

WHAT IS A THESIS/ CREATIVE PROJECT?

Under the guidance of faculty, honors students complete a project in an area of interest. Through this process students will learn how to identify and utilize relevant existing research, articulate a timely and important research question/topic or creative objective, and identify and utilize appropriate methodologies to address the research question/topic or creative objective. Projects of this nature allow students to cultivate effective communication and problem-solving skills while working collaboratively with faculty and project stakeholders. Students are encouraged to reflect constructively on their experience to identify what they learned, personal strengths and opportunities for growth, and how the experience has informed their future educational and career goals.

THESIS CREDITS

Students pursuing a thesis or creative project with a Thesis Director in the W. P. Carey School of Business are able to earn up to 6 credits. The prefix (ACC, AGB, CIS, ECN, ENT, FIN, MGT, MKT, SCM, or WPC) of the credits will correspond to the department of the Thesis Director. Students must discuss the number of credit hours per semester in advance with their Thesis Director (1 credit = 45 hours of student effort).

During the first semester of the project, students will enroll in up to 3 credits of XXX 492 and work a large portion of the project. Examples of work commonly completed in the first semester include:

- Academic Journal Impact Factor Assessment
- Area of Inquiry Literature Review
- Evaluation of Current Situational Dynamics
- Develop Research Question(s) and Project Objectives
- Responsible Research Inquiries and Training
- Research Methodology Design Plan
- Preliminary Data Collection
- Proposal Presentation
- Personal Reflection

For the second semester, students will enroll in up to 3 credits of XXX 493 and work to complete the remainder of the project. Students can expect to work on the following:

- Thesis Inventory
- Additional Data Collection
- Data Analysis
- Final Draft Approval
- Thesis Defense

PRELIMINARY MATERIALS

- Thesis Preparation Workshop: <https://barretthonors.asu.edu/thesis/gettingstarted>
- Recommended:
 - Turbrian, Kate. A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. 7th edition, 2007
 - Bryman, Alan & Bell, Emma. Business Research Methods. 4th edition, 2015
 - Pinson, Linda. Anatomy of a Business Plan: The Step-by-Step Guide to Building a Business and Securing Your Company's Future. 7th edition, 2008
- The thesis committee may stipulate additional materials requirements

GRADING POLICY

Students must discuss grading criteria with the Thesis Director at the start of the project. Grading of thesis credit is on a traditional alpha-scale (A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, and E). The Thesis Director retains authority on assigning a grade based on quality of work, adherence to deadlines, and other factors. In some circumstances, a Y (satisfactory) or Z (course in progress) grade may be assigned. A Y grade grants credit but is not calculated in GPA. If a Z grade is assigned, it is the student's responsibility to request an updated final grade upon the completion of the project. Students may receive a different grade on 493 than on 492.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The W. P. Carey School of Business takes academic integrity very seriously and expects students to produce and submit original work in all their classes. Therefore, unless otherwise specified, you should complete assignments independently. The ASU Student Academic Integrity Policy includes a description of student obligations and the process followed if this integrity is breached. For full details of the Academic Integrity Policy, click [here](#).

Academic dishonesty in any form will NOT be tolerated. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be taken seriously. Students found to have violated ANY portion of the academic integrity policy will receive *one* or *more* of the following sanctions:

- A reduced grade in the course –OR–
- A failure in the course –OR–
- An XE which denotes failure due to academic dishonesty on the transcript –OR–
- Removal from the W. P. Carey School of Business

Academic integrity violations may prevent you from getting approved to add a concurrent degree, changing your major, or receiving a scholarship. Further, academic integrity violations may prevent you from being selected for leadership positions within the W. P. Carey School of Business. These positions include, but are not limited to: WPC 101 Facilitator, APPLE, Camp Carey Facilitator or Director, Community Assistant, McCord Scholar, Peer Advisor, Residential Engagement Leader, WPC Connectors Mentor, and student worker positions.

Group Thesis/ Creative Projects: Group projects are permissible at the discretion of the thesis committee. Students participating in a group thesis/ creative project are expected to adhere to the [Professionalism Policy](#).

Note: Academic work for thesis credit must be completed during the semesters of the thesis. Resubmitting a paper from another class or elsewhere constitutes academic dishonesty. If you wish to further develop ideas or a project you have worked on in another class, discuss your plans with your thesis committee first. For more information, click [here](#).

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AND CITI TRAINING

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is an administrative body established to protect the rights and welfare of human subjects recruited to participate in research activities. Projects that involve collecting primary data from human subjects must obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval prior to project execution.

