**Sample Honors thesis rubric**

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| **Criteria** | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing** |
| **Content of Argument** | Introduction clearly and concisely identifies the issue, advances an argument, and makes it clear what the contribution is.  The paper develops each claim thoroughly by supplying relevant *evidence* from a diverse range of scholarly sources.  The paper carefully explains how the evidence supports the claims.  The argument has a clear throughline and is easily identifiable throughout. | The introductionorients the reader to the issue and makes an argument.  The paper develops claims by supplying relevant *evidence*, explaining how the evidence supports the claims. | Introduction hints at the nature and importance of the issue and the major questions about it.  Makes some claims about the issue, but does not supply evidence for those claims.  Includes *claims* of fact or judgment, supplies *evidence* that seems irrelevant or comes from only a few sources, and attempts to explain how this evidence supports the claim. |
| **Reflection & Significance** | Demonstrates a strong ability to construct arguments and reflect on the key questions.  Effectively conveys your ability to assess the scholarly literature, identify key gaps in the literature, and to critique the literature.  Makes strong use of key quotes from the scholarly literature.  Makes an original contribution to the literature. | Explores tentatively what you have learned about constructing arguments and reflecting on key questions.  Conveys an ability to assess the scholarly literature.  Makes use of quotes from the scholarly literature. | Begins to reflect on lessons learned.  Makes use of the scholarly literature, but does not go into detail about the literature. |
| **Mechanics** | Piece is carefully proofread and polished.  Proper formatting (MLA/APA or formatting of your choice) is used to cite readings and resources.  Piece is well-organized and structured. | Piece shows careful editing with a few minor typos or errors.  Proper formatting (MLA/APA or formatting of your choice) is attempted to cite readings and resources; a few minor errors are evident. | Piece contains spelling and/or grammatical errors that distract the reader and/or impede understanding of content.  Formatting is incomplete or mis-used. |

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| **Comments:** |