

## Honors Thesis/Creative Project Committee Guidelines

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a committee member for a thesis/creative project. Barrett, The Honors College realizes that students cannot succeed without faculty support, and we are grateful for your willingness to participate in this journey with an honors student. We want to ensure that you are aware of all policies and procedures regarding the thesis/creative project and that you feel comfortable with the expectations of your role and the role of the student.

A thesis/creative project should be a collaborative effort between the student and the committee. It is essential to set expectations with your students very early, to hold regular meetings, and create a timeline with benchmarks for the student's work. This will enable the student to work more effectively under your direction, and help you become aware of any potential problems with the project. We all agree that it is problematic when students do not meet with committee members on a regular basis to guarantee the goals of the project are being appropriately developed. An honors thesis/creative project should not be worked on independently by the student without collaboration with faculty. By the time the student is scheduled to defend his/her work, the entire committee should be familiar with and supportive of the final product.

### Honors Website and Resources

The Honors website has several resources available to assist you in navigating the thesis/creative project process (<http://barretthonors.asu.edu>). Please select the **Academics** tab on the homepage and then the Thesis/Creative Project link (<http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/>). Here you will find the guidelines given to Barrett students, which outline the process and due dates for all projects. As always, if you have any questions, please contact the Barrett Honors Advising Office on your campus.

Downtown: 602-496-1757

Tempe: 480-965-9155

Polytechnic: 480-727-5399

West: 602-543-3410

### Thesis/Creative Project Committee Members

The Honors Advising Office educates students on the importance of understanding the role of their committee and strongly reinforces the responsibility of the student to communicate with each committee member on a regular basis throughout the process.

### ANNOUNCEMENT:

- **Reminder: Requirements for number of full faculty members and size of the committee are determined by the academic unit of the Director. For specific academic unit committee requirements, see: <http://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/honors-opportunities-in-majors/>**

### *Director*

The committee consists of a Director, a Second Committee Member, and may include a Third Committee Member. The Director, chosen by the student, is a regularly-appointed member of the ASU faculty with professional expertise in the thesis/creative project area. The Director must be a lecturer or tenure-line faculty member. Emeritus faculty may serve as thesis directors as approved by the FHA from the department which the thesis is to be completed. Directors are expected to be physically present at the thesis defense. They may not be reimbursed for travel related to attending the defense.

The Director is the faculty member with whom the student will work most closely throughout the process. The Director is responsible for providing project expectations, guidance throughout the entire thesis/creative project

process, and evaluation of the final work. The student should meet regularly with the Director throughout the project. Among the members of a thesis committee, the Director's recommendations are the most heavily weighted.

### ***Second Committee Member***

The Second Committee Member is an individual who the student and Director decide is appropriate to serve based on knowledge and experience with the thesis/creative project topic. The credentials of your Second Committee Member will be determined by the Director and the criteria of that academic unit. The Second Committee Member could be a regular faculty member at ASU or a qualified professional in a related field. A Second Committee Member is responsible for assisting you with research as needed, reading/viewing and providing feedback on drafts of the work, and being physically present to participate at the defense. Some Second Committee Members meet almost as regularly with students as the Director; others become involved only at significant points (e.g. a statistician when statistics are being analyzed). Regular in-person meetings, which at times may include the Director, are required to discuss the progress of the thesis/creative project.

### ***Third Committee Member*** (optional-varies by academic unit)

Academic units may choose to require a Third Committee Member. If needed, a Third Committee Member will offer insights beyond those offered by the Director and Second Committee Member. To avoid conflicts of interest, avoid selecting a graduate student of the Director or Second Committee Member. Family members, students, or close friends are not appropriate Third Committee Members. The student and the Director should choose the Third Committee Member no later than six weeks prior to the defense; the Third Committee Member should receive a copy of the thesis/creative project at least 2-3 weeks before the defense. Students may also apply for the ***Barrett Honors External Examiner Program***, which provides funding for an outside expert to act as a third committee member. The application is on the Barrett website and is also included in the *Thesis/Creative Project Guidebook* given to the student. An External Examiner is only eligible for the role of Third Committee Member.

