University Scholars Program
Capstone Handbook

Table of Contents

Introduction

This handbook is designed to provide instructors, students, and mentors with resources to guide University Scholars Program (USP) students through the successful completion of a capstone project within the student's chosen major. The Capstone Project is a requirement of all University Scholars Program graduates. Through the Capstone Project, honors students are challenged to articulate a relevant research or creative agenda; develop clear research questions or goals; identify and demonstrate appropriate methodologies in a project of one's own design; communicate logically and effectively; formulate and develop meaningful claims supported by reason and evidence; and organize and synthesize information from diverse and appropriate sources to form a clear and articulate argument.

About the University Scholars Program

Mission

The University Scholars Program identifies highly motivated students, immerses them in a learning community where they can explore their passions, provides them with opportunities to take intellectual risks, and develops them as socially responsible leaders who are ready to take action in their profession and community.

Vision

Honors Education at the University of Central Arkansas seeks to develop public scholars whose values are shaped by inquiry and exploration; whose deliberate actions are grounded in interdisciplinary understanding; and whose skills as leaders empower them to fulfill their potential to guide change within the university, the community, the state, the nation, and the world.

Core Values

The core values of the Honors Education at UCA, underlying everything we do, include:

- Academic and Personal Excellence
- Inquiry and Exploration
- Integrity and Social Responsibility
- Diversity and Inclusion
- Interdisciplinary Understanding

Goals

The University Scholars Program has these goals for student development:

- Social Responsibility–addressing social and environmental challenges and finding ethical solutions, a process that culminates in individual and collective interventions;
- Expertise–practicing communication and inquiry, a process that culminates in academic research, writing, and oral presentation; and
- Leadership–engaging as citizen-scholars exercising informed judgment and an ability to collaborate, a process that culminates in the capacity to guide social change for the common good.

Capstone Courses

Multidisciplinary Research Methods

A multidisciplinary research methods class for University Scholars Program students. Students will gain exposure to qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods research approaches; read, analyze, and synthesize current literature within their disciplinary fields; write a literature review of an approved topic; and develop and present a research proposal for their capstone thesis project. This course is typically taken in the spring semester of the student's second year of study. Satisfies Effective Communication (C) and Critical Inquiry (I) within the Upper Division Core. Consent of the Honors College Associate Dean.

UCA Upper Division Core

This course is designated [C] which means it satisfies your Communication component of the Upper Division Core. Communication courses promote effective communication: the ability to develop and present ideas logically and effectively in order to enhance communication and collaboration with diverse individuals and groups. For more information, go to http://uca.edu/core.

This course is designated [I] which means it satisfies your Critical Inquiry component of the Upper Division Core. Critical Inquiry courses promote the ability to analyze new problems and situations to formulate informed opinions and conclusions.

Learning Objectives

- Investigate multidisciplinary research approaches, designs, and methodologies.
- Demonstrate understanding of departmental honors criteria and expectations within the student's major field of study.
- Demonstrate understanding of research ethics and requirements for research on human subjects.
- Forge a relationship with a faculty member in the student's major field of study to serve as mentor, guide, and sounding board for the Capstone Project; identify second readers or committee members in accordance with departmental criteria.
- Develop research question(s) or creative agenda in partnership with the faculty mentor.
- Practice formulating, developing, supporting, and assessing claims and learn to properly attribute sources.
- Review pertinent literature or materials that form the scholarly background of the student's project, as selected in consultation with mentors, and produce a written literature review.
- Design, write, and present a research or creative project proposal, situated within the current literature and the student's major field of study, with approval of the faculty mentor.

While the Capstone Proposal only documents the beginning of a capstone project and lays out a plan for the trajectory of the student's project, whatever is still applicable from the project proposal when beginning the Capstone semester can be used in the final document, as long as it is edited to reflect new information, expanded research, changed plans, and so on.

Expectations of Mentors and Students

During the Research Methods semester, the student will identify a proposed topic and mentor. The student should prepare a list of readings in consultation with their mentor as soon as possible, so that preliminary research can begin. The reading list should function as a guide for the student and mentor; as the student explores the subject, however, they may find the need to make changes to the reading list to incorporate new angles. The student is responsible for their own discoveries and for making choices regarding materials necessary for the research.

Advising is generally a two- or three-semester commitment. The Scholars Capstone Project may take many different forms, depending on the student's major and criteria for departmental honors (see types of Capstone Projects section for more information). The student will not complete the Capstone Project during the Research Methods semester, but will complete a Project Proposal and timeline for the remaining work. As the student moves into the advanced research and writing stages, the student should expect to retain the mentor as a primary advisor for the Capstone Project.

