

# Guidelines for Writing an Undergraduate Honors Thesis in the Department of Economics at SJSU

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To graduate with Economics Department honors a student must have an overall GPA of 3.2; a GPA of 3.5 for all upper division economics courses; and must complete an approved honors thesis. The prerequisite for enrollment in the honors thesis section of Econ 180 (Independent Studies) is completion of 100W. This document contains guidelines for completing the approved honors thesis.

There are several steps involved in completing an approved honors thesis.

First, the student writes a proposal by completing the Independent Study Application Form for the Honors Thesis Section of Econ 180 (which can be found by clicking the following link: [http://sjsu.edu/economics/docs/econ\\_180\\_honors\\_section\\_application.doc](http://sjsu.edu/economics/docs/econ_180_honors_section_application.doc)) and submits it to the Director of the Economics Honors Program (EHP). The current Director of the EHP is Associate Professor Matthew J. Holian and his email address is [matthew.holian@sjsu.edu](mailto:matthew.holian@sjsu.edu). Students are encouraged to meet with the EHP Director for guidance well in advance of submitting a proposal. If the proposal is approved by the EHP Director, the student will then fill out the general Independent Study Application Form (which can be found by clicking the following link, [http://sjsu.edu/economics/docs/Firstname\\_Lastname\\_180\\_298\\_FORM.doc](http://sjsu.edu/economics/docs/Firstname_Lastname_180_298_FORM.doc)), and submits it in hard copy to the Economics Department main office in Dudley Moorhead Hall room 147, who will provide the student with a course code *and* permission number to enroll in the Honors Thesis section of Econ 180.

At the end of the semester, the EHP Director will assign a letter grade for the final report submitted for Econ 180. To successfully complete an approved honors thesis, the student must pass Econ 180 with a grade of A- or higher. Note however, that *to receive a passing grade for Econ 180 requires **only** a grade of C or higher.* However, although passing Econ 180 requires only a grade of C or higher, *for the final report to qualify as an approved honors thesis requires receiving a grade of A- or higher.*

Finally, if after completing an approved thesis all GPA requirements are met, the student will be eligible to graduate with departmental honors.

A successful honors thesis will generate new knowledge in an important area of economics. In principle, students have wide latitude in choosing topics. However, as mentioned above, it is strongly encouraged that interested students seek out guidance from the EHP Director as soon as possible. Writing an honors thesis is an individualized process, and the EHP Director will help the student choose a topic that is well suited to their skills, interests and career goals.