Honors Programs Orientation

Preparing for the Capstone Research Experience in the School of Social Ecology
Overview

- Why a senior research project?
- What does it involve?
- What programs are available?
- What preparation is needed?
- Need more information?
Why?
To make a good education great with a capstone experience!
“In order to ensure that the educational experience is drawn together, the student needs a course at the end of the curriculum that corresponds to the capstone of a building or the keystone of an arch.

Too many students report a sense of anti-climax in their senior years--just add more to the total of courses, and it is finished!

All the skills of research developed in earlier work should be marshaled in a project that demands the framing of a significant question or set of questions, the research or creative exploration to find answers, and the communication skills to convey the results to audiences both expert and uninitiated in the subject matter.” (The Boyer Report: Reinventing Undergraduate Education: http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer.nsf)
Why?

To participate in creating knowledge, and to explore your interest in conducting research.

How can you know if you will like graduate school or can handle it if you haven’t tried doing research?

Why?

To work closely with faculty members.

Most graduate schools require three letters of reference.

The best letters come from faculty who know you well!
Why?

To get the kind of research experience necessary for admission to graduate school

Research experience in your field is very important to be competitive in the application process, especially for Ph.D. programs.
What does it involve?

- Finding a mentor
- Exploring your interests by defining a research question and reviewing the literature
- Collecting and analyzing data to answer your question
- Presenting your findings in a senior thesis and an oral presentation
What programs?

- Campus-wide Honors Program
- School of Social Ecology Honors Program
- Psychology and Social Behavior Excellence in Research Program
Campus-Wide Honors Program

- For students invited to join as freshmen or (later) by application
- Has required curriculum for 1st 3 years
- Requires capstone research project in senior year
- May carry out senior project in the Social Ecology Honors Program
Social Ecology Honors Program

• Serves students in all Social Ecology departments, whether in the Campus-wide program or not
• Applications invited during the junior year from those with eligible GPA
• Requires participation in the Honors Seminar H190ABW, 3-quarter senior course sequence
To apply

- Submit 1-2 page research proposal
- Official transcript
- Letter of recommendation from faculty mentor
- Due to Social Ecology Undergraduate Office by deadline date
Requirements, Social Ecology Honors Program

- Minimum GPA:
  - 3.2 UC
  - 3.5 GPA in upper-division Social Ecology major courses
- Minimum of 4 upper-division SE major courses
  - by end of Winter quarter, junior year
- Brief proposal for a research project
- Faculty mentor
- Commitment to enroll in all 3 courses of Honors Program sequence in senior year
  - Must be in residence at UCI all 3 quarters
What to expect in H190ABW

• Fall
  – Meets weekly, letter grade
  – Activities:
    • Sharpen research question
    • Design study
    • Apply for human subjects permission
    • Conduct literature review
    • Design research study
• Winter
  - Meets less often, most work with faculty mentor
  - Pass/No pass grade
  - Activities
    • Conduct study

• Spring
  - Meets weekly, letter grade
  - Activities
    • Write up research
    • Present at UROP conference
More Information?

• Campus-wide Honors Program
  http://www.honors.uci.edu

• School of Social Ecology Honors Program
  http://www.seweb.uci.edu/students/undergrad/honors_info.uci