To obtain your master's degree in Higher Ed in the Community College Leadership Program or other Higher Ed programs, all graduate students are required to complete and present either a creative component or a thesis. The website listed above spells out the specific requirements for the degree completion. It will be most helpful to you in sorting out what is expected of you. Once you have decided on your major professor and committee, you will work very closely with that person and group in completing your creative component and final oral exams. Within the next semester, you should be deciding on who you would like to become your major professor and invite that individual to serve that role for you. Once that individual accepts your invitation, he/she will guide you through the process.

The following are excerpts from the ISU website on the master's creative component or thesis requirements.

**Creative Component.** Every nonthesis student must present substantial evidence of individual accomplishment (e.g., a special report, capstone course, integrated field experience, annotated bibliography, research project, design, or other creative endeavor). A minimum of two credits of such independent work is required on every program of study for a nonthesis master's degree. Some programs require more credits. (For more information, contact the individual program or consult the Specific Master's Degrees section in this catalog.) The element of creative independent study must be explicitly identified on the program of study. The format of the creative component is determined in cooperation with the POS committee. As with a thesis, a creative component should be submitted to members of the POS committee two weeks before the final oral examination. However, no first submission or final submission of a creative component is turned in to the Graduate College for review and approval.

**Thesis.** A master's thesis is a scholarly composition that demonstrates the ability of the author to do independent and creative work. A thesis is required in all fields in which a master's degree is awarded, except where specific provision is made for a nonthesis degree program. A minimum of three research credits is required on every program of study for a thesis master's degree.

Responsibility for writing and editing of the thesis rests with the student, under the supervision of the major professor, and not with the Graduate College. The Graduate College does not permit joint authorship of theses. It is the responsibility of the major professor to supervise the preparation of preliminary and final drafts of the thesis to assure the highest level of quality when the student presents the thesis to the committee for final approval.

Copies of the thesis must be submitted to the members of the POS committee at least two weeks before the final oral examination.
Res Ev 550 W/V Final Paper Requirements:

The two assignments in Res Ev 550 WX related to the thesis or creative component are the creative component prospectus and the creative component proposal. The prospectus is an outline of what you expect to do for your final project. It does not need to be lengthy nor extensive. It is an outline. The purpose of your prospectus is to get feedback on your thoughts and ideas for your creative component. The instructor will keep very close track of your posting and give immediate feedback on your ideas.

The creative component is as stated above:

“Every nonthesis student must present substantial evidence of individual accomplishment (e.g., a special report, capstone course, integrated field experience, annotated bibliography, research project, design, or other creative endeavor).”

That gives you a lot of freedom and opportunity to choose a project of your interest and do an in-depth study of it. The creative component can have various formats and elements depending on your creativity. There are elements of it that should be included as you have learned from Res Ed 550 course work. The proposal you will submit as your final project will contain the first three chapters or sections, if you prefer, of your final project. It is in many cases a quasi-research project, in that you will use research methodology to reach conclusions and conduct your study. Listed below are suggestions for your final project preparation.

Chapter 1 or Section 1:

**Background information** – describe the situation, the need, why the project is important and why it is necessary to study it. Why you are interested in it and what caused you reach the conclusion that it was worthy of study.

This should help to define the **goal/ goals** of the project.

The **purpose** of the project should be identified and stated.

**Research question/s** should be identified and stated. Think about it in terms of what is it that you want to know about this topic. Section one may, use some quotes from your literature review, to show that it is a societal issue as well as your local or community college issue.

This is your **introduction** to the project.

Chapter 2 or Section 2:

**The literature review** – Go back to Chapter 4 (Creswell, 2008) on literature review and use that for your guide. The literature review is a written summary of journal articles, books and other documents, such as existing records, conference papers, staff meetings, etc. that help to support your need for the study and refine your study. If it is a report of a local initiative that you were the key in charge of the project, you should still have a comprehensive literature review, because in essence, your project becomes a program evaluation. You should have at least 6 to 10 sources
as a part of your literature review for your proposal. The exact citation need not be listed in the prospectus, but should be listed on the final paper. The longest part of this paper will probably be your literature review.

Chapter 3 or Section 3:

**Your methodology** – the plan for implementing the study. What are you going to do or did you do in pushing the project forward. Who was/will be involved. Are you using surveys, observations, focus groups, etc. Will/Did you gather data and implement based on the data?

You are not expected to carry out the study at this point. **It is your proposal for your creative component or a research project.**

Finally:

Include a summary or conclusion in your paper.

References