An honors thesis proposal consists of the following four elements:

1) Approval in writing of the project by the student’s adviser. Forms are available from the Undergraduate Coordinator. This is due February 1.

2) A five-page description of the project structured to include:

   ABSTRACT: a brief 3-4 sentence abstract describing the scope of the project, i.e. the artists/objects/films to be addressed, the dates and, if relevant, the geographic area covered. You do not need to have a fully developed an argument at this point, but you should be able to clearly state the question or tension that interests you. The more focused your topic, the better.

   DESCRIPTION: a longer (2-3 page) more detailed account of the kinds of questions/issues you are interested in pursuing in relation to a defined topic. Give more information about the artists/objects/films you have selected, why you have selected them, how they relate to one another, and the kinds of questions they raise for you. Though you are not expected to have read everything on your bibliography at this point, a brief discussion of some of the reading you have already done and how it relates to your topic is helpful here.

   You may also want to discuss in this section how you became interested in the topic. Did you begin thinking about this as a result of a paper you wrote? An exhibition you saw? A travel experience you had? Give a sense of how this project will help you to synthesize your interests and why it is important to you.

   PREPARATION AND RESEARCH: a brief discussion of the kind of research the project will require and how you intend to carry this out.

   Students should also discuss in this section the relevant course work/experiences they have had prior to their senior year that have
helped prepare them for a year-long research project. If, for example, you have already started to think about your project in a shorter research paper, an internship or a study abroad experience, it is helpful to indicate this here. This section is also a good place to show off other relevant skills – foreign languages, relevant work experiences, etc.

3) An initial bibliography. This does not need to be annotated.

4) A writing sample. The writing sample should demonstrate your ability to think critically and write well. It does not need to be research-based. Most students submit course papers from one of their art history or film studies classes, usually 3-6 pages in length.