The process for pursuing an Honors Thesis track in Philosophy begins in the third year, after you have taken at least a couple upper-level courses in philosophy. The first step is to confirm that you've met the GPA requirement (3.7 or higher within Philosophy). Then, typically in spring of the third year,  you would approach a relevant faculty member (in the area in which you want to write the thesis) to explain your interest and see if they are able and willing to serve as your adviser. (Usually this is someone you've studied with previously, who can also vouch for your ability to take on a thesis project, though in some cases it may be a faculty member you haven't worked with before but who best fits your area of interest for the thesis.) You would then come up with a preliminary topic, and, in consultation with the adviser, put together a reading list for you to work through on your own over the summer to get you up to speed on the background for the topic and get a good start on the research for the thesis.

In your fourth year you would then sign up for PHL 396 in the fall (4 credits), for the purpose of doing that thesis research and starting some writing. This is structured like an independent study rather than as a regular course, and it's up to your adviser how often you meet, but it would be typical to meet every couple of weeks to discuss what you've been reading, your emerging ideas, how your thesis topic and plan is evolving in light of the research, etc. You should be sure to meet at least several times over the course of the semester to make sure you're moving forward with the thesis research and refining your topic, position, argument, etc. Toward the end of the semester, you would probably give your adviser a solid draft of at least a first chapter, which is good because the spring always winds up getting pretty compressed and it's hard to get all the writing done then if there hasn't been any beforehand.

For the spring semester, you'll sign up for PHL 399, which is for writing the thesis, though again, you'll still be having periodic meetings with your adviser to discuss things—just now with more focus on writing drafts of the chapters, getting feedback on them, and revising. In terms of length, faculty vary in their expectations. At the middle-to-upper end, you might aim for 3 chapters of 20 pages each. Some have been as long as 80 pages, while in certain cases a thesis has been done as a single long paper, maybe 30-40 pages (still substantially longer than any term paper for a class). There's room for discretion there, and no universal policy, but it should be kept in mind that an Honors thesis is a year-long project and so should be a substantially more involved than an independent study paper.

Once a final version of the thesis has been approved, late in the spring, there is an oral thesis defense with the adviser and a second committee member in the department (the 'second reader'). That's basically a conversation for about an hour or a little longer, where the examiners ask questions about the thesis and you answer them to demonstrate your mastery of the topic, and you all talk together about the relevant issues related to your topic. The oral exam is usually scheduled during exam week in the spring.

Note that in addition to the above there is also a requirement for *one additional course to be taken at the graduate level*—either a 400-level version of one of our 200-level courses that also have graduate sections (which just involves some extra work and often an extra weekly meeting for those taking the course at the 400-level), or a 500-level graduate seminar. You would need to consult with the professor ahead of time in order to enroll in such a course, explaining that this is part of your Honors thesis track.