

# Procedures for HON Capstone Proposal<sup>1</sup>

1. Focus on an area of interest to you, ordinarily in your field, but oftentimes merging two or more fields of interest.
2. Find a faculty member with knowledge of your area to serve as the advisor for your thesis, creative project, or service learning project.
3. With your advisor's guidance, write a proposal of your project in one the following formats:
  - a. If the thesis is research-oriented, identify the problem or question being addressed. Indicate the research method to be employed.
  - b. If the project is creative, estimate the scope of the work (e.g., if a play, how long) and the possible use of the work when completed.
  - c. If the project is a service learning piece, estimate the scope of the work (e.g., if you are creating items or assisting in community work, walk us through the steps and indicate when the work will be completed) and the possible use of the work when completed.
4. Attach a preliminary bibliography and list of sources, even for creative and service projects, to show the background and scope of your work.
5. Explain your project in language that can be understood easily by people outside your field; define technical terms.
6. Double space throughout and use the format appropriate to your field.
7. Use the appropriate Google Form located on the UMF Honors Program website to submit your proposal in pdf. format to the Honors administrative assistant and director.
8. Once the proposal is reviewed, the Honors Program administrative assistant will notify you of the director's suggestions and/or approval. Once you are notified that the proposal is approved, Honors staff will register you for HON 499. You may then begin work on the thesis/project.
9. You and your thesis/project advisor should agree on a schedule to follow in getting the thesis/project completed.

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Note: The capstone can be completed through one of these models:

- 3-credit model (traditional Honors directed thesis/project where you enroll in 3 credit hours)
- 0-credit model (Honors add on to equivalent capstone work in major, teaching portfolio, etc., but you do not pay for credit hours)

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<sup>1</sup> Contact the Honors Program's administrative assistant or director for proposal samples.

## HON 499 Capstone Guidelines

There are options for completing a capstone project and graduating with the status of University Honors Scholar: 1) research-oriented thesis, 2) creative project, and 3) service learning project.

### Research-Oriented Thesis Guidelines

1. The thesis should aim at making an original contribution to the field of study. It may take the form of a project in your field of study and might include section headings to organize the document.
2. The level of competence and standards of writing and research should be of a high undergraduate-level appropriate to your particular field.
3. A review of relevant resources and literature should be included.
4. Thorough documentation of all material taken from sources should be provided. This documentation should conform to the format specified by your thesis advisor.
5. Discourse should be comprehensible to the ordinary college-educated person. (If you and your advisor prefer to address a more narrow audience, such as that addressed in scholarly journals, include a "Glossary of Technical Terms" or other such assistance for readers outside of your field).
6. There is not a page requirement, but thesis projects typically run as many pages as a capstone in your field would run. E.g., a thesis on a literary subject might be 20-25 pages.
7. Please use an 11- or 12-point sans serif font such as Arial and 1-to-1.25-inch margins.
8. Double space throughout the document, including endnotes and bibliography. Footnotes may be single spaced.
9. Include the title in a right aligned header in all caps and a right aligned footer with page number and name.
10. Label the bibliography clearly either as "Works Cited" or "Works Consulted."
11. Include an abstract and keywords for inclusion in Mantor Library's Scholar works website.
12. Make sure your manuscript is thoroughly proofread and edited before submitting it because it will be available online for people to read.
13. Sharing your research with the public is strongly suggested, and we encourage you to submit your work to appropriate publishers and let us know the results.

## Creative Project Guidelines

Note: As the format of creative projects varies with the project, you should confer with the Honors Director about the final form your project is expected to take prior to its completion.

1. Creative projects might focus on one genre, such as poetry, fiction, nonfiction, playwriting, dance, film, or theater; or the project might be multimodal. If more than one genre is offered, the logic of doing so must be clear.
2. The length or number of selections is open but should clearly be adequate to your purposes (as outlined in the proposal you will submit to the Honors director).
3. Your selections or chapters should work together to give a clear sense of focus and cohesion for the whole project.
4. Include an artist's statement that provides a critical introduction to your work.
  - a. The first part of this statement will include contextual information such as sources of inspiration and literary works that you believe align with your project's shape and goals (both should be included in a bibliography).
  - b. The second part will explain your writing process from the idea stage through revisions (including descriptions of advice from others) to the final draft; describe your intended audience; and address the effects your work has had on you.
5. Please use an 11- or 12-point sans serif font such as Arial and 1-to-1.25-inch margins.
6. Double space throughout the document, including endnotes and bibliography. Footnotes may be single spaced.
7. Include the title in a right aligned header in all caps and a right aligned footer with page number and name.
8. Label the bibliography clearly either as "Works Cited" or "Works Consulted."
9. Include an abstract and keywords for inclusion in Mantor Library's Scholar works website.
10. Make sure your manuscript is thoroughly proofread and edited before submitting it because it will be available online for people to read.
11. A public reading of a portion of your work is strongly suggested, and we encourage you to submit your manuscript to appropriate publishers and let us know the results.

