


Bryant University
The Honors Program



Senior Capstone Project
Orientation Session
Class of 2011
Fall 2009

Overview

- General orientation
- Information about the Capstone Project
- Dispel rumors about project
- Why you should do it?
- Next steps?
- Personal thoughts ...

Thoughts ...

- *"Persistence is the twin sister of excellence. One is a matter of quality; the other, a matter of time."* – Anonymous
- *"Sometimes the road less traveled is less traveled for a reason."* – Jerry Seinfeld

Project Perspective

- Personal thoughts
- Distinctive nature of the project
- How it will develop you ...
- Countless number of people have said how it has done that ..

What Have They Said?

- I know that completing a Senior Honors Project provided me with the opportunity to discuss project that set me apart from my peers.
- I had an experience that few others get a chance to do.
 - *Mikayla Truckey '06*

What Have They Said?

- ... it taught me the importance of time management and dedication.
- I was passionate about the project and really wanted to create a great final product.
- When it was completed, I felt a great sense of accomplishment."
 - *Kristin Milligan '07*

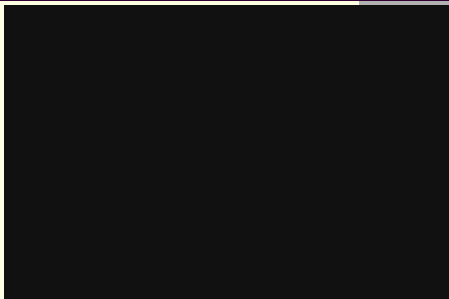
What Have They Said?

- SHP gave an extra boost to my resume – many interviewers asked about it and it was a topic of conversation.
- Made me proud of graduating from the program considering only a handful of people stuck with it until the end.
- Gave my resume a boost when interviewing.
- Go for it. Don't be turned off by the SHP – it was more enjoyable than taking a class and the sense of accomplishment is reason enough to do it.
 - *Matthew Holt '08*

What is the Project?

- Capstone requirement of the Program
- Integrate concepts, ideas and skills from various courses and disciplines
- Includes a **higher-level** of research than any other course
 - A search for knowledge
- A topic of interest and purpose to you
- And ... a topic that you will **enjoy!!**

What have people done?



Why Should I Complete It?

- Because you should ☺ ... and why you should
- Market yourself for an internship or full-time, permanent position
 - Could be the "tie breaker" with another candidate
- Define yourself with a research project to include in an admissions packet for graduate school
 - It could be the difference between acceptance or denial

Why Should I Complete It?

- Because you should ☺
- The pride of completion
- "Build" an in-depth knowledge associated with a specific subject or topic
- Something substantial to discuss during an interview
- Gain the confidence and skills associated with completing an independent project

Why Should I Complete It?

- Differentiate yourself against others for ...
 - Internships
 - Permanent career positions
- Ask yourself when you finish ...
 - What do I know now that I did not know before?
 - What did I contribute?

Another thought on completing ...



What Can I Do?

- Three Types of Projects
 - Traditional Research Thesis
 - Creative Media Project
 - Problem-Solving Project

Traditional Research Project

- Adds to the body of knowledge in a specific discipline or subject area
- Scope, depth and contribution
- Address a problem or issue that has not been addressed in literature
 - The systematic investigation into, and study of materials, sources etc in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions.

Creative Media Project

- Production or performance of an original art or simulation
 - ... Leverage your creative talents
- These projects are accompanied by an explanatory essay with foundational research
 - Documents the member's development, and
 - Its contribution of the deliverable to the community
- Specific disciplines are well-suited for these projects

Creative Media Project

- **CIS:** Develop a specific software application which will solve a specific business problem.
- **Communication:** Produce a video documentary
- **Management:** Develop a prototype production system

Problem-Solving Project

- Evaluate and respond to a particular problem or situation
- Similar to the traditional research project except it focuses on a specific client organization
- A research component must be integrated into the final deliverable

Problem-Solving Project

- **Marketing:** Evaluating the current image of a product or service and develop a marketing campaign
- **Accounting:** Development and implementation of an accounting system and training program
- **Service Learning:** Business plans, consulting studies and operational analyses

Examples

- Traditional Research Project
 - College Aged Women's Perception of Stereotypical Female Gender Roles in Advertisements
 - The Endangered Species Act: How Effective has it Been?
- Creative Media Project
 - The Impact of the Girl Scout Organization on the Lives of Ordinary Women: A Documentary
- Problem Solving Project
 - "Buy-or-Make" Information Technology System

Where do I begin?

- Begin with a topic or subject about which you have some passion or curiosity; which you find interesting and thought provoking.
 - What Bryant course have you enjoyed the most?
 - What professor seemed to be working on issues about which you are interested?
 - What non-fiction book have you read recently and found to be thought-provoking, engaging, and persuasive?
 - What article in the news has sparked your curiosity?
 - What practical problem have you seen in your work experience that you would like to solve?

