



Neeley School of Business

Neeley Departmental Honors Project Guidelines

The purpose of this document is to establish the framework for the implementation of Departmental Honors projects conducted at the Neeley School of Business. While the document does not serve as a substitute for any official [guidelines of the John V. Roach Honors College](#), it aims to provide direction to students and their Supervising Professors on the Neeley School's expectations for these projects.

Guidelines for the Preparation of the Departmental Honors Project

A. What is the Neeley School of Business Departmental Honors Project?

The term “Neeley School of Business Departmental Honors Project” refers to a project that is meant to satisfy the requirements of the John V. Roach Honors College Departmental Honors. An honors student completes a project in one of the departments at the Neeley School of Business, in the student’s major, minor, or emphasis area.

The Departmental Honors Project is described by the Honors College:

“Departmental Honors students work closely with a faculty mentor to define and carry out a sustained original research or creative project. Projects vary by field and discipline. Departmental honors students work with a supervising faculty member to determine the topic, method, and timeline for their projects. Senior students present their projects publicly and submit them to the permanent archive of the Mary Coutts Burnett Library.”

Neeley School of Business honors students complete the Departmental Honors Project through “*Signature Work*,” as defined by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU). [AACU](#) describes signature work as “an individual project related to a significant issue, problem, or question [students] define for themselves—immersing themselves in exploration, applying what they learn to real-world situations, and preparing to explain the significance of their work to others.” Reflecting “the high level of personalization and individual initiative involved, such a project bears the distinctive imprint of the interests, commitments, and cumulative learning of the student.” Regardless of the project's form, Signature Work includes substantial writing, reflection on learning, and visible results. While the student will work with a Supervising Professor on the project, the project will be started and directed by the student and cannot duplicate work used for credit in another academic course.

Students are given significant flexibility in designing their projects with the Supervising Professor. Some students may develop projects from ideas received in classes, while other students may choose to pursue their long-standing interests or use their internship as a launching pad for ideas. These projects can be disciplinary or interdisciplinary.

Below are examples of different types of Departmental Honors Projects:

1. A paper or journal article with primary data collection (e.g., survey, interviews, focus groups, and/or statistical analysis)
2. A paper or journal article with secondary data collection and analysis (e.g., database)
3. A hybrid of the two above types (e.g., multi-method case analysis).
4. A societal impact project with pre- and post-data gathering, justification, and a reflection-on-learning paper or article.

The above list is not exhaustive. Visit your potential Supervising Professor to discuss your project idea.

The repository of all [Neeley Undergraduate Honors Papers](#) in the past ten years can serve as a great source of inspiration for disciplinary student projects. Below are select examples of the different Departmental Honors project types that could be completed in the business disciplines:

Department	Sample Project Ideas/Titles
Accounting	Economic Impact of State Tax Incentives: An Analysis of the California Competes Tax Credit
Entrepreneurship and Innovation	Lessons for Multinational Enterprises: The Case of Empowerment and Institutional Change in Thailand Question Mark Culture: How Culture Affects Entrepreneurship at Amazon
Finance	A Case Against the Efficient Market Hypothesis
Information Systems and Supply Chain Management	Security Attitudes, Knowledge, and User Behavior The effect of religiosity on decision making in self-driving cars: The case of the ethical knob Anchoring Effects in Inventory Control Decisions
Management and Leadership	Creativity in the Workplace and Its Effect on Employee Retention
Marketing	Marketing with Authenticity: Diversity Marketing and The Student Experience At Texas Christian University

B. Structure

Neeley Honors Students design and carry out their projects under the guidance of a Supervising Professor, typically over two to three semesters. During the spring semester of the junior year or the fall semester of the senior year, honors students enroll in a one-credit BUSI 40301 course to develop the project proposal and seek approvals. The Neeley Departmental Honors Seminar will expose the student to the process and resources needed to complete departmental honors at Neeley. Students will also develop and sign a contract with their Supervising Professor and their department chair, which outlines deadlines, expectations for progress, and the timeline for the entire project.

In the following semester(s), students enroll with their chosen Supervising Professor in a one to three-credit course, depending on how long they plan to complete their project, typically in the department of their major. Upon completion of the projects, students present them in a public forum and publish their finished works in the archives of the Mary Couets Burnett Library. Below is a visual representation of example paths for completing departmental honors. XXXX represents the abbreviation of the student's major department, e.g., INSC.

Year-And-A-Half Project Completion	One-Year Project Completion
Spring JR: BUSI 40301 – 1 credit	Fall JR: BUSI 40301 – 1 credit
Fall SR: XXXX 40030 – 1 credit	Spring JR: XXXX 40030 – 3 credits
Spring SR: XXXX 40030 – 2 credits	

C. Benefits to the Student

The Neeley Departmental Honors Project is meant to be one of the most rewarding experiences of a student's undergraduate career. The project teaches about the research process and how to complete a meaningful project that will engage faculty and potential readers – learning to scope a project, self-management of the process, conducting research, and writing individually.

