Students who wish to submit proposals for an honors thesis in music should identify a thesis advisor no later than the beginning of spring semester of their junior year. The student should work closely with the thesis advisor during the semester to identify a suitable subject and to prepare a cogent, clearly-argued proposal. Normally, the student will conduct significant preliminary research prior to writing the proposal; s/he will work closely with the faculty advisor during both the research and the writing process.

A well-prepared honors thesis proposal in the area of musicology or music theory will consist of a clear statement of the thesis (including the main arguments to be explored), a brief summary of previous scholarship related to the thesis, and a selective bibliography. For an honors thesis that involves the creation of an original composition, the proposal should include the parameters of the piece (duration, text where applicable, and performing forces) and a short explanation of how the student conceives of the work's realization.

The following deadlines must be met if the proposal is to be accepted for submission to the Department of Music and to the Charles Center. Late submissions will not be accepted.

First Monday in April: Final version of the honors proposal should be submitted to the thesis advisor for review and approval. The advisor may choose to (1) accept the proposal, (2) require that the proposal be revised and resubmitted to the advisor no later than the second Monday in April, or (3) reject the proposal, in which case it must be withdrawn. In the first case (or second case, pending successful revision), the advisor will forward the proposal to the Academic Faculty of the Department of Music by the second Wednesday of April. The proposal will be discussed at a meeting prior to the end of the academic year. The advisor may bring the proposal to the music faculty at a regular meeting of the music department for advice and commentary prior to the submission deadline.

It is incumbent upon the student to submit the strongest possible proposal to the Department of Music, for the faculty will review a given proposal only once. If the Department of Music’s decision is favorable, the student may submit the proposal to the Charles Center no later than the College-
It is the responsibility of the student to inform him/herself about applicable College-wide deadlines and to adhere to them. If the decision by the Department of Music is unfavorable, the student must withdraw the proposal from consideration. Only proposals of significant merit with a strong promise of a positive outcome will be approved.

Those students planning to participate in the Semester Abroad Program in the spring semester of their junior year should begin work with an advisor early in the fall semester of their junior year.

Eligibility criteria for honors work—and other information about the program—are available on the webpage of the Charles Center for Interdisciplinary Studies.