During this time, the mentor is the student's sounding board and is expected to ask questions, guide the student, and push the student to do their best to uncover the relevant material. The mentor's essential role throughout the tutorial experience is to act as a pedagogue—to "walk with" the student by providing an example of how to ask insightful questions.

The mentor need not necessarily be a subject matter expert but should have some knowledge of the field and the kinds of questions and answers that are appropriate. Mentors may find that they learn a great deal from their students. Students may be encouraged to take research courses in their own departments and/or apply for undergraduate research and experiential learning grants, as applicable.

The student and mentor should work out any scheduled meetings or deadlines set for future semesters and each semester should sign the Capstone Mentorship Contract that specifies whether they will meet weekly or bi-weekly (see sample in Appendix B). After mentoring 3 students through the entirety of 3 capstone projects, the mentor is entitled to $300 in travel funds and should contact the Associate Dean to arrange a transfer when they are interested in using these funds.

Scholars Capstone

The Scholars Capstone course is designed to support students as they complete, write, and present the Scholars Capstone Project. Its most important function is to ensure that each student contributes new knowledge through completion of the project. The heart of the course will be the workshop, which will consist of writing, sharing, reading, and commenting on one another's work.

Course Objectives
- Integrate knowledge to express insight and originality through disciplinary or multidisciplinary methodologies
- Analyze new problems and situations to arrive at informed opinions and conclusions
- Construct a knowledge base to ask more informed questions and learn more complex concepts
- Utilize appropriate conventions and strategies in written and oral communication for various audiences and purposes
- Develop and communicate ideas logically and effectively in order to enhance written and oral communication
- Participate with a community of scholars in the process of writing, reflecting, and revising

Grading Criteria

Grading for the thesis course is based on the quality of your written project, your presentation, and comments from your advisors. This is, by necessity, a subjective enterprise. Your project advisors (first and second readers) and capstone course instructor will determine whether your project satisfies the requirements of an honors capstone according to the departmental honors criteria for your major department. If the student, capstone advisors, or capstone course instructor finds that there is a problem in satisfying any requirement (including meetings, writing, attendance, etc.), they should communicate the problem to the other parties immediately. A failure to solve this problem could result in a lowered grade. Approximately 40% of your class grade comes from your participation in the peer review components of the class, with 30% of the grade coming from the final capstone document, and 30% coming from the capstone presentation.

All students registered for the course **must complete the project during the semester enrolled**. Throughout the semester each student will be expected to complete a draft of the project, revise it, and do a practice presentation. Failing to meet these requirements will lower the student's grade, regardless of the quality of the final project.

Any project submitted after Study Day will be considered late. Any graduating student submitting the Honors Capstone Project after finals week may need to reapply for a later graduation. Any returning student submitting the project after finals week may be required to write an exception request for the continuance of his scholarship, complete with a personal statement and two letters of support from faculty.

Students Enrolling in Departmental Capstone Course

If a student's major department offers a course for students completing a departmental honors project, the student may enroll in the departmental course rather than the University Scholars Capstone course, USCH 4320. Students must be enrolled in at least 1-hour of capstone credit during the semester they are completing, submitting, and presenting their capstone project so that completion of the capstone project will be transcripted and the mentor and/or capstone instructor can submit a grade for the project.

Expectations of Mentors and Students

Before enrolling in the Scholars Capstone Course or the corresponding Departmental Capstone Course, a student should have nearly completed the Capstone Project. Work will need to be done during the semesters between completing Multidisciplinary Research Methods and the Capstone course in order for the student to be prepared to enroll in Capstone. During the Scholars Capstone semester, the student must document results of the Capstone experience as is appropriate for the specific project type. Within the first month of the Capstone course, the student must submit their final Capstone Project title and choose an objective second reader (or committee, depending upon departmental criteria) for the Capstone Project, who may or may not represent another discipline.

During the Scholars Capstone semester, the mentor serves primarily as reader and consultant. The mentor and student should agree on regular meeting times throughout the semester. If the student or mentor encounters a problem in satisfying any requirement including meetings, writing, attendance, etc., they should communicate the problem to the other parties immediately. If the interested parties are unable to resolve the issue after further discussion, then the Honors administration should be notified. Failure to resolve a problem could result in an X grade for the student, which could, in turn, result in loss of a

scholarship. Changing mentors requires a meeting with the honors administration (see Appendix C for Common Problems/Solutions).