## Service Learning Project Guidelines

Note: As the format of creative projects varies with the project, you should confer with the Honors Director about the final form your project is expected to take prior to its completion.

1. A service learning project is meant to help a given community of your choice while teaching you the value of service.
2. The form this project takes is open but it should clearly be connected to your purposes in helping a specific community (as outlined in the proposal you will submit to the Honors director).
3. The project should include descriptions of the service learning activities and products as well as images that show the activities or items created during the project.
4. Include an introduction that provides a critical overview to your work. This opening section will include contextual information such as sources of inspiration and works that you believe align with your project's shape and goals (both should be included in a bibliography). It will also address the project's audience and the effects your work has had on the community and you.
5. Following the introduction, provide documentation of results through images and descriptions. A schedule and log of events might also be included.
6. Please use an 11- or 12-point sans serif font such as Arial and 1-to-1.25-inch margins.
7. Double space throughout the document, including endnotes and bibliography. Footnotes may be single spaced.
8. Include the title in a right aligned header in all caps and a right aligned footer with page number and name.
9. Label the bibliography clearly either as "Works Cited" or "Works Consulted."
10. Include an abstract and keywords for inclusion in Mantor Library's Scholar works website.
11. Make sure your manuscript is thoroughly proofread and edited before submitting it because it will be available online for people to read.
12. A public presentation of your work is strongly suggested.

## Procedures for Final Submission

1. When the thesis/project is finished, submit it in PDF format to the Honors Program administrative assistant and director. Deadlines for final submission are:
  - a. The end of the third week of April for a spring defense.
  - b. The Monday after Thanksgiving break for a fall defense.
2. A date for your defense will be set by the Honors Program administrative assistant.
3. Students will present their project to the Honors Council (as part of a defense, which is explained in the following section of this guide), who will evaluate the thesis/project and advise the director to accept the thesis/project as is or ask for revisions. Most projects will undergo some form of revision.
  - a. Deadlines for final submission, including corrections, revisions, and suggestions made by the Honors Director are the end of Finals week in either semester.
4. When the project is complete and ready for the final submission to be included in the Honors Program records and be sent to Mantor Library, add a cover page (attached in front of your final submission and without a page number):

Title

Your Name

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the University Honors Scholar Designation

Date

## Procedures for Defense

With approval, you and your advisor will appear before the Honors Council to defend your work on the arranged date. Defenses must be held before Finals end.

Honors capstone projects must be completed in the semester originally intended, unless there is a request made to the director for an extension that is approved. Ordinarily only one semester extension is possible.

The defense is organized as follows (estimated time: 45-60 minutes) :

1. The student and advisor are invited to join the council, where:
  - a. The advisor will introduce the student and the project (2-3 minutes)
  - b. The student will present the project (8-10 minutes)
  - c. The council members question the student (15-20 minutes)
  - d. The advisor may ask questions of their own (5 minutes).
2. The student and advisor are asked to step out of the room while the Honors Council meets with the director privately to decide whether to accept the final work as it is, request revisions, or reject the work (10-15 minutes).
3. The student and advisor are invited to rejoin the council and director, who informs them of the decision (5 minutes).

### Questions the Honors Council May Consider

#### Clear Goals

Does the scholar (i.e., the student) state the basic purposes of the work clearly? Does the scholar define objectives that are realistic and achievable? Does the scholar identify important questions in the field, or effectively involve the viewer/reader in a dialogue?

#### Adequate Preparation

Does the scholar show an understanding of existing scholarship in the field? Does the scholar bring the necessary skills to his or her work? Does the scholar bring together the resources necessary to move the project forward?

#### Appropriate Methods

Does the scholar use methods appropriate to the goals? Does the scholar apply effectively the methods selected? Does the scholar modify procedures in response to changing circumstances?

#### Significant Results

Does the scholar achieve the goals? Does the scholar's work add consequentially to the field? Does the scholar's work open additional areas for further exploration?

**Effective Presentation**

Does the scholar use a suitable style and effective organization to present the work? Does the scholar use appropriate forums for communicating work to its intended audiences? Does the scholar present his or her message with clarity and integrity?

**Reflective Critique**

Does the scholar critically evaluate the own work? Does the scholar bring an appropriate breadth of evidence to this critique? Does the scholar use evaluation to improve the quality of future work? Does the scholar demonstrate understanding of their work in conversation with other contemporary work and/or theory?