



HON 420: Honors Research Methods
Honors Program | 3 Credits

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Examination of research paradigms and methodologies to develop the most appropriate research methods and data analysis processes to design and develop a successful honors thesis proposal.

This course supports what is typically an individual process of student work. It is fast paced and will require significant work outside of a traditional 3 credit hour course. Students should expect to invest significant time and effort to ensure they are inline with their goals for the Honors program.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will develop their ability to:

- identify and explain key tenets of dominant research paradigms;
- identify methodological approaches and systems utilized within different disciplines for research;
- synthesize methodological approaches within their research discipline;
- articulate the expectations and design the essential components necessary for their honors thesis proposal.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Lapan, S. D. & Quartaroli, M. T. (Eds.). (2009). *Research Essentials: An introduction to designs and practices*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Also required for Qualitative Studies:

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative Inquiry & Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. (2nd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

*Additional reading TBA

REQUIRED ELECTRONIC ACCOUNTS

UNC Bearmail - Students are required to utilize their UNC Bearmail accounts and check email regularly to ensure they receive postings from the course instructor. UNC Bearmail accounts are the official source for email communication in this course. In this hybrid course with its strong independent work component relies on students checking their Bearmail and communicating with the instructor on a regular basis.

Canvas –Class updates, the syllabus and additional handouts will be posted to Canvas. Please check your Canvas account regularly. You will be required to submit monthly written assignments through Canvas' assignment module as well as submit all work completed to date by the end of the semester to Canvas.

CLASS POLICIES

Policy on Late Assignments: Following the deadlines are important in this class in order to stay on track. It is assumed that students will submit assignments on time and will be diligent about making adequate progress on their Honors project. Extenuating situations should be discussed with the instructor in advance.

Changes to the Course Syllabus and Class updates: Class updates, the syllabus and additional handouts may be posted to **Canvas**. Please check your Canvas account regularly. You will be required to submit certain written assignments through Canvas's Assignment module. The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus to best accommodate student learning and make schedule adjustments for workshops. Since this course is a new design changes to the deadlines and assignments are likely and will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

Respectful Classroom Environment: An atmosphere of cultural responsiveness is the only acceptable atmosphere in this class. Any student engaging in disruptive or rude behavior will be warned and/or asked to leave.

- Classroom Etiquette

- You may leave your cell phone on silent during class. No text messaging during class.
- If using a laptop is helpful for you to use for note taking purposes in class, please do so. However, it is assumed that you will use this tool for class purposes alone.
- Do not read other materials while in class (this includes newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- Side conversations are disruptive and not tolerated.
- You are more than welcome to bring food and drink to class.

Class Participation

Class participation requires regular attendance in class, active participation in discussions which requires both listening and speaking and taking an active interest in the course by asking appropriate questions and participating in all activities. Being a scholar means being engaged with your peers, and thus is required for successful participation in this course.

Course Structure & Methods of Instruction: This course will meet once a week with expected work outside of class. The course structure is designed with the expectation that students will invest a *minimum of four hours outside of class* on work related to this course. This course is a blend of seminar style teaching (Socratic questioning and requires students to be well prepared and informed on subject matter) and applied work (hands on work with the purpose of using said work for future projects).

In addition to class meetings, students are expected to remain in regular contact with their Honors Thesis Advisor as well as the Honors Director to ensure 1) research is discipline appropriate, 2) students are aware of their thesis timeline, 3) research topics, questions, and methodologies are inline with the standards of the research department or discipline.

Course Expectations: In general, the expectations in this course mirror those of your other college level courses. We anticipate students will be engaged and invest time and energy in producing work that demonstrates their skills, competencies, knowledge, and wisdom. Students can demonstrate their abilities through meaningful class participation, submission of strong on-time assignments, and by authentically engaging in course material. As an interdisciplinary course, HON 420 requires students to approach learning with an open mind and desire to challenge their traditional ways of thinking and knowing.

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ASSIGNMENTS

Submission--All assignments are to be submitted to the instructor in paper form. Occasionally, assignments will need to be submitted via email to the instructors. In the instance that assignments are submitted via email, students are required to use the following subject line format:

Lastname.Assignmenttitle.CourseName.Date

ex: Cordova.Methodology.HON351-451.Jan13

Due Dates—Due to the individual nature of the work produced in this course, students have the option of determining their own timeline for assignment due dates. This highly self-directed option is offered in order to accommodate for varying timelines for students in the course. If students choose not to submit an alternate schedule of due dates for assignments, they will be expected to meet the due dates posted on the original course schedule.

