

**THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SCIENCE  
OF THE KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

**AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ASIA**

**BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION PROGRAM**

**Senior  
Thesis  
Guidelines**

**2011-12 Academic Year**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance and information about the Senior Thesis process for Business Administration students.

The Senior Thesis is an alternative to the written Kyrgyz State Examination in core business administration courses -- management, marketing, financial accounting and banking. All students who have fulfilled the requisite eligibility requirements will be authorized to conduct research, write a thesis report and defend their thesis work before the State Examination Board. The State Examination will no longer be a choice. Only in rare situations approved by the BA Chair can this option be exercised.

The purpose of the senior thesis is to allow all students to apply their accumulated theoretical knowledge to practical real-world analytical situations. Therefore, the senior thesis is a compilation of theoretical background, analysis and assessment which becomes an individual statement of the graduating senior's analytical business acumen.

### **Eligibility**

According to Business Administration department regulations, students must meet the following requirements before being granted permission to write and defend a senior thesis:

1. The student must have achieved a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or higher;
2. The student must be in good standing with the university; and
3. The student must obtain the written approval of the Chair, Business Administration Department in regards to the topic and scope of the research project.
4. The student must attend Honors Seminar sessions in Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 (missing more than 3 sessions will disqualify student)
5. The student must keep a regular schedule of meetings with their supervisor (at least once per week initially, or as required by your supervisor)

### **Submission**

The submission deadline for completed, final versions of the senior thesis is **18:00, Thursday, 3 May 2012** in Room 202/1 (**BA department**). The student is responsible for insuring that two (2) bound copies of the final version and one electronic version (MS Word format) of the thesis is submitted prior to the submission deadline. Only those senior theses submitted according to the acceptable format will be accepted. Senior theses submitted after the submission deadline will not be accepted. Refer to the document Senior Thesis Submission Format for the correct submission format.

### **Grade Components**

The senior thesis is comprised of two components: the written thesis and the defense of the thesis research. Grades will be based upon:

Written Thesis Report	60 percent
Defense of Senior Thesis	40 percent

### Senior Thesis Grading Scale:

A	100 – 93
A-	92 – 90
B+	89 – 87
B	86 – 83
B-	82 – 80
C+	79 – 77
C	76 – 73
C-	72 – 70
F	69 – 0

Absence for the scheduled Senior Thesis Defense appointment does not imply an additional appointment to defend one's work will be permissible. If commitments hinder making the scheduled appointment, students must consult with the Chair, BA Department Senior Thesis Committee at least five days in advance of the defense to make other arrangements.

### Thesis Topic

The senior thesis is an individual effort to further the study of graduating seniors. Therefore, the topic of research for the senior thesis should be of personal interest of the student in the field of business administration. The thesis topic and outline should be agreed upon by both the student and the senior thesis supervisor/advisor prior to being submitted to the Chair, BA department for approval. General requirements on the topic are:

1. The topic must be relevant to the current global business environment;
2. The topic should be related to the sphere of business in Central Asia
3. The topic must have substantial academic foundations upon which a review of business literature will provide background on the topic.
4. If in the form of a Business Plan, it must include substantial research.

### Timetable

Students are responsible for insuring that the senior thesis is completed in a timely manner. Students will work with their senior thesis supervisor to complete the research work. The responsibility for completing the senior thesis lies with the graduating senior and not with the thesis supervisor or the faculty of the BA Department. A framework for completing the senior thesis, complete with suggested milestones, is provided below. Students are strongly urged to adhere to the scheduled timetable designed in conjunction with their senior thesis advisor.