Sources of Research Ideas

- Everyday life
- Practitioners
- Past empirical research
- Theory

Source: <http://stream.cc.ut.af.us/wordpress/Fisk/research%20questions%202003.pdf>

Sources of Questions

- Everyday life
 - I love sports and have always been puzzled by whether teams should build through free agency or the draft.
- Practitioners
 - At my internship, my manager keeps talking about finding a more effective way to evaluate potential hires.
- Past empirical research
 - Past academic studies seem to have come to conflicting conclusions about a particular topic.
- Theory
 - I read about a particular theory that would seem to predict a change in advertising approaches during a recession. I wonder if that is true.

Source: <http://stream.cc.ut.af.us/wordpress/Fisk/research%20questions%202003.pdf>

Characteristics of Good Research Questions

- Well grounded in the literature
 - You know what has already been done
- Can be articulated clearly for purposes of investigation/inquiry
 - Clear hypotheses, definitions, variables
- Data is accessible
- Relevance to theory and practice

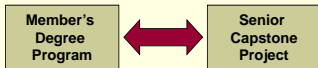
Source: <http://stream.cc.ut.af.us/wordpress/Fisk/research%20questions%202003.pdf>

What is Required?

- Faculty Sponsor
 - Tenure/Tenure-track faculty member
 - <http://www.bryanthonors.com/forms.htm> for a listing of all eligible faculty
 - Listing of faculty "volunteers"
- Editorial Reviewer
- Department designation
- Senior status
- Good standing in The Honors Program

Where Do I Begin?

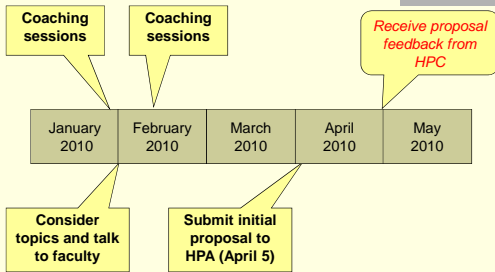
- HON490 "double counts" for any **3/4xx elective**
- Consider the topics that you would like to explore
 - What do you want to learn more about?
 - What topic could you leverage for your future?
 - Practically ... what requirement do you have open?
- Designate your HON490 selection(option(s))
 - Note each 3/4xx elective on your degree evaluation



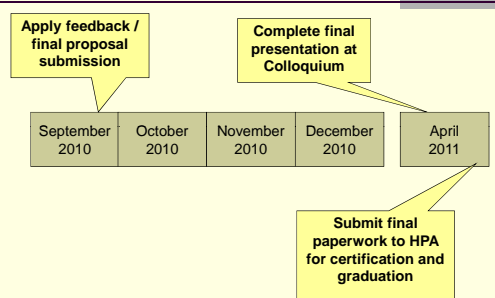
Survey Form

- To better help us plan ...
 - Please take a moment to complete the YELLOW survey form in your orientation package
- Submit them when you finish ...

What is the Timeline?



What is the Timeline?



OK ... I have no idea what to do!

- Consider various faculty members
 - You would be interested to work with
 - Experienced in a subject that interests you
- Be on the lookout for ideas ...
 - Magazines, newspapers, commercials, articles, ... in daily life looking for answers
 - It is easier to remove ideas than attempt to think about more ideas
- Meet with faculty members
 - Discuss your ideas and thoughts; brainstorm!

Relationship with Faculty Sponsor



What is available for you?

- Bryant faculty and administrative staff
 - Wealth of resources
 - Community of scholars
 - Look on University's website for faculty web pages to find current research
 - People who are ready to help ... Just ask!

What is available for you?

- Honors Program
 - Sessions on Endnote
 - Survey program available
 - Research textbook
 - Assistance with printing
 - <http://www.bryanthonors.com/blog>
 - Library's Digital Commons for complete manuscripts submitted by HP graduates

What Resources Are Available?

- Douglas and Judith Rupp Library
 - Reference personnel
 - Assistance using electronic resources
 - Copies of articles not available at Bryant
- Writing Center
 - Seminars: Citation formatting, writing a research plan
 - Peer tutoring
 - Communication reference textbooks

Conclusion ... OK a Quiz!

Remember the important questions associated with the capstone project?

**What do I know now that I did not know before?
What did I contribute?**

Next Steps

- Coaching Sessions
 - 3-4 Sessions during January and February 2010
 - Compilation of research ideas; initial research and idea generation
 - Qualitative & quantitative research
- Sessions are meant to 'guide' you through the process; *not add more to your "plate"*
- Borrow ... **"The Craft of Research"** from the Library **before** you leave in December
 - Read first 6 chapters during break

Their advice to you ...



Final Thoughts

- From 2000 (inception) – May 2006
 - 39 members have completed the Program
- Statistics for the Class of 2009
 - 24 members have completed the Program
- From 2007 – 2009
 - At the completion of this three-year period ...
 - **63** members will have completed the Program!
 - More than double from the first six years of the Program

Final Thoughts

- The project ... and personal pride
- The project ... and its effect on you and your personal/career development
- The project ... and your relationship with a mentor to guide that development
- What we are trying to help you with ...

Thank You!

- See you in January!
- Look for the email for sessions
- Thanks for your time and attention!

Questions ...