Grading—**Assignments will not be marked with a final grade until the entire research portfolio is submitted.** As a result, assignments will be given a feedback when submitted individually to ensure students have an opportunity to revise and re-submit their work.

Grading Policy:

All grades are final and assigned at the instructors' discretion.

Grade Distribution: A 90-100; B 80-89; C 70-79; D 60-69; F: Below 60%

Evaluation

Assignment	Points Possible	Points Received
Class Engagement/Participation	50	
Research Day Presentation	100	
	150	
Research Portfolio	350	
• Abstract	25	
• Topic Introduction & Landscape	50	
• Literature Review	50	
• Methodology Section	150	

• Completed IRB or Grant Proposal	75	
Total	500	

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

Assignment
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research Day Presentation: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. All students are expected to present their research via poster presentation at UNC's Research day. b. The poster presentation should include the following slides: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Title Slide ii. Abstract iii. Research Question iv. Literature Review v. Methodology <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paradigm 2. Axiology 3. Epistemology 4. Ontology 5. Research Methods 6. Data Analysis vi. Timeline for Research
<p>Research Portfolio:</p> <p>Research Portfolios should be organized in a 3" 3-Ring binder with labeled dividing tabs. The order of the research portfolio is seen below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section I (Full Proposal) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title Page ○ Research Abstract ○ Topic Introduction & Landscape ○ Literature Review ○ Methodology ○ References (APA/MLA/Chicago) ○ Research Timeline • Section II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Topic Introduction & Landscape Drafts and Supporting Information • Section III <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Literature Review Drafts and Supporting Information ○ Annotated Bibliography • Section IV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Research Methodology Drafts and Supporting Information ○ IRB Drafts and Supporting Information • Section V <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ TA Summaries ○ Presentation Slides

2. Topic Introduction & Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The topic proposal and landscape should serve as an introduction to the reader. b. Within this chapter, students should include the following headings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Background of topic and researcher connection to topic ii. Definition of key principles or language iii. Problem Identification—why is this worth exploring? iv. Significance of Study—what will findings accomplish or provide? v. Research Questions vi. Ethical Considerations—Researcher Bias? c. References
3. Literature Review Section should include the following:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identifies key themes in the literature b. Presents a thesis for research c. Presents a well formed argument for the research d. References
4. Research Methodology: The Methodology section should include the following:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Paradigm b. Axiology c. Epistemology d. Ontology e. Research Methods f. Data Analysis g. References
5. Proposal Abstract:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. It should state the main objective and rationale of your project, b. It should outline the methods you used to accomplish your objectives, c. It should list your project's results or product (or projected or intended results or product, if your project is not yet complete), d. And it should draw conclusions about the implications of your project.
6. Completed IRB application (if required for project) or Completed Grant application and proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. See UNC IRB Guidelines b. Students who are not completing IRB will instead write a grant proposal, such as a proposal for an Office of Undergraduate Research student grant.
7. Full proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Title Page ○ Research Abstract ○ Topic Introduction & Landscape ○ Literature Review ○ Methodology ○ References (APA/MLA/Chicago) ○ Research Timeline

SAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week	Class Dates	Topic	Class Activities	Assignments DUE by class time.
1		Course Orientation, Research Ethics	Discussion on Ethics. Discussion on the purpose of research. What is purpose of IRB.	None
2		No Class MLK Jr. Day		
3		Research Process.	Review proposals with a critical eye for where there are still questions and gaps. Review first draft IRB narrative (for those who require IRB). Discuss schedule and needs for rest of semester.	Thesis proposal first draft (as is with revisions from Fall semester). IRB draft if necessary.
4		Research Paradigms	Lots of talk about ologies: Axiology, epistemology, ontology.	Reflection questions due.
5		Research methodology	The last ology – What is the “study of methods?” What is my methodology. How does it relate to methods?	Paradigm Paper Due
6		Research Q’s, study design, and research methods.	Linking the questions to the design. Strong “statements of the purpose.”	Reflection questions due (relating to methodology). First Thesis Advisor Summary & feedback form Due
7		Data Collection/research methods	Hands on work with various data collection methods.	Research Questions & Study Design paper.
8		Research Abstracts & Data Analysis	In class abstract revisions Working with analyzing data	Research Abstract for Research Day submission due.
9		Data Analysis & Research Rigor.	What is the connection between research rigor and data analysis.	Data Collection methods & Data Analysis paper.
10		Spring Break		
11		Research Presentations	Creating a research poster. Class will practice presenting their posters.	Draft research poster (as PPT slide) due.

