The Keystone Project

The Keystone Project is a substantial, in-depth work of research, creation, or invention in a student’s chosen field. The primary purpose of the Keystone Projects is to provide students with a sustained experience of intellectual discovery. That experience begins in the junior year, when students learn to balance the excitement of imaginative approaches to their intellectual interests with the rigor of field-specific methodologies, and work on the design of their research/creative project. The process continues in the senior year, when students conduct their research, create their artwork, or invent their devices, and assess the significance of the work they have done. The form of the Keystone Project may vary from field to field, but it should aim for the highest standards of the disciplinary or interdisciplinary area in question. Although the Keystone Project originates in and is supported by Kilachand Honors College, students will undertake their research, and be advised, in their chosen field of study.

The Keystone Requirements

All Kilachand students take a seminar in either semester of their junior year (KHC HC 401: The Process of Discovery) aimed at helping them to design and propose a Keystone project. In their senior year, students carryout their projects while enrolled in a two-semester two-credit directed study with their Keystone Advisor (KHC HC 503 and KHC HC 504).

The Keystone Advisor

While Kilachand provides a curricular structure and modest funding for Keystone Projects, it cannot provide the intellectual expertise and individual mentoring that independent projects of this magnitude require. For this reason, we rely on faculty advisors to provide intellectual guidance and support of the conceptualization and completion of our students’ Keystone Projects. We rely on advisors to:

1. Provide feedback on Keystone Project proposals during the junior seminar
2. Provide the Kilachand Directors with insight into the intellectual substance and practical viability of Keystone Projects at the end of the junior year
3. Provide intellectual guidance to students as they conceptualize, carryout, and complete their Keystone Project during the senior year

Advising a Keystone

In the course of advising a Kilachand student as they undertake their Keystone Project, we ask faculty to:

1. Sign the Keystone Faculty Advisor Form agreeing to serving as the student’s Keystone Advisor
2. Respond to a catalog of questions about the student’s Keystone proposal to assist Kilachand Directors in assessing the viability of the proposed project. Depending on the semester the student takes the course, we ask that you respond to these questions by January 15 or June 15. You will be sent a link directing you to these questions once the student has submitted the Keystone Faculty Advisor Form with project proposal and budget, where relevant, to Kilachand at the close of the junior seminar
3. Meet regularly with the student to provide intellectual guidance on their project as it develops. Frequent meetings are one aspect of the students’ directed study with you
4. Evaluate your advisee’s progress and quality of work by providing a letter grade for the directed study in which the student is enrolled with you. A letter grade must be provided each semester and students are required to earn a grade of B+ or better in Kilachand coursework in the junior and senior years to graduate from Kilachand. We assume you will apply the standards relevant to your discipline in grading an undergraduate project of this scope, but if you have any questions, please feel free to contact us

Please see reverse for signatures
As faculty advisor to ____________________________, I agree to supervise his/her Keystone Project, which is entitled _____________________________________________________________

_______________________________________________________________
Advisor name (please print)

_______________________________________________________________
Advisor title, department and school

_______________________________________________________________
Advisor signature Date

_______________________________________________________________
Student name (please print) School and major

_______________________________________________________________
Student signature Date

Students: by completing and signing this form, you acknowledge that it is your responsibility to meet deadlines, adhere to timelines, and ensure that you are regularly meeting with and communicating with your advisor. Your Keystone advisor is there to guide you as you conduct your research, assess appropriate methods, and analyze your data, and write up your findings. It is not his/her responsibility to remind you to make progress on your project.