### **Prospectus**

The prospectus is considered a contract between the committee and the student. In the prospectus, the student is expected to write a summary that describes the scope of the thesis/creative project. The summary should outline expectations and include a timeline for the work. Barrett Honors Advising Office uses the prospectus to track students' progress and confirm their intention to complete a thesis/creative project and graduate from Barrett. Please encourage your student to submit the paperwork by the priority deadline, as this will make them eligible for additional thesis/creative project funding. Deadlines are found at the end of this document. The prospectus must be signed by the Director and Second Committee Member as well as by the student.

### **Group Projects**

Barrett allows more than one student to work on a thesis/creative project. Group projects **are at the discretion of the Thesis Director**. Group thesis/creative projects give students valuable experience and enable them to take on larger, more complicated topics. They can collaborate with peers and work with students in other disciplines in order to approach the topic from a variety of viewpoints. Group projects can and should grow out of a variety of student/faculty interactions including—but not limited to—labs, capstone classes, creative work, internships, and faculty research projects that utilize undergraduates. Each student in the group is required to submit an individual prospectus document. The individual roles of each group member should be articulated and a “code of conduct” agreed upon, particularly when the project is interdisciplinary. A detailed prospectus ensures that there is sufficient work for each student.

### **Credits/Grading**

Students will typically complete their thesis/creative project in the department of their major, but have the option of going outside their major. Most departments allow up to six credit hours for the project, but some departments limit students to three-hours of credit (XXX 493 only). Students sign up for XXX 492 *Honors*

*Directed Study* (when appropriate) in the first semester of work and then *XXX 493 Honors Thesis* for the second semester of work, both in the department of the Director. Please note that *XXX 492* and *XXX 493* must be taken in sequence and may not be taken together in a single semester. *XXX 493* (or its equivalent) is required for graduation from Barrett. Students may not earn more than 6 credits for the thesis.

When the thesis/creative project is a year-long endeavor with no distinct break between the two semesters, the first semester grade (*XXX 492*) is generally a Z, indicating work in progress. If the student is not performing up to the expectations of the committee, this is the time for a serious discussion. **A Z grade is not counted toward grade point averages.** It may impact scholarship eligibility. Grades must be changed to (Y) Pass or a standard course grade.

Please assign a grade for the project when grades are due through your department, and change a Z grade to the letter grade after the work is completed (*XXX 492* from a past semester) in addition to *XXX 493*. Typically, a letter grade is assigned for the thesis/creative project, though a Y is allowed, if appropriate.

Students must complete the graduation requirements for Barrett, The Honors College, including the thesis/creative project, by the required deadlines. Students are responsible for meeting these deadlines and for keeping the committee informed about them. Please do not feel pressured by a student who requests a defense but who is not adequately prepared. It is entirely up to the committee to determine when the student is ready; contact the Barrett Advising Office for assistance with any difficulties. Extensions can be provided if circumstances warrant them, but no student is allowed to participate in the Barrett Convocation Ceremony without first successfully defending and submitting final, signed thesis/creative project to the Barrett Honors Advising office.

### **The Institutional Review Board**

The role of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to review all proposed research involving human subjects to ensure that subjects are treated ethically and that their rights and welfare are adequately protected. The IRB is composed primarily of faculty members from disciplines in which research involving human subjects is integral to that discipline's work, researchers whose primary interests are non-scientific, as well members from the community. The human subjects review process is administered through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance.

**All research activities involving the use of human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before data collection can begin. Investigators may not solicit subject participation or begin data collection until they have received written approval from the IRB. Please discuss this with your director and visit the following website for the IRB @ ASU: <http://researchintegrity.asu.edu/humans>**

### **Formatting and Style**

The student should follow the style manual for the appropriate discipline.

If the thesis is written in a language other than English, the student is required to provide an abstract written in English.

Please note the following formatting requirements:

- **Unbound document** (no staples, clips, hole punches, bindings, or covers).
- Left Margin 1 ½ inches for binding.
- White, 8 ½ x 11 inch, and 20 pound paper – same brand, weight, and color throughout; acid-free paper is not required.
- 10-12 point font size.
- Font consistent throughout except for items in appendices.
- No grammatical errors and no ink corrections.

