

Step 1: Program essence

- Lead project at work and write it up as a thesis
- Assist students in meeting a graduation requirement
- Students learning to solve a problem for an employer and themselves
- Faculty develop further from working with employers
- Opportunity to apply what was learned in classroom and at work
- Work is at a professional level
- Develop communications skills
- Soft Skills

The Senior Thesis Program continually produces significant contributions to society, employers, the university, and students themselves -- uniquely transforming students through integrating and applying their accumulated professional knowledge from academic and cooperative learning via a challenging project.

Step 2: Stakeholders and interests

Students: thesis writer, TDA users, students preparing PTAs

Fulfilling a degree requirement

Make an impact

Project management and reporting

Employers: student's co-op, subsequent employer, supervisors

Cost savings or other benefits from thesis project

More effective employees

New inventions

Enable leading technology position

Faculty:

Professional development

Ability to mentor students

Research opportunities

Staff

Provides jobs for support staff

Benefit from some theses

A source of pride

Administrators

Pride in institution

Institutional development

Increased prestige of institution and their positions

Consumers

Significant inventions from theses

Lowered product costs

New and improved products

Step 3: Define the appropriate scope of the program – is/is not

| Program IS | Program IS NOT |
|--|--|
| Professional project Agreed upon scope by KU, student, employer Project and document completed in the allotted time frame Comprehensive project Facilitator of producing on time graduation Academic requirement for graduation Combines the academic & coop experience into one project Produces higher level thinking skills Unique Providers of broad based knowledge and experience Incorporates co-op organizational knowledge and experience Applied research | Free faculty consulting for companies Not a report on a company Not a “rite of passage” Not busywork Master’s thesis Basic research |
| | |

Step 4a: 5 current goals

1. Advise all JR2 students
2. Improve “on-time” graduation
3. Recognizing outstanding thesis work
4. Develop a base of approved policies
5. Articulating the steps of the thesis process

Step 4b: 5 future goals

1. Students’ projects will be in their major field
2. Training for employer advisors
3. Using thesis program for marketing
4. All students graduate “on-time”
5. Improved IT support for managing the process
6. Improved thesis template

Step 5: Top 5 products or assets

1. Senior theses
2. Thesis Digital Archive
3. Happy alumni
4. Happy employers
5. Co-op Navigator

Step 6: Key processes, structures, systems that will help accomplish current and future goals (describe)

1. Website
2. Blackboard Organization
3. Co-Navigator
4. Regular Thesis Coordinator meetings
5. "Thesis Team"
6. Academic advising (needs improvement)
7. Meeting reports from faculty thesis trips

Step 7: Write clear performance criteria that account for most of the quality of the program.

1. innovative **
2. positive
3. rewarding
4. creative
5. transforming**
6. relational*
7. challenging**
8. commitment**
9. confidence building
10. professional*
11. educational**
12. significant*
13. application oriented**
14. relative
15. integrative**
16. unique*
17. focused
18. adaptable
19. state of the art
20. synthesis
21. tangible product – bound thesis*
22. accomplishment**
23. skills enhancer
24. demanding
25. structured

1. Innovative
 - creative
 - new concepts and ideas
 - non-traditional

2. Unique
 - Only one of its kind
 - niche
 - specialty
 - experience based not starting in the theoretical
 - employer mentor, faculty mentor
 - bachelor level
 - undergraduate applied research experience
3. Transforming
 - transition to professional writing
 - maturing
 - takes significant responsibility
 - enhancing project related skills
4. Integrative
 - application oriented
 - academic and co-op experiences
 - culminating experience
5. Significant
 - major project
 - project management
 - notable impact
6. Commitment
 - challenging
 - time management
 - perseverance
 - persistent
7. Educational
 - relevant to major
 - theory to practice
 - professional development

1. The student uses creative concepts to develop new ideas and non-traditional solutions to problems. Measure: creativity & problem solving

2. The Senior Thesis is a unique undergraduate applied research experience which flows from practical needs of employers and incorporates theoretical principles. This process is guided by both employer and faculty advisors.

- experience based not starting in the theoretical
- employer mentor, faculty mentor
- bachelor level
- undergraduate applied research experience

Unique: students develop a proposal based upon challenges confronted on their job, recruit a faculty and employer mentor, carry out a research effort that produces a strong solution that the company values and its scholarship documented

3. Students completing a senior thesis have made a major personal accomplishment, which brings about both a growth in job related responsibilities and bringing about maturing of the student and enhancing the students technical and organizational skills.

1. Transforming
 - transition to professional writing
 - maturing
 - takes significant responsibility
 - enhancing project related skills

Transforming: Through the challenges of performing and writing a thesis, students learn to produce professional writing, address the issues of project management, persist against many barriers, and come through with the confidence to take on almost any challenges that the employer will provide in the future.