Each student must hand in a polished draft of the project **at the midterm break** to the mentor, second reader, and instructor; at which time they will read and make recommendations for revisions. The mentor and second reader are responsible for returning comments to the student in a timely manner.   The student should hand in a final draft of the project to the mentor, second reader, and instructor no later than **a month before Study Day**. If revisions are required, revisions are due to the mentor and second reader **no less than two weeks prior to Study Day**, allowing both the mentor and second reader time to give any additional feedback that may be needed to finalize the project. On or before Study Day, the student must submit to the UCA Honors College an electronic submission of the final Capstone Project through the student portal.

The final Capstone Presentation will take place on UCA's official Study Day, which is the last business day before finals week. The Capstone Presentation generally lasts half an hour, with twenty minutes for the presentation and ten minutes for questions. A representative from the UCA Honors College serves as the presentation moderator. The capstone project **mentor and second reader must be present at the student's final presentation**. If not present, the student will be asked to repeat or cancel the presentation.

An assessment of the final project and a grade recommendation will be due from the mentor the week following the Capstone Presentation (see criteria in Appendix D). If the Capstone Presentation and Capstone Project meet with the mentors' approval, the mentor and second reader will electronically sign off on the Capstone Project through an email they will receive upon the student's electronic submission. After mentoring 3 students through the entirety of 3 capstone projects, the mentor is entitled to $300 in travel funds and should contact the Associate Dean to arrange a transfer when they are interested in using these funds.

Types of Capstone Projects

The Honors Capstone Project may take many different forms, depending upon the criteria for departmental honors of the student's major department. Regardless of the type of project, the student must provide both a written and oral presentation.

Each project type follows the same basic format:

1. Cover Page (including Abstract)
2. Contents
3. Introduction
4. Literature Review
5. Explanation of Methodology/Design of Project **OR** Artist Statement *(Creative)*
6. Results *(Thesis)* **OR** Documentation of Project *(Experiential)*
7. Discussion *(Thesis)* **OR** Reflective Statement *(Experiential)*
8. References
9. Appendices/Figures

More on the basic format and the variations for several types of projects follows.
Departmental Capstone Projects may take many different forms. They can take the form of a traditional thesis, but they can also be creative writing, fundamental research, an innovative curriculum, a

performance, an artistic creation, or a substantive service project, depending on the expectations of the department. Examples of Departmental Capstone Projects take three main forms (Analytical, Applied/Experiential, or Creative) and include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Research project that culminates in a paper and scholarly presentation to faculty and campus peers
- Research project which produces a paper ready to submit for publication in an academic outlet, such as an academic journal or conference proceedings
- Inquiry-based research project driven by the investigation of a gap in academic knowledge represented by the current peer-reviewed academic literature
- Action-based research driven by an investigation of the state of academic, professional, and/or technical knowledge represented by current peer-reviewed academic literature, professional practice, and/or technical application
- Field research that results in program development for a campus and community partner
- Internship which demonstrates significant learning, is closely monitored by a faculty mentor, fulfills all credit requirements, AND culminates with an in-depth paper or oral presentation
- Significant consulting project for a company, not-for-profit organization, or government agency, including an executive summary of the project
- Significant service-learning project, including a written summary of the project and its outcomes
- Portfolio
- Expressive exploration of a political, cultural, economic, and/or social issue using mediums such as literary or musical composition, painting, film, sculpture, photography exhibit and photo essay, or other art form
- Business plan
- Founding a student organization
- Developing a curriculum
- Policy paper
- Participation in a significant competition

Appendices

Appendix A: Guidelines for Final Capstone Project Proposal

By the Friday of Dead Week you will need to upload your Final Capstone Project Proposal into the student portal at http://honors.uca.edu/student. A link to your project proposal will then be sent to your mentor for their approval. The final capstone project proposal should be 10-15 pages in length and should contain the following items (see Appendix G for sample proposal cover page):

1) Cover Sheet: include the provisional title of your capstone project, your name, mentor's name, and an abstract of no more than 100 words summarizing your project

2) Introduction: Background, Context, and Statement of Question or Project

3) Literature Review: a review of relevant literature in your area, sensibly Organized

4) Methodology: a description of potential approaches, techniques, and methods for the planned project

5) Gantt Chart: a Gantt chart or other timeline with specific deadlines and deliverables for the project lifespan (1-3 semesters, through presentation of the final project)

6) Research Compliance: CITI Training and IRB proposal, if necessary

7) A complete bibliography, set forth according to the documentation style appropriate to your field (many if not all of these items may show up in your literature review as well; this is just a list, with no narrative or annotations included)

