

ALS 3923 – Honors Orientation (1 credit)

Class Time & Location:

Wednesday 5:10-6:00pm McCarty Hall B 3096.

The class will meet live and in person. This course is offered to distance students via Zoom.

Students are expected to participate in the live class. Students should communicate with Dr. Goss prior to the start of the course and regarding any technical or logistical difficulties connecting to the course.

Instructor

Dr. Erica Goss, Professor

Plant Pathology & Emerging Pathogens Institute

Fifield Hall Room 1450, 2550 Hull Road

Phone: 352-273-4650

Email: emgoss@ufl.edu

I typically respond to email within one day. If I don't respond within 2 days, I may have missed your email and you may email me again.

Office hours: Tuesday 3-4 pm, Friday noon-1pm in person or on [Zoom](#) (note that this is a different link than the course Zoom!). Send me an email so I know to expect you.

Course Description: 1 Credit. Introduces the CALS honors program and the skills needed to complete an honors thesis on a creative, scholarly project. Activities in and out of class, discussion, guest-speakers, writing and oral presentation are used to accomplish the learning objectives.

Course Objectives. At the conclusion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Explain the requirements and expectations for an honors thesis
2. Find and critically evaluate scholarly literature
3. Begin to develop a thesis and/or a creative scholarly project
4. Complete a preliminary literature review and introduction for a thesis topic
5. Communicate the societal or scientific importance of their research

You can find the complete course map with module learning objectives [here](#).

Course prerequisites: Acceptance into the [CALS Honors Certificate Program](#) is required to take this course, but does not require prior knowledge in a discipline or specific competencies.

Text and resources: Course materials are on the Canvas E-Learning website. It contains the assignments, readings, links to resources, and more.

E-learning with Canvas: All students must use Canvas for this course. Syllabus, assignments, resources, grades, and other materials will be posted on the course Canvas page throughout the semester.

Attendance and Participation: Because this course relies heavily on classroom discussion and interaction, attendance is crucial to your success and that of your classmates. Only documented university excused absences will be honored. Students are expected to be present for all class meetings and actively participate in class and small group discussions. *Online students should contribute to class discussions by raising their hand, commenting in the Zoom chat, or speaking up.* If a student has an excusable absence, arrangements should be made prior to the class date for opportunities to make up the missed discussion topics and/or work. However, because of the nature of this course, it is imperative that students not miss class meetings. When you miss class, you will lose 2 points per class toward your final grade. Late arrival to class is also disruptive. If you arrive to class 10+ minutes late, you will lose 1 point.

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for enrolled students who have a university excused absence. I will verbally notify the class when I am recording. Students who participate on these days are agreeing to have their video, image, and/or voices recorded. Online students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Software and technical skills required. This course requires use of a web browser, word processing program, and presentation software. Perusall is also used. Online students must connect by Zoom. I also require use of reference management software and encourage use of associated plugins for word processing. Endnote Web is the software taught for use with Microsoft Word, but alternatives are acceptable. Class presentations must be submitted in Microsoft PowerPoint or PDF format.

Digital information literacy is important for this course and for completing an honors thesis, including using various online resources, file and data management, preparing a thesis document with properly formatted bibliography, and presenting your research. Some of the required digital literacy skills will be discussed or demonstrated during our library session, including: using online databases to find scholarly literature on your topic; narrowing searches with keywords,

filters, and boolean statements; evaluating sources for credibility; and proper citation of sources. Getting involved in research will also help you build these skills.

Use of AI tools. In this course, you will need to cite scholarly sources. You may use AI programs to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic (e.g., provide ideas that are way too ambitious for an undergraduate honors thesis). I encourage you to instead generate ideas for your thesis topic with your mentor, who will have a much better idea of what is feasible for you to complete. You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. Writing is thinking and you will gain a much better understanding of your research when you write about your research without an AI co-author. In our library session, we will discuss why AI chatbots should not be cited. In short, they are not reliable sources and there is no editorial or peer review of chatbot output.

Grading Scale [this course does not use the +/- grading system; if final score is less than 0.1 % from next grade, it will be rounded up.]

A = 90% to 100%

B = 80-89.9%

C = 70-79.9%

D = 60-69.9%

E = < 60%

For current UF grading policies and other academic policies and resources, see:

<https://go.ufl.edu/syllabuspolices>

Course Assignments & Grading Value

Assignment and point value		
Assignment	Points	Grading method
Mentor Selection Sheet	10	Complete/Incomplete
Library Orientation	5	Complete/Incomplete
Peer Review of Thesis	10	Complete/Incomplete
Reference Management Exercise	5	Complete/Incomplete
Reading the Literature	2	Complete/Incomplete
Annotated Bibliography	5	Complete/Incomplete
Ten Relevant References	20	Rubric
Introduction	30	Rubric

Introduction Revision	15	Rubric
Presentation	20	Rubric
Attendance and Participation	28	2 points per class
TOTAL POINTS	150	

Feedback on assignments: Assignments graded as complete/incomplete are considered complete when they contain all components detailed in the "Instructions" section of the Assignment. Incomplete submissions will be returned to the student for completion and resubmission. Students can view instructor comments on assignments by navigating to [Grades](#) and clicking on the assignment title or comments icon. Grades and feedback will be posted within one week of due date for most assignment. The Introduction assignment typically takes 2-3 weeks to provide personal feedback and release all grades. Presentation feedback and grades are returned after all presentations are completed.

Late Assignments Policy: Assignments due dates and times are as indicated on the course Canvas site. Some assignments are due prior to class time. An assignment submitted after the deadline will receive a **10% deduction per day, up to four days** for late assignments.

Schedule: Dates are subject to change at instructor's discretion – monitor Canvas site

Course schedule

Week	Date	Topics	Class Preparation or Assignment Due
1	1/14	Introductions, overview of program, contacting mentors	
2	1/21	Q & A with Director of CALS Honors Program, Dr. Wysocki	Bring questions; Contact potential mentors
3	1/28	Mentor status update; Research expectations	Reading and 3 mentor exercise; Continue to talk to potential mentors
4	2/4	Searching for references with librarian Suzanne Stapleton	Library Orientation
5	2/11	Building a strong thesis	Mentor selection
6	2/18	Peer review of thesis	Peer review of thesis

7	2/25	Reading scholarly articles; Writing your introduction	Annotated Bibliography; Reference management; Reading the literature discussion
8	3/4	Writing your introduction; Communicating your research	Ten Relevant References
9	3/11	Introduction workshop	Introduction Workshop
	3/19	SPRING BREAK	
10	3/25	Presenting your research	Thesis Introduction
11	4/1	Presentations	Presentation
12	4/8	Presentations	Presentation
13	4/15	Presentations	Presentation
14	4/22	Perspectives of finishing/past CALS Honors Students	Introduction Revision; Presentation self-critique

Privacy and Accessibility Policies

For information about the privacy policies of the tools used in this course, see the links below:

- Adobe
 - [Adobe Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Adobe Accessibility](#)
- Instructure (Canvas)
 - [Instructure Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Instructure Accessibility](#)
- Microsoft
 - [Microsoft Privacy Policy](#)
 - [Microsoft Accessibility](#)
- Perusall
 - [Perusall Privacy Policy](#)

- [Perusall Accessibility](#)