Fall 2026

Honors Thesis Conference

Sponsored by the
Eastern Kentucky University
Honors Program

November 3-5, 2026

EKU HONORS

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3RD

	Powell 220	Powell 224
10:00-10:30 am	**"The Appalachian Cancer Crisis: Investigating the Determinants of Disparity to Inspire Intervention"** *Lacie Ingle*, Presenter Dr. Bill Staddon, Mentor Callie Benge , Discussant	**"The Hidden Costs of Solitary Confinement: Social Cognition and Emotional Regulation as Mediators of Misconduct and Post-Release Outcomes"** *Lindsay Liddell*, Presenter Dr. Rodney Copenhaver, Mentor Kaylee McIntosh, Discussant
10:30-11:00 am	**"The Prevalence of Salmonella on the External Packaging of Chicken Meat"** *Callie Benge*, Presenter Dr. Vonia Grabeel, Mentor Lacie Ingle, Discussant	**"Behind the Jury: Media Exposure and Decision Making, Influenced or Independent?"** *Kaylee McIntosh*, Presenter Prof. Lauren Sutton, Mentor Lindsay Liddell, Discussant
1:00-1:30 pm	**"Pieced Together: Memory, Community, and the Art of Album Quilting"** *Raine Hankins*, Presenter Dr. Angela Dial, Mentor Grady Baker, Discussant	**"Shapes and Skeletons: How Structure Influences Animal Character Design"** *Ashley Brenda*, Presenter Dr. Anastasia Kazadi, Mentor
1:30-2:00 pm	**"Coal and Coronaries: Cardiovascular Disease and Quality of Life in Kentucky"** *Grady Baker*, Presenter Dr. Smita Joshi, Mentor Raine Hankins, Discussant	
3:00-3:30 pm	**"Household Conflict and Friendship Development: Understanding How Conflict-Heavy Homes Affect Adolescents Social Relationships in Adulthood"** *Kaili Dennis*, Presenter Dr. Olivia Williams, Mentor Brooklynne Spence, Discussant	**"The Great Satan: Oil Imperialism and the Divide Between Modernity in U.S.-Iranian Relations"** *Emma Landsaw*, Presenter Dr. Mina Yazdani & Dr. Brad Wood, Mentors
3:30-4:00 pm	**"Spot, Scales, and Cells: Exploring the Genetic Link Between Leopard Geckos and Human Melanoma and Carcinoma"** *Brooklynne Spence*, Presenter Dr. Kendall Simpson, Mentor Kaili Dennis, Discussant	

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 4TH

10:00-10:30 am	Powell 220 **"Predictors of Global Education: A Comparative Analysis of Quality Utilizing the Education Quality Index"** *Rylyn Rayburn*, Presenter Dr. Kerem Kalkan, Mentor Carolina Dominguez, Discussant	
10:30-11:00 am	**"Comparing Collection Methods for Maximization of Touch DNA Samples"** *Carolina Dominguez*, Presenter Dr. Jamie Fredericks, Mentor Rylyn Rayburn, Discussant	
1:00-1:30 pm	Powell 220 **"The Politics We Inherit vs Choose: An Examination of Cultural Values and Political Ideology"** *Fayth Dalton*, Presenter Dr. Jonathan Gore, Mentor Bethany Cramer, Discussant	Powell 224 **"Echoes of Silence: Representations of Anxiety in Contemporary Young Adult Fiction"** *Leah Dorsch*, Presenter Dr. Jill Parrott, Mentor Kylie Farler, Discussant
1:30-2:00 pm	**"Claire Keegan: Writing with the Secular Age Through Social Imaginaries"** *Bethany Cramer*, Presenter Dr. Mike Austin, Mentor Fayth Dalton, Discussant	**"A Mosquito's Warning: Malaria in Florida as a Signal of Environmental Change in the Anthropocene"** *Angela McNulty*, Presenter Dr. Gary Brown, Mentor Leah Dorsch, Discussant
3:00-3:30 pm	Powell 220 **"War, Disruption, and Deprivation: Understanding Food Insecurity in Current Conflicts"** *Adriana Gomez Penrod*, Presenter Dr. Patrick Litanga, Mentor	Powell 224 **"Lifelong Involvement in Sport: What Can We Learn from the Lived Experience of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Athletes"** *Adeli Lindner*, Presenter Dr. Joel Cormier, Mentor Holden VanDenmark, Discussant
3:30-4:00 pm		**"Exploring Appalachian Kentucky in Screenwriting"** *Holden VanDenmark*, Presenter Prof. Emily Hofelich, Mentor Adeli Lindner, Discussant

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH

	Powell 220	Powell 224
10:00-10:30 am	**"Where Magic Meets Medicine: Play, Imagination, and the Development of Emotional Resilience in Pediatric oncology Patients"** *Taylor Gant*, Presenter Prof. Amberlyn Whitaker, Mentor Elizabeth Goodman, Discussant	**"Why Do We Love Music? How Personality Predicts and Shapes our Connection to Music"** *Uchechi Anyanwu*, Presenter Dr. Jodi Treadway, Mentor Haley Beauparlant, Discussant
10:30-11:00 am	**"The Hidden World of Having a Sibling with a Disability"** *Elizabeth Goodman*, Presenter Dr. Karen Puckett, Mentor Taylor Grant, Discussant	**"A Tiny Crash Course on Empathy in Psychology"** *Haley Beauparlant*, Presenter Dr. Perry Winslow, Mentor Uchechi Anyanwu, Discussant
1:00-1:30 pm	**"To Bring a Friend or Not to Bring a Friend, That is the Question: The Impact of Emotional Contagion and Co-Viewing on Movie-Watching Settings."** *Ben Tennill*, Presenter Dr. Cassie Whitt, Mentor Jessica Skidmore, Discussant	**"Breaking the Flow: How Land Use Change Disrupts Watershed Systems"** *Danielle Nolan, Presenter* Dr. Estifanos Haile, Mentor JP Edie, Discussant
1:30-2:00 PM	**"Eyes Wide Open: An Analysis of GLP-1 Drug Impacts on Eye Health"** *Jessica Skidmore*, Presenter Dr. Oliver Oakley, Mentor Ben Tennill, Discussant	**"Beam Characterization for Laser Ablation in Micromachining "** *JP Edie*, Presenter Dr. Thomas Jarvis, Mentor Danielle Nolan, Discussant
3:00-3:30pm	**"The Need to Succeed - The Mental Aspects of Being a First-Generation College Student, A Scoping Review"** *Hope Kerns*, Presenter Kayla Mchone, Mentor Cassidy Combs, Discussant	
3:30-4:00PM	**"The Missing Spark: Could Selenium Hold the Key to Fertility?"** *Cassidy Combs*, Presenter Dr. Oliver Oakley, Mentor Hope Kerns, Discussant	

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