What is an Honors Thesis?
The Honors Thesis provides a culmination to an Honors student’s academic career. It offers an opportunity—along with the responsibility—for a student to work with a faculty member in their chosen field on a research or creative project that integrates and applies previous work.

An Honors Thesis will reflect each student’s major and interest. It may take the form of a paper developed out of independent research done in a lab, a creative project with research into an artistic movement or period, an engineering design report outlining a original solution to a significant problem, or another similarly academic, discipline-specific project. Each Honors Thesis should include relevant background information, an acknowledgment of its methods and techniques, the project itself, and a discussion of and reflection on the experience. A major goal of an Honors Thesis is for the student to demonstrate a command of the relevant scholarship in the research area and to document their own personal contributions to the topic.

Who approves an Honors Thesis?
An Honors Thesis proposal must be approved two semesters before graduation (e.g. a proposal should be approved in the spring of 2021 if a student plans to graduate in the spring of 2022). There are two steps to the approval process.

1. First, the student must secure the approval of a faculty member who will become the Thesis Advisor. The Thesis Advisor is usually from the student’s major or minor field and will approve the proposal based on discipline-specific content to ensure that the proposed project will meet departmental expectations for an Honors Thesis (e.g., length, scope, objectives).

2. Second, the Lewis Honors College will approve proposals based on whether the student follows proposal directions in terms of completeness, requirements, and professionalism.

What requirements do all Honors Theses have in common?
An Honors Thesis will consist of a written document—or a creative performance—and a public presentation. All Honors Theses must be associated with a graded, credit-bearing course, such as HON 398 or a departmental equivalent, and will be submitted to UKnowledge upon completion.

What are departmental equivalent courses?
Some departments have courses that require a significant individual project, including both a written component and an oral presentation (e.g., ENG 495). With departmental approval, this course may fulfill the Honors Thesis requirement. All departments are encouraged to create their own courses to meet this requirement.

Helpful links for starting an Honors Thesis
Thesis Project Guide from Penn State's Schreyer Honors College
What is a Bachelor’s or an Undergraduate Dissertation? by Ivory Research
Thesis Writing Basics: Choosing an Undergraduate Thesis Topic by My College Advice
The Writing Center of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Specific questions can be sent to Dr. Czarefa Crofcheck, Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, at crofcheck@uky.edu.

*Required for all Lewis Honors College students starting at UK in Fall 2018 or later.