

BCMB Honors Candidacy Criteria and Timeline
Approved Nov 18, 2021

Phase	Deadline/ Evaluator(s)	Criteria	Met
Candidacy Assessment (1)	Roll call of Fall semester senior year – advisor and BCMB chair	GPA in BCMB courses	≥ 3.2
		Research Time	≥2 semesters or 1 summer + 1 semester
		Ownership and Independence	Student demonstrates intellectual contribution to project, an understanding of the time required to succeed in the lab, ability to manage time, ability to troubleshoot, and motivation to move project forward.
		Mentor Role	Faculty member agrees to mentor student as an honors candidate.
Honors Proposal (2)	Penultimate Monday of Fall semester – honors committee	Summary Statement and Aims	Proposal has relevant research aims that address gaps in knowledge.
		Literature Review/ Hypothesis	The author uses relevant background information from scholarly sources to support the hypothesis.
		Approach/ Methods	Student has a clear understanding of methods and facilities/resources (equipment, funding, faculty oversight) are sufficient to support approach.
		Preliminary Results	Student has sufficient preliminary results that indicate technical competency and ability to complete the aims in a timely manner.
		Length Guidelines	The proposal includes a proposal summary (300 words), one or two relevant aims, background/introduction, materials and methods, preliminary results, and adheres to appropriate language usage and citation style. The proposal is up to five pages of single-spaced text in length, excluding references and figures.
		Mentor Role	The expectation is that the faculty mentor has reviewed the proposal before sending to the honors committee. The honors committee applies proposal rubric to evaluate candidate's ability to move forward.
Research Progress (3)	Friday before spring break – assessed by advisor and student; reported to honors committee and BCMB chair	Amount of progress	Ideally, experimental work is concluded by the Friday of Spring Break. Aims are complete or nearly complete and thesis drafting is meeting the deadlines set the first week of the semester.

Phase	Deadline/ Evaluator(s)	Criteria	Met
Honors Thesis (4)	Friday the 12 th week of classes in the Spring semester – honors committee	Abstract	Summarizes thesis concisely and accurately.
		Literature Review/ Hypothesis	The author uses relevant background information from scholarly sources to support the hypothesis/question.
		Approach/ Methods	Methods are reported in a detailed enough manner to understand the nature of the experimental approach.
		Results	Student has at least one set of data that has been analyzed and presented in a manner that would pass peer review.
		Discussion	Candidate explains and integrates results with current knowledge in the field.
		Length Guidelines	The thesis includes an abstract (300 words), introduction, materials and methods, results, discussion, and adheres to appropriate language usage and citation style. The thesis is up to 25 pages of single-spaced text in length, excluding references and figures.
		Mentor Role	The expectation is that the faculty mentor has reviewed the thesis before sending to the honors committee. The honors committee applies thesis rubric to evaluate candidate's ability to move forward.
Oral Presentation (5)	Scheduled during the 13 th week of the Spring semester through W finals reading day – all BCMB faculty	Quality	The majority of the oral presentation is clear and accurate resulting in overall audience understanding of the project. The presentation was prepared for a diverse audience – the majority being non-experts in the topic. The oral presentation is delivered independently.
		Slides	The majority of slides support and enhance verbal message with an appropriate balance of words and images.
		Time	Oral presentation runs 25 +/- 5 min.
		Mentor Role	The expectation is that the faculty mentor has reviewed the oral presentation before the student presents to the larger group. The BCMB committee applies presentation rubric to evaluate candidate's advance towards honors.
Defense (5)	Immediately following presentation – all BCMB faculty	Quality	The student is capable of explaining all aspects of the project to the committee in a clear and accurate manner and can address gaps in knowledge identified throughout the honors process.
		Mentor Role	The expectation is that the faculty mentor will not answer questions on behalf of the student other than to clarify the question being asked.