

UIUC Anthropology Honors Thesis: Levels of Distinction, and Turn-in Schedule

The UIUC Department of Anthropology offers three levels of “Distinction” to students who complete an Honors Thesis:

- Highest Distinction
- High Distinction
- Distinction

The guidelines below offer clarity and uniformity to the process and schedule of how we designate and confer levels of Honors Thesis “distinction.”

Normally, the student’s advisor and second reader decide on the level of “distinction” to be conferred. In case of uncertainty, they may consult with the Anthropology Undergraduate Advisor and/or Director of the Undergraduate Program in Anthropology for additional input.

The level of “distinction” is noted on the student’s transcript. If the thesis is turned in by the relevant deadline, (see *Instructions and Deadlines for Honors Thesis*) the level of distinction is also noted in the program and announced at the convocation ceremony.

The following guidelines explain the three levels of “distinction” available:

Highest Distinction:

GPA of 3.6 in Anthropology

GPA of 3.5 overall

To merit the honor of “Highest Distinction,” an Honors Thesis should meet the standards listed below and even move significantly beyond those expectations:

- is of an overall high enough quality that it could realistically be submitted to either a student journal, a mid-tier professional journal, or a national student paper competition without significant revisions
- constitutes an original contribution to anthropological thought or debates
- is based on a significant and notable level of independent research (whether library, archival, lab, or fieldwork-based)
- is unusually well written and well organized, grammatically error-free, employing smooth word usage, and perhaps even contains extra pizzazz or special creativity
- integrates data and theoretical framework to make a cogent argument that is clearly presented, internally cogent, and well developed
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- offers a sharp and thoughtful discussion and/or critique of relevant literature within and/or outside anthropology
- credits and cites a sufficient number of relevant works within anthropology and other relevant disciplines
- meet technical (sub)disciplinary expectations for citations, bibliography, formatting, length, and pagination

High Distinction:

GPA of 3.6 in Anthropology

GPA of 3.3 overall

- goes beyond a general summary of what is already known about the topic
- integrates data and theoretical framework to make a cogent argument that is clearly presented, internally cogent, and well developed
- is based on some independent research (whether library, archival, lab, or fieldwork-based)
- is well written and well organized, free of grammatical errors and word usage issues
- offers a sharp and thoughtful discussion and/or critique of relevant literature within and/or outside anthropology
- credits and cites a sufficient number of relevant works within anthropology and other relevant disciplines
- meets technical (sub)disciplinary expectations for citations, bibliography, formatting, length, and pagination

Distinction:

GPA of 3.6 in Anthropology

GPA of 3.0 overall

- is based on some independent research (whether library, archival, lab, or fieldwork-based)
- offers a thoughtful and cogent argument that is internally consistent, clearly stated and well developed
- is well written and well organized, containing minimal grammatical errors and word usage issues
- engages with relevant literature within and/or outside anthropology

- credits and cites a sufficient number of relevant works within anthropology and other relevant disciplines
- meet technical (sub)disciplinary expectations for citations, bibliography, formatting, length, and pagination