CULMINATING UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE: THESIS

The Culminating Undergraduate Experience: Thesis represents a Kettering student’s crowning achievement – the tangible proof of growth, knowledge, understanding, and mastery of applicable, real-world skills necessary for the student’s transition to professional status upon graduation. All Kettering University baccalaureate programs require completion of the Culminating Undergraduate Experience, also known as the Senior Thesis. The Senior Thesis is a professional document describing a comprehensive project managed and performed by the student. The project is generally performed for the student’s Co-op Employer (Co-op Thesis); however, with employer permission the student is eligible to perform another option for his/her Thesis: Research Thesis Project (with department faculty) or Entrepreneurship Thesis Project (student idea for a new business, new product, etc.). Students become eligible to conduct work on the Thesis when they have earned a minimum of 88 credit hours (Senior I Standing). The Thesis is an academic requirement approximately taking 240 hours to complete the objectives of the project work. Students are introduced to the Thesis through an online Introductory Assignment that is accessible during their Junior II Co-op term. There are four (4) credit hours awarded upon completion of the Thesis and the student will earn a grade of Pass with Distinction or Pass upon faculty approval of a Kettering standardized written Thesis Manuscript. The focus of this project may be a product, system, creation of a comprehensive business plan, results of investigation of a new idea, etc.

Please Note: Students facing challenges for completing their Thesis requirement, including students who have completed all other graduation requirements, are to contact the Center for Integrated Learning Experiences (CILE) for immediate advisement at thesis@kettering.edu.

Thesis Options and Finding a Thesis Topic

For all Thesis options, it is the student’s responsibility to find a topic for his/her thesis project. If the student is unable to secure a thesis project through his/her Co-op Employer, with employer approval provided by the company to CILE, the student can pursue one of the non-Co-op Thesis options.

Co-op Thesis

A topic idea for the Co-op Thesis project is determined by the employer and student; a project the company needs performed and a topic that is of value to the employer. The student manages the project from start to finish and performs a majority of the work. The student is required to complete and submit a Thesis Topic Proposal (known as the PTA) in the thesis software tool, KqUest, in order to obtain topic approval prior to starting the work on the Thesis. Upon submission, the Thesis Topic Proposal is electronically forwarded to the students Employer Thesis Advisor and degree department for evaluation. Upon approval, the student is notified via e-mail of their assigned Faculty Thesis Advisor and acceptance to begin work on the project.

Research Thesis

The Research Thesis focuses on conducting research (most often) on campus with a Kettering faculty member. It is an opportunity for the senior student to apply his/her academic and co-op experience to the investigation and experimentation of new ideas. Usually the topic is provided by a Kettering faculty member in the student’s degree department. The student is required to complete and submit the Research Thesis Proposal which is available in the Thesis software tool, KqUest under “Documents”. Once the proposal form is completed, the student and Faculty Thesis Advisor will obtain an approval signature from the Department Head, the proposal is then considered approved. Upon approval, the proposal form is submitted to CILE and the student can begin work on the project. The projects are limited and students are selected based on their expertise matching the project scope. For more information contact your degree Department Head or appointed Thesis Administrator within your degree department.

Entrepreneurship Thesis

The Entrepreneurship Thesis focuses on a student generated idea. An applicant for an Entrepreneurship (E-ship) Thesis project will formalize a comprehensive Business Plan that can be used in an effort to secure funding for the establishment and/or expansion of a new or existing operating venture. The student is required to complete and submit the E-ship Thesis Proposal form available in Blackboard by sending a request for access to thesis@kettering.edu. Upon submission, the proposal is evaluated by the School of Management. Upon approval, the student is notified via e-mail of their assigned advisor in the Small Business Development Center - SBDC (located on campus and funded through the State of Michigan) as well as their Faculty Committee Member and acceptance to begin work on the project.

Please Note: Students who have exhausted all efforts to identify a Thesis topic and require Kettering’s assistance to find one, are to complete a Directed Thesis Request Form. The form can be provided by sending a request to thesis@kettering.edu. Upon completion, the form will then be sent to the students degree Department Head as an alert that the student needs assistance. The degree Department Head will attempt to identify a thesis topic that fits the students skill set and experience defined in the Directed Thesis Request Form. Please note: CILE recommends this request form to be submitted if the student is unable to identify a Thesis topic by the end of the students Senior I Co-op Term.

Student Process

Students will be acclimated to the Thesis on their Junior II Co-op Term through an on-line Introductory Assignment. Students will have two advisors upon topic approval through completion that will serve as mentors and review the written Thesis Manuscript. The Final Thesis Manuscript (non-confidential theses only) will be archived in the Thesis Digital Archive on Kettering’s Library website for viewing. At the students request, he/she can receive a bound copy of the thesis; however all confidential theses will not be bound nor will be available for viewing in the Digital Thesis Archive. Kettering’s Confidential Agreement is available in Blackboard, for the student’s employer to determine the sequestering period and for signature.

Registration

Students who achieve Junior II standing and are registered in a co-op term, will be automatically registered for the Culminating Undergraduate Experience: Thesis (CILE-400). CILE-400 is a one-time registration applicable for the entire process. Upon completion of the Thesis, a final passing grade is submitted by CILE to the Office of the Registrar, posted to the student’s record and the four credits are earned.
If students complete their last required academic term and the Thesis is incomplete, they will have an additional four terms as an active student to complete his/her Thesis.

For more information visit the Center for Integrated Learning Experiences at 3-341 AB, call (810) 762-9947, or send an e-mail to thesis@kettering.edu.