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Purpose

The Capstone Project (CP) is intended to provide members with the opportunity to work directly with a faculty member to define, compile and present a research project on a specific topic or subject. The scope of this project fulfills the capstone of the Honors Program while utilizing both honors and traditional coursework as the basis of its completion. The Capstone Project may be focused on the member's major or minor area of study, although this is not required. Members are encouraged to compile a multi-disciplinary approach for the scope of their projects.

The most significant benefit is the value to the member's future goals after graduation. It is strongly suggested that the member leverage the project's deliverable to assist with a future career path or industry preference. A traditional research project can provide an opportunity to develop an in-depth knowledge on a subject. This option could be useful for members who wish to further their education through graduate study. The submission of a traditional research paper with a graduate school application can "tilt" the admission decision. Projects such as a business plan, marketing analysis or financial study could be completed to apply concepts into a useful project. Applied projects, possibly working for a real business, can provide a distinct competitive advantage for members seeking a career position.

Ultimately, this project should define the culmination of your coursework at Bryant University ... especially in relation to your concentration or minor. Members discussing the nature and depth of their project during an interview will illustrate the ability to succeed with a definitive example. Even if the project has not been completed prior to interviews, members can converse about the objective and methodology associated with the project.

This capstone course presents the member with a winning combination to gain an advantage on a career or graduate school admission.

Types of Projects

A variety of different approaches to the Capstone Project are possible. The following suggestions are just that, suggestions. Students with various ideas about their Project are encouraged to consult with the Honors Program Coordinator (HPC) about the appropriateness and feasibility of their ideas.

Traditional Research Thesis

Following a traditional model, one type of project is a written compilation of work that adds to the knowledge in the field. In terms of substance, a thesis is more than a brief research paper in terms of scope, depth, and contribution. It may address a problem or issue that has not been adequately addressed in the research literature or has not been addressed from the particular perspective proposed by the member. The thesis extends the research completed by others to include the member's own creative and critical thinking. The member must demonstrate a commitment to scholarship in the final product. The thesis, at the undergraduate level, is not required to present an original contribution to the knowledge base of a discipline. However, it should be a well-developed and creative application of existing ideas using a alternative methodologies, theories, concepts or population. Ultimately, the result should answer the following questions: "*What do I know now that I did not know before?*" and "*How does the presentation of my results impact how the subject matter is viewed?*"

Creative Media Project

For members interested in certain academic disciplines, a more appropriate project may be the production or performance of a piece of original art. For example, members majoring in management with a focus on operations may choose to develop a prototype production system. Students majoring in Computer Information Systems may develop a piece of software designed to solve a particular business problem. Students with a concentration or minor in communication may choose to complete a project in the form of a video documentary. These types of projects would be accompanied by an explanatory essay of at least ten pages that documents the member's development as well as the contribution of the project.

Problem-Solving Project

Problem-solving projects require members to evaluate and respond to a particular problem or situation. A wide variety of options would fit with this approach. For example, in the area of marketing, a problem-solving project problem might be focused on evaluating the current image of a product or service and developing a marketing campaign to enhance that image for a client organization in the community. Such projects also might include: developing an accounting system and training program for a small business; developing and implementing a public awareness program; developing and delivering an education or training program for a particular constituency. Business plans, consulting studies and operations analyses are examples that could provide the basis of this alternative.

Tasks to be Completed

Orientation Session

Each year, honors members will be required to attend a Capstone Project orientation session. This session will provide members with the opportunity to gain additional direction on their project and learn about what other members are working on. It will also help to build a personal support network that will be critical during the project.

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Milestones and Deadlines

The successful completion on a project such as this will focus on the member’s ability to manage a project, deadlines and expectations. A reasonable, defined and concise project plan will significantly assist the completion of the project and reduce any frustration and inefficient time allocation. In consultation with the member’s faculty advisor (CPA), the member should compile a reasonable plan for the completion of the project.

