



Manchester
University

Honors Program

Honors Handbook



Honors Program

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Honors Program

Welcome to the Honors Program

The MU Honors Program seeks to attract motivated and academically accomplished students and provide a challenging and interdisciplinary educational program. At the core of the Honors Program is a group of high-achieving students that create a resilient community of leaders.

“I wanted to be able to connect with other high-achieving students. I graduated with honors because I was willing to put in the hard work required to receive that distinction.” – Honors graduate

Upon acceptance into the Honors Program, students join a select group of MU students, a community committed to success and growth as members of the MU student body.

Advantages

- **Active students in the honors program have the benefit of registering early for classes, increasing the level of control students have over their course schedules.**
- **Students are able to develop close relationships with fellow honors students as they participate in honors program sponsored events, such as Honors First Year Seminar (FYS) and the Honors Leadership Council (HLC).**
- **Students are able to demonstrate to graduate schools and employers that they are leaders and that they challenged themselves while obtaining their college degree.**
- **Students are recognized at graduation and wear special honors regalia to recognize their achievements while at MU.**



Honors Program

Mission, Values, and Goals

Mission

The Honors Program at Manchester University engages students with a high level of interest, initiative, and ability to challenge themselves intellectually; to understand the interdependence of knowledge; and to lead and serve on-campus and in the community in order that they may lead principled, productive, and compassionate lives.

Vision

We seek to create a collaborative community that enhances students' learning, creativity, and discovery as lifetime endeavors.

Goals

- Students will challenge themselves with complex perspectives and interdisciplinary ideas through Honors course opportunities.
- Students will develop into leaders on-campus and in the community by being actively involved in the Honors Leadership Council.
- Students will build collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, and peers through the First Year Seminar, Honors Leadership Council, and the Honors Thesis.
- Students will generate professional skills in formal writing, oral presentations, and intellectual dialogue as demonstrated through the Honors Thesis.



Honors Program

Honors History @ MU

On October 14, 1986, the faculty approved the establishment of an Honors Program which offered courses and an Honors Thesis to Honors students. The proposal for this new program came from the Academic Policies Committee and was developed during the academic year 1985-86 by a sub-committee chaired by Janina P. Traxler.

The Honors Program was shaped by the following guiding principles:

1. Honors study should to the extent possible broaden the students' methods of inquiry, allow students to pursue topics in greater depth than is possible in the regular curriculum, and introduce them to both the interrelatedness of learning and the most fundamental and intriguing material of specific disciplines;
2. Honors study should replace simpler material and techniques with more sophisticated content and thinking skills, thus providing enriched, alternative study rather than larger and harder assignments to a regular course;
3. Honors study should strengthen the liberal arts education rather than undermine or replace it;
4. Honors study should be recognized officially on the student's transcript, and recipients of Honors should be recognized at commencement.

During the 1991-1992 academic year the Honors Program made revisions to more clearly identify and provide for Honors Students.

1. An Honors Diploma was created to recognize Honors Students; students with a number of credit hours in honors course work who completed an Honors Thesis would be recognized with Honors Diploma at graduation, and the thesis would be preserved in the library.
2. Two full-tuition Honors Scholarships were added to the scholarship program.

Honors Leadership

1990-1998	Janina Traxler, Honors Coordinator
1998-2015	Thelma Rohrer, Honors Director
2015-2017	Rachel Polando, Honors Director
2016-2017	Mark Angelos, Interim Honors Director
2017-2018	Raylene Rospond, Interim Honors Director
2018-Present	Tim McKenna-Buchanan, Honors Director



Honors Program

Eligibility and Admission

Admission Requirements

There are a few ways you can join the Honors Program at MU:

1. You can be **admitted as a first-year student**.
 - Submit a completed application for admission by Dec. 1st,
 - Receive a Presidential Scholarship or top-level Ability and Interest Scholarship,
 - Complete the online Honors Application (including essay response), and
 - Attend Presidential Scholarship Day
2. You can be **invited to apply**.
 - First-year students with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 after their first semester will be invited to apply to the Honors program.
3. Students **already enrolled** or who are **transferring** to Manchester University must: (please review - www.manchester.edu/honors)
 - Have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.5, with at least 14+ credits
 - Complete the Online Application (must complete essay question and return a faculty recommendation to the Office of Academic and Student Affairs)

NOTE: Applications will be reviewed by the Director of the Honors Program on a bi-annual basis. Please submit by **August 15th** for fall consideration and by **January 15th** for spring consideration.

