Criteria For Honors Thesis—Research Based

No Honors
• A thesis does not get submitted
• A thesis is submitted, but:
  o Looks like a class/seminar paper, not a sustained study
  o Does not reflect research or creative work on the part of the student
  o Does not have a clearly explained or appropriate methodology
  o Contains no, little, or poor analysis
  o Is badly written (many typographical and grammatical errors, little evidence of proofreading or revision)

Honors Thesis
• Has a clearly stated purpose/problem statement/set of research questions
• Has a clearly articulated significance
  o What is at stake? So what?
• Is comprised of a sustained study of a topic that uses appropriate sources to explore the topic
  o Sources can include, but are not limited to, primary literary and cultural texts; archives; laboratory results; case studies; surveys; interviews
• Demonstrates an understanding and articulation of the broader context and conversations in the discipline(s) and field(s) in which project is located
• Exhibits solid grounding in the theoretical framework(s) that the project is using
• Has a clearly explained and appropriate methodology
• Shows critical analysis of the subject matter
• Is of uniformly high quality throughout
• Has been proofread and revised for appropriate format, grammatical errors, appropriate format for the field
  o As appropriate, contains well-labeled and attributed tables and figures as supplementary material
  o Has a complete Works Cited or Bibliography included in the proper format
  o Please review the required Honors thesis format information on the Honors website

High Honors Thesis
• Has all the elements of an Honors level thesis
• And demonstrates one or more of the following criteria at a level higher than an Honors Thesis:
  o Makes a significant contribution to the field or community and/or
  o Demonstrates analysis at a high level and/or
  o Uses innovative methodology

Highest Honors Thesis
• Has all the elements of an Honors/High Honors thesis, and in addition, achieves one or more of the following:
- Makes a unique and significant contribution to the field or to the community
- Demonstrates a sophisticated and unique analysis
- Uses of innovative methodology
- In addition, the student should have demonstrated a high level of independence and initiative for the project, as determined by their evaluator
- Approaches Master’s degree-level work in terms of significance, scope, contribution and/or analysis