

Biology 496A/B: Honors Thesis

Course Descriptions:

BIOL 496A Honors Thesis I (1-2)

Experimental or observational research for the B.S. degree conducted under the supervision of one or more biology faculty members. Prerequisite: senior standing in the major with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and an approved application.

BIOL 496B Honors Thesis II (2-3)

Completion of research for the B.S. degree conducted under the supervision of one or more biology faculty members. A research paper summarizing the results is required. Prerequisite: senior standing in the major and completion of BIOL 496A.

Course Overview

Honors Thesis (496A/B) is a capstone experience that provides Biology majors one alternative to complete the research requirement for the B.S. degree. The course offers hands-on research experience in an area of biology that interests the student, and relies on students applying conceptual and analytical knowledge gained from courses in the major (including support courses in the physical sciences and mathematics). Students work with one or more faculty to design a research project, collect and analyze data, conduct library research, and write their results in a thesis.

Requirements

1. Possess a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0.
2. Identify one or more faculty members who are willing to serve as research mentor(s).
3. Obtain approval of the research proposal from the Honors Thesis Committee.
4. Submit the advisor approved written Honors Thesis to the Honors Thesis Committee for inclusion in Department archives.

Procedure

At least 3 semesters before graduation

- a. Review your degree progress with your advisor to see if you are able to complete the requirements for a B.S. degree.
- b. Consult with one or more Biology faculty members whose research areas match your interests in biology. You must identify at least one faculty member who agrees to supervise and support your research project.
- c. Develop a research proposal (no more than 2 pages) with your faculty mentor.
- d. Submit an application (BIOL 496A contract form with research proposal, informal transcripts, and résumé) for approval by the Honors Thesis Committee. Approval of the application is the first step in registering for BIOL 496A.

Two semesters before graduation

- a. Enroll in BIOL 496A with your faculty mentor by submitting an Honors Thesis Committee approved BIOL 496A contract form.

Final semester before graduation

- a. Enroll in BIOL 496B with your faculty mentor by submitting a BIOL 496B contract form. Attach to the form the research proposal from BIOL 496A and any modifications that may have occurred during the first semester of research activity.
- b. No later than three weeks before the end of the semester, submit your Honors Thesis, in scientific journal format to your research mentor. The mentor may require significant revision before approval. Students are also encouraged to present their findings in a public forum.
- c. Submit the revised, final version of the Honors Thesis to the Department for inclusion in the Department archives. Include a title page (attached) signed by the faculty mentor. This document will show that all requirements have been satisfied and is required before a grade will be awarded.

Completion of Requirements

Honors Thesis

A VASCULAR FLORA OF THE VINE HILL PRESERVE; SEBASTOPOL, SONOMA
COUNTY, CALIFORNIA, USA

by

Linden M. Schneider

A Senior Honors Thesis submitted to
Department of Biology, Sonoma State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

BACHELOR OF SCIENCE

in

Biology

Spring 2011

Dr. Richard Whitkus, faculty research mentor