- Through the Departmental Honors Projects, students can follow their curiosity for academic credit toward a B.B.A. degree and for graduation distinction.
- Working with faculty, students have an opportunity to build relationships that often translate into references for graduate schools or jobs, increasing students' marketability.
- A project can show prospective graduate schools or prospective employers the student's intellectual, creative, and writing talents.
- Departmental Honors Projects, which are considered an advanced academic experience, challenge students to become independent thinkers and introduce them to a world of scholarship and professional activity the way no other academic experience can. They develop habits of mind and transferable skills that will serve students well into their future careers.
- Students who complete Departmental Honors with a 3.5 GPA are recognized in the commencement program, on their transcripts, and by the Honors College as Paul and Judy Andrews Honors Scholars.
- Students pursuing Departmental Honors are also recognized by the Neeley School of Business.
- Undertaking a Departmental Honors Project makes a student eligible to apply for funding to travel to conferences, present work, and get grants to receive support from the Honors College.
- Each year, one of the departmental honors projects is selected to represent the Neeley School of Business in the Boller Award competition for the best departmental honors project presentation, and the project is also included for publication in the Boller Review, TCU's journal of undergraduate research.

D. Benefits to the Faculty

By accepting the role of a Departmental Honors Project Supervising Professor, Neeley faculty can mentor a student through a process of inquiry, which can be satisfying if done well. If done well, the project can result in a scholarship that can be presented at conferences or published in a journal in the Supervising Professor's field of study. Faculty leading Departmental Honors Projects are recognized for their effort and for embodying the teacher-scholar model on the annual Faculty 180 evaluations. Instructors and Professors of Professional Practice with terminal degrees who attend scholarly conferences or publish scholarly or practitioner-focused publications qualify for the Scholarly Academic (SA) designation, which helps the Neeley School of Business with its AACSB accreditation.

E. Supervising Professors' Expectations

By accepting the role of a Departmental Honors Project Supervising Professor, the faculty member agrees to act as a mentor to a student through the honors project. He or she will meet with the honors student and offer guidance in the following areas:

- Explain the project guidelines.

- Evaluate the manageability of the student-chosen project topic.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the student-chosen tools and methods.
- Evaluate the relevance of published sources used as references.
- Suggest another committee member.
- Evaluate if the timeline for completion is realistic.
- Issue a contract with the student to decide expectations and evaluate progress to decide if the student may move forward.
- Enact the iterative process of inquiry by setting deadlines for completion of parts/drafts of the project and by providing prompt feedback at each stage – and by setting clear expectations about when work is to be shared with the full committee (vs. sending only to the supervising professor).
- Work with the faculty member who teaches the one-credit Business Honors Seminar course to ensure students meet deadlines.
- Offer feedback on content, style, and Honors College submission requirements for the final paper.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of the presentation.

Supervising Professors will not provide the student with a question nor direct them to use specific data sources. The faculty will not author the thesis for the student. The Supervising Professor will be expected to grade the final manuscript and attend their student's project presentation during Honors Week, if available.

To be a Departmental Honors Project Supervising Professor, individuals must:

1. be a full-time faculty member at TCU (Texas Christian University),
2. have a functional, baseline knowledge of the overall topic area, and
3. be approved by the Department Chair in the student's major.

Typically, a Supervising Professor should be from the student's major department; however, subject to the approval of the Department Chair, any full-time TCU faculty member may be acceptable, given that the focus of the project is still close to the areas covered within the student's major Department.

F. Available Resources

Resource	Description	Contact
TCU Honors College	<p>General Departmental Honors Information</p> <p>Honors Advising</p> <p>Honors Undergraduate Research Grant - funding to support the research process</p>	<p>Marie Martinez m.d.martinez@tcu.edu</p> <p>https://honors.tcu.edu/current-students/honors-curriculum/upper-division-honors/</p> <p>https://honors.tcu.edu/academics/scholarships-aid.php#accd23e81-honors-undergraduate-research-grant</p>
TCU Library	<p>Workshops:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding and Avoiding Plagiarism 	<p>Diana Boerner d.boerner@tcu.edu</p> <p>https://library.tcu.edu/</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating the Credibility of Resources • Research Skills for Success 	
TCU Research Compliance	Get help with human subjects research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Subject Research Training • IRB Submission Process 	https://research.tcu.edu/research-compliance/irb/
TCU Writing Center	Get help with project writing	https://wrt.tcu.edu/
Neeley Professional Development Center	Get help with project presentation	Kelly O'Brien k.t.obrien@tcu.edu https://www.neeley.tcu.edu/Page/Professional-Development-Center/a413c5aa-2f88-4c36-b1aa-e1c5eb6ad759
Neeley School of Business Behavioral Research Lab	A dedicated space for faculty and student scholars to conduct experiments and observational studies.	Jennifer D'Angelo jennifer.dangelo@tcu.edu Gretchen Ross gretchen.ross@tcu.edu