Milestone	Deadline
Orientation and selection of capstone project advisor	Spring/Junior Year
Submission of initial proposal to Honors Program Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capstone Project Advisor approval only • Can select the editorial reviewer if you wish 	April/Junior Year
Submission of final proposal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Including feedback from Honors Program Coordinator • Selection of editorial reviewer • Complete proposal form with all signatures • Submit completed form to Honors Program Coordinator for registration 	September/Senior Year
Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall candidates for graduation..... • Spring candidates for graduation..... 	Schedule with Coordinator and faculty advisor Spring Colloquium
Certification of completion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit proposal form to Honors Program Coordinator with final approval from CPA • Final report; electronic (CD) and hardcopy • Copyright clearance (release) 	Within two weeks after completing the final presentation ¹

Note: Members who will be completing their graduation requirements in December are strongly encouraged to “reverse” these deadlines into the Spring of the semester previous to graduation. For Spring graduates, the completion of HON490 does not need to be completed in the semester of its registration (if you register in Fall). However, transcript and degree certification cannot be completed until HON490 is completed and approved by the CPA and HPC and submitted to the Office of Academic Records for processing.

¹ – In order to complete the transcript certification process for graduating seniors, please note that May graduates need to complete submit **all** the paperwork by the deadline as outlined for that academic year. Failure to do so may not allow sufficient time to certify the member’s transcript in time for commencement.

Proposal

The first task of the Capstone Project is the development of a proposal. The proposal should be defined using the approved form (located on the website). The member may attach additional

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documentation to the form to expand the scope and definition of the project. The proposal will be developed with the assistance of the Capstone Project Advisor (CPA). For more information on this topic, review the Selection of Advisors section. The Honors Program Coordinator may be utilized for consultation and advice.

Compatibility with Other Degree/Program Requirements

All members must adhere to Bryant University policies on course and distribution requirements. Depending on the subject area of the CP, it may be assigned to a requirement as shown in the table below. It is strongly suggested that the member consult with the Office of Undergraduate Advising and complete the Designation Assignment for with an advisor. It is the member's responsibility to define which requirement that the CP will fulfill on the proposal form.

Major elective	Concentration elective	Minor elective
Mode of thought	Liberal arts elective	Open elective

HON490 Registration

The form (Capstone Project Proposal) must be completed by the member. The form is "editable" and the information can be directly entered onto the form. Just click on an area and type in. Save a copy of the completed form to your personal computer. **Handwritten forms will not be accepted.** The information contained on the first page is extremely important for records, registration and course assignment purposes. Ensure that you provide extremely accurate information on this form.

This course is assigned three credit hours. Members can register for HON490 after the successful completion of the seven honors courses (21 credits) and attained senior status (classification code 07-08). Members with only six completed honors classes should consult the HPC to develop a senior year coursework. Members receiving final approval from the HPC will be registered for the CP in the semester designated by the member on the proposal form.

Capstone Project Committee

The CP Committee will become the most important support mechanism for members. This committee will consist of at least two members, a Capstone Project Advisor and an Editorial Reviewer. Members should select faculty that will provide them with the knowledge, support and guidance necessary to complete the project.

The Capstone Project Advisor must be a full-time, tenure-track/tenured member of the Bryant University faculty. Contact the Coordinator for advice on eligible advisors. On rare occasions and with special circumstances, non-tenure track/full-time faculty members may serve as advisors with the prior written approval of the Honors Program Coordinator. Members are encouraged to discuss the selection of these faculty members as advisors prior to developing a proposal or meeting with a term faculty member.

The selection of the CPA is a critical choice. Members should choose the advisor by considering the faculty member's expertise as well as the potential for a close working relationship as the project will require frequent interaction with the advisor. As the type and objective of the project becomes more known, members should begin to consider the advisor during the junior year. It is typical, although not required, for members to ask a faculty member whose course was of special interest or importance to the member or whose area of specialization coincides with the member's interests. Students should not

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be reluctant to approach faculty about project supervision. Supervising a Capstone Project is an honor and privilege for the faculty member, not a burden.