Honors Scholarship

Each year two full-tuition scholarships are given to students who are awarded the Presidential Scholarship and submit an application (including essay response) for admittance into the Honors Program.

This scholarship will be renewed annually as long the student maintains full-time status at Manchester and a minimum 3.5 cumulative grade point average, makes consistent academic progress toward graduation (converting (1) course to honors a semester) with an Honors Diploma, and maintains at least 80% active participation in Honors Program activities and events.



Honors Program

Graduation Requirements

- (1) Honors students must maintain a cumulative 3.5 G.P.A.
- (2) Honors students must complete 15 credit hours of honors converted courses
- (3) Honors students must complete at least 3 credit hours for the capstone Honors Thesis, which is in the student's selected major and provides advanced mentoring and academic specialization

Active Membership

Students must meet these requirements in order to maintain their Honors Designation and the benefits associated:

- (1) Students must maintain full-time status at Manchester
- (2) Students must maintain a minimum 3.5 cumulative grade point average. Students whose cumulative grade point average falls in the threshold of 3.30-3.49 will be in a probationary period for 1 semester in order to raise grade point average above 3.5.
- (3) Students must maintain a clean disciplinary record by checking with the conduct review board and academic integrity panel.
- (4) Students must make consistent academic progress toward graduation. We expect you to enroll in at least (1) honors converted course a year while at Manchester. This includes enrolling in IDIV495 for credit during your senior year.
- (5) Students must maintain active participation; we expect at least 70% attendance at Honors Program events annually. These events include Honors Leadership meetings, service opportunities, as well as other leadership and social events held throughout the year.

If any of these requirements are not met, students will receive a notification of removal from the Honors Program. They can contact the Honors Program Director with any questions or concerns.

Withdrawing from Honors Program

Students may voluntarily withdraw at any time from the Honors Program by notifying the Honors Director via e-mail. However, we strongly encourage you to meet with the Honors Director in advance of such a decision.

- Students choosing to withdraw will be asked to fill out an exit survey to assist the Honors Director in tracking the reasons for student departures.



Honors Program

Honors Curriculum

In the MU Honors Program, you are given the opportunity **create your own honors experience**. Every semester, students are asked to initiate a discussion with a professor of a course they would like to convert to Honors. Students and faculty work together to develop an assignment that challenges students to explore complex perspectives or interdisciplinary ideas.

Some CORE courses have pre-arranged conversions, meaning the professor of that class has an honors project set aside so that the student does not have to create their own conversion sheet (see next page for these courses).

Honors First Year Seminar (FYS)

This class introduces new students to writing through a variety of disciplinary or interdisciplinary topics. Students will improve their thinking skills by examining a topic through multiple perspectives. This course builds community and aids students in their transition to college.

Honors Conversion Courses

Student Guidelines:

Students approved for the Honors Program may, with the permission of the instructor, convert a regularly scheduled class to honors. Converting a course to an honors course depends on your initiative and the cooperation of the professor. Some courses and faculty might be better suited to conversion than others. You should discuss your interest with the professor as early as possible to avoid confusion and poorly-conceived course work. The course will be identified as honors on the student's transcript with an HN following the course title.

Student Responsibilities:

1. Initiate the discussion with the professor about portions of the course that interest you and would allow you to explore a new content area. Work with the professor to develop a written outline consistent with the professor's guidelines; inquire about grading procedures as well as course content and assignments.
2. Fill out the Honors Conversion form to convert the enrollment (see Appendix A). The form must be signed and returned to the Registrar.
3. Keep in contact with your professor as you work on your conversion project. It is your responsibility to complete it well and on time.