Appendix B: Sample Capstone Mentorship Contract

SCHOLARS CAPSTONE MENTORSHIP CONTRACT
(A NEW CONTRACT SHOULD BE COMPLETED EACH SEMESTER)

Dr. Victor Frankenstein – Mentor
Eager McLearner – Honors Scholar
(SPECIFY NAMES OF BOTH THE MENTOR AND SCHOLAR)

In order to successfully complete the Scholars Capstone Project and to fulfill the responsibilities of mentor and scholar, we the undersigned propose the following:

I. That we will meet once a week on Mondays at 10:00 a.m. during the Fall semester of 20XX. (BE SURE TO SPECIFY DAY OF WEEK AND TIME, SEMESTER AND YEAR)

II. That we will pursue a study of the possibility of creating a sentient being out of recycled human elements, during which the student will attempt to gain an understanding of and insight into the ethics of such attempts, giving special attention to the responsibilities of the scientist towards the being that she has animated.
(BE SPECIFIC ABOUT THE SUBJECT OF THE STUDY, THE PRIMARY AVENUES OF INQUIRY AND THE GOALS)

III. That the student will read works suggested by the mentor and other works that the student may find relevant to the study.
(BE AS EXPLICIT AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THIS READING LIST)

IV. That during weekly discussions the student will relate understandings, opinions, and elaborations on readings done during the tutorial; the mentor will question, clarify, and criticize the student's efforts with the goal of advancing the student's understanding and helping the project to continue to progress.
(BE PRECISE REGARDING WHAT THE MENTOR EXPECTS FROM THE STUDENT AND WHAT THE STUDENT NEEDS FROM THE MENTOR)

V. That the Student will submit continuous drafts and the mentor will provide consistent feedback. The student will submit a final draft to the mentor no less than one month prior to Study Day. The mentor will provide feedback and revision suggestions within one week in order for student to have time to revise and submit the final draft to the mentor and second reader two weeks prior to Study Day.
(BE SURE THAT DATES INCLUDED COINCIDE WITH HONORS CAPSTONE COURSE REQUIREMENTS)

VI. That our goal for the semester will be for the student to complete the research and prepare an annotated bibliography in preparation for the Honors Capstone Course.
(BE SPECIFIC ABOUT ANY OTHER GOALS THE STUDENT AND MENTOR SET)

Scholars Capstone Mentor Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Scholars Student Signature: _____ *Date:* _____

Appendix C: Troubleshooting Common Problems in the Thesis Process

The student loses interest in the topic before the project is complete.
This may happen for several reasons. The student may find out that she has tackled a topic that is too broad or that she doesn't have a grasp of basic concepts important to the topic. The student may switch majors, or simply find out that the subject did not yield the results or research possibilities she had hoped. When this happens, the student and mentor may need to regroup, finding alternative approaches that might stimulate questions that excite the student anew. Any project will involve some kind of redirecting and adjustment; however, if the student and mentor cannot find a new approach to the subject, the student may need to find a new subject and new mentor.

Either student or mentor fails to meet as agreed upon.
Sometimes schedules simply conflict for a week or two; this is often unavoidable. However, if either the mentor or student misses a number of weeks in a row, the research relationship is not working. If the mentor finds that she is unable to devote an hour a week to the project, the mentor should be frank with the student about the situation and suggest that the student find a new mentor. If the student fails to come to meetings, it is probably a sign of another problem: research malaise, a bad relationship with the mentor, or unhappiness with the topic. If this happens, the mentor should try to discover the problem, or contact the Honors College.

The student fails to accomplish a significant amount of reading or to make progress in answering the research question.
This can happen if the student fails to find a narrow enough focus for the topic to make it workable in the timeframe available, or for one of the problems mentioned above. The mentor should always seek to evaluate the student based on the effort and progress she has made. Both mentor and student should be frank about this; often acknowledging that both believe little has been accomplished can be a relief to each and lead to a new direction in the research. However, if the mentor concludes that the student has not put effort into the research and has not reached the goals established at the beginning of the term, the mentor should feel free to evaluate the student accordingly. If the problem is not one of effort or enthusiasm but instead of the volume of research or if failing to sufficiently narrow the topic, then the student and mentor may agree to continue the work through a modified or second project and the mentor should evaluate the student's progress according to what she has achieved.

The student and mentor simply do not work well together.
Sometimes personalities do not mesh. If this happens, the student and mentor should discuss the problem openly and if both the mentor and student agree that the issue cannot be resolved, the student should find a new mentor. The process for doing so requires the student and original mentor to meet with the honors administration and Capstone course instructor.

