HONORS THESIS

In the culmination of the Faith & Reason Honors Program at DeSales University, student members are required to write, present, and publish an honors thesis during the Spring semester of their Senior year. The topic of the thesis is chosen by the student, with the approval of a faculty advisor and the director of the honors program.

Development of the honors thesis (research and writing) will be directed by a full-time faculty member at DSU and will count as a three-credit “independent study” course in the Division of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (LS 499), which fulfills a “free elective” requirement in the student’s General Education Core curriculum. (Alternately, students who desire that these credits be included in their major curriculum must request permission for this prior to registration.)

Spring 2016 Schedule of Events
Monday, January 18

Students submit completed registration forms for an “Independent Study” course, numbered as **LS 499**. (Forms are available from the Academic Affairs Office or as a .pdf file on the University’s web site.)

Students apprise the director of the Honors Program (Fr. THOMAS DAILEY, OSFS) of their topic of study and the faculty advisor for this course.

Students work on their thesis (research and writing) throughout the Spring semester, according to the schedule agreed upon with their faculty advisor.

**NOTE:** In the preparation of the written thesis, students should be attentive to the specific criteria by which the thesis will be evaluated, namely:

- **originality & creativity**
  - is the topic interesting & relevant?
  - is the student’s own “voice” clearly heard?

- **explication of the argument**
  - does the thesis make a strong point or advance a significant thought?
  - does the thesis provide good support for the point being made?

- **clarity of coherence and expression**
  - is the thesis organized well and does reading it flow smoothly?
  - is the thesis written well and does it read well by a general audience?

- **incorporation of scholarly research**
  - does the thesis make proper use of relevant and timely research?
  - is the research properly incorporated (text) and referenced (notes)?

- **integration of faith and reason**
  - does the thesis incorporate both aspects of knowing?
  - does the thesis align with higher education in Christian Humanism?

**Monday, April 4 by 5:00 p.m.**

Students in LS 499 submit their thesis to their faculty advisor and to the director of the Honors Program (Fr. THOMAS DAILEY, OSFS).
For the sake of consistency and eventual publication, all submissions **MUST** follow these guidelines:

- The length of the thesis should be 30-50 pages, **not** counting the title, outline, notes, or bibliography pages. Pagination **must** be included in the text.

- The text is to be composed in a 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins on all sides. Lengthy quotations, as well as any notes and references, are to be single-spaced, double-indented, and printed in a 10-point font.

- An abstract of 150-200 words that summarizes the thesis is to be included on the first page.

- The thesis must include endnotes (not footnotes) and a listing of works actually cited in the text. Formatting should be consistent with the academic standards of the discipline in which the thesis is written.

- For the sake of evaluation by the Review Committee, the student’s name may appear only on the title page. No other identifying reference may appear anywhere in the paper (including in the pagination).

- Each thesis must be submitted electronically, in MS Word or WordPerfect format, as an attachment to an email message.

**Tuesday, April 5**

The director of the honors program distributes the theses to the Salesian Center’s Review Committee for their evaluations. Ordinarily, the Committee is split into two groups, each of which reads half of the total number of submissions.

Based on a common evaluation form, Review Committee members rate each thesis in terms of form and content, with emphasis on the five criteria explained above.

**Thursday, April 7 @ 7:00 p.m.**

Students will meet with the director of the Honors Program (FR. THOMAS DAILEY, OSFS) at the Salesian Center for Faith & Culture to preview the 5-minute oral presentation of the thesis they will offer at the Honors Colloquium (see below).
In preparing for the presentation, students should be able to explain the following:

- the reason for choosing the topic of the thesis
- the point being made in the thesis
- the research/arguments that support the point being made in the thesis
- the implications/conclusions that follow from the point made in the thesis.

Monday, April 11

The Review Committee submits its evaluations of each thesis to the director of the honors program, who tallies the scores. One semi-finalist is chosen from each review group based on the total ratings.

Tuesday, April 12

The director of the honors program distributes the two semi-finalist theses to the entire Review Committee for their final evaluation.

Thursday, April 14

The Review Committee meets (at 12:30 p.m. in the Salesian Center) to discuss the two semi-finalist papers and select the award-winning Honors Thesis.

Friday, April 15

The director of the honors program returns each thesis to the students. Comments from the Review Committee may also be sent to the students, at the discretion of the director of the honors program. Students undertake revisions of the thesis in view of the final submission and eventual publication (see below).

Sunday, April 17 @ 5:30 p.m.

The annual **Faith & Reason Honors Colloquium** is held. To this event are invited the Senior and Junior students in the program, the faculty who have directed the Honors Seminars, the faculty who have directed the Honors Theses, and the members of the Review Committee. The Senior students may also invite family and/or friends to attend the Colloquium (for a minimal cost, to be determined annually). Alumni of the honors program are also invited to attend.

The colloquium takes place in the Gerald A. White Pavilion of the DeSales University Center, according to the following timetable:
5:30 p.m.  social gathering
5:45 p.m.  welcome & introductions … dinner buffet begins
6:30 p.m.  coffee & desserts …
           oral presentations of the theses by each author (5-minute summary)
           reception of the honor cords for Commencement
7:30 p.m.  presentation of the “best thesis” award … closing remarks
7:45 p.m.  conclusion

Saturday, May 14 (the conclusion of final exam week)

If revisions have been made, students submit the final versions of the thesis to their faculty advisors and to the director of the honors program (FR. THOMAS DAILEY, OSFS). Faculty advisors determine and submit the final grade for LS 499.

Friday, May 20

The Salesian Center for Faith & Culture publishes all theses in an electronic journal entitled On the Wings of Truth. Students are apprised by email of the publication of their work.

http://www.desales.edu/default.aspx?pageid=8456