Faculty Guidelines:

Conversion of a regular course to an honors credit results in work similar to that of any independent study arrangement. When students approach you about this option, be candid about what you are and are not willing to try. The best candidates for this type of work are those who are creative and take responsibility for their education. The conversion of a regular course into an honors course does not obligate you to omit essential information or skills from the course; it does obligate you to provide the student with an alternative, preferably more challenging, way of accomplishing the goals of the course. The assignment can build upon a current assignment making it more rigorous or could add to the students learning and discovery.

Faculty Responsibilities:

1. Work with the student to develop a written outline (i.e., an altered syllabus). Be as specific as possible about your expectations, both for the content and activities of the altered course and for the way you will evaluate it.
2. Sign the form which converts the course to “HN” designation.
3. Keep in contact with the student to ensure successful completion of the conversion and enhanced learning experience.
4. The grade for the converted assignment should be approximately 10% of the grade for the course.

NOTE: Failure to fulfill the honors conversion assignment will result in a (NR) grade. All work must be completed by the mid-semester date of the next regular semester, otherwise a failure is recorded for all the NR grades.

Honors Courses

The following CORE courses have pre-arranged conversions, meaning the professors of these classes already have an honors project set aside so that the student does not have to create their own conversion. Students must still initiate a conversation with their professor and fill out the Honors Conversion form to convert the course (see Appendix A). The form must be signed and returned to the Office of the Registrar.

- **COMM110: Foundations of Human Communication**
- **ENG238: World Literature**
- **MUS120: Introduction to Music**
- **PSYC110: Introduction to Psychology**
- **THTR201: Theatre & Society**



Honors Program

Honors Thesis

The Honors Thesis, by design, is the most rigorous undertaking as an honors student. The purpose is to advance knowledge, understanding, or creative value in the world. Through this process you will develop and conduct independent research and defend its significance. As a whole, we hope that you develop your intellectual and professional identity.

- It requires strong interest in a research topic related to your major and seeks an interdisciplinary perspective. It should grow out of course work and experiences, serving as a capstone and demonstrating that the student is intellectually mature as well as liberally educated.
- It gives you an opportunity to work closely with faculty mentors who are familiar with the research topic or interdisciplinary focus.
- It necessitates a commitment to the production of a high-quality independent research paper that develops your skills in formal writing, oral presentations, and intellectual dialogue.

What is an Honors Thesis?

A thesis identifies something of importance whose answer or best interpretation isn't fully known or agreed upon by people who make their careers in the field, and it steers towards the answer or best interpretation. Even a creative or performance thesis is about expressing something you think is worthwhile and hasn't been fully expressed already.

Traits of a Successful Honors Thesis

1. Develops a hypothesis; answers a significant question; demonstrates synthesis; explores a problem, studies it, and draws conclusions.
2. Is founded on experience, skills, and knowledge the student has developed during their educational experience.
3. Demonstrates that the student thinks critically and creatively, expresses him/herself clearly and with reasonable sophistication, and can plan and complete a large and demanding project.
4. The final paper will be evaluated competently by the thesis advisor using common criteria from the Honors Program and with which the broader intellectual community would find reasonable.