The mentor dominates the meetings.
The mentor, no matter how enthusiastic about the topic, should allow the student to take the leadership role and to do most of the talking. It is not a goal of the Scholars Capstone Project for the student to discover the mentor's wisdom; instead, the project's aim is to provide a setting for conversation in which the student tries out a position on an informed and interested listener. If the student feels the mentor is

being domineering, the student should respectfully tell the mentor so. Sometimes, students feel shy about doing this; if so, an Honors College administrator may call a meeting with both student and mentor to discuss and try to resolve the problem. The problem can best be alleviated by setting up a format for meetings that ensures ample time for the student to present her findings.

The mentor and student develop fundamentally opposing viewpoints that impede progress.

Certainly, the mentor should differ with the student at times, and part of his job is to push the student to look at a number of viewpoints. Students and mentors should be open about these differences and use them for discussion. If the student or mentor feels that their philosophical differences may impede the student's progress or the mentor's evaluation of the project, however, the student and mentor should be frank about the situation; the student or mentor may wish to withdraw from the relationship.

Appendix D: Assessment & Grade Recommendation Criteria

Mentors will be asked to indicate the level that best matches student performance on the Scholars Capstone Project, recommend a final grade, and sign the official form. Assessment criteria are as follows:

Information Literacy. Communicates, organizes, and synthesizes information from diverse and appropriate sources to form a clear and articulate argument.

Disciplinary Expertise. Articulates a relevant research or creative agenda, develops clear research questions or goals, and identifies and demonstrates appropriate methodologies.

Central message. Central message is compelling, reinforced, and strongly supported.

Organization. Organizational pattern is clear and consistent, polished, and makes the content cohesive.

Supporting Material. Employs timely and relevant material to provide effective support in a way that reflects a thorough understanding of the topic/thesis.

Context & Audience. Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the context; uses compelling language appropriate to the audience.

Syntax & Mechanics. Demonstrates clear and fluid controls of syntax and mechanics that skillfully communicates meaning to readers and is virtually error-free.

Knowledge. Shows both a broad and deep understanding of the concepts/principles and their relevance to important questions in the discipline.

Information. Selects information from the most relevant and credible sources, without critical omissions of key sources.

Analysis. Justifies a position and/or draws a logical conclusion using appropriate disciplinary analysis on a significant question or problem.

Final Project Grade: _____ If lower than a B, please explain:

Appendix E: Guidelines for Creative Projects

How to Produce a Creative Capstone Project

Some University Scholars Program students are majoring in areas in which creative projects are appropriate to fulfill the Departmental Capstone requirements. Creative projects may include producing an original literary or musical composition, painting, film, sculpture, photography exhibit and photo essay, or other art form. The goal of the initial cycle of planning and proposal writing is to give the student the perspective to intellectually fit the project into appropriate fields of study while also becoming familiar with other projects, techniques, basic concepts, and terminology that might benefit your project at hand. The student is building a solid platform from which to discuss the project with others and increase the chances of producing something new or different rather than repeating past creations.

A primary intention of the project is to produce an original work which also demonstrates the technical competence of its creator. Despite the heavy burden implied in the building of a solid foundation for any given project, the creative work itself is liberating. The creative project might be an expression of the student's own journey through life as shared with many other people. The project might be the work of an active imagination, perhaps developing even greater distance between the author and the audience. The mode of expression for a specifically creative project, whether it be comedy, drama, musical, satire, might be considered its defining feature.

Creative work, perhaps even more than traditional scholarship, is social activity. The words "author" and "authority" come from the Latin root *augere*, which means "to increase, to create, to promote." Thus, a Creative project is not solely the isolated goings-on of the originator, but comes into being through the sharing of the producer's creative vision with other people as well. Authorship is about developing an idea that can be communicated to other people. Likewise, feedback from those other people can be a powerful tool for personal growth.

Creative projects are almost always more time-intensive than traditional theses. Why? Unlike traditional thesis writers, who have a natural home in Torreyson Library and its associated services (article and manuscript databases, archives, and interlibrary loan), creative project researchers must first assemble their own laboratories or studios (often borrowed from their advisors) and then generate their own resources to accomplish the project.

Like traditional theses, Creative projects have a written component. Creative Projects must include an Artist Statement that is at least ten pages in length describing the project's intent in producing the creative work and influences on the producer (e.g. other artists' work, musical styles, and performances). The statement will describe the history and process of the project's production, including research, internships, group meetings (with performers, participants, collaborators, and interviewees), gathering of materials, rehearsals, and so forth. The statement will also include an assessment of the final product. This may include observations by the audience or participants or external judges based on their reaction to the work (including interviews or written responses on-site), and the student's evaluation of the responses, interpretations, or sentiment elicited by the project.

