Undergraduate Honors & Senior Thesis

Students excelling in their major coursework and interested in pure math should consider Departmental Honors. Departmental honors means you will graduate “With Distinction” as opposed to College Honors which is “With Honors”. The most important component of graduating with Departmental Honors is researching and writing a Senior Thesis.

Requirements for Departmental Honors:

1. Must complete a B.S. Mathematics Degree.
2. Must satisfactorily complete at least one three-quarter sequence 402-3-4, 424-5-6, or 441-2-3; or two two-quarter sequences from this list. Exceptions must be approved by the chair of the Departmental Honors Committee.
3. Must earn a GPA of 3.5 or better in Math coursework completed at the UW.

Process:

1. Think about a math problem or area you are interested in. You should begin thinking about your topic no later than the beginning of your final year at the UW.
2. Seek out a faculty supervisor. You need to find a faculty member whose field of interest is closely related to your own.
3. Submit a thesis proposal form to our office, Padelford C-36, no later than the end of the first week of classes the quarter before you expect to graduate. The proposal form contains additional information regarding the thesis.
4. Once thesis proposal is approved you will sign up for Math 498 in your second to last quarter, and Math 496 for your last quarter. Contact our office to be added. Math 498 and 496 are intended to give you research credits for the work you will be completing. Math 498 is not required and is credit only, whereas Math 496 will have a numerical grade and must be completed for honors.
5. Final draft is due no later than the last day of your final quarter. Please submit via email only to advising@math.washington.edu.

Writing a Senior Thesis Only

If you are not interested in the College Honors or Departmental Honors in Mathematics, you may still write a Senior Thesis. The process is the same as above, but it does not need to be approved by the Honors Committee. Research credit (Math 498) may be available.