

As an undergraduate thesis preceptor at the University of Chicago, I (in consultation with the coordinator and fellow preceptors) developed the following timeline for undergraduates writing honors theses. If you are a student considering writing a thesis with me, carefully consider how these steps may map onto your own timeline before coming to see me about writing a thesis.

Political Science Honors Thesis Important Dates and Deadlines

Spring Quarter (junior year)

- Formally enroll in the BA thesis course. The goal this quarter is to translate your broad topic into a research question; place your project within the political science literature; and decide upon your methodological approach and evidence.
- By the end of the quarter, students will have a draft of the research proposal, secure a faculty advisor, and form a plan for summer reading/research.

Summer Quarter

- Students should delve further into relevant literature or in some cases, begin to collect data.
- Secure IRB approval, if needed.
- By the end of the summer, students should be ready to meet with their faculty advisor early in the fall quarter to report on summer progress.

Autumn Quarter (senior year)

- Formally enroll in the BA thesis course if you have not already done so. All students will rejoin their Spring quarter colloquium group, whether they registered for the BA thesis course in the Spring or Autumn. The colloquium will meet every other week. The goal this quarter is to guide students through drafting parts of the thesis. Students will present their work and receive feedback from their peers. Students should be collecting data.
- Meet with Faculty Advisor early in Autumn quarter.
- By the end of the quarter, students should have drafted a substantial portion of their thesis, to be turned in to their preceptor and faculty advisor before the winter break.

Winter Quarter (senior year)

- Enroll in a thesis supervision course with your faculty advisor.
- Meet 2-3 times per quarter with preceptor to review work; this is the most intense quarter in terms of writing. Most students will have finished collecting data and are doing their main analysis.
- By the end of the quarter, students will submit a complete rough draft of the BA thesis to both their preceptor and faculty advisor.

Spring Quarter (senior year)

- Meet with faculty advisor in the first week of the quarter to get feedback on the rough draft submitted at the end of Winter Quarter. Make revisions.
- The final version of the BA thesis must be submitted to the department by 4pm at the end of the fourth week of Spring Quarter. Your preceptor and faculty advisor will read the thesis and assign a letter grade to your thesis. This will also be your grade for the thesis supervision course. Honors requires an outstanding GPA and an honors-deserving thesis. Students who meet the requirements at the beginning of Spring quarter will be awarded honors if the BA thesis is receives a B or higher.