Writing an Artist Statement

An Artist Statement is a document that provides a window into the world of the creator. It offers insight into a single piece or an entire body of work by describing the developmental process, philosophy, vision, and passion behind the Creative Project. It enlightens and engages while at the same time giving the audience freedom to draw conclusions. An Artist Statement reads easily, is informative, and adds to the understanding of the project and its scholarly producer.

How does one get started writing an Artist Statement? Keep a journal of the progress as the project advances. Memory of the moments when important ideas were born, how decisions were made, and where events took place will fade over the course of an entire year (or more) of researching, planning, and writing. Carefully documenting the work as the project moves along will make the writing of a final Artist Statement much easier. Keep track of relevant information about (e.g. meetings with community members, staging choices, settings, plotting, creative writing, actions, critiques, conflicts, conflict resolution, overall themes, purposes, effects to be achieved, and future plans). Take note of what happens each day that work proceeds on the project.

Some questions to keep in mind as benchmarks for progress are met and goals are accomplished: What led to this work? What were its inspirations? What vision/philosophy was brought to the work? How are the inspirations and visions/philosophy expressed in the work? What does it feel like when work is going well? What are the favorite things about the work? What does it mean to say that a project has turned out really well? What is the feeling of creating something new? How does the work reflect the producer? What patterns are emerging in the work? Is there a pattern in the way materials or tools are selected or in working relationships with other people? What messages is the work trying to convey? How much time is spent at each stage of the work? How does the work process differ from prior expectations of who it would go? Why? What are the goals for the future? The Capstone mentor, serving as a sounding board, will be asking questions too. Write those questions down even when there is no ready answer.

When writing the Artist Statement, begin with a simple statement of why the work was undertaken. Support that statement, telling the reader more about its goals and the producer's aspirations. Tell the reader how decisions were made in the course of the work. How and why were materials, techniques, and themes selected? Keep it simple and be candid. Tell the reader a little more about the current work and how it is grew out of prior work or life experiences. What is being explored, attempted, or challenged by doing this work? Share the approach or philosophy. Mention one's education. Mention any significant awards won or exhibitions participated in, or professional societies belonged to. Display professional credibility even if formal certification has not yet been conferred. It is the work that makes one credible, not the qualifications, per se. Include descriptions of what other people have said about the work, what is being aimed at through the project.

An Artist Statement is not a résumé, a biography, a list of accomplishments and awards, a summary of exhibitions, or a catalogue of works. It is not insignificant and should not be hastily written. It is not difficult to understand, pretentious, irritating, or laughter-provoking.

Appendix F: Guidelines for Experiential Projects

How to Produce an Experiential Capstone Project

Some University Scholars Program students are in major for which experiential projects are appropriate to fulfill the Departmental Capstone requirements. Experiential projects may include developing a business plan, founding a student organization, developing a curriculum, or fulfilling a community need. The goal of the initial cycle of planning and proposal writing is to give the student the perspective to intellectually fit the project into appropriate fields of study while also becoming familiar with other projects, techniques, basic concepts, and terminology that might benefit your project at hand. The student is building a solid platform from which to discuss the project with others and increase the chances of producing something new or different rather than repeating past endeavors.

A primary intention of the project is to produce an article or a service that is original and which also demonstrates the technical competence of its producer. Despite the heavy burden implied in building a solid foundation for any given project, actions taken to produce something original is liberating in many ways. The project may be instrumental, aiming for an end state of improvement from producing new means to that end such as with a community service project or business plan or curriculum development, therefore the outcome may be more central in judging the character of its defining feature.

Experiential Projects, perhaps even more than traditional scholarship, involve social activity. The words "author" and "authority" come from the Latin root *augere*, which means "to increase, to create, to promote." Thus, an experiential project is not solely the isolated goings-on of the originator, but comes into being through the sharing of the producer's vision with other people as well. Authorship is about developing an idea that can be communicated to other people. Likewise, feedback from those other people can be a powerful tool for personal growth.

Experiential Projects are almost always more time-intensive than traditional theses. Why? Unlike traditional thesis writers, who have a natural home in Torreyson Library and its associated services (article and manuscript databases, archives, and interlibrary loan), Experiential Project researchers must first assemble their own laboratories or studios and then generate their own resources (data, survey results, needs assessments, preliminary outlines) to accomplish the project.