Capstone Project Advisors will meet on a regular basis (at least once per month) with the member until the work is complete. The final months of the project typically involve much more frequent meetings with the advisor (e.g., once per week). The purpose of these meetings is for the member to ask questions, seek guidance and receive feedback. The advisor's role is to provide direction and encouragement to the member.

Early in the project, the most critical task for the CPA is to assist the member refine the scope and focus into a "reasonable and achievable" CP while developing a strategy and timetable for successfully completing the effort. The CPA reviews drafts and progress on the project as well as providing detailed feedback. Typically, a capstone project will require a series of revisions. The member is expected to provide the advisor with ample time to read, review and comment on each revision. Likewise, the advisor is expected to provide feedback as expeditiously as possible to the member.

The Editorial Reviewer (ER) is selected by the member and Capstone Project Advisor. The ER typically becomes involved in the project when significant deliverables (reports, simulations, video, etc.) are available. However, the ER can become involved earlier, at the option of the member. While the ER's responsibility is not as significant as the CPA, the member should provide ample time for the ER to read, view and comment on all stages of the project effort. Occasionally, a project may benefit from the expertise of a person other than a full-time faculty member. Such a person may be appointed as an ER with the written permission of the Honors Program Coordinator.

Human Subjects Review

Any activities included in the CP that may have an impact on Human Subjects must be reviewed and approved by the Bryant University Internal Review Board (IRB) to ensure that the rights of subjects are protected. **This requirement is required under Federal law.** Activities subject to the review process include not only testing, but written surveys and personal interviews under University sponsorship. This requirement should not prevent or impose an obstacle to the member. Therefore, if the project includes these types of activities, contact the Honors Program Coordinator for guidance. While the HPC and the CPA will provide the assistance on this task, it is the member's responsibility to allow ample time in the schedule to complete this review.

Project Development

All projects must include a preface in which the member reflects upon the experience of completing a CP. Written documentation must also include a statement of the member's general subject or topic, the objective of the research or creative activity, a discussion of the scholarly context in which the effort is to be understood, pertinent evidence, and conclusions. All these projects must include an appropriate citation list of bibliographic and other resources.

Regardless of the medium in which the body of the project is produced (written, videotaped, painted, performed, etc.), the member must also provide an enduring record of the work (manuscript, photographs, tapes). The final project deliverable(s) will be archived electronically and remain on file at the University Library for future reference. In order for the University to publish your document on its Digital Commons web-based reference system, the member will need to sign a release. While this release is not mandatory, the availability of your document will provide future honors students with a

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reference of prior work. In addition, published work can be cited as a reference in future research and studies.

The written materials approved and submitted to the University will become a permanent addition to the Library and the University's publications. To ensure that all submitted and approved written materials maintain a professional and consistent presentation, members are required to use the document template. The instructions and template are provided on the Honors Program website.

Review

In order to allow sufficient time for review of the CP, it must be submitted to the Honors Program Coordinator and Capstone Project Advisor at least **three** days before the member's scheduled presentation. The presentation cannot be scheduled without the approval of the Capstone Project Advisor and Editorial Reviewer. It is the member's responsibility to coordinate the presentation date/time with the Honors Program Coordinator. The presentation date/time will be communicated to the University community.

Presentation

All projects must be presented in an open forum for review by interested members of the Bryant University community. At the time of the presentation, members may be required to respond to questions from the audience that relate to their project. The presentation will be evaluated as part of the grade for the project (see Evaluation Criteria below).

Evaluation Criteria

Specific evaluation criteria for the CP will vary depending on the scope and type of project. Therefore, the Honors Faculty Advisor and the member should agree on the specific evaluation criteria that will be used to compute the final project grade. For example, in some situations, the presentation may be heavily weighted (e.g., for a creative performance) while in other situations the written effort should receive more emphasis. A letter grade is assigned to the final deliverable by the Capstone Project Advisor in accordance with University policies. All candidates are required to present their research as a pre-requisite to completing HON490 and being certified.