

Strategies to generate topics for your Honors Project



Consider the following questions as you develop a topic for your Honors Project:

- What classes interest you? Why?
- Which topics from these classes would you like to learn more about?
- Consider your personal interests/experiences outside the classroom. How might you incorporate what you have learned from these experiences with what you have learned in the classroom?
- What are the questions that you would like to know the answers to?
- Consider your future career plans (if known) and think of ideas that connect to that area.
- What frustrates or upsets you about a field or subject?

Use the following strategies to help you narrow down your topic and identify questions for your Honors Project:

Brainstorming: Informal way of generating topics to write about, or points to make about your topic done at any time during the writing process.



Colorado State's
Writing Center

Free Writing: Practice of writing without a prescribed structure, which means no outlines, cards, notes, or editorial oversight.



MIT's Writing
Guide

Mind Mapping: Used to visually organize information. Often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those major ideas.



SUNY State Empire
Campus Writing
Support

Meet with faculty member(s) and your Honors Academic Advisor to discuss your project topic.

*"Definition of Brainstorming." Colorado State University, <https://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/gentopic/pop4a.cfm>.

**Definition of Freewriting, <https://www.lynchburg.edu/academics/writing-center/wilmer-writing-center-online-writing-lab/drafting-a-document/freewriting/>

***Definition from "Mind Map" @ Wikipedia

Tips for Selecting and Communicating with Honors Project Faculty Advisors



What are the responsibilities of the faculty advisors?

- Help you lay out the basic conception of the project, clarify your objectives, and discover an appropriate research or creative strategy for achieving these goals
- Help solve problems that may arise. Critique drafts of the project
- Jointly grade the finished project

How to find a faculty advisor:

Most students choose at least one advisor from among the faculty for which they have taken courses, know well, and have performed well. You should approach advisor candidates the semester before you start your project (or sooner if possible). Some specific pieces of advice that you might find useful in your search for advisors include:

- Every faculty member has specific areas of specialization. You may need to work with a specific professor because of the area of study you have chosen for your project. Research faculty interests and specializations before approaching someone to be an advisor. It is always useful to go into a meeting where you are requesting help with some explanation of what you think a particular faculty member has to offer you and your project.
Serving as a Faculty Advisor is essentially volunteer work on the part of the faculty member. Be sure to thank them for their time working with you.
- You will be working with the advisor over a period of at least one academic year. This person must be someone with whom you can work closely.
- Check in with your advisor frequently; set up regular appointments to keep them informed of your progress and goals. Bring materials with you to the meetings and take notes.

Who can serve as a faculty advisor:

- Faculty members at the University with the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor, or Qualified Rank Faculty (Teaching, Clinical, or Research Professor/ Associate Professor/Assistant Professor) can serve as an Honors Project advisor.
- A non-faculty member or an adjunct faculty with special expertise in the student's area may serve as a third advisor but may not be one of the student's two primary advisors and may not grade the project.
- Faculty should have completed a program of study in the discipline or subfield (as applicable) in which they teach, and/or for which they develop curricula, with coursework at least one level above that of the courses being taught or developed. (Higher Learning Commission)