Students engaged in research with human subjects must complete CITI Training prior to interacting with human subjects. For more information on IRB and CITI, click [here](#).

THESIS TIMELINE

Students pursuing a thesis or creative project may start in Fall or Spring semesters; however, it is strongly recommended that students complete specific items in the semester prior to the start of the project. Below is an example schedule. The thesis committee may adjust the schedule based on the requirements of the project. It is the student's responsibility to finalize their thesis timeline with the thesis committee prior to submitting the Prospectus.

Preparation:

Preparation includes many steps. A general list is included below. Please note that in some cases a student may identify a faculty prior to selecting a project topic or vice versa.

- Attend a [Thesis Preparation Workshop](#).
- Brainstorm thesis/ creative project ideas.
- Investigate the research areas of faculty in your department and create a list of topic ideas and questions to discuss with faculty.
- Meet with potential thesis director(s); bring list of research questions. For assistance, contact your [Faculty Honors Advisor](#).
- Once you have secured a Thesis Director, register for the appropriate 492 course for the next semester. See the [Thesis Registration page](#) for details. Discuss with your Thesis Director the number of credits to enroll in for 492.
- Select the Second Reader in collaboration with your Thesis Director. A Third Reader may be recommended or required depending on the department of the Thesis Director and the project scope.
- Review recommended preliminary materials.
- Create bibliography of potential resources (books, articles, interviewees, etc.).
- Discuss and finalize project content and timeline (deadlines) with thesis committee.
- Write [Prospectus](#) and have it reviewed and signed by the thesis committee.
- Submit Prospectus to Barrett, The Honors College by the [Prospectus Deadline](#): _____

Semester Project Begins (492):

- Meet regularly with your Thesis Director and Second Reader on the progress of your project.
- Complete deliverables of the first semester as indicated in your Prospectus.
- Adhere to deadlines set in the project timeline.
- Stay in contact with your thesis committee – especially if your project goes off schedule.
- Register for the appropriate 493 course for the next semester. See the [Thesis Registration page](#) for details. Discuss with your Thesis Director the number of credits to enroll in for 493.

Semester Project is Defended (493):

- Continue to meet regularly with your thesis committee.
- Adhere to deadlines set in the project timeline.
- Ensure you have discussed the defense date and expectations (length, format, etc.) with the thesis committee prior to finding a location.
- Schedule your defense – coordinate with your Thesis Director’s department to find a room. All committee members must be present for the defense. Recommended Defense Deadline: _____
- Submit Defense Reporting Form by the Deadline: _____
- Submit Final Draft to thesis committee at least 2 weeks prior to defense.
- Defend your project. Ensure you have a copy of the Signature/ Title Page ready.
- If needed, make revisions and submit revised project to thesis committee.
- Ask your Thesis Director to submit final grades for the thesis credits.
- Submit completed project to Barrett, The Honors College by the Final Submission Deadline: _____

Example of a Detailed Timeline:

Semester 1 (492)	
Aug 30 th	CITI Training completion deadline.
Sept 4 th	Recap meeting with thesis committee (director and readers) to review project goals and resources needed.
Sept 9 th	Begin weekly meetings with director (Wednesdays at 11:30am) and bi-weekly meetings with second reader (alternating Thursdays at 4:00pm). Begin process for IRB approval.
Sept 23 rd	Complete background research on student-athlete social media perceptions and uses. Minimum 8 sources. Draft of survey questionnaire and interview questions due.
Sept 30 th	Final questionnaire and interview questions due to IRB review. Literary review and references/ works cited due.
Oct 7 th to 18 th	Data collection with student organizations and MKT 300 students. Interview student-athletes on social media habits.
Oct 21 st to Nov 1 st	Analyze data from surveys. Code data from interviews.
Nov 6 th	Progress meeting with thesis committee (director and readers) to discuss findings from data and project progress.
Nov 22 nd	Methods and analysis sections due.
Dec 6 th	Appendices and footnotes due.
Semester 2 (493)	
Jan 13 th – 17 th	Secondary data collection, if needed.
Jan 20 th	Resume weekly meetings with director (Mondays at 2:00pm) and bi-weekly meetings with second reader (Thursdays at 4:00pm).
Jan 24 th	Intro, conclusion and implications, and abstract due.
Feb 7 th	First full draft due, feedback expected by Feb 21 st .
Feb 28 th	Second full draft due, feedback expected by Mar 13 th . Schedule defense date/ time/ location; review expectations of defense with committee.
Mar 6 th	Online Defense Reporting Form Deadline.
Apr 3 ^d	Recommended Defense Deadline.
Apr 10 th	Revisions due to committee, if needed.
Apr 17 th	Final Submission Deadline.

