

CS Departmental Honors 499Y Semester Plan Instructions

10/29/2019

To begin honors research through the CS Departmental Honors program, students must submit the CS Departmental Honors application form, obtain a conditional acceptance, find an advisor, and submit a 499Y semester plan and contract for review. 499Y semester plans are submitted through CHC Paths at <https://honorspaths1.honors.umass.edu/chc-paths>. 499Y semester plans are reviewed by your advisor, by the CS Honors Program Director, and by the CHC Academic Standards Committee after submission. The documents contain CS Departmental Honors program-specific instructions for completing the semester plan.

In CS, we expect your semester plan to be the equivalent of 2-3 pages double spaced. It must include the following information:

- **Section 1 - Statement regarding the goal:** A well-written introduction to the area you wish to perform research in. You should begin by providing general background material on the area you plan to study. You should highlight one or more problems you are interested in addressing over the course of your research, or give a high-level description of the system or software artifact that you hope to build. Finally, you should explain your motivation for selecting the research area/problem, and why it is important.
- **Section 2 - Key Readings:** A list of at least 5 key readings to be completed in the 499Y semester as suggested by your advisor. The readings are expected to be published works (conference papers, journal papers, books or book chapters). You must list references to specific readings in the semester plan. You and your advisor can agree to change one or more papers once your 499Y semester starts if needed. You must use a standard format for listing references that includes author, title, publication, year, page numbers, etc. as appropriate for your sources. Do not list videos or other non-text sources.
- **Section 3 - Communication Plan:** Present a communication plan that includes meeting with your advisor for 30-60 minutes per week starting on the first week of the semester, and describe what your advisor expects of you at these meetings.
- **Section 4 - Specialized Training:** If your work will include any human subjects research, discuss with your advisor what training you may need and whether the work will require approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Human subjects research includes activities like conducting interviews and involving individuals in the evaluation of software and other systems. If no specialized training is required enter "None required."
- **Section 5 – Methods or Agenda:** Present a brief sketch of the methodology or tools that you will need to perform research in the area that you have selected. For example, if you will be building a software system, what languages, frameworks, or APIs are you likely to use?

- **Section 6 - Timeline:** Present a timeline that must include specific dates (day/month) for at least one graded assignment due before mid-semester, a date for selecting a second committee member, completion of your literature review writeup, a date for a draft of your thesis or project proposal, and a date for submission of your final 499T/P proposal to CHC. It is recommended that you include a written summary of each key reading as a graded item on the timeline (at least one per week for the first 5+ weeks). The submission to CHC must occur by the **last day of classes**. All other due dates must be before that date. Include any other deliverables or milestones with dates as requested by your advisor. Use the following template:

- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 1
- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 2
- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 3
- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 4
- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 5
- DD/MM/YY – Written summary of key reading 6
- DD/MM/YY – Selection of second committee member
- DD/MM/YY – Completion of literature review writeup
- DD/MM/YY – First draft of thesis/project proposal
- DD/MM/YY – Submission of thesis/project proposal on CHC Paths