Honors Program

Honors Thesis - Stage 1: Proposal

1. Choose a thesis advisor – someone who is in your major department and is familiar with your work and research interests. Meet with your thesis advisor to start developing the research topic and to discuss what other faculty might constitute your committee.
2. Enroll in IDIV495 for (1 cr) during the spring term of your junior year. This is intended to give you credit for your Honors Proposal.
3. Identify additional committee members. Your committee should consist of: Honors Thesis Advisor, faculty member from major, and a faculty member to help support your interdisciplinary focus.
4. Develop your proposal, which should include:
 - a. **Title Page:** Please include: full name, academic major(s) and minor(s), and intended graduation date; a title that properly addresses topic of thesis; and names of your Honors Thesis Advisor and Honors Thesis committee members (1pg)
 - b. **Rationale:** Describes the significance of the research and outlines the primary idea and question of the research in enough detail to be understood by those outside the field. (2-3pg)
 - c. **Methodology:** Details the approach and methods for gathering data and research. Includes information on analytical methods. (1pg)
 - d. **Reflection:** Describes the personal connection, interest, and motivation the student has developed during their educational experience toward the current research topic proposed. (1pg)
 - e. **Bibliography:** Provides an initial reference list of sources to be reviewed to validate, understand, and evaluate the questions. (1pg)
 - f. **Timeline:** Provides an outline of milestones to meet. You must have enough information to prove the goals are realistic and achievable.
 - g. **Credit Hours:** Identifies credit hours for which you should enroll.
 - You must enroll in IDIV495 for (3CR) before graduation
5. Schedule a meeting with your Honors Thesis Advisor and Thesis Committee to propose Honors Thesis. Committee may make suggestions and changes at this meeting.
6. Obtain signatures on the Honors Thesis Proposal Cover Sheet (see Appendix B) and submit your proposal to the Director.
7. Once you receive the approval letter, obtain IRB approval, if necessary.



Honors Program

Honors Thesis – Stage 2: Research & Writing

Once Approved by Honors Committee and IRB (if necessary):

1. Enroll in IDIV495 for (3 cr) during the fall or spring term of your senior year. This is intended to give you credit for your work.
2. Conduct research and work as necessary following your timeline.
3. Schedule regular bi-monthly meeting with your Honors Thesis Advisor and find times to meet with your committee members to discuss progress and concerns with your research.
4. Schedule a meeting with Director of the Honors Program to discuss your progress on the Honors Thesis at least *once per term*.

Once research/analysis has been completed

1. Continue writing your Honors Thesis in consultation with your Advisor.
2. Set tentative dates for completion and defense. All Honors Theses must be defended **two weeks** prior to final's week. This time allows for any necessary corrections from the Honors Thesis Committee.
8. Develop your final paper (20-30pg), which should include:
 - a. **Title Page:** Please include full name, a title that properly addresses topic of thesis, and names of your Honors Thesis Advisor and Honors Thesis committee members.
 - b. **Rationale:** Describe the significance of the research and outline the primary idea and question of the research in enough detail to be understood by those outside the field. (1-2pg)
 - c. **Literature Review:** Explain the current knowledge including substantive findings, as well as theoretical contributions to your particular topic. (7-10pg)
 - d. **Methodology:** Detail the approach and methods for gathering and analyzing data and research. (2-3pg)
 - e. **Findings/Results:** Describe what you found based on your proposed hypothesis or research question(s). (5-7pg)
 - f. **Discussion/Reflection:** Describe the importance, implications, and limitations, and future directions of your research. (5-7pg)
 - g. **Bibliography:** Provide a reference list of all sources used within your research paper. Use normal style manual standards for formal writing in your discipline.



Honors Program

Honors Thesis - Stage 3: Final Paper & Oral Defense

Once final paper has been drafted

1. Submit a copy of the complete draft of the Honors Thesis to your Honors Thesis Advisor to review and make corrections and edits.
2. Once your Advisor believes your Honors Thesis is suitable for defense, distribute the document to committee members.
3. Schedule a time for the Oral Defense with your Honors Thesis Committee (at least 75 to 90 minutes). You will need to find a time when all of your committee members are available and reserve a room. Once scheduled, contact Director of the Honors Program with date/time.
4. Your final paper will not be submitted until after any corrections or suggestions are added and/or addressed from your committee.

What is an Oral Defense?

The Honors student and committee members meet for you to present your research and findings. The committee will have a conversation by asking the student about: the experience; knowledge or skills acquired; implications of the results; issues for future; and/or the student's future goals.

