

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY  
HONORS & UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH

**COURSE SYLLABUS SPRING 2014**  
**UGST 491-900: Thesis Writing**  
**Class Sessions:** Wednesday, 4:00 – 5:00 PM  
**Location:** 103 Henderson Hall

**Instructor:** Dr. Duncan MacKenzie  
**Phone:** 845-1957  
**Email:** d-mackenzie@honors.tamu.edu  
**Office:** 212 Henderson  
**Office Hours:** Mondays from 2 to 4 PM or by appointment  
**Course Website:** Log in through eCampus.tamu.edu

Thesis Writing is a one credit seminar course offered exclusively for students participating in the Undergraduate Research Scholars program. It is not required for participation in the Scholars program, but is available to any Undergraduate Research Scholar who needs writing instruction or would like assistance with thesis preparation. The course also serves to satisfy one of your two writing-intensive (W) course requirements for graduation by writing your thesis under the direction of your advisor. **You must confirm that your major department's advising office has submitted a "Department Request for W Course Sections" form to assure that you will receive W credit for this course.** Check with Tammis Sherman if you are not sure about course approval.

Your research advisor will play a central role in this course. You will be expected to meet with him or her at regular intervals to assure that you are making adequate progress on your thesis and presentation. Additional feedback can come from Dr. Sumana Datta and Ms. Tammis Sherman at Honors and Undergraduate Research. Your advisor must read and suggest revisions to your thesis drafts to satisfy the W requirement.

### Course Objectives

In this course you will

- Learn how to access information and search the scholarly literature
- Learn how to cite and document sources properly
- Learn how to prepare a formal research thesis
- Learn how to make scholarly presentations
- Utilize this information to complete your thesis and prepare a public research presentation

### Required Texts

*Undergraduate Research Scholars Thesis Manual* and the *Thesis Example* can be found at <http://honors.tamu.edu/FormsDownloads.html#UGR>

### Recommended Text

Style guide of your choice (e.g. Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*; *American Institute of Biological Sciences Style Manual*; *ACS Style Guide*; *Publication Manual of the APA*; *The MLA Handbook*; *Style Manual for Biological Journals*; or *The Chicago Manual of Style*)

### Software

RefWorks or EndNote bibliographic software (available for free to TAMU students) is strongly recommended for completing your thesis. If you will be using LaTeX to submit your thesis, a copy of the Scholars Thesis LaTeX template is available at the HUR website.

## **Grading and Course Requirements**

This course will be graded on a Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. To achieve a satisfactory grade, a student must

- Attend all class meetings (with a maximum of one unexcused absence)
- Meet with your research advisor on a regular schedule
- Hand in assignments on time
- Present during Student Research Week or another public venue
- Complete and upload a thesis deemed satisfactory by Honors and Undergraduate Research and your research advisor by April 4th

## **Attendance**

Attendance is required except as allowed by the University rules on excused absences. If you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to complete the work that you have missed. (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/>)

**PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOU FAIL TO ATTEND CLASS OR FINISH YOUR THESIS YOU WILL NOT RECEIVE SATISFACTORY W CREDIT FOR THIS COURSE. THIS MAY PREVENT YOU FROM GRADUATING IF THIS IS ONE OF YOUR REQUIRED W COURSES.**

## **Need Writing Help?**

- Visit the **University Writing Center**: <http://uwc.tamu.edu> , (979) 458-1455, 214 Evans Library.
- Undergraduate Research Scholars are provided access to POWER (Promoting Outstanding Writing for Excellence in Research) in the College of Education and Human Development.
- Honors and Undergraduate Research has resources to help you understand and complete the Scholars Thesis process: <http://honors.tamu.edu/FormsDownloads.html#UGR>
- You can schedule a conference with your research advisor or Dr. MacKenzie.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, the legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities, in Cain Hall or call 845-1637.

## **Aggie Honor Code**

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. Additional information about the Aggie Honor Code can be found at: <http://aggiehonor.tamu.edu/>

The consequences for plagiarism of any kind will be dismissal from the Undergraduate Research Scholars or Program and an unsatisfactory grade in the course.

## Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Course Assignments	Scholars Deadlines
1	1/15	Introduction to Thesis Writing: Scholars Thesis Content and Style		
2	1/22	Clear and Concise Writing The University Writing Center		
3	1/29	RefWorks and Endnote Dr. John Fullerton, TAMU Libraries		Monday 1/27: Chapter 2 draft due
4	2/5	Using Bibliographic Resources Dr. Stephen Bales, TAMU Libraries	Abstract Examples	
5	2/12	Writing Abstracts	Abstract Evaluation	
6	2/19	Data Presentation	Draft SRW Abstract	
7	2/26	Making Presentations	Poster Examples	
8	3/5	Academic Publishing	Poster Evaluation	Abstract due for SRW Monday 3/3: Chapter 3 draft due
	Week of 3/10-14	Spring Break		
9	3/19	Digital Citizenship and Copyright Dr. Gail Clement, TAMU Libraries	Data Figure or Table	
10	Week of 3/24-28	Student Research Week (no class meeting)	Attend SRW Presentations	Friday 3/28: Abstract and presentation form due
11	4/2	Discussion of Student Research Week Experiences, Scholars Thesis Submission and Approval Process	SRW Presentation Evaluations	Friday 4/4: Final Advisor- approved Thesis Upload
12	4/9	Questions about Clearing Thesis with Thesis Assistants	Class Assessment, Data Graphic Vote	
13	4/16	Wrap-up and Assessment	Scholars Program URSSA Evaluation	Friday 4/18: Deadline to Clear Thesis
14	4/23	Galveston Research Symposium (no class meeting)		

All assignments will be due by Tuesday, 5:00 of the next week.

### **Galveston Students:**

Lectures and presentations will be made available for you either in downloadable format or through the use of TTVN. **If you are enrolled in the course, participation in these activities is required.** Further details will be provided at the beginning of the semester on the schedule for accessing resources.