

D'Amore-McKim School of Business Honors in the Discipline Guidelines

From the outset of their Northeastern studies, honors students in the D'Amore-McKim School of Business have the opportunity to engage in intellectual activity and inquiry-based analysis. As the culmination of their studies, students may choose to carry out independent honors projects in an area of interest to them. With support and guidance from a faculty advisor, honors student projects involve substantial individual research and a comprehensive analysis of the findings. The project can be the most important experience of a student's college career. Preparation of the project can focus a student's interests, provide perspective in an area of interest, support development of scholarly skills, foster creativity and independent effort, and synthesize the student's educational experiences. Within the realm of business, honors project topics are as diverse as the interests of our students.

Qualifications

Students with a 3.5 GPA may apply to undertake an honors project upon completion of 80 semester hours. The student is responsible for identifying a faculty advisor for the project. The faculty advisor must be a tenured or tenure-track member of the faculty or an academic specialist who is actively engaged in research. A list of faculty who can serve as advisors is available in 250 Dodge and in the Honors Program Office. Once the advisor has agreed to serve, the student will file an Honors Project proposal form at the D'Amore-McKim School of Business Undergraduate Programs Office.

Credit Hour Requirement

Honors project work and credit can be included in the curriculum towards meeting degree requirements. The project can meet one concentration course elective requirement or can be used to satisfy an open elective spot in the curriculum. While students will likely work on their project over multiple semesters, they will be enrolled in a four credit honors project during one of their final three academic semesters. The honors project will receive a letter grade.

Research Project Options

Students may pursue one of two types of honors projects. Students may choose to explore a question of current issue to companies. In this case, the student will investigate at least eight different companies. Alternatively, students may explore a question of broader social and business interest. In this case, students will engage in an extensive literature review, including at least 20 academic research articles that address the chosen issue.

Option 1

With option 1, the student poses a question of current interest to business. The student will need to ascertain that the question is of current interest in the business community. To accomplish this, the student will need to investigate current trade and research publications as well as appropriate academic journals. The student will then need to

identify which segment of the market is being explored. This could include country, region, industry sector, or company characteristics (eg, Companies with high staff turnover). Once this is accomplished, the student conducts an empirical investigation with the companies that have been identified. Students must investigate a minimum of eight companies. The student should be able to:

- justify each question, relying in particular on the achievements of the first part of the research,
- justify the proposed terms of response,
- explain the process of identification and selection stakeholders,
- report exhaustively rough results obtained, contact by contact,
- organize these raw results, and
- draw conclusions from the results.

The final project should be approximately 40 pages plus exhibits.

Option 2

With option 2 the student is interested in a research field and a particular theme. The student has ideas and personal opinions on this subject and wishes to expand on research already done. The student wants to advance the understanding of an interesting problem recognized by the research community in one or more disciplines. The student will:

- identify research hypotheses,
- review the relevant literature on the subject (a minimum of 20 research articles, at least half from the last decade),
- gather empirical data,
- identify an appropriate research methodology to test the hypotheses and undertake the empirical tests,
- organize and report on the results, and
- draw conclusions about the results.

The final project should be approximately 40 pages plus exhibits.

Presentation of the project: Students will present their results in one of two venues: (1) an oral presentation arranged by the group, (2) poster session at Honors Evening.