1. The Oral Defense will begin by the advisor introducing the student and explaining the process of the defense; the advisor will chair the session and facilitate the question and answer period at the end. Students may be asked to leave the room briefly at the end of the defense.
2. At the conclusion of the Oral Defense, your committee will sign the Honors Thesis Oral Defense Rubric & Completion (see Appendix C & D) acknowledging that you must complete any corrections agreed upon.
3. Once corrections have been made, you will submit a final version of your Honors Thesis to your Honors Thesis Advisor to be graded.
4. The Honors Director must receive the completed final product and then will be in charge of submitting the Honors Thesis Paper Rubric (see Appendix E) and Honors Thesis Final Cover Sheet (see Appendix F).



Honors Program

Honors Leadership Council

The Honors Leadership Council was created in January 2018 and elected its first officers in March of that year.

Constitution

- I. **Purpose Statement:**
The purpose of the Honors Leadership Council (HLC) is to provide academically accomplished students intellectual, social, and service oriented opportunities on campus and in the community.
- II. **Membership:**
Membership in the Council is open to all students in good standing in the Honors Program. No student who meets the other criteria for membership as listed in this Constitution may be denied membership on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, handicap, marital status, or veteran's status. In order to remain in good standing as a member of the Honors Leadership Council, a member must have at least 70% attendance at Honors Program events annually.
- III. **Honors Council Meetings**
 - A. Meetings will be held at least once a month or as needed.
- IV. **Executive Board:**
 - A. The Executive Board shall consist of: (1) Senior Representative, (1) Junior Representative, (1) Sophomore Representative, and (1) First Year Representative.
 - B. Each position will be elected by the Honors Leadership Council at the end of fall semester. The Executive board will work collectively, and equality shall be observed.
 - C. Meetings of the Honors Leadership Council Executive Board will be held once a month and all members should be present. If a member is absent, guidelines for regular council meetings should be followed.

D. Special meetings of the Honors Leadership Council Executive Board can be called by all members on the board and may be designated as mandatory at the discretion of the Senior Representative.

E. Executive Board Positions and Duties:

i. Senior Representative (Facilitator):

- a. Facilitates each Honors Leadership Council meeting**
- b. Acts as a mentor guiding other Honors students to success**
- c. Coordinates and supervises all voting procedures**

ii. Junior Representatives (Recorder):

- a. Creates and distributes agendas for Honors Leadership Council and E-board meetings in collaboration with all other E-board members**
- b. Takes minutes during the Honors Leadership Council and E-board meetings for the public record**

iii. Sophomore Representatives (Marketing):

- a. Organizes and leads all details pertaining to events held by the Honors Leadership Council.**
- b. Ensures a variety of events with scheduled days, times, and locations**
- c. Maintains record keeping for all events held**
- d. Conducts event planning meetings monthly or as needed**
- e. Develops a marketing strategy to create awareness of the Honors Leadership Council**

iv. Honors Program Assistant (Liaison):

- a. Communicator between the Honors Director and the Honors Leadership Council.**

V. Ratification and Amendments:

A. Ratification of this constitution or any amendments must be passed by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Honors Leadership Council members present at the meeting of the proposed ratification and amendments

B. Amendments must be read at the meeting at which they are introduced, and reread and voted on at the following meeting



Honors Program

Honors Committee 2018-2019



Tim McKenna-Buchanan

**Honors Director &
Assistant Professor of
Communication Studies**

ACEN 310

TPMcKenna-Buchanan@manchester.edu



Heather Twomey

**Associate
Professor of
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ACEN

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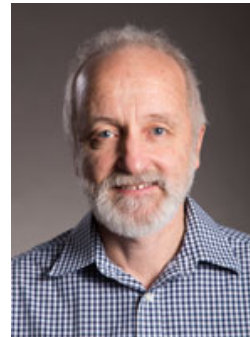


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Jonathan Watson

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APPENDIX A



Honors Program

Honors Conversion Form 2018-2019

Student Name _____ Student ID Number _____

Term: Fall January Spring Summer I Summer 2

Course Number: _____ Course Title: _____

Instructor Name _____ Date/Time of Course _____

Students approved for the Honors Program may, with the permission of the instructor, convert a regularly scheduled class to honors. The course will be identified as honors on the student's transcript with an HN following the course title. The process of converting a regularly scheduled course to an Honors Course is not complete until this form is signed and returned to the Office of the Registrar. **Failure to fulfill the honors conversion assignment will result in a (NR) grade. All work must be completed by the mid-semester date of the next regular semester, otherwise a failure is recorded for all the NR grades.**

Honors Conversion Description:

[FACULTY] Describe the changes made to the course requirements for conversion to honors. Please explain **grading** procedures (approx.10% of course grade) and any **deadlines**.

