplest format guide is to choose one of the major North American

geographical journals, such as the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* or *The Geographical Review*, and follow their directions on thesis structure. When in doubt about issues of editorial minutia, consult [The Chicago Manual of Style: The Essential Guide for Writers, Editors, and Publishers](#).

### Thesis Defense and Completion

Upon completion of the thesis, the student should coordinate a date of defense with their committee. The defense should take place on campus (student can contact the Program Administrator to reserve a room and media equipment, if necessary, for the defense). The defense should be about one hour long.

The student will present their thesis and research to their committee, who will then reach a decision on the level of honors to be granted to the student following the defense. The honors supervisor should report this designation to the Program Administrator once a decision is made.

### Thesis Binding

After the student completes their defense, the student will have two weeks to make revisions and have the final draft approved. Once the final version of the student's Honors thesis is approved by both the supervisor and second reader, the student should contact the Program Administrator to begin the process of binding the final copy of their thesis. **\*Before sending a thesis for binding, please be sure all of the formatting is correct, including a cover page as noted on the [Graduate School's Thesis Template \[DOC\]](#)\***

A departmental copy of the thesis should be made on archival paper. In order to do this, students should follow this procedure:

- Students should contact either the Clark [Copy Center](#) (on campus) or [Curry Printing](#) regarding printing the thesis on archival paper. The type of paper is called "Atlas Bond Acid Free paper", which is a heavier paper with a water mark on it.
- Students should send an electronic copy of their thesis (preferably as a pdf) along with a scan of their completed Honors Thesis Binding Form (found on page 12) to the printing company they choose to do business with. Students should be sure to note any special instructions for printing (pages to be done in color, special maps or diagrams that need attention, etc.) on their binding form. Students should email all of this information to the appropriate contact at the company they are using, and they should be sure to CC to the Program Administrator.
  - If the student plans on ordering any personal copies of their thesis in addition to this departmental copy, they can place the order at this time as well. It is up to the student if they want to order their personal copy/copies on archival paper, but if they choose to do so, they should include however many additional copies they want for themselves in this order as well.
  - If the student wishes to order personal copies on standard paper, the student should print their thesis as desired and then submit the paper copy to the Program Administrator for binding.
- When placing the order with the printing company, the student should provide their personal payment information, and should specify to have the finished copy/copies of their thesis sent to:
  - Program Administrator
  - Jefferson Academic Center, Room 210
  - Clark University
  - 950 Main Street, Worcester MA, 01610
- Once these printed copies are delivered to the Program Administrator, the copies will be sent to Goddard Library for binding. The department will cover the cost of binding for the departmental copy,

but any personal copies ordered by the student should be paid for by the student. Contact the Program Administrator for updated prices and procedures for payment.

- Please be aware that the binding process takes about two weeks. Finished and bound copies of theses will be returned once completed to the Program Administrator, who will then notify the students.

**NOTE: The Program Administrator is not responsible for proofreading or checking your thesis for formatting errors. Your thesis should be ready to print upon submission and must include a correctly formatted title/cover page. Any errors in formatting or printing are to be resolved by the student.**

## Poster Presentation

Students participating in the honors program may have the opportunity to present their research as a poster at one of the following conferences:

- AAG (American Association of Geographers) Conference | Spring Semester
- Fall Fest | Fall Semester
- Academic Spree Day | Spring Semester

Students should discuss poster presentation with their faculty supervisors and coordinate the details through them.

## Special Circumstances

### Double Honors

In special circumstances, some students may wish to register for “double honors.” This situation may arise when a student is a double major and would like to receive an honors designation in both majors. There are two instances for double honors:

1. When a student is working on one honors thesis in which the subject matter encompasses both departments, the student should register for honors for a total of two semesters: one semester in each department for one credit each. For example, if a student is a Geography major and an Environmental Science major, they would register one semester for GEOG 297 and receive one credit for this “course.” Then, the following semester, they would register for EN 297 and receive a second credit and be on the road to honors completion.
  - o The student should keep in mind that each department has its own evaluation process to designate the level of honors the student will receive for their thesis within that major. It is possible to get “honors” designation from one department and declined in another department. It is especially important to meet with your advisors in both majors regularly to be sure that your thesis encompasses recommendations, requirements and expectations of both faculty supervisors.
2. If the student is producing two separate honors theses because their topic does not encompass both departments, then the student should be registering for two semesters of honors thesis directed research within each major.

### Honors Program and the HERO Program

The two semesters of work done within the HERO program can be counted for the two semesters of Honors work upon consultation with HERO faculty supervisors. Students should still fill out the attached honors program application with their information and GPAs.

## Honors in Global Environmental Studies (GES)

Students looking to pursue honors in the Global Environmental Studies (GES) major should consult the GES program requirements, however the honors process should follow the procedures outlined in this guide.

Additional information on the Honors program in GES can be found in the most current version of the [Guide to the GES Major](#), as well as on our website and [GES Academic Catalog page](#).

## Honors in Earth System Science (ESS)

Students must apply in writing **by April 15th** of their **junior year** to the Director of the Environmental Science program for admission into the honors program. Normally a cumulative GPA of at least 3.4 will be required for admission into the honors program. The application should include a brief cover letter describing the proposed honors research and the name of the faculty member who will be the primary research advisor. An unofficial transcript should be included in the application. Upon admission to the honors program the student (with the approval of the primary advisor) must find one other member of the ES program faculty who will serve on the student's honors thesis committee. With the approval of the Steering Committee, one member of a student's committee (even the primary research advisor) may be a qualified person who is not a member of the faculty at Clark.

