



Faculty Policy on Joint Honours

December 2009

1. The Faculty of Arts permits individually tailored Joint Honours programs of study for students whose scholarly interests and research projects are strongly interdisciplinary. Joint Honours should not be used as a mechanism for enabling students to study a mix of subjects rather than choose between them. (See the Faculty's statement on 'The Nature and Purpose of Honours'.)
2. Enrolment in Joint Honours is at the discretion of the Honours Coordinators of the departments or programs involved.
3. The total number of words of written work (or their equivalent) a student is required to submit for any Joint Honours program must be no less than 30,000 and no more than 39,000.
4. Any Joint Honours program must include a thesis of at least 12,000 words worth at least 40% of the final Honours mark.
5. Joint Honours programs should usually follow one of the following three student workload patterns:
 - (a) Two seminars, each worth 20% of the final mark, and a long thesis (18,000-20,000 words), worth 60%. If one of the seminars is from a department that normally requires three seminars, and so offers seminars that require less work than two-seminar departments, the scale of the assessments in that seminar may need to be increased to bring the total amount of written work within the 30-39,000 range.
 - (b) Three seminars, each worth 20% of the final mark, and a short thesis (12,000-15,000 words), worth 40%. This option is appropriate in Joint Honours arrangements involving most SLC departments, and either English or Philosophy (but not both). It may not be appropriate for Joint Honours programs involving the SPSS departments, History, and other programs that normally require a long thesis. If it typically takes 20,000 words to argue and document a research project of Honours scope in History, for example, a shorter thesis may be at a disadvantage when being assessed against other theses in the Department of History.
 - (c) For Joint Honours in English and Philosophy: two seminars in English, each worth 15% of the final mark; two seminars in Philosophy, each worth 15% of the final mark; and a short thesis (12,000-15,000 words), worth 40%.

6. A Joint Honours program of study is a single, coherent undertaking, and EFTSU credit will be divided equally between the two departments, regardless of the number of seminars the student takes in each department.

7. A thesis written in a Joint Honours course must be assessable in both fields of study.

8. The thesis must be supervised jointly, by a staff member in each department, though the responsibilities of supervision need not be shared equally. Supervision arrangements should be negotiated and agreed upon by all parties at the beginning of the student's course of study.

9. The thesis will be due on the same date as other theses in the departments or programs involved. If the two departments or programs have different due dates, the Joint Honours thesis must be submitted on the earlier of the two dates.

10. When a student applies to take Joint Honours, the two Honours Coordinators concerned must make arrangements for marking the thesis in each host department or program are satisfactory and consistent with the procedures for other students in those departments or programs. This is especially important with theses that require specialist technical knowledge or expertise in a language other than English to be assessed properly. For instance, if a student taking Joint Honours in German Studies and Government and International Relations writes her thesis in German, the Department of Government and International Relations will need to show that it has enough staff proficient in German to have that thesis read by the same number of Government and International Relations staff as would read the thesis if it were written in English.

11. Students wishing to take Joint Honours should complete the accompanying Plan of Study form collaboration with the relevant Honours Coordinators. The Plan of Study form includes details of student workload, seminar choices, supervision arrangements, and assessment procedures. The student and the two Honours Coordinators must each retain a copy. The Plan of Study will serve as a contract—between the student and staff members, and between departments—to be referred to in case of miscommunications or conflict regarding coursework expectations, thesis supervision, assessment, and so on.

12. In consultation with Chairs of Department and Heads of School, the Associate Dean (Honours) will be able to mediate in disputes over Joint Honours programs of study.