



School of Planning, Public Policy and Management



Thesis Writing for PPPM Majors not enrolled in Clark Honors College PPPM Honors Program

Students who are PPPM majors and not enrolled in the Clark Honors College may be eligible to complete an honors thesis. Thesis credits (PPPM 403) will satisfy elective credits for the PPPM major and qualify the student for departmental honors. PPPM majors must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.75 to be eligible for a PPPM thesis, and must maintain a 3.75 cumulative GPA to be considered for departmental honors upon graduation.

Writing a thesis is an excellent way for students to develop strong technical writing skills and advanced research skills. Writing a thesis also helps students connect with faculty who share similar interests. Students may also find thesis writing to be an important step if they are considering graduate studies. Students considering a thesis must meet with the PPPM Undergraduate Program Director to discuss eligibility, process, and timeline. Interested students should do the following:

Sophomore or junior year:

1. Take upper-division PPPM courses in an area of potential interest for a thesis topic. An instructor in one of these classes is a logical candidate for a thesis advisor.
2. Meet with the PPPM Undergraduate Program Director to discuss your thesis plans, program requirements, and possible PPPM thesis advisors. Students are advised to approach tenure track faculty and approved non-tenure track faculty. Due to other teaching, research, and advising duties, some faculty may not be available to advise students on undergraduate theses.
3. Meet with faculty to discuss an honors thesis and ask if they will serve as your advisor. Identify faculty members whose interests align with yours and work with them to develop a suitable thesis topic. Do not approach faculty with an already identified topic.
4. Complete PPPM 413 Quantitative Methods and other preparatory courses as identified by your thesis advisor by the end of junior year.

Senior year:

1. Complete and submit the PPPM Undergraduate Honors Program Thesis Approval Form and PPPM Individualized Study form to the PPPM Undergraduate Program Director no later than week 5 of the term prior to when you wish to register for thesis credits (i.e., to register for PPPM 403 during winter and spring terms, submit paperwork by week 5 of fall term).
2. Register for up to 8 credits PPPM 403 Thesis in the 2-3 terms preceding graduation (2-4 credits/term for 2-3 terms). These credits will count toward the required 32 elective credits for the major.
3. Schedule a thesis defense.

Note: The typical length of an undergraduate thesis is 25-35 pages. Length and scope of a student's thesis will be determined by the thesis advisor.