

February 12, 2019

Dear Junior Psych Major:

This is the time to decide whether you want to do a thesis next year. I am attaching a description of the honors program and the research interests of the faculty. If you think you might be interested in doing a thesis, read this material and then discuss your thesis interests with faculty members whose research interests match your own. Before the application deadline, you need to develop a shared understanding with each relevant professor of what topic you would work on together (you do not need to figure out the specific project/design).

Once you have talked with all relevant professors, fill in the form below and send it to Isabel Margolin, ismargolin@amherst.edu, by **9 am on Thursday, March 7th 2019**, which will allow us to make thesis assignments in time for preregistration for the fall of 2019. Your responses on this form will tell us which professors and projects you are most interested in so that we can optimize best matches. **We strongly encourage you to list three professors, since each professor has limited space. It is not possible to give everyone their first or even second choice.** If you list fewer than three options, we will assume you would rather not do a thesis than work with anyone you did not list. If you feel equally interested in working with some professors, please let us know that (e.g., change “Second” choice to another “First”).

Thank you,

Amy Demorest
Chair

Your name: _____

First choice: Professor: _____ A phrase/sentence describing the topic:

Second choice: Professor: _____ A phrase/sentence describing the topic:

Third choice: Professor: _____ A phrase/sentence describing the topic:

THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT HONORS PROGRAM

The honors program in Psychology offers students the opportunity to work in depth on an empirical project during the senior year. These projects usually involve 3 course credits, one in the fall semester and two in the spring; in some cases that order can be reversed. Be aware that the thesis fulfills a seminar requirement in the area of your thesis, so that thesis writers need to take only one seminar in a different area for the psychology major.

On the attached pages are descriptions of the areas of interest and expertise of the faculty members of the Psychology Department. In some cases specific research projects that a faculty member would like to see carried out are described, and specific course prerequisites necessary to pursue honors work in a given area are listed. Students should read the descriptions and talk with all faculty members whose research areas they find exciting. They should then submit the thesis form to Isabel Margolin, ismargolin@amherst.edu, by **Thursday, March 7th at 9 am**. The faculty will meet before preregistration to make decisions about which students will be accepted into the honors program and who their advisor will be.

There are general criteria that the faculty uses in making its decisions: background in the area, ability to work independently, appropriate writing skills, high level of motivation, and perseverance. It is advantageous and sometimes necessary to have had a course with the professor in whose research area one is interested.

