**Honors in Environmental Science**

The Honors Program in environmental science is intended to provide exceptional students the opportunity for advanced research and study, under the guidance of a faculty member, leading to the completion of an honors thesis. To qualify for graduation with honors, students must complete all requirements for the major, have a cumulative grade‐point average of 3.5 or better in upper division course work in the major, an overall grade‐point average of 3.0 or better, complete at least eight units of Environment 198 taken over at least two quarters, and produce a completed, satisfactory honors thesis paper. The honors thesis is in addition to the requirement of a completed Practicum in Environmental Science project.

**Guidelines for Environmental Science Departmental Honors Program**

**I. REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY**

A. Junior class standing (≥ 90 completed units of university-level course work – do not consider AP or IB units when calculating)

B. Cumulative GPA of ≥ 3.0 in all university-level course work (including courses required as preparation for the major)

C. Cumulative GPA of ≥ 3.5 in course work required in the major (excluding courses required as preparation for the major)

D. At the discretion of the Environmental Science Program, prior completion of one or more specified courses

**NOTE**: The above are the minimum GPA requirements to earn Departmental Honors at graduation. Students who have a realistic chance of attaining the GPA minimums by their Degree Expected Term but who do not yet qualify at the time of application may be allowed, upon review and approval by the IoES Honors Committee, to pursue Departmental Honors.

**II. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION**

A. Selection and agreement of a faculty sponsor (generally a participating faculty member in the Institute of the Environment and Sustainability who should also be a member of the UCLA Academic Senate. If a non-Academic Senate is the primary advisor, a Senate member should act as a secondary sponsor and co-signer.)

B. Selection of a suitable thesis topic.

C. Completion and submission to the Environmental Science Honors Committee of a complete application form, Degree Progress Report, and Prospectus (see Application and Prospectus Guidelines below)

**III.** **ENROLLMENT IN DEPARTMENTAL HONORS PROGRAM**

All Departmental Honors students are required to enroll in two to three quarters of Environment 198 for a total of 8 units. Students wishing to pursue Departmental Honors must also complete the Senior Practicum (180ABC) series; Departmental Honors **cannot** substitute for the Senior Practicum, nor can it be used as a substitute for any other major or minor/concentration requirement.

**IV. REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUATION (“MINIMUM PROGRESS”)**

A. Acceptable progress towards completion of required Environmental Science Honors course work, monitored quarterly by the faculty sponsor

B. Acceptable progress towards completion of an Environmental Science Honors Thesis, monitored quarterly or more frequently by the faculty sponsor

C. At the discretion of the Environmental Science Program, participation of the student in additional “enrichment experiences,” monitored quarterly by the faculty sponsor

**V. REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATION WITH DEPARTMENTAL “HONORS” OR “HIGHEST HONORS”**

A. Completion of all requirements for the major

B. Cumulative GPA of ≥ 3.0 in all university-level course work

C. Cumulative GPA of ≥ 3.5 in upper division course work in the Major

D. Completion of required Honors course work (Environment 198)

E. Completion and acceptance by the Environmental Science Honors Committee of the Honors Thesis.

**APPLICATION AND PROSPECTUS GUIDELINES**

**I.)** **The prospectus** should be 2-3 pages with references, and include the following components:

**A).** Background: What is the motivation and context for the thesis topic? Place the problem in its broader scientific, environmental, and policy (if applicable) context, and include a summary of what is known about the problem already.

**B).** Explain who the audience is: Who will find this thesis topic important? What agency or group would be interested in the results?

**C).** Clearly state your objectives. What question are you asking?

**D).** Include a clear timeline showing the steps you will take to complete the thesis and your approximate time of completion for each. A condensed version of this timeline should be provided on the contract you submit to your advisor.

**E).** Specifics regarding the thesis: What kind of data are you collecting? What methods are you using? Where will the research take place (e.g. field site)? What type of analysis will you be using? What are your expected results?

