



# Carlson School of Management Honors Program Policies

(Updated February 2026)

The purpose of this document is to lay out policies and procedures that are specific to the Carlson School of Management for University of Minnesota Honors Program (UHP) students.

Note that to maintain good standing in the Honors Program and to graduate with Latin honors, students must adhere to the general requirements listed by UHP. These include requirements for different levels of Latin honors. These can be found in the Honors Requirement Handbook:

<https://honors.umn.edu/current-students/honors-requirements>

## Overview of Carlson Thesis Options

Students graduating with Latin honors must complete an honors thesis. The Carlson School of Management offers two paths to a thesis:

- **Plan A/B:** A research-based thesis paper which is supported by participation in BA 4992V as the thesis support course
- **Plan C:** participation in an Enterprise Program or Leadership Lab with a thesis reflection paper written about the experience

A Plan A/B research-based thesis paper is eligible for all levels of honors and will be judged via a rubric, with details made available in BA 4992V. A Plan C thesis is only eligible for *magna cum laude* or *cum laude* level honors based on the student's performance.

## Plan A/B Research-based Thesis

A Plan A/B research-based thesis involves writing a research paper on a topic of the honor student's choosing.

**Plan A Thesis:** A Plan A research thesis is an individual research paper written in any area of management (it does not have to be within the student's major area), and is the traditional research-based thesis pathway. A Plan A thesis is evaluated by a three-person committee, which includes one primary thesis advisor and two readers. At least one committee member (not necessarily the advisor) must be a tenure-track faculty member at the University of Minnesota, and at least one must be affiliated with the Carlson School of Management.

**Plan B Thesis:** A Plan B research thesis involves a joint research paper with another student, often of an interdisciplinary nature. A Plan B thesis must conform to UHP guidelines, and thesis proposals must be approved further in advance compared to Plan A theses as specified by UHP. The thesis proposal must be approved by each students' respective Faculty Honors Representative, both students' primary thesis advisors, and at least one reader. Each student that takes part in a Plan B thesis is individually evaluated in terms of the level of honors. See the Honors Requirement Handbook for more detailed information.

**Thesis Support Course:** UHP policy requires students to enroll in a thesis support course. Students pursuing either a Plan A or a Plan B thesis must enroll in BA 4992V to meet this requirement.

### **Plan C Enterprise Thesis**

Beginning in the Fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year, honors students within the Carlson School of Management are able to complete their requirements for a senior thesis to graduate with Latin honors through a Plan C Thesis. This involves the satisfactory completion of one of the Carlson School's Enterprise Program or the Leadership Lab. Students may attain *cum laude* or *magna cum laude* honors through participation in the Plan C thesis pathway; students are not eligible to receive *summa cum laude* via Plan C.

In addition to their participation, students are expected to write a reflection on their contribution to the project and what they learned through the process. This reflection will be submitted with the Thesis Completion workflow. Participation in a Carlson School Enterprise Program or the Leadership Lab requires an application and is not guaranteed for any student. It should also be noted that participation in a Carlson Enterprise or

Leadership Lab cannot count for *both* an honors experience (one of the UHP requirements for graduating with honors) and the thesis requirement.

All Plan C theses must be approved by a three-member committee. Students will list the Director of the relevant Enterprise/Leadership Lab as their thesis advisor, and the Associate Dean of the Carlson Undergraduate Program and the Carlson Faculty Honors Coordinator as their two readers.

**Plan C Options:** The specific options and requirements for each Enterprise is as follows:

- **Brands Enterprise:** Students must apply and be admitted, and participate for 2 semesters. Attaining *magna cum laude* requires a grade of A in both semesters, while attaining *cum laude* requires no worse than an A- in either semester. Students must register for BA 4505 while participating in the Enterprise.
- **Consulting Enterprise:** Students must apply and be admitted, and participate for 2 semesters. Attaining *magna cum laude* requires a grade of A in both semesters, while attaining *cum laude* requires no worse than an A- in either semester. Students must register for BA 4504 while participating in the Enterprise.
- **Funds Enterprise:** Students must apply and be admitted, and participate for 2 semesters. Attaining *magna cum laude* requires a grade of A in both semesters, while attaining *cum laude* requires no worse than an A- in either semester. Students must register for either BA 4501 (Growth Equity) or BA 4502 (Fixed Income) while participating in the Enterprise.
- **Ventures Enterprise:** Students must apply and be admitted, and participate for 1 semester. Attaining *magna cum laude* requires a grade of A, while attaining *cum laude* requires a grade of A-. Students must register for BA 4503 while participating in the Enterprise.
- **Leadership Lab:** Students must apply and be admitted, and participate for 1 semester. Attaining *magna cum laude* requires a grade of A, while attaining *cum laude* requires a grade of A-. Students must register for MGMT 3063 while participating in the Leadership Lab.

Across all options, the level of honors attained is also subject to the approval of the thesis committee.

**Thesis Support Course:** Through Spring 2026, Plan C students should take HCOL 3101H or 3102H rather than BA 4992V to satisfy their thesis support course requirement.

Starting in Fall 2026, Plan C students should instead fulfill the thesis support course requirement by enrolling in an H designated version of the respective

Enterprise/Leadership Lab courses listed above. For example, Plan C students using the Carlson Consulting Enterprise as their thesis requirement should enroll in BA 4504H while participating in the Enterprise. These H designated courses will include meetings and/or activities outside of the regular Enterprise/Leadership Lab content that are tailored towards honors students and aim to further enrich their experience. Students enrolled in the respective H designated courses must participate in these activities.

**Thesis Reflection Paper:** Students pursuing a Plan C thesis must submit a reflection paper through the University's Thesis Completion workflow as their final thesis document. The reflection paper must be a 3–5 page double-spaced essay (12-point Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins) discussing the student's role in the project and what they have learned from and contributed to the project. Students must use clear organization, thoughtful analysis, and detailed examples to support their reflections, also checking for clarity, grammar, and spelling. Students are not permitted to use generative AI (GenAI) to write this reflection paper.

Evidence of work products (such as pitch decks or tear sheets) should be included as part of the submission. In circumstances where a non-disclosure agreement prohibits the inclusion of such material, a signed statement by the Enterprise Director stating such must be included in the submission.

Students should consult with the Director of their respective Enterprise/Leadership Lab for any additional specific requirements related to the structure and content of the reflection paper.

The final thesis submission will occur through the UHP web reporting tool via the thesis submission link at the following website: <https://honors.umn.edu/current-students/honors-advising/honors-reporting-center>. Students should not submit their final thesis before having the essay and deliverable approved by the respective Enterprise/Leadership Lab Director. The final thesis submission will include the following:

1. A title page with the student's name, the title of the course, the title of the project, the thesis supervisor (the respective Enterprise/Leadership Lab Director), and the intended graduation date
2. The reflection essay
3. A copy of work products if they do not violate any confidentiality or non-disclosure agreements. If a non-disclosure agreement prevents inclusion of this, a signed statement by the respective Enterprise/Leadership Lab Director attesting to this must be included

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