

## **University Honors Program Independent Study Application for Capstone**

The Honors Independent Study experience is called the Honors Capstone. Capstones are independent study projects that allow a student to investigate a subject of particular interest, to participate in the research of the faculty capstone advisor, or to undertake a creative effort in the major field of study. Depending on the discipline, the outcome may be a senior thesis, a videotape, a computer program, or an artistic creation etc. The thesis or other appropriate documentation, after approval by the faculty capstone advisor, is deposited with the Honors Program to become a part of the Capstone Library. (Samples of approved proposals and Capstones may be examined in the Capstone Library.)

Capstone projects may be in the student's major area, or in a related area, and frequently will fulfill departmental honors requirements as well as those of the University Honors Program. The independent study effort may extend over several semesters and does not have to be carried out during the semester of registration for credit. Students in their junior year are urged to discuss possible Capstone projects with the Honors director to allow adequate time for thorough completion of the work.

The University Honors Independent Study should reflect interest in a specific topic not usually handled in depth in any course listed in the catalog (although the interest is often generated by some in-class experience). Every Independent Study should be individualized by the student. The **University Honors Independent Study Application for Capstone** could be either the outgrowth of a definite, directed investigation already begun or could be new to the student.

The applicant must discuss the goals and directions of this proposal in detail with the faculty capstone advisor of the project. Also, in order for the final capstone to be accepted, the student and Honors director must agree in advance on the shape of the study, the method of project supervision, and the form for the final presentation of the results.

In general, the capstone proposal should be turned in by the student and accepted by the faculty capstone advisor, the department chairperson, and the Honors Director in the semester **prior** to the actual capstone work. Any of these individuals may require clarification and modification of the proposal and the project through the proposal process.

The capstone proposal must be submitted in good form to the Honors Program **no later** than the last day of the fourth week of the semester in which the capstone is taken for credit. Special circumstances do arise that might cause the proposal to be completed earlier or later than this.

A **rough draft of the capstone** is due in the Honors Office by the end of the **first week in November or April**. A review committee will provide recommendations for revision. A copy of the completed project, or documentation of the completed project, must be filed with the University Honors Program no later than the Friday before finals week of the semester of completion. It is the student's responsibility to see that such documentation is submitted within the designated time.

The following pages list capstone goals and the items that are required in your proposal. Type and print out your proposal, then attach the cover page to the front of the proposal and the signature page to the back of it. After your faculty capstone advisor accepts and signs the proposal you should secure the signature of the department chairperson, whose approval is also required. You must then take the proposal to the director of the University Honors Program, also for signature and approval.

## University Honors Program

### Goals of the University Honors Capstone

- To provide the student with a “capstone” experience
- To require a senior thesis / writing experience
- To require the student to carry out an original work of significance
- To allow a student to develop individual initiative separate and independent from class work
- To require the student to learn how to plan a thesis, dissertation, research, project, or artistic experience
- To require the student to learn how to carry out and see to completion a thesis, dissertation, research, project, or artistic experience
- To allow a student a unique opportunity to have a one-on-one collaboration with a true expert in a field under study by the student
- To give a student an opportunity to explore or study a topic in depth
- To give a student control over a project, or thesis of importance
- To provide a student with value added to the overall honors experience

### Proposal Requirements

1. Please indicate the proposed title of your project / thesis. (One to two lines.)
2. Describe **in detail** the focus of the work you propose. e.g., is there a specific hypothesis you are advancing? Is there a problem you are solving?: Why is your topic of interest? Why is your topic important? (One half to one page.)
3. List a minimum of five (and a maximum of twenty) reference sources dealing with your topic using a Manual of Style. (One half to one page.)
4. **Briefly** describe the methodology of your proposed study. **Describe** your research design, if any. Is the study qualitative or quantitative? Is it performance art? Are you using primary or secondary sources as your database? Are you working in a specific creative genre? (One half to one page.)
5. The purpose of the following is to assist you in structuring and carrying out an independent study project. In consultation with your faculty capstone advisor describe each phase or step of your project as specifically as possible. **Please** include **estimated** completion dates for each phase or step. Please include any deadlines that you must meet external to the Honors Program, e.g. departmental honors, HCIR funding, funding deadlines of undergraduate committees, or prize competitions. (One half to one page.)
6. List the courses you have taken, expertise and experiences or activities you have had that provide a background for this study. (One quarter to one page.)