Thesis/Creative Projects:

An honors thesis may be completed in one of two ways within CESE. It can be completed either as a supplement to the CEE Capstone course or as an independent study under the advisement of a CESE faculty member (Thesis Director). The thesis can be in any civil engineering area such as environmental, geotechnical, hydrosystems, structures, sustainability, transportation, or another closely related area.

• Capstone: Upon approval, the thesis may be completed as part of the student’s CEE capstone project (CEE 486). This would be conducted as part of the standard capstone experience. In most cases, the Thesis Director will be the advisor for the Capstone Project. Students must do something extra for their project, such as more extensive literature review, additional experiments, additional analysis, or a discussion of the social/economic/environmental impact of their project.

• Independent Study: The thesis is an independent project performed under the mentorship of a CESE faculty member.

In both cases, the student should enroll for the appropriate credit hours (see below).

Committee Structure: the minimum number of committee members is two, one of which must be the Thesis Director. Currently only the director MUST be an ASU faculty member (i.e. tenure-line faculty, research faculty, lecturer, professor of practice). The Second Committee Member may be faculty or non-faculty, depending on the decision of the Thesis Director or the academic unit of the director. A third committee member is not needed unless specified by the director or the academic unit of the director OR unless an external examiner is added (who will be a third committee member).

Recommended Timeline:

The student must identify a Thesis Director and meet to discuss their intention to work with them and the nature of the proposed honors thesis the semester before they intend to start.

For the both the Capstone and Independent Study options, Honors thesis work is conducted over 2 semesters for 6 credits as follows:

• Semester I – CEE 492 Honors Directed Study (3 credits)
• Semester II – CEE 493 Honors Thesis (3 credits). Honors students may use CEE 493 Honors Thesis as a technical elective with credit towards the BSE degree only if the thesis topic is not related to the CEE 486 topic.

These must be taken in sequence and cannot be taken together in a single semester, though an intervening semester is allowable in some cases.

Important: Prior to enrolling in CEE 492 or 493, all students must complete a thesis/creative project information session. Students may meet this requirement by completing any of the following:

• A thesis preparation course within CEE (not currently available but may be an option in the future
• HON 498 “Thesis Prep Course,” a one-credit course offered on the downtown campus
• One of the Thesis Workshop Sessions periodically offered by Barrett
• The on-line workshop offered through Barrett via ASU Blackboard.

Example Honors Thesis schedule
Junior Year
End of Spring Semester
• Find a faculty member to advise you on your Honors Thesis (the Thesis Director) and begin discussing possible projects
• Enroll in CEE 492 for 3 credits
Senior Year
Fall Semester
• Work with your Thesis Director to define your project and to formulate an action plan for the project (the Prospectus)
• Prepare your Prospectus and submit it to Barrett ([find instructions online](#)).
• Complete background review for project
• Enroll in CEE 493 for 3 credits for the spring semester
Spring Semester
• Continue working on project and begin preparing thesis document
Before Spring Break
• Complete first draft of the thesis document and submit to Thesis Director for initial review
• Schedule your thesis defense - remember this is your responsibility – by completing the [Thesis/Creative Project Defense Reporting Form](#).
• Note that a draft of the thesis should be sent to the entire committee for review at least two weeks before your defense
After Spring Break
• Prepare for your defense!
• Hold defense and, following a successful outcome, get the Signature Title Page signed by all committee members
• Make any necessary changes to the thesis document based on feedback from committee
Early April
• Submit final thesis document to Barrett!