General Guidelines
Completing an honors thesis under the guidance of a faculty member in the department offers students a unique opportunity to explore a topic of special interest and to further hone research and writing skills. To earn Honors in Anthropology or Honors in Sociology a student will ordinarily complete a written project (of approximately 75 pages) that is based on independent research and that demonstrates the ability to clearly articulate a research question, critically synthesize an evaluate various theoretical perspectives and methodological approaches, sustain an argument with appropriate evidence, understand broader problems within the discipline, and follow scholarly standards of presentation (such as table of contents, proper footnoting and citation). Research projects may be based solely on an analysis and synthesis of secondary sources or may integrate secondary and primary data collection and analysis. Students considering honors work are strongly encouraged to apply for a summer research fellowship prior to their senior year. Honors work requires the student to work creatively and independently. At the same time students should expect to refine goals and revise written text in response to faculty suggestions.

Ordinarily, the student must have earned (and must maintain) a 3.5 GPA or better in the courses taken for the major to be eligible for honors. An honors project will normally involve two semesters of independent study under the direction of a faculty advisor.

Fall of junior year (3rd week of semester): Department faculty host a meeting with majors and minors to talk about the research potentials of study-away, summer fellowships, preparation for and scheduling of Honors work.

Early spring of junior year: Email sent to all majors to encourage students interested in Honors to contact potential Advisors in order to discuss Honors topics. For interested students, the department will provide strong honors projects as models. The decision to let students into the Honors program is a department decision.

Late spring of junior year: Email sent to all majors to remind them that Honors Proposals are due before classes begin in the fall and that they should be in touch with potential Advisors if they haven’t done so already.

Fall semester (Monday-Tuesday before classes begin): Students submit Honors Proposals to the Department Chair.

First full week of classes in the fall: Before the end of the add/drop period, the Department will meet to decide which proposals will continue as Honors projects and allocate Advisors and committee members.

Mid-September: Advisors will convene a meeting of the committee members for each project they are supervising without the student present to discuss expectations and a plan of advising. After this meeting, the committee will meet together with the student. At this

April 2014
meeting, the Advisor will communicate to the student that the committee has the option of deciding to stop the honors project – and turn it into an independent study project – at any point during the year. The student will then continue to meet with his or her Advisor and committee members throughout fall semester as needed.

**Late October:** First informal collective meeting of Honors students and Advisors to discuss progress and issues.

**Early December:** Second informal collective meeting of Honors students and Advisors, to discuss progress and issues.

**Fall Term – last day of reading period:** Honors students submit drafts of two chapters to all members of their committee. These should be completed chapter drafts; not outlines or summaries.

**Fall term – end of exam period:** Advisor and committee members meet to discuss the submitted chapters, and then within 2-3 days of their meeting, the Advisor conveys their feedback to student.

**Third week of February:** Third informal collective meeting of Honors students and Advisors, to discuss progress and issues.

**Friday before Spring Break:** Honors students submit a complete thesis draft to their entire committee. The draft should be complete enough to allow judgment on the merits of the work, including logic, supporting data, and bibliography. If the student does not meet this deadline, the project will not proceed as an Honors project, and the Advisor will convey this determination to the student.

**During Spring Break:** Advisor and committee communicate to determine whether the draft demonstrates that the student has made sufficient progress.

**Week after Spring Break:** Meeting with Honors student to share the committee’s feedback and decision. At least the Advisor will attend this meeting with the student; potentially all members of the Honors committee will attend. Immediately after the post-Spring Break meeting, Honors students will be canvassed to find out if they would like a fourth informal meeting in April, with or without Advisors.

**Mid-April:** Fourth informal collective meeting of Honors students.

**Second Friday before Reading Period:** Honors students submit their final thesis (hard copy and soft copy) to their committee and the Department Office.

**Prior to Colloquium:** Advisor and committee meet to evaluate the thesis and make a recommendation to the Department.

**Friday of Reading Period:** Honors students present theses to entire department. After April 2014
students leave, faculty members discuss each thesis and the department as a whole makes a decision on whether Honors should be awarded. Department discusses and allocates prizes.

Subsequent to meeting: Advisor communicates decision to student.