Work Component	Responsibility	Deadline
Initial Meeting of BA Chair with students	BA Chair	Fri. Sept 9, 2011
Presentation of Senior Thesis Guidelines	BA Chair	Fri. Sept 30, 2011
Supervisor Selection Deadline	Student	Fri. Sept 30, 2011
Submission of Senior Thesis Applications	Students & Thesis	Mon. Oct 10, 2011
Faculty Review of Senior Thesis Applications	BA Faculty	Fri. Oct 12, 2011
Submission of Research Annotation	Student	Fri. Nov 25, 2011

Approval of Senior Thesis Projects	BA Chair	Mon. Nov 28, 2011
Submission of one Chapter of Senior Thesis (or one-third of project Business Plan)	Students & Thesis Supervisors	Fri. Jan 20, 2012
Submission of another Chapter II of Senior Thesis (or second third of project Business	Students & Thesis Supervisors	Fri. Feb 17, 2012
Submission of final Chapter of Senior Thesis (or remainder of project Business Plan), and completion of full first draft	Students & Thesis Supervisors	Fri. March 16, 2012
Pre-defense process	BA Faculty & Students	March 26-30, 2012
Submission of 2 <sup>nd</sup> draft of Senior Thesis	Students and Thesis	Fri. April 6, 2012
<b>Submission of Final Version of Senior</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Thur. May 3, 2012</b>
Defense of Senior Thesis	Students & State Exam	May 14-25, 2012
Final Grades' announced	BA Chair	Fri. May 25, 2012

### **Forms and Guidelines**

An AUCA E-Course link (<http://e-course.auca.kg/>) will be set up for your senior thesis class under the name Honors Seminar II, and the access code will be the course code ("BUS499"). The E-Course will contain specific format instructions for your Senior Thesis. This will include links to required forms such as Supervisor Selection, and the Senior Thesis Application, and academic resources relevant to the completion of the senior thesis for both students and supervisors. Students must log on this Web site to access all the necessary supplemental documentation to insure compliance with BA department requirements.

### **Specific Forms and Guidelines**

- **Supervisor Selection Form**
  - Can be obtained from the BA office, and will be posted on the E-Course.
- **Senior Thesis Application Form**
  - Can be obtained from the BA office, and will be posted on the E-Course.
- **Research Annotation Requirements**

The Research Annotation is a brief outline of the senior thesis, and should include a concise explanation of your project (approximately 2 pages). The Research Annotation should consist of the following components:

1. Identification of business related issue to be researched (the topic of research);
2. Relevance of this topic to the current global business environment, its relationship to the sphere of business in Central Asia, and an assessment on why this thesis should be undertaken;
3. Overall scope and specific objectives of the senior thesis research;
4. Subject and object of the study.
5. Proposed research methodology;
6. General description of each Chapter of Thesis;
7. Bibliography; and
8. Expected results of the senior thesis process.

- **General Thesis Requirements**

- The senior thesis must be written in English, and should be 50 – 60 pages in length.
- The thesis defense and pre-defense will be conducted in English.
- The senior thesis supervisor is recommended to be an AUCA faculty member with competence in the area of research. Thesis supervisors must have the approval of the Chair, Business Administration department prior to working with the student. The supervisor will assist with the preparation and organization of the research project, collection and analysis of data, and overall conclusions of the research. However, the supervisor's role is one of guidance; not actual work.
- When the thesis is completed, the supervisor prepares a written statement and recommends the thesis for evaluation and defense. The thesis, along with the supervisor comment, is given to the BA Department State Examination Board. The Board is composed of BA Department faculty members and external experts and specialists.
- The senior thesis defense is held in an open meeting forum of the State Examination Board where the public may sit in on all the meetings. Each defense will begin with the student giving a presentation of their thesis work (not to exceed 15 minutes), followed by questions from the State Examination Board. The total recommended time for each defense is 30 minutes.

- **Academic Dishonesty**

As defined, academic dishonesty is a *failure to maintain academic integrity*. Failing to maintain academic integrity includes obtaining help with the realization of the senior thesis and plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a serious issue in academic settings. There is a general rule for avoiding plagiarism: never attempt to pass off another's work as your own. More specific guidelines are:

- Do not copy words from any source without quoting and citing that source. The quotation should be reproduced in the exact manner in which the quote is taken.
- Do not use the ideas, concepts or opinions from any source without citing that source. Included are key terms, technical concepts and original views.
- Paraphrasing is acceptable; however, one must take care to cite the source and not misrepresent the original thesis. Paraphrasing often is the area in which most charges of plagiarism result.

Students are expected to maintain high ethical standards in all their academic endeavors. All cases of academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade and will be referred to the Chair, Business Administration department for administrative review.

Steven Lustig  
Acting Chair, Business Administration Department  
11 November 2011