Help honors undergraduate students begin the honors thesis early.

4 research questions addressing: barriers for students when beginning the thesis, self-efficacy, task completion, and scaling via technology.

Theoretical perspectives: Bandura’s self-efficacy, Schön’s reflective practitioner, and Weick’s small wins. Research: reconnaissance in Cycle 0, further reconnaissance and instrument development in Cycle 1, testing intervention in Cycle 2.

6-week program to help students begin thesis early. Target population is junior honors students. Intervention offered through multiple modalities. Each week designed to help students make progress towards determining a research project and finding professors to work with.


Concurrent Mixed Methods data analysis.
Quantitative Results
Repeated Measures ANOVA showed significant results with large effect size for:
- Student self-efficacy to work with professors on the thesis rose during Thesis Launch.
- Student perception of barriers declined during Thesis Launch.
25% of participants submitted a prospectus early, compared to less than 9% of the junior class.

Qualitative Results
5 Assertions:
1) Participants overcame perceived barriers and reported fewer barriers after experiencing successes during Thesis Launch.
2) Utilizing Thesis Launch influenced student self-efficacy including (a) building self-efficacy to work with professors on the thesis and (b) providing strategies to begin thesis work.
3) Students preferred an online, technology-based program as a means of learning and supporting their efforts.
4) Students began thesis work early, and students’ thesis timelines changed based on work completed during Thesis Launch.
5) Participants utilized and valued resources provided through Thesis Launch.

Complementarity
Qualitative data provided illustration, clarification, and support for quantitative results.

Discussion
Survey showed self-efficacy to begin and complete a thesis were high, but qualitative responses were more nuanced. Self-efficacy to connect with professors rose significantly. Small wins and reflective practice aided students in building self-efficacy.
A web and text-message based intervention provided a sustainable and scalable solution. Student customized timelines and began thesis preparatory work early.

Limitations
Generalizability vs Transferability
History, Sample size, Attrition, Length of Study

Future Implications
Helping student connect with professors.
Providing opportunities for small wins via structured tasks.
Utilizing technology to provide students ubiquitous access to resources.