



WOMEN STUDIES PROGRAM

Guidelines for Undergraduate Departmental Honors

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I. Purpose

The Undergraduate Honors Program in Women Studies is designed to encourage students who exhibit superior motivation and performance by offering them the opportunity to do independent research with Women Studies Faculty. This research culminates in the writing of a senior honors thesis. If the program is successfully completed, the student is rewarded by receiving program honors at graduation.

II. Eligibility

To be eligible to participate in the Women Studies Undergraduate Honors Program, a student must present a major in Women Studies, an overall GPA of 3.2 and a GPA of 3.5 for courses in the Women Studies major program of study.

Students who wish to apply for the Women Studies Undergraduate Honors Program must complete and turn in the application materials during the first semester of their junior year. Before submitting the application, the student must find a professor who agrees to act as the thesis advisor. In consultation with the thesis advisor, the student must establish that he or she has the requisite course work in the major area of study. The course requirements will generally consist of a minimum of 15 credit hours of courses towards the major area of study. The minimum number of requisite credit hours or the timeline for application and admission to candidacy for Honors may be waived on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Faculty Undergraduate Advisor and the Director.

In summary, qualified students who are interested in the Women Studies honors program must: 1) select an honors thesis faculty advisor, preferably in consultation with the Program Faculty Undergraduate Advisor; 2) submit an application letter and completed application form (available on the Women Studies website). Eligible students are strongly urged to submit their letter of application, co-signed by the honors thesis advisor, by October 15th of their junior year; 3) submit verification of scheduled, or taken, honors sequence, 4) provide a copy of an unofficial transcript.

III. The Honors Sequence

Once accepted into the Women Studies Undergraduate Honors Program, the student is considered an honors candidate. Candidates will be expected to complete a series of special courses and independent work in addition to those which make up the regular program of study for their Women Studies major. The same minimum GPA's which are required for acceptance (3.2 overall, 3.5 in major) must be maintained through the end of the honors program in order for the candidate to remain eligible for graduation with program honors.

During the Spring semester of the junior year, in addition to the preliminary information on the application form, a more thorough thesis proposal and bibliography should be submitted to the thesis advisor. The specific time frame and format for these obligations will be decided by the candidate's thesis advisor.

Candidates must enroll in WMST 492, ordinarily offered in the Spring semester of the candidate's junior year. During the senior year, candidates take WMST 493, offered as an independent study with the thesis advisor. WMST 493 course is a reading and research course designed to provide the student with a program of directed study for the writing of the thesis. For the 493 course, the candidate and the thesis advisor must meet at regularly-scheduled times to be set together by the student and the professor. During the course of these meetings, the advisor will supervise the candidate's thesis research and writing progress.

If deemed necessary by the candidate and the thesis advisor, Honors students may opt to write the Honors thesis over the course of the senior year. To do so, they may sign up for a section of WMST 499 with their honors thesis advisor during the Fall. By the end of the 499 course, the candidate should have completed at least an outline, an abstract, and a complete bibliography which the thesis advisor finds acceptable to commence the writing of the thesis.

If WMST 499 is taken in the Fall, following its completion, the candidate must enroll in WMST 493 during the Spring semester of their senior year. Building on the work of the previous semester (499), the candidate should complete any remaining research necessary and should finish writing the thesis. Because the writing of the thesis should take place in close consultation with the advisor, it is again recommended that an appointment schedule be set and the candidate's progress be discussed regularly. Some advisors may fix deadlines by which portions of the thesis are due. While exact agendas will vary, the thesis must be completed and graded in its entirety in time for final grades and honors to be reported to graduation committees.

In the same semester during which a 499 or the 493 course is taken, the candidate and the advisor should select a committee of readers who will grade the final thesis. This committee will consist of the thesis advisor and at least one other UNM faculty member. Secondary thesis readers must be associated with departments or programs directly related to the candidate's major field(s) of study.

Because of the importance of frequent discussions and regular administrative procedures, the candidate should ensure that the professor chosen as thesis advisor will be available during the candidate's entire senior year. The calendar below indicates the standard progression of the candidate's program.

Fall, junior year	Student chooses an advisor. Student completes and turns in application. Student is notified of acceptance/rejection into honors program.
Spring, junior year	Honors candidate completes WMST 492
Fall, senior year	Honors candidate completes WMST 499 including submission of outline, abstract, and complete bibliography.
Spring, senior year	Honors candidate completes WMST 493, including conclusion of research and thesis. Student and advisor select alternate reader(s) of thesis committee.

While there may be deviations from this agenda depending on the specific circumstances of individuals and programs, students are advised to follow this schedule as closely as possible.

IV. Grading of the thesis and awarding of honors

The honors thesis will be read and graded by the thesis advisor and the secondary reader(s) of the candidate's thesis committee. The final thesis grade will be the average of the grades assigned by all readers.

Once the thesis has been read and graded by all committee members, they will convene and vote on the level of honors to be awarded to the candidate. Although the award of honors need not be based strictly on a numerical score, committee members will be generally be guided by the University's approved scale when they cast their votes. According to this scale, an average grade of 3.86 to 4.00 merits the Summa Cum Laude honor, 3.66 to 3.85 is Magna Cum Laude, and 3.5 to 3.65 is Cum Laude.

If the candidate fulfills all the course requirements for the honors program, but fails to make a grade of B or higher on the honors thesis, or fails to meet the GPA requirements for honors candidates at the time of graduation, he or she may still graduate, but without honors.

For any further information, please contact the Undergraduate Advisor of Women Studies at 277-3854.