This is an independent research program for students who have a strong academic record. Students in Messiah University's Honors Program can complete their required Honor's Projects through departmental honors.

Acceptable Papers

The following types of papers are acceptable for Departmental Honors projects.

- Research Projects (Quantitative or Qualitative studies)
- Theoretical Projects (Integrative or Historical/Library based studies)
- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
- Program Evaluation and Assessment
- Program Design & Implementation
- Community Based Research

Honors Program Guidelines

I. Eligibility

From the Messiah University Catalog: "PSYC/CRIJ/SOAN 497, 498 Major Honors (3,3) Independent research program for students who have a strong academic record and have completed at least 69 credits of undergraduate study. An overall minimum GPA of 3.5 and a minimum GPA of 3.75 is required for courses in their major, and the student must have departmental approval for enrollment." Although a student may be eligible to complete an honors project, it is up to the department to decide whether the application will be approved based on proposed idea, and availability of faculty to advise the study.

II. Basic Timeline

This departmental honors process spans over <u>the student's last three semesters</u>: Approval semester, 497 semester, 498 semester.

APPROVAL SEMESTER – (usually occurs in the third to last semester prior to graduation).

1. **Student Eligibility:** The interested student should email the Chair of the Department of Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Sociology to verify their eligibility based on the above criteria.
2. **Project Advisor:** Upon verification of eligibility from the Chair, the student makes an informal connection with a potential Project Advisor, forwarding email verification as written proof.
3. **Proposal Preparation:** In consultation with the Project Advisor, the student prepares a 3-4 page proposal, which will then be submitted to the Department of Psychology, Criminal Justice, and Sociology one week before advising begins (late applications may be considered upon Chair approval). This proposal will contain the following:
   a. a clear title for the research topic,
   b. a description of the problem,
   c. a brief summary of past research on the topic,
   d. proposed hypotheses (for data-driven projects),

e. proposed methodology (for data-driven projects),
f. an outline of the study including questions to be explored,
g.   and a preliminary reference list of sources on the topic to be studied.

4. **Proposal Approval:** The Project Advisor will bring the name of the student and their proposal forward for consideration in the first department meeting after advising week begins. Based on criteria above, the proposal must be approved by department <u>majority</u> before the student may proceed.

5. **Advisory Team:** The student is encouraged to seek out professionals with specific skills and experience for collaboration throughout the project, meeting together as necessary. The Project Advisor will work with the student to ensure they have adequate resources and necessary expertise from others.

6. **The student should register for XXXX 497** for the next semester, which will require a completed **XXXX 497 syllabus from the Project Advisor.**

XXXX 497 SEMESTER – (usually occurs in the second to last semester prior to graduation).

1. **First Draft:** Throughout this semester, the student in consultation with the primary Project Advisor, will prepare a detailed, 7-10 page draft (seeking review from potential collaborators, if warranted). The First Draft should contain an expanded literature review, specific methodology and participant count (as applicable), as well as further clarifications of any issues raised with the brief proposal. The student should refer to course syllabus for any specific expectations for the first draft. The Project Advisor will set a due date for the final first draft (at least 2 weeks before the end of the semester). After the Project Advisor reviews, any requested revisions should be made by the student and resubmitted for final approval. Once fully approved, the student can continue in project preparation.

2. **Human-Participants Research Projects:**
    a. **Discuss IRB Proposal:** In consultation with the Project Advisor, the student will prepare an IRB proposal (Messiah University's Institutional Review Board) in conjunction to the first draft. It is suggested the IRB application is submitted to the IRB by mid-semester to allow sufficient time for project to be reviewed prior to beginning of next semester. (Project Advisor can determine best timeline as to whether IRB proposal is submitted at the end of this semester or beginning of next.)
    b. **Discuss Sona Data Collection**: The student will email the Chair (include Project Advisor in email) describing the study and requesting student participants. The Chair will then determine participation credits required, and alert Intro-to-PSYC instructors to add Sona Participation information to their syllabi.

3. **Receive Final Grade for Course**: At the end of XXXX 497, the Project Advisor must determine if the first semester's work has been at "A" level to allow the student to continue in the departmental honors program and to register for XXXX 498. If a student does not reach "A" level in their work for XXXX 497, or if they are not able to complete enough work to move on to XXXX 498, they will be given a grade for the first semester's work but will not be allowed to register for XXXX 498. No Incompletes will be given for XXXX 497; the project cannot be completed as an audit or pass/fail.

4. If eligible to continue, **the student should register for XXXX 498** for the next semester, which will require a completed **XXXX 498 syllabus from the Project Advisor.**

XXXX 498 SEMESTER – (usually occurs in the last semester prior to graduation).

1. **Obtain IRB Approval and/or Begin Data Collection** (as applicable)
2. **Final Draft of Project:** Two weeks before the end of the semester (refer to the syllabus for the exact date), the student in XXXX 498 should submit a draft of the final project to the Project Advisor (and Advisory Team as applicable), who then will review and give direction as needed.
3. **Formal Presentation:** At the end of the semester of XXXX 498, the student must give a formal presentation to the Department Faculty and to other interested individuals. Typically, this will take place around Finals Week, if not sooner (e.g., SACS Symposium).
4. **Final Approval**: After the Final Presentation, the Project Advisor will indicate their approval of the Final Project by assigning a grade. This should be completed within one week of the end of the semester in which XXXX 498 is taken and prior to graduation. No final grade will be submitted to the Registrar's Office until the student submits the final corrected copy of the project paper.
5. **Archiving**: The student will submit a copy of the project in a PDF format to the department's administrative assistant and the Project Advisor, prompting the Project Advisor to submit the final grade. Lastly, the student must submit final project through MOSAIC, Messiah's Open Scholarship and Intellectual Creativity site.