

## **Legal Studies Honors Projects**

Students with qualifying grades are encouraged to consider doing an honors project. To be eligible for participation in the Legal Studies Honors Program students must demonstrate the capacity for scholarly research and the ability to express themselves well in writing. It is recommended that students have an overall GPA of 3.5 or higher.

## **Why getting Honors is Important**

Good jobs in the paralegal and legal field are often elusive for new graduates. The legal profession is attuned to the symbols of academic achievement. Graduating with honors in a field of study is impressive. An honors project speaks to prospective employers about potential and drive to excel. It provides a writing sample that speaks in the language that is most of interest to lawyers – scholarship, diligence and writing skills.

For law-school bound students, academic excellence is of the utmost importance to admissions committees. Departmental honors are an excellent addition to a law-school profile. Furthermore, success (as opposed to survival) in law school turns on a student's ability to succeed in academic pursuits. An honors project helps hone research and writing skills for success in law school.

## **Honors is a Privilege not a Right**

Although the faculty encourages all qualified students to consider participation in the Legal Studies Honors Program, it is not appropriate for everyone. Acceptance into the program is competitive. No student is entitled to do an honors project regardless of grade point average. All proposals for departmental honors are subject to the approval of the Legal Studies faculty.

## **Faculty Honors Project Advisor**

All candidates for departmental honors must have an advisor for their honors project who is willing to meet regularly with the student during the course of the project. The project advisor reviews and evaluates the project with the student. To that end, sophomores and juniors who are interested in graduating with departmental honors are encouraged to meet and get to know all the legal studies faculty members. After getting to know the faculty members, students should establish a strong working relationship with a faculty member of choice who has sufficient expertise in the area of the student's interest to act as the project advisor.

## **To get more information on Honors Projects go to:**

[http://www.hamline.edu/cla/deans\\_office/dep\\_honors.html](http://www.hamline.edu/cla/deans_office/dep_honors.html)

## LEGAL STUDIES HONORS PROJECT GUIDELINES.

Students who wish to be considered for departmental honors in Legal Studies should follow the guidelines set out below and be prepared to demonstrate their qualifications to pursue departmental honors by the spring of their junior year.<sup>1</sup>

- 1) **Academic Success:** The candidate must demonstrate academic excellence with a recommended grade-point average of 3.5 or higher.
- 2) **Preparation for Honors:**
  - a. Candidates should begin discussions about their project with a Legal Studies faculty member by the end of the first week of the spring term of their junior year. This faculty member will serve as faculty advisor for the project.
  - b. Candidates planning on submitting an application for a summer student/faculty research grant should commence those discussions at the same time.
  - c. A working draft of the proposal should be given to the advising faculty member by the end of the first week of March.
- 3) **Honors Project Proposal:** Candidates must submit a proposal for an Honors Project. The proposal must include: the substance, methodology, and justification for the project. Honors Projects must have distinctive scholarship, originality of thought, and relevance to Legal Studies. A timeline for the project should also be included. As the cover sheet to the proposal, candidates should use the form provided by the Registrar's Office.
- 4) **Portfolio and Documentation:** In addition to the proposal, candidates must also submit a portfolio containing:
  - a. An up-to-date internal Hamline transcript.
  - b. Two academic writing samples.
  - c. A one-to-two page summary of scholarly interests and potential. The summary should include a statement of work habits, attendance, and participation in classes as a Hamline student and any other information that demonstrates capacity for honors work.
- 5) **Deadlines:** All proposals must be approved at the April meeting of full-time faculty of the Legal Studies Department. In preparation for the April department meeting, candidates must do the following by the end of the last week in March:
  - a. Send an electronic copy of the Honors Project Proposal to all Legal Studies full-time faculty members.
  - b. Give a signed copy of the Honors Project Proposal to the advisor.
  - c. Provide your honors project advisor with the portfolio outlined above.

**Approval and Registration:** Honors Projects must be approved by a majority of the Legal Studies Faculty. After the project is approved, students must submit the signed proposal to the registrar.

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<sup>1</sup> For December graduates, all deadlines in this document must be adjusted accordingly. Confirm all deadlines with your proposed advisor.