**Supervising the Honors Capstone**

**Honors College**

**www.txstate.edu/honors**

**What is the Honors Capstone?**

The honors capstone is a requirement for all students who want to graduate in the Honors College and often represents the culmination of multiple semesters or even years’ worth of investment in a particular topic or project. To complete the capstone, all students, regardless of the nature of their project, must in enroll in HON 4390B or, with special permission from the Honors College, the zero-hour version of the course, HON 4090.

We encourage supervisors to hold their students to their own standards of excellence and to push them to achieve their highest potential. The honors capstone, however, is not intended to be the equivalent of a master’s thesis, and we don’t have our own rubric or template for evaluating all honors projects. Given the interdisciplinary nature of the Honors College and the diversity of our students, we define “capstone” broadly to include signature works and creative projects as well as disciplinary and interdisciplinary academic work.

*More information about the capstone process as well as a timeline of key date and deadlines for this semester can be found on the syllabus.*

**What is the role of the supervisor?**

Supervising an honors capstone is roughly equivalent to directing an independent study. Capstone students receive three hours of upper-division honors credit for HON 4390B, so we expect their projects to reflect at least the same level of engagement that you would expect in one of your upper-division seminars. Faculty of record at Texas State who hold the title of Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor or Professor are automatically approved to supervise a capstone. Other faculty (e.g. Professors of Practice, Lecturers, and Postdoctoral Scholars) may also serve as supervisors with the approval of their director or chair. Students submit a form signed by the supervisor that shows they have a plan for completing a capstone in the semester in which they enroll. If students are working with human subjects or animals, then additional approval from the university’s [IRB or IACUC](https://www.txstate.edu/research/orc) are also required before a student can begin work on their project.

When students meet with us to register for HON 4390B, they are instructed to develop with you a meeting schedule, a project timeline, and a list of general expectations for the final product by the start of the capstone semester. Expectations for the final product should include such considerations such as estimated length, format, and citation style. At the end of the semester we will ask you to recommend a grade based on how well your student met these expectations.

Over the course of the semester, supervisors are expected to provide feedback on the initial draft, attend their student’s capstone presentation if possible, and approve the final electronic copy before the student is allowed to submit their work to digital collections. Beyond this, it is up to you to decide what your role as a supervisor should be.

If you have supervised an honors capstone before, you may already have a rubric or a clear set of expectations for the capstone. If you haven’t supervised an honors capstone before and would like more guidance on coming up with a set of expectations, we would be more than happy to meet with you.

**What is the role of a second reader?**

The role of the second reader is left entirely up to the capstone students and their supervisors. Some second readers assist with research and read and comment on drafts just like supervisors. Other readers assist students only with specific portions or aspects of their projects. Students and supervisors are asked to specify the role of the second reader in a box the capstone application and planning form. Second readers are not expected to recommend final grades.

**What is our role?**

The instructors of record for the capstone course are Dr. Heather Galloway, Dr. Ron Haas, and Jordan Morille. Although HON 4390B does not meet as a class, and there is no requirement that students meet with us regularly, we are available throughout the semester to assist students in the capstone process.

In addition to the submission of a final approved project at the end of the semester, there are two requirements for the successful completion of HON 4390B: the initial draft, which is due roughly ten weeks into the capstone semester, and participation in the Undergraduate Research Conference that semester. Failure to complete either of these requirements will result in a lowering of your student’s final grade. Students will receive comments on their initial and final drafts from an honors faculty member. These comments are intended only to compliment your feedback. In addition, we encourage but do not require all capstone students to submit early drafts of their work for us to review and to participate in a series of capstone workshops we hold throughout the semester.

**What is the student’s responsibility?**

Capstone supervisors are not added to the Canvas site or sent (many) email reminders throughout the semester. All capstone students have been instructed that it is *their responsibility* to keep their supervisors informed and up to date regarding course expectations and deadlines.

***Thank you for supervising the honors capstone. We look forward to working with you!***

**Dr. Ron Haas**

**Dr. Heather Galloway**

**Jordan Morille**