OPTIONS AND EXAMPLES

There are multiple types of projects students can pursue (see below for additional details). While some projects may be more research intensive than others, W. P. Carey expects that all student engage in some form of research to support their project. For example, a student creating a mobile application may need to survey existing applications for usability. Students are encouraged to discuss expectations with their Thesis Committee prior to starting the project.

Option 1: Thesis/ Research Intensive Project

A thesis/ research intensive project is an opportunity for students to investigate an area or topic in depth. Projects of this type should create new knowledge or examine a body of knowledge. This type of work requires, but is not limited to the following segments:

- Introduction Section
- Background/ Literary Review Section supported by at least 10 academic sources
- Methods Section, if applicable
- Analysis Section
- Implications and Conclusion Section
- References/ Works Cited
- Appendices, if applicable

Examples:

- Working Hard to Look Good: The Influence of Effort in Perceptions of Cosmetic Products by Michelle Daniels
- Haiti: A Study of Economic Policies Effect on Education by Alisha Ward
- Blockchain: What is it and What Does it Mean for Public Accountants? By Stephen Lomsdalen

Option 2: Business Plan

The Business Plan option focuses on strategy for the creation of, expansion of, or significant change in a company. Business Plan projects should include a literature review and analysis from the perspective of multiple areas within business such as:

- Finance/Accounting
- Marketing (and possible impact on society)
- Operations Management
- Supply Chain
- Sustainability/Impact on environment

Examples:

- General Motors: Navigating Through a Sea of Change by Christian Kalmbach
- Tooth Fairy Tokens Marketing Plan by Courtney Blackmer
- Trekster: A National Parks Business Plan by Kurtis Zinger

Option 3: Corporation or Industry Analysis/ Comparison

An analysis/ comparison of a company or business field is an opportunity for students to learn more about a particular industry or company. Students should be able to access relevant information/ data in order to conduct an analysis of items such as:

- Branding/ Reputation
- Operational Structure
- Quality control and obtaining resources

Examples:

- From Big Mac to Maharaja Mac: An Examination of Brand Management Practices Across National Borders by Deepika Naidu
- Supply Chain of the Wine Industry: The Effects of Small Winery Operational Decisions on Quality by Tanya Clarke

Option 4: Department-sponsored project

Department-sponsored thesis programs are set up to allow students to work collaboratively on a larger academic work. These programs are unique and may have significantly different deadlines. Students interested in these programs are encouraged to connect early with the faculty overseeing the program.

- Finance Department | Intel Collaborative Project
- Marketing Department | AdSport | Daniel.McIntosh@asu.edu
- Undergraduate Dean's Office | Founders Lab | Jsbryne2@asu.edu

Examples:

- AdSport: Noches Latinas: A Study of the Effects of Heritage Nights on Fans in Professional Basketball and Sports Marketing by Patrick Gibbens
- AdSport: eSports Personas: Segmentation and Fan Group Analysis of eSports Fans by Logan Strauss
- Founders Lab: Circular Comfort: An Entrepreneurial Venture by Nadeen Kattan, Chris Curran, and Cassandra Thompson
- Founders Lab: Spilling Beans: Purchasing Consortium Concept by Cole Woods, Krystal Anigwe, and James Labelle

Option 5: Alternative Learning Thesis

In partnership with Barrett, The Honors College, W. P. Carey offers the option of pursuing an Applied Learning Thesis for business students. Students can utilize an internship, business project, or leadership experience as the basis for developing a thesis.

Some examples include:

- Internship, or employment (student worker or off-campus)
- Micro-Internships (such as Parker Dewey Micro-internships site)
- Leadership position (ASU club/organization or off-campus)
- And many more possibilities

Students will be assigned a thesis director and will be assisted in finding a second committee member. For more information, contact Dr. Kevin Burns at Kevin.Burns@asu.edu.

Option 6: Independent Project/ Creative Project

At the discretion of the thesis committee, students may pursue a project that does not fit into the above categories. For this option, students are encouraged to connect with their Faculty Honors Advisor and potential thesis director early in order to discuss project scope and requirements.

Examples:

- Industrial Benefits and Detractors of Asteroid Mining by Spenser Scheven
- Being Sparky: Forks Up, Mask Off by Walker McCrae, Henrielle Millon, Ben Ashby, and Elizabeth Baxter
- Virtual Reality Architecture by Jason Conigliari