Like traditional theses, Experiential Projects have a written component. Experiential Projects must include a final Project Reflection that is at least ten pages in length describing the project's intent, influences on the producer (e.g. other similar work, business goals, class learning goals for a curriculum, or community need to be addressed by a service). The Project Reflection will describe the history and process of the project's production, including research, internships, group meetings (with performers, participants, collaborators, and interviewees), gathering of materials, and so forth. The statement will also include an assessment of the final product. This may include observations by the participants or external judges based on their reaction to the work (including interviews or written responses on-site), and the student's evaluation of the responses, interpretations, or sentiment elicited by the project.

Writing a Project Reflection

A Final Project Reflection is a document that provides a window onto the world of the producer. It offers insight into a single piece or an entire body of work (or actions) by describing the developmental process,

philosophy, vision, and passion behind the Experiential Project. A Project Reflection reads easily, is informative, and adds to the understanding of the project and its scholarly producer.

How does one get started writing a Project Reflection? Keep a journal of the progress as the project advances. Memory of the moments when important ideas were born, how decisions were made, and where events took place will fade over the course of an entire year (or more) of researching, planning, and writing. Carefully documenting the work as the project moves along will make the writing of a final Project Reflection much easier. Keep track of relevant information (e.g. meetings with community members, student-teacher interactions, goal-setting brainstorms with entrepreneurs, actions, critiques, conflicts, conflict resolution, overall themes, purposes, effects to be achieved, and future plans). Take note of what happens each day that work proceeds on the project.

Some questions to keep in mind as benchmarks for progress are met and goals are accomplished: What led to this work? What were its inspirations? What vision/philosophy was brought to the work? How are the inspirations and visions/philosophy expressed in the work? What does it feel like when work is going well? What are the favorite things about the work? What does it mean to say that a project has turned out really well? What is the feeling of creating something new? How does the work reflect the producer? What patterns are emerging in the work? Is there a pattern in the way materials or tools are selected or in working relationships with other people? What messages is the work trying to convey? How much time is spent at each stage of the work? How does the work process differ from prior expectations of who it would go? Why? What are the goals for the future? The capstone mentor, serving as a sounding board, will be asking questions too. Write those questions down even when there is no ready answer.

When writing the Project Reflection, begin with a simple statement of why the work was undertaken. Support that statement, telling the reader more about its goals and the producer's aspirations. Tell the reader how decisions were made in the course of the work. How and why were materials, techniques, and themes selected? Keep it simple and be candid. Tell the reader a little more about the current work and how it is grew out of prior work or life experiences. What is being explored, attempted, or challenged by doing this work? Share the approach or philosophy. Mention one's education. Mention any significant awards won or exhibitions participated in, or professional societies belonged to. Display professional credibility even if formal certification has not yet been conferred. It is the work that makes one credible, not the qualifications, per se. Include descriptions of what other people have said about the work, what is being aimed at through the project.

What isn't a Project Reflection? A Project Reflection is not a résumé, a biography, a list of accomplishments and awards, a summary of exhibitions, or a catalogue of works. It is not insignificant and should not be hastily written. It is not difficult to understand, pretentious, irritating, or laughter-provoking.

RAISING THE DEAD:
A STUDY OF ETHICS IN SCIENCE

University Scholars Program Capstone Project Proposal
submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements
for the University Scholars Program of the UCA Honors College

by

Eager McLearner

University of Central Arkansas
Conway, Arkansas
Fall 2019

Proposal Committee

Advisor: _____
Dr. Victor Frankenstein
Professor

Instructor: _____
Dr. Theophrastus von Hohenheim
Professor

Abstract: [*no more than 100 words*]

Appendix H: Sample Capstone Project Cover Page

RAISING THE DEAD:
A STUDY OF ETHICS IN SCIENCE

University Scholars Program Capstone Project Proposal
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Conway, Arkansas
Fall 2018

Capstone Project Committee

Advisor: _____
            Dr. Victor Frankenstein
            Professor

Reader: _____
            Dr. Igor Strausman
            Assistant Professor

Dean: _____
            Dr. Patricia Smith
            Dean of the Honors College

Appendix I: Departmental Honors Information and Expectations

College of Business						
Department	**Contact**	**Project Types**	**Project Topic**	**Project Mentor**	**Dept. Research Methods? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**	**Dept. Honors Capstone? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**
Accounting	Stephanie Watson	Traditional research thesis projects, Action-based research, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Developing curriculum	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Start with department chair for advising then reach out to suggested faculty members.	No (No)	No (No)
CISA	Jeff Hill	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Business plans and/or marketing plans, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Significant consulting project, including an executive summary, Developing curriculum	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students may approach faculty members or faculty members may contact students and students can always contact the chair for direction if needed.	Yes (No)	Yes (No)
Management & Marketing		Traditional research thesis projects, Internship Experiences, Service-based projects, Business plans and/or	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and	Students should contact the department chair	No (Yes)	No (Maybe)