## Signature Title page

A signature title page must accompany the document and bear the original signatures of all committee members. Photocopies and electronic signatures are not accepted. Students should use the *Signature Title Page* template found online at the Barrett, The Honors College website (<https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/forms-important-dates>).

## Thesis/Creative Project Defense Reporting Form

The *Thesis/Creative Project Defense Reporting Form* is used to confirm the student's committee members, including Third Committee Member (if applicable), and scheduled defense date and location. The form does not serve as a room reservation; students will have to reserve space for their thesis separately. The *Defense Reporting Form* is submitted by the student on the Barrett website, and the information is posted to the Barrett Defense Calendar to encourage all members of the Barrett community including students, faculty and staff to attend thesis/creative project defenses. In rare cases a student may request a closed defense with the approval of his or her Director; Barrett respects the judgment of the Director to whether the defense should be close. The Director will receive an electronic mail notification of the defense details submitted by the student. Directors should notify the Honors Advising Office if changes are needed. Schedule a defense well in advance of the deadline for final submission of the final thesis/creative project to the Barrett Advising Office. Deadlines for the *Thesis/Creative Project Defense Reporting Form* are included at the end of this document.

## Thesis/Creative Project Defense

Students are required to defend their thesis/creative project before the members of the committee. **All committee members must be physically present at the defense.** The defense is an opportunity for the student to present his/her research and creative work to a group of knowledgeable and interested individuals in his/her field. The committee should be familiar with the student's work because he/she has been communicating with them closely throughout the thesis/creative project process. The defense is an opportunity for the committee to provide further feedback and engage in dialog with the student about the thesis/creative project topic. The defense is designed to be an intellectual exercise and opportunity for the student to demonstrate what he/she has learned during the thesis/creative project process; it reflects the culmination of the student's Barrett honors experience.

Determining where the defense will take place is the responsibility of the student. Many defenses are scheduled in Barrett classrooms but they may also be scheduled in facilities within the departments of the committee members. The student and committee will decide on the date, noting the appropriate defense deadlines corresponding with the student's anticipated graduation date. The student must submit the *Thesis/Creative Project Defense Reporting Form* to the Barrett Honors Advising office when the defense has been scheduled. Students are told to submit a final draft (not a first draft) of their thesis/creative project 2-3 weeks prior to the defense to allow committee members time to prepare. Students should consult with the Director about the format, content, and length of their defense presentations.

The way a defense is conducted may vary by committee, but generally the defense will take at least one hour, within which the student will make a presentation and answer questions from the committee members. The committee may also invite the audience to ask questions. After the defense the committee will meet in private without the student to make a decision about the success of the defense and will meet with the student to discuss the decision. The outcome is nearly always a positive celebration, but the student should make sure to understand the opinions of the committee about the project by staying in touch and responding to the comments by revising the thesis/creative project. The student should be prepared to make final changes to the thesis/creative project after the defense if the committee requests them. The student will know what to anticipate if they are in touch with the committee well before the defense and have responded to the comments on the work. Below are some specific points of a defense:

- Prior to the defense all members of the committee should have a copy of the most up-to-date version of your thesis/creative project. To prepare for the defense the committee needs sufficient time to

review the student's final work. **Plan to ask the student to submit a final draft to the committee at least two weeks before the defense for adequate time to prepare. This should not be the first draft the committee has seen.**

- The defense is open to the public so it is possible others may attend outside the committee. The student should make sure the room scheduled can accommodate at least 20 people. All Barrett honors students are encouraged to attend defenses. It is up to the committee if questions will be taken from the audience.
- At the defense the student will give a summary of the thesis/creative project. The format, content, and length should be discussed with the Director well before the defense as the standards vary across subject areas. Students are advised that they may be asked to review the origins of the project, its scope, the methodology used, significant findings, and conclusions.
- A group thesis/creative project would be expected to have a longer defense. Each student in the group should be given equal time to present and participate in the question and answer period. All students must prepare separate *Signature Title Pages* for the defense.
- Following the presentation, the committee will ask questions about issues raised in the work, ask the student to justify the choices made in researching and creating the project, and speculate on the applications or usefulness of the work. Students should discuss the types of questions to expect with the committee. Some committees allow any attendee to ask a question.
- At the end of the question and answer period, the student will be dismissed from the room while the committee members review the performance. Once the committee has reached a consensus, the student will be provided an outcome that will determine the next steps.
- Students should prepare and take a *Signature Title Page* to the defense for the committee members to record their decision. (A template can be found on the Barrett website: <https://barretthonors.asu.edu/academics/thesis-and-creative-project/forms-important-dates>).

