

CRONKITE BARRETT HONORS PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Welcome to the Cronkite Barrett Honors Program! We're excited to work with you to make your honors experience as rewarding as possible.

HONORS COURSES AT CRONKITE

Each semester the Cronkite School offers several honors sections of required courses. These frequently include JMC 201 Beginning News Writing and Reporting, JMC 301 Intermediate Reporting and Writing, JMC 305 Multimedia Journalism and JMC 366 Ethics and Diversity. Occasionally, an elective course, such as a seminar, also will be offered exclusively for honors students. We strongly encourage you to enroll in these sections; they are designed to both challenge and inspire you. If an honors section is offered, you cannot complete a contract in another section.

When an honors section of a course is *not available*, you may be able to complete an honors enrichment contract to earn honors credit. To arrange for a contract:

1. Speak with the instructor within the first week of the course to let her or him know of your interest. Faculty are not required to accept honors enrichment contracts, but most are happy to work with you. Both full-time and part-time faculty can administer these contracts.
2. It is up to you, not the instructor, to develop an idea for your project. The idea should be closely related to the subject matter of the course but should enrich learning beyond what the course offers. For example, you might add multimedia elements, such as a video or slideshow, to an assignment that would otherwise be submitted as text only. You could conduct an in-depth interview with an expert or write a research paper, prepare a presentation or teach a module that explores a topic in depth. There is no set amount of time an honors project must take, but it should represent a significant investment of time while not overwhelming your regular coursework. A good rule of thumb is to count on 10 to 15 hours of time investment.
3. After verbally agreeing on a project with your instructor, you will generate a contract on your MyASU page. Your instructor will review it and, if satisfied, approve the contract and set expectations regarding length, deadlines and other particulars.
4. It is up to you to carry out your project to completion. You should plan to meet with your instructor several times over the semester – and send him or her drafts to ensure that you're moving in the right direction. But don't expect your instructor to bird dog the project. He or she is there to help when you need it and to provide general guidance and direction.
5. Your instructor will review your project upon completion and decide whether to award honors credit. If you do not meet expectations – or if you fail to deliver the project or to deliver it on time – there is no penalty other than you will not get the honors credit for that course.

Review these guidelines for more information on honors enrichment contracts and how the process works: <https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/honors-courses-and-contracts/honors-enrichment-contracts>

HONORS THESIS/CREATIVE PROJECT AT CRONKITE

Cronkite Honors Faculty Advisors

Your first step is to make an appointment with your Cronkite Honors Faculty Advisor no later than the second semester of your sophomore year. Your Advisor will help you identify a thesis or creative project topic and suggest faculty members who could serve as your Thesis Director and member(s) of your committee.

You are assigned to one of five Honors Faculty Advisors alphabetically according to the first letter of your last name.

Names beginning with:

A-C: Senior Associate Dean Kristin Gilger, kristin.gilger@asu.edu

D-H: Professor Marianne Barrett, marianne@asu.edu

I-M: Professor John Craft, john.craft@asu.edu

N-R: Associate Professor Joseph Russomanno, russo@asu.edu

S-Z: Professor of Practice Mark Haas, mark.haas@asu.edu

After meeting with your Honors Faculty Advisor, you should start developing your thesis idea into a prospectus, a document that spells out what you propose to do and sets out a timeline for doing it. Once your Honors Faculty Advisor thinks you're far enough along in developing a prospectus, he or she will indicate it's time to find a Thesis Director and committee.

Thesis Director

Your Thesis Director can be a full-time member of the Cronkite faculty, a qualified member of the adjunct faculty, or a faculty member from another department or school at ASU.

The Cronkite School has more than four dozen full-time faculty members with expertise in a variety of areas, from documentary and digital media to ethics and diversity. Start by visiting the faculty web page <https://cronkite.asu.edu/about/faculty-and-leadership/faculty> to familiarize yourself with these faculty members (click on their names to get full CVs). If there are no full-time faculty member who fit your area of interest, you may suggest one of the school's part-time faculty associates, or adjunct faculty, who are listed here: <https://cronkite.asu.edu/about/faculty-and-leadership/associate-faculty>. Your Faculty Honors Advisor will let you know if the adjunct faculty member is qualified to be a Thesis Director.

Not all faculty members will be able to chair an honors thesis. Associate or part-time faculty typically have full-time jobs outside of the classes they teach, and some full-time faculty may already be committed to other students. But don't worry; your Honors Faculty Advisor will be able to offer advice and suggest options.

The Thesis Director is the person you will work most closely with over the course of your project. He or she will start by reviewing your prospectus-in-progress and help you refine it. When it's ready, both your Thesis Director and your Faculty Honors Advisor will sign your prospectus and you're ready to get to work.

Your Thesis Director will meet with you regularly, establish expectations for your project, review your work as it progresses and chair your thesis committee when it's time to defend your project. But the other member or members of your committee are important, too.

If your Thesis Director is from another school or department at ASU, you will need to follow that department's or school's thesis guidelines. Please notify your Faculty Honors Advisor if you would like to follow this route.

Your Committee

You need at least one other person in addition to your Thesis Director to sit on your committee. Committee members serve as an additional resource for you, providing help and advice when you need it, reviewing your work and providing feedback. They also evaluate your work at the end and decide as a group if your thesis is acceptable.

