Criteria For Honors Thesis—Research Based

Honors Thesis:
Submission of a written thesis that has all of the following elements:
• A clearly stated purpose/problem statement/set of research questions
• A clearly articulated significance
  o What’s at stake? So what?
• 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
• A demonstration of the student’s clear understanding and articulation of the broader context and conversations in the discipline(s) and field(s) in which project is located (the literature review)
• A solid grounding in the theoretical framework(s) that the project is using
• A clearly explained and appropriate (justified) methodology/research design
• A robust critical analysis of the subject matter (does not merely present data or describe)
• 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
  o Recommended length (25 page minimum)
• Is of uniformly high quality throughout and clearly represents work above what is expected of a typical undergraduate in the major.

Research Thesis Award for Outstanding Work: A student’s evaluating committee (advisor and committee member(s)) may recommend an exceptional thesis for submission to the Honors Council, which will determines awards for the most outstanding theses in each semester cycle. These theses should represent excellent work that stands out even among other Honors work.

• Must have all the elements of an Honors level thesis
• And demonstrates at least one of the following criteria at a level higher than an Honors Thesis and approaching master’s level work
  o Makes a significant contribution to the field or community and/or
  o Demonstrates analysis at a high/sophisticated level and/or
  o Uses 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 level work in terms of significance, scope, contribution or analysis.

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)