### **Thesis Outcomes**

Depending on the amount and type of revision the committee requests, the student will leave the defense with one of the following outcomes. The student is responsible for making any revisions proposed by the committee and will need to consult with the Director to ensure the project has met the committee's recommendations. **All revisions must be made before the final thesis/creative project submission deadline set by the Barrett Advising Office.**

- **Approved**
  1. Minor format/editorial corrections may be suggested.
  2. All committee members sign the *Signature Title Page*.
  3. Turn in your thesis/creative project and *Signature Title Page* to the Barrett Advising Office.
- **Provisional Approval (Common outcome)**
  1. Format/editorial corrections and/or minor changes (i.e., some text needs rewriting, sections may need to be added or deleted, grammatical errors corrected).
  2. Second Committee Member and Third Committee Member (if applicable) make their recommendations and sign the *Signature Title Page*.
  3. Director signs the *Signature Title Page* only after the required corrections are made.
- **Not approved (Least common outcome)**
  1. Basic design and/or overall execution of the thesis/creative project is significantly flawed.
  2. Defense presentation is seriously deficient.
  3. *Signature Title Page* will not be signed.
  4. Student must inform his or her Barrett Honors Advisor as the decision may impact Barrett graduation timeline. The Director and committee may continue working with the student to make major revisions. You should discuss this with your committee and inform your Honors Advisor.

## **Convocation**

The Barrett Convocation is a special time to recognize both the students who have completed the honors requirements and the faculty who have helped make that possible. This is a symbolic, deeply significant moment in the student's academic career, and a time to thank you for helping the student weave together the skills and knowledge of his/her undergraduate career into a creative piece of scholarship. Directors are contacted to attend (via email) and will participate with their students in the convocation ceremonies. This event is for you and your students.

## **Important Deadlines**

### **Fall 2017 Thesis/Creative Project Deadlines**

Prospectus Due: February 10, 2017

Defense Reporting Form Due: October 13, 2017

Recommended Defense Completed\*: October 27, 2017

Final Submission Due (signed signature title page, abstract, and digital submission): November 17, 2017

### **Spring 2018 Thesis/Creative Project Deadlines**

Priority Prospectus Due Date: April 5, 2017

Final Prospectus Due Date: September 15, 2017

Defense Reporting Form Due: March 9, 2018

Recommended Defense Completed\*: April 6, 2018

Final Submission Due (signed signature title page, abstract, and digital submission): April 20, 2018

### **Fall 2018 Thesis/Creative Project Deadlines**

Priority Prospectus Due Date: November 3, 2017

Final Prospectus Due Date: February 16, 2018

Defense Reporting Form Due: October 12, 2018

Recommended Defense Completed\*: October 26, 2018

Final Submission Due (signed signature title page, abstract, and digital submission): November 16, 2018

### **Spring 2019 Thesis/Creative Project Deadlines**

Priority Prospectus Due Date: April 6, 2018

Prospectus Due: September 14, 2018

Defense Reporting Form Due: March 8, 2019

Recommended Defense Completed\*: April 5, 2019

Final Submission Due (signed signature title page, abstract, and digital submission): April 19, 2019

### **Fall 2019**

Priority Prospectus Due Date: November 2, 2018

Final Prospectus Due Date: February 15, 2019

Defense Reporting Form Due: October 11, 2019

Recommended Defense Completed\*: October 25, 2019

Final Submission Due (signed signature title page, abstract, and digital submission): November 15, 2019

Deadlines subject to change based on the ASU academic calendar.

\* Barrett recommends that you defend by this date. The defense date is subject to your Director's approval. Please note that if you defend after this date, you will have less time to make any revisions by the final due date.