B.Sc. Honours Policy

School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences
(Approved April 3, 2017)

Overview

Honours programs in the School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences are available in the areas of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science. They are designed to provide research experience at the undergraduate level. In addition to developing research capability in students, they aim to teach students to conduct reviews and critical analysis of the research literature, to advance students' level of knowledge in a sub-field of the discipline, and to develop students' written and oral presentation skills.

Application Procedure

Students apply in writing to the program through the Associate Dean. They should be encouraged to consult with the Associate Dean as soon as possible, and normally by January 31 of their third year. The Associate Dean will verify that the student meets the academic requirements as detailed in the Academic Calendar, and ascertain that the student has chosen a suitable supervisor and a general topic area. The Associate Dean will then notify the Registrar's Office and the proposed supervisor that the student has been accepted into the program.

Supervisor

Each Honours student shall have a faculty supervisor (or co-supervisors) for the duration of the Honours project. The supervisor (or at least one co-supervisor) will be a School faculty member. The supervisor's role is to provide guidance and assistance to the student throughout the project. Students and supervisors are expected to meet on a regular basis to ensure the project is progressing satisfactorily.

Coordination Committee

Each year, the School will strike a Coordination Committee consisting of the Associate Dean and at least 2 faculty members from the School. The Coordination Committee is responsible for general oversight of the Honours Program. The Committee's duties are to coordinate Honours events, evaluate project proposals to determine acceptance, schedule final project submissions and oral presentations.

This Committee is also responsible for striking an Examination Committee for each Honours student.

Examination Committee

An Examination Committee consisting of at least 2 faculty members from the School, one of which will be the supervisor(s). (Co-)supervisors who are not members of the School will also be on the Examination Committee. The Examination Committee's duties are to evaluate the final projects and oral presentations and assign the final grades.

Project Proposal

A formal project proposal should normally be submitted by March 15 of the student's third academic year. The proposal should be a maximum of 5 pages (excluding the title page and references) and should include the following:

- Title page (including the project title, date, author and supervisor);
- A review of relevant background work;
- An outline of the work to be performed and the methods to be used;
- A project schedule; and
- References

The Coordination Committee will determine whether the proposal is acceptable. The School will attempt to notify the student within two weeks of receipt of the proposal.

Progress Reports

If the faculty supervisor so desires, the student will provide a written progress report to the supervisor at the end of each month (Sep – Feb). These reports should be approximately one page in length and should include a summary of that month's progress including:

- The tasks completed during the month;
- Challenges and obstacles faced;
- A reassessment of the project schedule; and
- Goals for the upcoming month.

Oral presentation

The student will give a public, oral presentation based on the honours project, which will last approximately 40 minutes, plus a question period. The presentation will count for 30% of the student's final grade, and will be evaluated by the Examination Committee. The oral presentation is to be given in March, as scheduled by the Coordination Committee in consultation with the student.

Project Report

The student will produce a written report on the honours project, approximately 25 single-spaced typed pages in length. The project will count for 70% of the student's final grade, and will be evaluated by the Examination Committee. The deadline for submission of the written report is March 1 for the draft version, and April 1 for the final version.

The Examination Committee will review the draft Report to determine if revisions are needed. These will be communicated to the student in writing by March 15. The final Report must be submitted by April 1.

The School will produce three bound copies of the Report; one for the student, one for the supervisor and one for the School library.