				Research Rigor Paper.
12		Honors Research Night	Present Research poster at Honors Research Night 3/26 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm.	2nd Thesis Advisor Summary & feedback form Methodology paper. Research Poster.
13		No class Monday: Present Research Proposal (poster) at Research Day 4/5		Draft 1 IRB or Grant proposal
14		Literature Reviews Other topics TBA	Taking a 2 nd look at lit reviews, and connecting the dots. Other topics as are needed for the class.	
15		Revisions & Feedback	Individual Research	Revised literature Reviews. Draft 2 IRB OR Grant proposal
16		Revisions & Feedback	Individual Research.	
17		Class Celebration		Final Portfolio Due 3rd Thesis Advisor Summary and Feedback Form due.

OTHER COURSE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Disability Resources

It is the policy and practice of the University of Northern Colorado to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that present barriers to your inclusion or to an accurate assessment of your achievement (e.g. time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, use of videos without captions), please communicate this with your professor and contact Disability Resource Center (DRC) to request accommodations.

Office: (970) 351-2289, Michener Library L-80.

Students can learn more here: www.unco.edu/disability-resource-center

Food Insecurity and Basic Needs

Research shows that college students experience food insecurity at higher rates than the American household rate, and that food insecurity can negatively impact academic performance and persistence. In recognition of this problem, UNC offers assistance to students facing food insecurity through an on-campus food pantry. The Bear Pantry is located in University Center 2166A, and is open for regular hours throughout the semester. Please visit www.unco.edu/bear-pantry for more information.

Any student who faces challenges securing their food or housing and believes this may affect their performance in the course is also urged to contact Student Outreach and Support (SOS) for assistance. SOS can assist students during difficult circumstances which may include medical, mental health, personal or family crisis, illness or injury. SOS can be reached at sos@unco.edu or via phone at 970-351-2796.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course. Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to grading consequences with regard to this course and/or university disciplinary procedures through the Office of Community Standards and Conflict Resolution.

Title IX

The University of Northern Colorado is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. UNC has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

Please be aware all UNC faculty and most staff members are “responsible employees,” which means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, they must share that information with the Title IX Coordinator, Larry Loftin. Larry or a trained staff member in the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (OIEC) will contact you to let you know about accommodations and support services at UNC as well as your options for pursuing a process to hold accountable the person who harmed you. You are not required to speak with OIEC staff regarding the incident; your participation in OIEC processes are entirely voluntary.

If you do not want the Title IX Coordinator notified, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, you can speak confidentially with the following people on campus and in the community. They can connect you with support services and help explore your options now, or in the future.

- UNC’s Assault Survivors Advocacy Program (ASAP): 24 Hr. Hotline 970-351-4040 or www.unco.edu/asap
- UNC Counseling Center: 970-351-2496 or www.unco.edu/counseling

- UNC Psychological Services: 970-351-1645 or <https://www.unco.edu/cebs/psychological-services-clinic>

If you are a survivor or someone concerned about a survivor, or if you would like to learn more about sexual misconduct or report an incident, please visit www.unco.edu/sexual-misconduct or contact the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance (970-351-4899). OIEC is located on the third floor of the University Center in room 3060.

Equity and Inclusion Statement

The University of Northern Colorado embraces the diversity of students, faculty, and staff, honors the inherent dignity of each individual, and welcomes their unique perspectives, behaviors, and world views. In this course, people of all races, religions, national origins, sexual orientations, ethnicities, genders and gender identities, cognitive, physical, and behavioral abilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, immigrant statuses, military or veteran statuses, size and/or shapes are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. Course content and campus discussions will heighten your awareness to each other's individual and intersecting identities. If you would like to report an incident or learn more about identity-based discrimination/harassment, please visit www.unco.edu/institutional-equity-compliance