

**Departmental Honors in Research, Biological Sciences: Requirements and Procedures**  
**Updated January 19, 2012** by Tamra Mendelson

**I. Student Requirements**

1. Minimum GPA of 3.25 for the following courses by graduation:
  - BIOL 141, BIOL 142, BIOL 302, BIOL 303, BIOL 300L, BIOL 497H
  - CHEM 101, CHEM 102, CHEM 102L, CHEM 351
  - MATH 151 (or 155), STAT 350 (or MATH 152)
  - PHYS 111 (or 121), PHYS 112 (or 122)
2. Apply for Departmental Honors in Research using form available online. Form must be completed and signed by student, faculty mentor, and honors degree coordinator (rotating) and submitted before registering for BIOL 497H.
3. Two or more semesters **BIOL 499**: Independent Research in Biological Sciences (*minimum total of 4 credits, pass/fail*) in the laboratory of a Biological Sciences faculty member.
4. One semester **BIOL 497H**: Honors Thesis and Capstone Course (*3 credits, graded*)
  - Students attend ~12 scientific (e.g., departmental) seminars. Each student will be expected to write short abstracts of 5-6 of these seminars.
  - Students write an Honors thesis in the form of a research journal article.
    - \* Each student will be assigned to one member of the Honors Committee who, along with the research mentor, will provide guidance and advice regarding the writing of the honors thesis.
    - \* Upon completion, the thesis will be evaluated *and graded* by the mentor and Honors Committee member.
  - Students present results of the project in the form of an oral and/or poster presentation at one or more public forums such as a scientific meeting, UMBC's annual spring [Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievement Day](#), the Department's spring GABS symposium, UMBC's Summer Undergraduate Research Fest, or the fall Undergraduate Research Symposium in the Chemical and Biological Sciences.

**II. Faculty Mentor Responsibilities**

1. Complete and sign Application for Departmental Honors in Research (form available online).
2. Provide permission for student to register for 2 semesters of 499 and 1 semester 497H.
3. Supervise independent research project.
4. Confirm seminar attendance; read and archive the 5-6 seminar abstracts.
5. Supervise writing of honors thesis; coordinate with honors degree coordinator for grading.
6. Supervise student presentation at public forum.
7. Follow up with honors degree coordinator during Graduation Reviews.

**III. Formal Recognition of Achievement**

1. Transcript notation ("**Departmental Honors**")
2. Commencement program notation
3. Curriculum Vitae notation
4. Departmental Research Honors graduation regalia cord

**Note: 2 semesters of BIOL 499 + 1 semester of 497H may substitute for a 3XX Lab elective major requirement for the BIOL BS degree.**