You may choose another Cronkite faculty member, a faculty member who teaches elsewhere at ASU, or a professional with expertise in the area you will be exploring to serve on your committee. Cronkite students often choose a media professional or a part-time faculty member who is working in the profession.

You may choose to expand your committee by adding a third person from any of the above categories. We recommend that you think about doing this – both because you'll have access to more expertise and because committee members sometimes have to drop out due to changed circumstances. If you start with three committee members and drop to two, you're still in good shape.

Keep in mind that your committee should include at least one full-time Cronkite faculty member. That means that if a part-time faculty member chairs your committee, you should seek a full-time faculty member to serve on your committee.

Thesis Defense

You will defend your thesis or project before your committee, guests and interested members of the ASU community. You should consult with your Thesis Director and committee members to establish a date for the defense, book a room where the defense will take place, and fill out a Defense Reporting Form with Barrett, The Honors College

<https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/defense/defense-reporting-form>). This should be done several months prior to the date of the defense. All committee members must be present during the defense, although in some instances they can be present virtually.

Most Cronkite students hold their defenses in the Cronkite building. To reserve a room, contact csevents@asu.edu. Indicate whether you'll need a room with audiovisual capability.

You should provide all committee members a copy of your paper or project at least two weeks prior to the defense meeting so they can give you their final edits and ask you to answer specific questions. Plan to bring to the defense copies of the final version of a paper if your work is a written thesis. For a creative project that you will show to your committee during the defense, it's helpful to provide printed copies of slides you plan to show.

If your thesis takes the form of a creative project, such as a video or website, you will need to provide a written document that explains the creative endeavor and involves a measure of scholarly research or critical analysis. The purpose is to provide 1) context: the importance of the topic and a review of other relevant work that informed your project; 2) your methodology: any data collected and how you went about your work; and 3) reflection: what you learned and what you would, in retrospect, have done differently.

For example, a project that consisted of creating and leading a journalism club at a local high school included an overview of how clubs are replacing journalism courses at many schools and how that affects academic engagement and success. Another creative project that consisted of reporting and writing a long-form article in the style of Solutions Journalism, included an in-depth exposition of the Solutions Journalism movement and how it is being practiced at news organizations across the country. There is no set length for this paper, but it should include research and critical thinking. Depending on the project, the paper may be relatively short – five or six pages – or dozens of pages long. Talk to your Honors Thesis Advisor or your Thesis Director about what is appropriate for your project.

At the defense, you will provide an overview of your thesis or creative project and explain key components. You'll explain why you embarked on your project, the challenges you faced and how you addressed those problem, and what you learned by doing the project.

Your defense is your chance to shine, so prepare for it just as you would for a presentation to a professional gathering. Practice what you will say, arrive early to make sure technology is working, dress professionally, and be prepared.

At the conclusion of the defense, your committee will approve, disapprove or give provisional approval, outlining required revisions. Finally, you will digitally submit your project to Barrett.

More guidance is available in the Barrett Student Guidebook at <https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/student-guidebook>.

Honors Thesis Course Credit

You will need to complete two courses -- MCO 492 and MCO 493 – while working on your honors thesis or project. Each is worth three credits.

Talk to your Faculty Honors Advisor or your Thesis Director about when to register for these courses, but, typically, students register for the first course during the semester they're doing the bulk of their fieldwork or research. They typically take the second course, MCO 493, during the semester they are completing their thesis. The two courses are sequential and cannot be taken in the same semester.

Your Thesis Director is responsible for evaluating your work and assigning grades for these courses. Your director has the option of assigning a “Z” grade for the first course, MCO 492, which indicates the project is in progress. The “Z” is replaced by a permanent grade after your thesis/creative project is completed and approved by your committee.

Available Funds

Barrett, The Honors College provides funds that can be used to purchase software, books and other items or travel to a conference or to conduct research or fieldwork. Funds also can be used to bring in an external committee member for your defense. For more information, visit <https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/funding>.

CHECKLIST

Semesters Before Thesis Begins

- ✓ Meet with your Faculty Honors Advisor to discuss and refine your ideas and identify a possible Thesis Director.
- ✓ Review the Barrett Student Guidebook.
- ✓ Meet with possible thesis directors and secure one.
- ✓ Draft your prospectus and have it reviewed by your Thesis Director.
- ✓ Choose other members of your committee and share the draft prospectus with them.
- ✓ Complete the Barrett prospectus form.
- ✓ Obtain and complete a course override form from your Cronkite academic advisor; attach the completed prospectus; get signatures of both your Faculty Honors Advisor and your Thesis Director and submit to Barrett.
- ✓ Register for MCO 492 for the next semester.
- ✓ Begin your research and/or fieldwork.

First Semester of Thesis

- ✓ Meet regularly with your Thesis Director to review progress.
- ✓ Consult with other committee members as needed.

- ✓ Complete research and/or fieldwork.
- ✓ Register for MCO 493 for the next semester.
- ✓ Schedule a date and room for your defense.

Final Semester of Thesis

- ✓ Complete draft of thesis or project; submit to Thesis Director.
- ✓ Distribute draft to other committee members.
- ✓ Make final revisions and distribute copies to Thesis Director and committee members two weeks before defense.
- ✓ Defend your thesis.
- ✓ Work with director to make any changes requested by committee.
- ✓ Submit thesis or project to Barrett.
- ✓ Consider participating in the Barrett Celebrating Honors Symposium to showcase your project.