19

		marketing plans, Significant consulting project, including an executive summary, Writing a policy paper, Participation in a significant competition, including an experiential learning summary	then find a faculty member willing to advise them			
EFIRM						

College of Education						
Department	**Contact**	**Project Types**	**Project Topic**	**Project Mentor**	**Dept. Research Methods? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**	**Dept. Honors Capstone? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**
ELSE	Janet Filer	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Action-based research, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should contact the department chair	No (No)	No (No)
Teaching & Learning	Debbie Dailey	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Action-based research, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Developing curriculum	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should contact the department chair	No (Maybe)	No (Maybe)

CAHSS						
Department	Contact	Project Types	Project Topic	Project Mentor	Dept. Research Methods? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)	Dept. Honors Capstone? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)
Art & Design						
English	Ty Hawkins	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Developing curriculum	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should approach faculty members directly	No (No)	Yes (No)
Film, Theater, and Creative Writing						
History	Wendy Lucas	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should approach faculty members directly	Yes (Maybe)	Yes (No)
LLLC	Katelyn Knox	Traditional research thesis projects, Creative projects, such as	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by	Students should approach faculty members directly	No (Maybe)	Yes (Maybe)

		original manuscripts, compositions, art, or performances, Service-based projects, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Developing curriculum	faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda			
Music						
Philosophy & Religion	Taine Duncan	Traditional research thesis projects, Many of our thesis projects include service and/or a creative component. However, these are in addition to a bibliography of traditional research in Philosophy and/or Religious Studies.	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	We generally work in tandem, between faculty and department chair, advising students to make sure that faculty members who will chair the thesis have the time for the Honors Thesis course advising.	No (Maybe)	Yes (No)
Political Science	Clay Arnold	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas	Students should contact the department chair	No	Yes (No)

			and then find a faculty member willing to advise them			
School of Communication						
Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice	Lynne Rich	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students may approach faculty members or faculty members may contact students and students can always contact the chair for direction if needed.	No (Maybe)	No (Maybe)

College of Health and Behavioral Sciences						
Department	Contact	Project Types	Project Topic	Project Mentor	Dept. Research Methods? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)	Dept. Honors Capstone? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)
Communication Sciences and Disorders	Brent Gregg	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda	Students should approach faculty members directly	Yes (No)	No (Maybe)
Exercise & Sport Science	Steve Tucker	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda	Students should approach faculty members directly	Yes (No)	Yes (No)
Family and Nutrition Science	Nina Roofe	Traditional research thesis projects, Internship Experiences, Service-based projects, Action-based research, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member	Students should contact our department's research coordinator	Yes (Yes)	Yes (Yes)

		partner, Writing a policy paper, Developing curriculum	willing to advise them			
Health Science	Betty Hubbard	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Action-based research	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should contact the department chair	No (Yes)	No (Yes)
Nursing	Pam Ashcraft	Evidence-based research project and poster	Our department prefers for students to develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should contact our department's research coordinator	No (No)	No (No)

| Psychology & Counseling | Veda Charlton | Traditional research thesis projects, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner, Developing curriculum | Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them | Students should approach faculty members directly | No (No) | No (No) |

College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics						
Department	**Contact**	**Project Types**	**Project Topic**	**Project Mentor**	**Dept. Research Methods? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**	**Dept. Honors Capstone? (sub. Scholars class for departmental credit?)**
Biology	Brent Hill					
Chemistry & Biochemistry	Pat Desrochers	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda	Students should approach faculty members directly	No (Maybe)	No (No)
Computer Science & Engineering	Emre Celebi					
Environmental Science	Ginny Adams	Traditional research thesis projects, Field research that culminates in program development for a campus or community partner	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda	Students should approach faculty members directly	No (Maybe)	Yes (Maybe)
Geography	Stephen O'Connell	Traditional research thesis projects, Service-based projects, Field research that culminates in program development for a	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or	Students should approach faculty members directly	Yes (Maybe)	Yes (Maybe)

		campus or community partner, Writing a policy paper, Developing curriculum	students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them			
Mathematics						
Physics and Astronomy	Carl Frederickson	Traditional research thesis projects	Our department prefers for students to work on projects led by faculty within the faculty member's own research agenda or students can develop their own project ideas and then find a faculty member willing to advise them	Students should approach faculty members directly	Yes (No)	Yes (No)