

3 things you should know about completing an Honors Capstone Experience

1) You can do it!

Although writing an Honors Capstone Experience can seem like a daunting task, you don't write it all at once. You break the large task into dozens of smaller steps, tasks you already know how to do: get an idea, find some sources, do some reading, do some writing, talk to a professor, change ideas, read again, write again.... Eventually you start to outline your paper, and you find you know exactly what information you still need to fill in the gaps. Think of it as writing two or three regular research papers.

2) Writing an Honors Capstone Experience is rewarding:

- a) It is required (along with 15 Honors credits, 9 of them 300-level or higher) to graduate with University Honors.
- b) You get university credit for researching a topic that interests you in depth: reading, researching, and developing your own ideas.
- c) In consultation with your advisor, you are free to set your own agenda for your studies and to change topics or directions as needed.
- d) In the process of working with an advisor and other readers, you develop your research and writing skills.
- e) Writing an Honors Capstone Experience may give you an edge in applications to graduate schools. You will have shown that you can design and complete a near-graduate-level project, and you will also have a polished and well-developed writing sample.
- f) Your faculty advisor will know you and your work well enough to write specific and persuasive recommendation letters.
- g) You earn a great sense of accomplishment and knowledge of what you can achieve.

3) You don't have to do it alone.

- a) You will work closely with a faculty advisor, who will guide you to helpful sources and ideas and share knowledge of expectations in your field.
- b) You may also want to take HON 313 the semester before finishing your Capstone Experience. This course will give you assignments and deadlines to help you start researching and writing, completing as much as half of your Capstone Experience. You will benefit from working with a small, supportive peer group to give each other feedback on ideas, writing, and organization.
- c) Reference librarians are eager to help serious students locate valuable sources and improve search strategies. In HON 313, we arrange individual consultations with reference librarians knowledgeable about resources available in your specific field.
- d) Investigate HON 410, Honors Internship, if you will be doing primary research.