

DEPARTMENT OF MATH AND COMPUTER SCIENCE

Departmental goals in MAT/CSC 498 are for the student to:

- complete a project of substance in mathematics or computer science.
- become an independent thinker and worker.
- strive for excellence in her research, her written thesis and her oral presentation.

I. General Timeline

A. In general students should plan to spend half of a semester choosing a topic and acquiring an advisor with whom to work.

1. If you plan to finish your project spring semester of your senior year, complete at least II. and III.A. by pre-registration spring semester of your junior year.

2. If you plan to finish your project fall semester of your senior year, complete at least II. and III.A. during fall semester of your junior year.

Table I. A.

	Semester 0		Semester 1		Semester 2	
	Before Pre-registration	Pre-registration and After	Before Midterm	After Midterm	Before Midterm	After Midterm
	Interview faculty as possible advisors	Pre-register for MAT/CSC/ or CIS 925	With advisor choose assoc. advisor	Continue work on project	Continue work and revise, revise, revise!	Complete thesis
	Research possible topics	Written proposal due to advisor	Work on project	Write first draft of thesis	Final draft due to advisor before midterm	Give presentation
	Choose topic and advisor	Start work on project				

* This includes students whose first major is in other departments who choose to write their thesis with a faculty member from the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science.

B. After your topic is chosen you can expect your project will be the equivalent of being registered for a one three-hour course, taken as an independent study, over a time period of two semesters (Semesters 1 and 2 in Table I. A.). Pre-register for MAT 498, CSC 498 or CIS 498 during Semester 0. Normally, you will be given a grade of Z at the end of Semester I.

C. In most cases you can expect that most of your reading, research, problem solving,

programming, and formulating a rough draft of your thesis will occur Semester I. You and your advisor should establish a schedule for regular conferences during this semester .

D. You can expect that you will spend Semester 2 fine-tuning your work and writing, and preparing and giving your oral presentation. You and your advisor should continue regular conferences during this semester.

II. Choosing an Area for a Project (Semester O before Midterm)

You may find it helpful to talk with one or more Math/CS faculty members during this phase. [Refer to I.A. for the time when this is appropriate.]

III. Acquiring Project Advisors

A. Usually at the request of the student, a Project Advisor is chosen. This is finalized by mutual agreement between the faculty member and the student with the approval of the department head. [Note: This needs to be done prior to pre-registration for the semester in which you register for MAT/CSC/CIS 498.]

B. The faculty member, after consulting with the department head, will ask another faculty member to be the Associate Advisor for this project. The Associate Advisor will assist the advisor in coaching the student, reading drafts, etc.

IV. Written Proposal

From your subject area make an annotated bibliography and write a description –about half a page in length --of topics you might want to pursue. Submit this to your advisor for approval by the end of the semester in which you pre-register for MAT/CSC/CIS 498.

V. Filing the Special Studies Form

At the beginning of the semester for which you are registered for MAT/CSC/CIS 498 your advisor will work with you, based on your proposal, to develop an abstract that outlines your project on a Special Form for submission to the Registrar.

This must be completed within the first two weeks of the semester.

VI. The Written Thesis

The written thesis must be submitted to your two advisors by midterm of the second semester. This should be your best effort at a final copy. You can, however, expect that your advisors will ask you to make revisions before giving final approval. Appropriate revisions must be made and final approval obtained from your advisors at least two weeks before the last day of classes.

VII. The Oral Presentation

The oral presentation should be a professional description of your project. This formal presentation should be approximately 20 minutes in length and should include appropriate audio-visuals.

The oral presentation is to be given at the November or April scheduled meeting of Pi Mu Epsilon during the Semester 2.

Logistical responsibilities of the student regarding the oral presentation:

Scheduling and reserving equipment

Making and sending invitations

Making and posting flyers

Invitations should be sent and flyers posted ten (10) days in advance of the oral presentation.

Invitations should be sent to:

All faculty of the Mathematics and Computer Science department

All majors within the Math/CS department (See the Departmental Assistant for a list.)

Any other faculty advisors

Honors Program Coordinator and Teaching Fellows Director

The President, Vice-Presidents and Deans of Meredith College

Education Department faculty members (for Teaching Fellows)

Other faculty as appropriate

Other Honors Program or Teaching Fellows students

Family, friends, and others as appropriate

VIII. Completion

A. Theses should be completed as stated in the college honors thesis guidelines.

If you are an Honors Student the original signed copy of your thesis will be bound for the library. If you are a Teaching Fellow your original copy will go to the Teaching Fellows office, but need not be bound. If you are both an Honors Student and a Teaching Fellow, the original will be bound for the library and an unbound copy may go to the Teaching Fellows office. In addition to these copies, a copy of your thesis or project should be made for the file in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science Office. Of course you can make other copies as you wish.

All copies must be signed by the appropriate college officials and submitted by the last day of classes.

IX. Grading and Evaluation

A. The grade will be determined by the Project Advisor, who may consult with the Associate Advisor .

B. The grade will be based on :

1. The quality of the research, writing, and oral presentation.
2. Demonstration of initiative, time management (as indicated in Table I.A. and VII.), and thoroughness in every phase of the project.

C. The grade will not be submitted until both items in VIII. are complete.

Best wishes. Have fun!