

The School of Earth and Space Exploration Senior Thesis Application Process

The purpose of this document is to outline the application process for students interested in pursuing a senior thesis in the School of Earth and Space Exploration (SESE). The attached application form and senior thesis contract are required for all students pursuing a senior thesis or Barrett Thesis. Please refer to the School of Earth and Space Exploration Senior Thesis Guidelines for an overview of the procedures, options, and requirements.

In all cases the following apply:

- To apply, all students must submit the following: the application form, senior thesis contract, a curriculum vitae (CV), an unofficial transcript, and a statement of purpose outlining their research plans and listing any relevant previous research experience. The student must also include a separate summary from the faculty advisor detailing the research project as discussed. *Barrett students applying to use their Barrett thesis in place of the SES senior thesis option must follow these same application procedures/deadlines in addition to any honors thesis requirements set forth by Barrett.*
- Students who meet the minimum eligibility requirements are not guaranteed approval for this opportunity. The SESE Undergraduate Oversight Committee reviews all applications for approval.
- Faculty members are not obligated to supervise a senior thesis, it is completely elective.
- Upon starting the work, the faculty member and student will enter into a contract (the form to be completed is included below) that lays out expectations on both sides and the consequences to the student if these expectations are not met; adequate progress to be defined by the faculty member must be maintained. If adequate progress is not made, the contract with the student may be terminated.

If applying to complete a senior thesis in lieu of the capstone sequence in your major, the following additional conditions apply:

- The thesis work needs to be completed for **both** semesters to be eligible to replace the capstone requirement, and those semesters must be served consecutively.
- To apply for this opportunity, the application must include a statement of research plans and purpose. In addition, this statement must include a description of why replacement of the existing capstone classes (e.g., SES 410/411 or GLG 452) with the thesis is a necessary step.
- Students will receive letter grades for the senior thesis courses. It will be up to the discretion of the faculty advisor to use a plus/minus grading scale. If the student's research effort is not completed to the faculty advisor's satisfaction, this will result in an "E" grade for the class.
- Successful completion of the senior thesis according to the above provisions will replace the requirement to participate in the capstone sequence for their major (e.g. SES 410/411 for ESE no concentration, Astrophysics, and Astrobiology/Biogeosciences students, GLG 452 for ESE Geoscience students).
- For ESE no concentration, Astrophysics, and Astrobiology/Biogeosciences students, if a student does not complete **both** semesters of the senior thesis, the student will still be required to complete **both** SES 410 and SES 411, which could delay degree completion by one full academic year.
- For ESE Geological Sciences students, if a student does not complete both semesters of the senior thesis, they will be required to complete GLG 452 which is only offered in the summer.

Application for Undergraduate SESE Senior Thesis

Name of applicant: _____ ID number: _____

Catalog Year: _____ Current Cumulative GPA: _____ Current Major GPA: _____

Faculty Advisor: _____
Name Signature Date

Expected Semester Dates to Conduct the Thesis Work:

Deadline for this application: March 1

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Capstone Replacement Option:

Please check this box and initial if you are applying to complete an ESE Senior Thesis or Barrett Thesis in lieu of the capstone sequence in your major.

_____ Are you a Barrett student? Yes No

By signing **above** the applicant understands that they are **required** to complete **both** semesters of the senior thesis work **consecutively** to be granted the exemption from taking the capstone classes. Failure to do **either** will result in the continued requirement to complete the capstone project to graduate. If approved, the applicant will need to sign up for SES 494: Undergraduate Thesis Preparation (3 credits) in fall and SES 495: Undergraduate Thesis (3 credits) in spring unless they are using a Barrett thesis in which case they will sign up for SES 492: Honors Directed Study and SES 493: Honors Thesis. The applicant also understands that before starting work they need to enter into a **contract** with the faculty member that lays out explicit expectations for conduct, adequate progress and participation. **Violation** of or **failure** to meet the terms of this contract will result in the **voiding** of this option and the continued need to complete the capstone classes. The student also understands that they will be required to complete a Senior Thesis Report and give a public presentation to complete the project.

Senior Thesis Complete Application Checklist Items:

- Application for Undergraduate Senior Thesis
- Senior Thesis Contract, signed by student and faculty advisor (for students applying to complete thesis in lieu of capstone only)
- CV
- Unofficial Transcript
- Statement of Purpose and Research Plans from student
- Summary from faculty advisor detailing research project

Senior Thesis Contract

I, _____ (print student's name), and _____ (print faculty advisor's name) agree and understand to enter into an agreement of expectations for the senior thesis. As part of this agreement the following expectations are made of each party entering into this agreement.

The student agrees that:

- They will meet at least weekly with their faculty advisor
- They will make adequate progress with their work as required by the faculty advisor. If adequate progress is not met three meetings in a row, the faculty member may void this agreement and terminate the senior thesis which will result in a grade of "E" being recorded for any thesis research courses. **For students completing the thesis in lieu of the capstone, this means they will need to complete the capstone course(s) to graduate.**
- They will seek out the faculty advisor if they experience problems or their work ceases to make progress
- They will be required to complete a Senior Thesis Report and give a public presentation to complete the project

The faculty advisor agrees that:

- They will meet with the student at least weekly to discuss their progress and future directions
- They will advise the student of inadequate progress if it occurs so there is plenty of time to correct the problem
- If adequate progress is not met three meetings in a row, the faculty member may void this agreement and terminate the senior thesis, which will result in a grade of "E" being recorded for any thesis research courses. **For students completing the thesis in lieu of the capstone, this means they will need to complete the capstone course(s) to graduate.**
- If they are to be absent for an extended period, that they will give advance notice to their student and provide alternative methods for consultation during the period of absence

The student acknowledges that if these terms are not met the contract will be voided and the student will still be required to complete any course work (i.e. capstone courses) originally required under the terms of the degree major map.

Please select one option:

- I am applying to count my Senior/Barrett Thesis toward my capstone requirement for my degree
- I am completing a Senior/Barrett Thesis in addition to my degree requirements and not in lieu of the capstone

Student Signature and Date: _____

Faculty Advisor Signature and Date: _____