**F).** A brief summary of the support you have or will need to carry out the thesis work. This includes who your advisor is, and your access to the tools you need to get your thesis done.

**G).** References

**II).** The thesis must have some depth and measure of completion. Merely assisting on projects in a lab or a research group will not suffice. We expect products (below) focused on one topic.

**III). Progress Report:** Students must submit a progress report at the end of each quarter for the duration of their enrollment in the Environment 198 Honors Program. This can focus on skills learned and measurements made, as well as preliminary results and if necessary, changes in your research plan. This is a formal requirement, and should be 2-3 pages submitted to the IoES and to your advisor.

**IV).** In order for the honors thesis to be accepted for satisfaction of the Environmental Science Departmental Honors Program, it will need to satisfy the following criteria:

**A).** You must submit an acceptable written final thesis paper that describes the results of independent research based on an investigation of the literature about the topic, field work, or lab results and data. The thesis should be approximately 20 to 30 pages, but remember, quantity is not a substitute for quality. You must also make an acceptable oral presentation of your results. The thesis paper and presentation should be complete, and include a motivation and background section that covers its broader context, methods, results, conclusions, and suggestions for further work. The work should be placed in a broader context that includes environmental impacts as well as the implications for specific policy, regulatory, economic and/or social issues where applicable.

**B).** The oral presentation will normally be made before or after the presentations made by the 180B/C students, typically during the final Environmental Science Colloquium class meeting in spring quarter. It must present your thesis results delivered in a clear, well-crafted and professional manner.

**C).** The prospectus and thesis should be approved by your advisor, and the thesis should be accompanied by a short statement from your advisor stating the final grade for the project and his or her recommendation for level of honors. It is critical that your advisor understand the commitment they are making to you and your project; the Honors project goes well beyond the expectations of a normal 199 independent study.

**D).** The Environmental Science Faculty Advisory Committee will determine, with consideration of the advising faculty member’s recommendation, the level of Honors to be granted. If for some reason you are unable to complete the thesis or satisfy these criteria, you will still earn the units and the grades for completion of Environment 198 courses, but no other credit will be given.

**Deadlines and important information for pursuing the Environmental Science Honors Program:**

* **APPLICATION AND PROSPECTUS DEADLINE:**

You must submit the attached application and a satisfactory prospectus (proposal of your thesis topic) to the IoES Honors Faculty Committee and to your proposed advisor no later than two weeks before the end of the term prior to the term in which you will enroll for the first time in Environment 198. It is generally advisable to begin the project during fall or winter quarter, but students starting in spring can complete it if enrolled in Environment 198 during summer or the subsequent fall, if eligible to continue at UCLA. Submit these materials, via email attachments, to rdieckmann@ioes.ucla.edu.

* **CONTRACT COURSE DEADLINE: Friday of week two (fall, winter & spring)**

Upon acceptance to the Environmental Science Departmental Honors Program, you will need to submit a copy of the Environment 198 enrollment contract signed by your project advisor at the beginning (or earlier) of each quarter for which you will enroll in Environment 198. The strict deadline for contract course enrollment is **before the end of week 2 of each quarter** in which you will enroll. You will create the Environment 198 course on your MyUCLA site, by clicking on “contract courses” and following the step-by-step instructions found there. The 198 course is variable units per quarter, with a mandatory grade basis (not P/NP). You will need to submit a course contract to enroll in the 198 units for each quarter prior to completing the project. Bring the contract in personto the IoES SAO (Royce Dieckmann) in Life Science 2308.

* **PRACTICUM VS. HONORS**: An independent practicum project is NOT a departmental honors project. The two are separate, and completing the Departmental Honors Program does not exempt one from, or substitute for, the Senior Practicum.
* **ALTERNATIVES**: Any student contemplating pursuing the Honors Program with faculty outside of UCLA or that will take place at another institution must consult with and gain the prior written approval of the IoES Faculty Honors Committee prior to undertaking any such project.

Questions: Email Royce Dieckmann, IoES SAO at rdieckmann@ioes.ucla.edu