[STUDENT] Describe how this assignment will challenge you by exploring complex *perspectives* and interdisciplinary ideas *through classroom opportunities*.

By signing this form the student and professor confirm their agreement to change the course in ways which will not undermine its integrity and which will be mutually satisfying. This conversion does not exempt the student from any requirement of the course.

Instructor's signature _____ Date _____

Student's signature _____ Date _____

Honors Director signature _____ Date _____



Honors Program

Honors Thesis Proposal Cover Sheet

Date: _____

I hereby recommend that the Honors Thesis prepared under my supervision by _____ [student name] _____, titled _____ be accepted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Honors Thesis.

Honors Thesis Advisor Signature

Honors Program Director

Recommendation concurred by:
(by signing below you have read the proposal, provided feedback, and agree to serve on the Honors Thesis committee for the duration of the research)

	Faculty Name	Department	Signature
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____



Honors Program

Honors Thesis Oral Defense Rubric

Name _____

Date _____

Evaluator _____

Basic Presentation Skills:

[1 - unacceptable, 3 - acceptable, 5 - excellent]

1. Exhibited & maintained poise and professionalism throughout.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Presentation had coherence, organization, and flow.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Presentation used appropriate vocabulary and grammar.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Project Presentation:

1. Explained purpose of project and importance of project.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Background information was thoroughly explained.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Explained methodology well.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Explained and analyzed results, could relate back to purpose of project.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Able to interconnect concepts from various disciplines.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Able to explain how project is interrelated or applicability of project.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

APPENDIX D



Honors Program

Honors Thesis Oral Defense Completion

Honors Student Name Date

Recommendation concurred by:
(by signing below you believe the student has successfully defended their Honors Thesis. The student is expected to make any revisions, corrections, or additions noted below before it should be submitted to the Honors Director in partial fulfillment of the Honors Thesis requirements)

Honors Thesis Advisor

	Faculty Name	Department	Signature
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____

Comments of the Honors Thesis Committee:

Honors Program Director



Honors Program

Honors Thesis Final Paper Cover Sheet

Date: _____

I hereby certify that the Honors Thesis prepared under my supervision by _____, titled _____ has fulfilled the requirements for the Honors Thesis. Including completion of the thesis, production of the final product, and a successful oral defense.

The final grade given for this Honors Thesis is _____.

(Documentation for successful Oral Defense and Honors Thesis Evaluation to support grade should be attached. Documentation is required to justify a failing grade.)

Honors Thesis Advisor

Honors Program Director

Recommendation concurred by:
(by signing below you provided feedback and believe this student has fulfilled the requirements to graduate with the Honors Diploma)

	Faculty Name	Department	Signature
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____
Committee Member	_____	_____	_____

APPENDIX F



Honors Program

Honors Thesis Paper Evaluation

Name _____

Date _____

Evaluator _____

Basic Skills:

[1 - unacceptable, 3 - acceptable, 5 - excellent]

1. Aesthetics: grammar, transitions, sentence structure.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. References/citations: Correctly cited and referenced.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

Content:

1. Title: Clearly articulates thesis and contents.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

2. Subject/Abstract: Provides brief overview of thesis.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

3. Background/introduction: Provides enough background to make clear the purpose and point of the thesis.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

4. Methodology: Provides information on how research was conducted.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

5. Results/analysis: Presents findings in a clear, concise manner.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

6. Conclusion: Wraps up thesis and findings in relation to what is known.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

7. Relation to other disciplines: Clearly articulates how other disciplines or broader application to the world.

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---