

## Evaluation of Art History Honors Projects

### I. Honors Tutorials

Students undertaking an honors thesis enroll in a two-semester tutorial (ARHA 409/410). Faculty tutors assign a grade for the tutorial which is not necessarily correlated to the honors determination.

At the end of the first semester, the faculty thesis tutor has two options:

1. If the thesis work is going according to plan, faculty tutors assign an “x” in the gradebook at the end of the first semester. At the conclusion of the second semester, the faculty member assigns a grade for the tutorial, which is retroactively carried over as the tutorial grade for the first semester.
2. If the thesis work is not going to plan and a determination is made to abort the project, the senior thesis tutorial is converted into a “Department/Program Project or Essay Tutorial (ARHA 403)” and assigned a letter grade at the end of the fall semester.

### II. Completed Honors Projects

In order to be considered for honors, completed senior theses will normally be evaluated by two readers, typically the thesis tutor and a second member of the Art History faculty, to be chosen by the tutor in consultation with the student candidate at the beginning of the spring semester or earlier. Eligible readers include all faculty listed in the Art History faculty roster, including those with primary appointments in Classical Studies, the DAC Curator, full-time visiting faculty, and visiting Sullivan Scholars in Art History. In certain cases, a third reader from outside the Art History Program, but with particular expertise which would prove beneficial for the evaluation, may also be proposed by the thesis tutor in consultation with the student. In rare cases where the tutor is not a member of the Art History faculty, but the thesis is being considered for honors in Art History, a third reader is required so that there will be at least two readers who are members of the Art History faculty. In all cases involving readers from outside Art History, the Honors Coordinator should explain to them that their evaluation will be in addition to the two required from within the Program and should provide them with a copy of these procedures and inform them of the relevant deadlines.

Each reader is required to submit a written evaluation of the honors project to the Art History Program Honors coordinator, at least one working day before the date scheduled for the Senior Honors Talks. Written evaluations will be duplicated and distributed to all program faculty prior to the Honors Talks and the ensuing meeting at which honors are awarded. In addition to the written evaluation, the reader must also complete the Honors evaluation form. Below are the possible honors evaluations, along with a written explanation of each:

No Honors (B or lower):	A competent piece of work but not yet good. Thesis may be unclear or non-existent, and the project is not situated in relation to the existing literature. Development of ideas is often skimpy. Use of evidence may be inadequate.
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No Honors/ No-bar honors (B)	Monotony of sentence structure is apparent, and errors may be sprinkled throughout.  A clear, but not original thesis. The thesis may be over-simple or not consistently argued. The author has engaged with a portion of the earlier literature on the subject and attempted to situate the project in relationship to it. More or less adequately organized along obvious lines. Writing is clear, but not distinguished.
Honors (B+ or A-):	Clear argument, clear writing, good evidence, appropriate response to assignment. Technically competent, with perhaps a lapse here and there. The thesis may be clear, properly limited, and reasonable, and an attempt has been made to situate the project in relationship to the existing literature on the topic. The student has done a lot of research, but the methodology may be not entirely clear. The prose is generally good but not distinguished.
Honors/ No-bar high honors (A-)	Clear argument, clear writing, good evidence, appropriate response to assignment. The argument is original and well-informed by the secondary literature, but may not be fully developed. The prose is good, with perhaps a lapse here and there. The argument is well-supported by evidence. There is a methodology, but it is not always consistently applied. Effective organization and writing.
High Honors (A+/A):	Excellent in all aspects. The thesis is original and well-situated in relationship to the secondary literature. The writer has demonstrated a mastery of the relevant primary and secondary material. The interest of the reader is engaged by the ideas and presentation. Paper marked by originality of ideas, persuasive argumentation, and polished writing.

The No Bar option indicates that the evaluator has no objection to the project being awarded the next higher grade if the other evaluator has given it a higher grade. The No Bar option is only called into play when there are only two readers. Two grades of No Bar do not activate each other. That is, two grades of No Honors/No Bar Honors would not be sufficient to validate a recommendation for Honors.

In these with only two readers, if the recommendation of both readers is the same, that determines the outcome. When the two evaluators are in disagreement about the grade (e.g. one gives a grade of Honors while the other gives a grade of No Honors or High Honors, or one recommends No Honors and the other recommends High Honors) and the disagreement cannot be resolved through recourse to the No Bar option, the Art History Honors Coordinator will, in

consultation with the tutor, select a third evaluator from among the Art History faculty. The third reader renders a judgment, but is not expected to submit a written evaluation.

In theses with three readers, or in the case of two-reader theses that have gone to a third reader, the outcome is determined in the following manner: if at least two recommendations agree, then the majority recommendation holds. If all three recommendations disagree – i.e., where they include No Honors, Honors, and High Honors – the outcome will be resolved collectively by the Art History faculty.

After the Program Director has reported the outcome of thesis projects to the Registrar, each reader is responsible for forwarding his or her evaluation, or an edited (shortened or expanded) version of the evaluation, directly to the student, but the student should not be told the recommendation for honors or grade.

The following chart illustrates the various possible outcomes. The first box covers theses with two readers, where there is agreement or where disagreement can be resolved through application of the No Bar (=nb) option. The second and third boxes illustrate possible resolutions of disagreement between two readers through the evaluation of an additional, third reader. (Note: “H/Hnb” = Honors or Honors, No Bar High Honors, etc.) The fourth box illustrates the various possible outcomes in the case of theses with three readers.

Evaluator 1	Evaluator 2	Evaluator 3	Recommendation
NH	NH		NH
NH	NHnb		NH
NHnb	NHnb		NH
H	NHnb		H
H	H		H
H	Hnb		H
Hnb	Hnb		H
HH	Hnb		HH
HH	HH		HH
H/Hnb	NH	NH/NHnb	NH
H/Hnb	NH	H/Hnb	H
H/Hnb	NH	HH	Resolution by Program
HH	H	NH/NHnb	Resolution by Program
HH	H	H	H
HH	H	HH	HH
NH/NHnb	HH	NH/NHnb	NH
NH/NHnb	HH	H/Hnb	Resolution by Program
NH/NHnb	HH	HH	HH
NH/NHnb	NH/NHnb	NH→HH	NH
H/Hnb	H/Hnb	NH→HH	H
HH	HH	NH→HH	HH
NH/NHnb	H/Hnb	HH	Resolution by Program