



What is the senior project?

The senior project (¹), hereinafter referred to as **490**, is a major piece of work and a degree requirement². It runs for two (consecutive) semesters (Fall→Spring or Spring→Summer). Students register only once in the first semester. Students work to complete and report on a specific project. Projects are offered by instructors and students select which project they want (therefore, also selecting their supervisor). At the completion of the project, each student must 1) submit a project report and 2) present their work to the whole of the department.

Who can register?

Students eligible to 'take' 490 are those that 1) have a GPA which is greater than or equal to 2.0 and 2) have senior standing (having already been awarded 96 credits or more towards their degree). Additionally, each project has prerequisite courses and a student 3) must have those prerequisites (with a grade of C or above).

Where do the projects come from?

The project subjects are offered by faculty members. Each member brings forward 2 (or more if required or wanted) projects. Usually the subject matters related to the research interests of the faculty or deal with solving a problem and producing a solution (for the department or otherwise).

When are the projects released?

Projects are presented to students on the Friday before the Monday that the semester (Fall or Spring) starts. Students are notified by email (and SMS) about the presentation (but we also rely on word-of-mouth). The projects are also emailed to interested students and uploaded on the departmental website (after the Friday presentation)

How are projects allocated?

Students will have the weekend following the presentation to contact instructors and request more information about potential projects. At 09:00 Monday (first Mon of the semester), a link to a google form is emailed to interested students. Students have to complete the form and select in their order of preference which projects they would like to take (1st option is most wanted; 2nd option is a little less wanted etc.). In 24 hours the 490 instructor collects the information and allocates based on a first-come first-served³ basis while at the same time checking for the GPA, the status and the pre-requisites of each project. Students that have a project allocated are then urged to contact their supervisor, discuss the project and confirm the allocation by signing the project contract (as prepared by the supervisor).

¹ Course codes depending on degree are: CSC491 (BCSC), ECE491 (BECE, BELE), MAT490 (BMAT), CSW490 (BWIS), CEE490 (BCEE)

² For the mathematics degree there is an option.

³ Which in this case is the order of completing and submitting the google form.

When can students register?

Students do NOT register for 490 in any pre-registration period. Instead, we wait for the allocation to complete. Student can register only after they have signed a contract and therefore officially have a project allocated. To register show the contract to the 490 instructor, get your Add/Drop form signed by the 490 instructor and then visit the enrolment office to register (add 490 to your courses).

- ✓ At the end of the add/drop period the 490 instructor adds all registered students to a (collective) CSC490 Moodle course. This course will contain information on the running of the project and enable the later submission of pertinent documentation.

Working on the project

Work starts immediately after you register. Consult with your supervisor and agree on a mutually agreeable plan of action. Most supervisors require regular weekly meetings so as to keep track of your progress. At the end of the first semester, provided that you have made considerable progress you will be awarded the grade 'I' (incomplete) and be allowed to continue and complete the project.

- ✓ Important: If at the end of the first semester you have NOT made considerable progress⁴ your supervisor has the authority to decide and declare the project a failure. A grade of 'F' will be awarded and you must stop working on the project.

Every project has a grading panel

The panel is made up of the project supervisor plus one other instructor. One of the two must be a faculty member. The panel will review your work before you submit the final copy; make comments so you can correct issues; and will be present at your presentation.

Writing up your thesis

Follow the guidelines provided by your supervisor, start writing parts of your thesis as early as possible. As the deadline for submission approaches you bring the parts together to complete the main body of the report. Produce work in a timely fashion and have your supervisor review and comment on your work regularly. Your supervisor must see and review your work before it is submitted to the panel.

- ✓ Important: The thesis can be written in one of two formats only: Microsoft Word, or LaTeX.
- ✓ Templates (for both formats) are available at: the Moodle course page, the departmental website and the 490 instructor's website.

Submission (of draft) to panel

3 weeks before you are ready to present and submit, you must submit (on Moodle and via email) your work to the panel. What you submit is the thesis/report of the project and it must be about 85-90% ready. Appendices and (if applicable) User and/or installation manuals can be missing, left to be added later on.

- ✓ Important: the draft you submit must have previously been reviewed by your supervisor.

⁴ The considerable progress should have been noted in your contract.

Feedback from panel

Your panel must review your work. After they receive your draft, they will have 1 week in which time they must review your thesis and make comments and/or suggestions and/or corrections as they see fit. If a panel member (except the supervisor) fails to provide any feedback then this means that the member accepts the thesis as is, and has no comments/corrections/suggestions (this also means that they cannot come at a later date and ask for corrections)

Submission of final report and accompanying documentation

You must submit (on Moodle and via email) all contract-specified deliverables that include (and are not limited to): **1)** the final version of the thesis document (Microsoft Word or LaTeX format); **2)** a PDF of the final report; **3)** a completed (with the project and student details and signature) signatures-page; **4)** the PowerPoint slides used to present the project

Also, if applicable: 1) any source code; 2) any setup program; 3) any database; and 4) optionally⁵ any video used as a demonstration during the presentation

- ✓ Important: you must submit all documentation, on Moodle (to the 490 instructor) and via email (to your supervisor) on the Thursday before the presentation of the project to the department.

Presentation of your project

Each student must present their work to the department. Due to time considerations, there are no live demonstration of software or hardware during the day. Each student will have 10 to 15 minutes and must: give a presentation about the project; (if applicable) walk through a demonstration video; and allow for a question and answer (5-min interval) at the end.

- ✓ Important: The presentation takes place on the last day of instruction of the semester/session immediately following the semester of registration. If a student is working on a Fall→Spring project they have to present on the last day of instruction of the spring semester. If a student is working on a Spring→Summer project then they have to present on the last day of instruction of the summer session.

Grade of your project

The grade for your project will NOT be readily available after you complete the presentation. In the days following the presentation the panel will decide on a grade for the project, based on the work detailed on the project contract, the submitted thesis and the presentation.

⁵ Videos tend to be quite large in size so submitting might be an issue.