**\*Students pursuing Honors in ESS through Environmental Science do not need to have taken GEOG 141 Research methods to apply to the program.\***

### Admission to the ESS Honors Program:

The Steering Committee will decide who is admitted into the honors program based on a student's GPA, course of study, plan for an honors project, and the recommendation of the faculty member who will act as research advisor. Admission to the honors program does not guarantee the award of honors.

### ESS Honors Requirements

Once a student is admitted into the honors program, the student will register for at least two semesters of Honors Research in Environmental Science, EN 297. The student will carry out a directed research project under the mentorship of a faculty member or other approved person for at least two semesters and will write an honors thesis, to be submitted to the student's two-member thesis committee by **April 10th** of the senior year. The thesis will also be made available to interested members of the ES faculty. The student will also give an oral presentation of their research at a designated time towards the end of the senior year. All faculty members of the ES program committee will be invited to attend these presentations, and the presentations will be open to the Clark community. After all the student honors presentations have been given and all the honors theses have been read by the respective two-member committees and other interested ES faculty, the Steering Committee will decide on the level of honors to be awarded based on the recommendation of the student's committee and Steering Committee members.

### Criteria for ESS Honors:

The category of honors (no honors, honors, high honors, highest honors) awarded in ES will be based on the following criteria (listed in order of importance):

- (a) the honors research and the honors thesis,
- (b) the oral presentation and response to audience questions,
- (c) the recommendation of the student's advisory committee,

(d) a student's overall grade point average and grades in individual ES-related courses.

Additional information on the Honors program in ESS can be found on the Environmental Science forum on Moodle, as well as on the Environmental Science/[Earth System Science Academic Catalog page](#).

### Deadlines to Remember

For students beginning their honors work in the spring of their junior year and completing in the fall of their senior year:

- Applications and calculations should be submitted to the Program Administrator **two weeks before course registration for the following semester.**
- Honors GEOG/GES/EN 297 enrollment should take place during registration for the spring of their junior year and during registration for the fall semester of their senior year.
- Thesis must be defended to committee by **December 15**
- Final printed copy/copies of thesis (after revisions) should be submitted to the Program Administrator by **December 30** for binding
- Honors designations should be submitted by faculty supervisor to the Program Administrator by December 30 for Commencement documentation

For students beginning their honors work in the fall of their senior year and completing in the spring of their senior year:

- Applications and calculations should be submitted to the Program Administrator **two weeks before course registration for the following semester.**
- Honors GEOG/GES/EN 297 enrollment should take place during registration for the spring of their junior year and during registration for the fall semester of their senior year
- Thesis must be defended to committee by **April 15**
- Final printed copy/copies of thesis (after revisions) should be submitted to the Program Administrator by **April 30** for binding
- Honors designations should be submitted by faculty supervisor to the Program Administrator by **April 30** for Commencement documentation

## Honors Program Application

Please submit this to the Program Administrator in Jefferson 210.

### Section I: *This section should be filled out by the student*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Honors supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Honors supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Two semesters in which you will earn two credits for Honors research: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

Intended Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description of Thesis work: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Current cumulative GPA: \_\_\_\_\_ Geography GPA: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of above GPAs: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section II: *This section to be filled out by the department*

- Accepted
- Declined
- Defer to Next Semester

Signature of Faculty Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

### Section III: *This section should be filled out by the student's Honors Supervisor at the end of the student's Honors Thesis Defense*

Final Thesis Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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Date of Honors Thesis Defense: \_\_\_\_\_

#### DESIGNATION OF HONORS (Circle One):

No Honors                      Honors                      High Honors                      Highest Honors

Signature of Honors Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Honors Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

#### DEADLINES TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Thesis is due to the Committee by April 1 for May graduation
- Thesis must be defended by April 15 for May graduation
- Honors designation is due to the Program Administrator by April 30 for May graduation
- Paper form of Honors thesis for binding is due to the Program Administrator by April 30 for May graduation. *See the Guide to Undergraduate Honors in Geography for deadlines for December completion.*

School of Geography  
**Honors GPA Calculation Guide**  
 (page 1 of 2)

In order to be eligible for honors, you will need to have an overall **cumulative GPA of 3.25**, as well as a **3.5 GPA in your major** at the time of application to the honors program. Information on your cumulative GPA can be found on your student Banner account, but you will need to calculate your own Major GPA based on the courses you have taken that satisfy Major requirements and the grades you received in those courses.

Clark University GPA Calculation Scale

A+ = 4.30	B+ = 3.30	C+ = 2.30	D+ = 1.30
A = 4.00	B = 3.00	C = 2.00	D = 1.00
A- = 3.70	B- = 2.70	C- = 1.70	F = 0.00

In order to determine your Major GPA, use the above scale to assign a numerical value to the letter grade you have received in each Major course you have taken, then multiply that value by the number of units/credits assigned to each course. Add all of the numerical values together and divide the sum by the total number of credits taken.

For example, if you have taken 2 courses for a Geography Major:

GEOG 110: A = 4.00 x 4 credits = 16.00  
 GEOG 280: B+ = 3.30 x 4 credits = 13.20

16.00 + 13.20 = 29.20 / 8 credits taken = 3.65 Geography Major GPA

Please use the back of this form to calculate your Major GPA, then sign and turn it in with your honors application to the **Program Administrator in Jefferson 210**.



More information on GPA calculation can be found here:  
<http://catalog.clarku.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=145>





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