

UNM Biology Honors Information and Requirements

Please complete the application and associated forms in cooperation with the Faculty Research Advisor who will supervise the student's Senior Honors Thesis. The student should complete this form at the beginning of their project. All documents will be submitted to biohonors@unm.edu

Biology Academic Advisors can provide general advice to students and confirm GPA for Directors of the Honors Program upon request. Students can schedule with their advisor via loboachieve.unm.edu.

Honors students will be allowed to register for Biology 400, Senior Honors Thesis, *by permission of their thesis advisor*, after admission into the program via the application process (including submission of the research proposal).

Upon satisfactory completion of the requirements for Biology Honors, the Directors of the Biology Honors Program will notify the Office of Registrar of the level (*cum laude*, *magna cum laude* or *summa cum laude*) of Honors to be awarded. The level is based on the quality of the thesis and associated academic productivity, and in some cases exceeds the University-level of Honors, which is based only on the GPA.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Admission to the program requires (a) a 3.2 GPA overall, and (b) a 3.5 GPA in UNM Biology. *The GPA in UNM Biology is calculated based on all UNM Biology courses taken.*
2. A student must have completed a minimum of 20 (total) hours of coursework taken in UNM Biology **by the end of the first semester that the student is admitted into the Honors program.**
3. Each honors student must identify a primary research advisor who supervises the student's project. **If the primary research advisor is not a faculty member of UNM Biology** (e.g., faculty in UNM Health Sciences or other department), then a secondary advisor who is a UNM Biology faculty member is required. Both the primary research advisor and the secondary advisor must read the submitted honors thesis and indicate a recommendation on the level of honors to be awarded, using the Honors Biology Review Form.
4. Each Honors student must complete **six hours of Biology 400**. A maximum of four of these credits will be accepted toward the Biology major. Because enrollment is for a maximum of three credits of Biology 400 per semester, enrollment requires a minimum of two semesters (or summer) of BIOL 400.
5. A short (1-2 page) research proposal is required **prior to registration for BIOL 400**. Please work with your research advisor(s) to craft this proposal prior to submission.

6. **Each honors student must complete an “Honors Writing Seminar” course (BIOL 419; T: Scientific Writing or T: Publishing in Natural Sciences).** Typically, this course is taken during the final Spring semester of honors research. These two courses are regularly offered during the Spring semester, so if you are planning to graduate during the Fall semester, plan to take the course the Spring semester prior. The course will help to guide you through the process of completing your thesis research, will provide workshops on verbal and written scientific communication, and will give opportunities for peer-led discussions and peer reviews.
7. **A presentation is required** at either a departmental or professional forum. Presentations at lab meetings *do not satisfy* this requirement. Many students present at the departmental Annual Biology Research Day in the spring; state and national scientific conferences and meetings also qualify. Oral or poster presentations are acceptable. Please consult with the Directors of the Biology Honors Program if you have questions about what types of presentation forums qualify.
8. **One semester prior to graduation**, notify the Biology Honors Program of your intent to graduate with that designation by emailing biohonors@unm.edu. Please update us with the progress of your completion of program requirements at this time.
9. **Four weeks prior to graduation**, submit an electronic copy of the thesis to the Directors of the Biology Honors Program.
10. **Your Faculty Research Advisor(s) must complete the Honors Biology Review Form at the same time the thesis is due** and submit an electronic copy of the review form to the Directors of the Biology Honors Program (jrudgers@unm.edu AND newsome@unm.edu) and biohonors@unm.edu.

Revised 4/15/2026