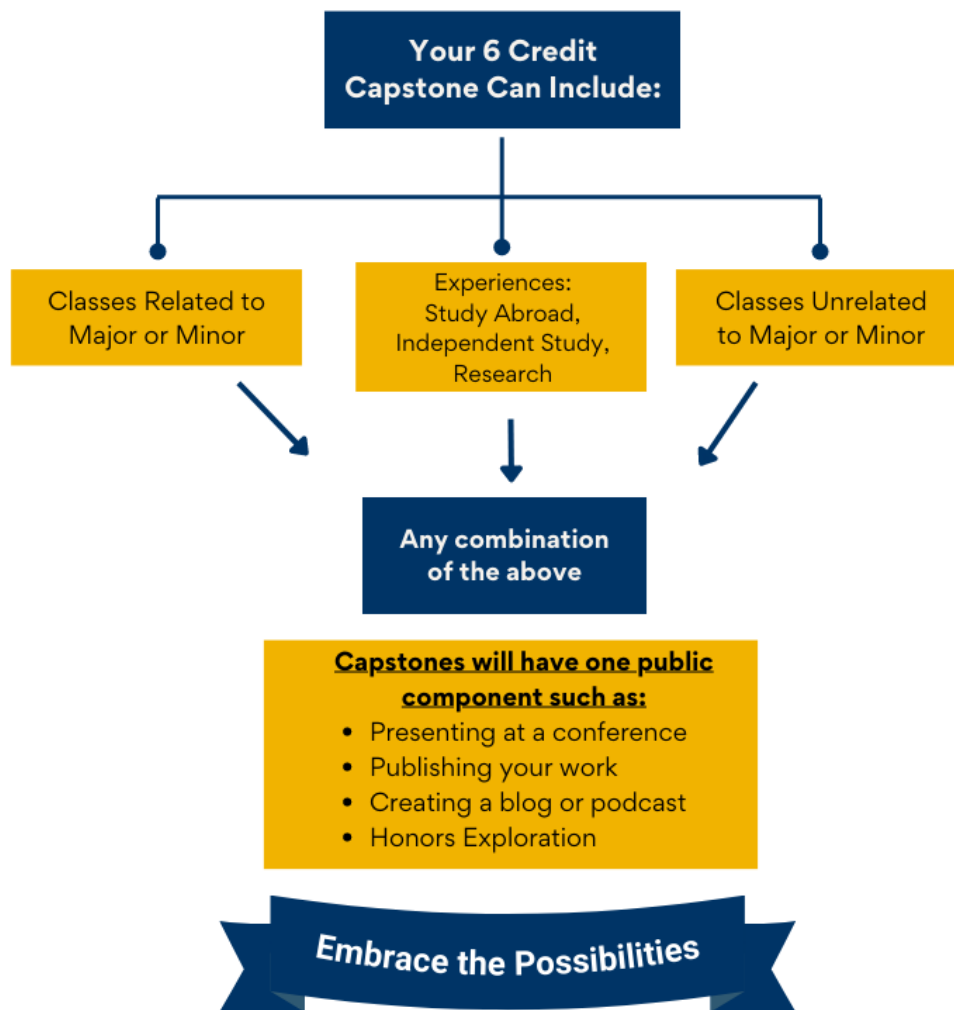


### What is the Honors College Capstone?

Your Honors Capstone is a rigorous culminating project that represents a sustained academic experience at NAU. Depending on your major/minor, interest areas, and personal and career goals, your Honors Capstone may look very different from other students' Honors Capstones. The unifying thread for all Honors Capstones is that they contribute to the development of disciplinary knowledge or practice, and that they result in a public presentation component where you share what you have learned.

### What are the Options?



- Honors Capstones generally fall into one of three categories:
  - All six units can come from Capstone or other classes that have been contracted for Honors units or have Honors seats.
  - All six units can come from one or more projects or experiences by enrolling in independently arranged units (HON 408, HON 497, HON 485).
  - The six units can come from a mix of classes, projects, and/or experiences.
- The Honors Capstone can be related to your major or not.
- All Capstones will result in the completion of a public component where you share information with the larger community. You might consider a poster that you present at the [Undergraduate Expo and Research Symposium](#) (spring-only) or the Honors Symposium (fall-only), a class presentation, the creation of a website or a blog, generating a pamphlet, the writing a book or novel, presenting at a regional or national conference, or other options. Remember that you only need to have one public component. So, if you do more than one project for the six units (a class and a research project, for example), you do not have to complete more than one public component.

### What is the Best Option?

This will depend on your educational goals and objectives, as well as available coursework and opportunities. Some possible questions you may ask yourself in preparation for designing your Capstone are:

- What are your major capstone requirements? Do you want to incorporate your Honors Capstone while also fulfilling your major capstone?
- Do you want to take coursework in your major or minor to comprise part/all of your Honors Capstone?
- Do you want to have an experiential Capstone where you are working on an independent project, completing research, or participating in an internship?
- Is there a passion or interest area you have not been able to develop but would like to?
- Is there a faculty member with whom you are interested in working on a project?
- Do you have a professional or career aspiration outside of your major that you would like to focus on?
- Do you want to start a business?
- Do you want to obtain a license or certification, such completing an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) course?

## Honors College Capstone *Instructor of Record and Mentor Selection*

*To complete your Honors Capstone, you must have instructors of record who assign grades for Honors coursework. We also recommend that you identify and develop a relationship with a mentor.*

### **What is an Instructor of Record?**

Each student must have official instructors of record who assign grades for all six Honors Capstone units. All instructors of record must be NAU faculty (full-time or part-time) and able to assign grades. NAU staff do not qualify. Instructors of record may also act as mentors who guide you through your Capstone experience but may be just the people who grade your work. The role of instructors of record will vary based on the type of Capstone you choose. You do not need to identify a specific instructor of record at the time you propose your Honors Capstone, but you will need to have official instructors by the time you are ready to earn credit.

### **What is a Mentor?**

To help guide and facilitate your Capstone experience, we encourage you to work with a mentor who will provide advice, support, and direction for your Honors Capstone. A mentor is someone who can be valuable to you in this project, but who also may become an important reference for future academic work or professional aspirations. A mentor can be an NAU faculty member or a non-faculty member. It is not required that you obtain a mentor for your Capstone but connecting with professionals can be very helpful.

### **Selection Process:**

When selecting a mentor and instructors of record for your Honors Capstone, you should first think about what type of project you will complete.

**Projects ON campus:** If you choose to complete a Capstone related to your academic major or minor, you will want to find a faculty member from that department. This person will serve as your instructor of record for your project and will assign you a final grade for your Capstone units.

**Example:** You are a Psychological Sciences student completing an independent research project on learning theory and enroll in PSY 497 (contracted to add -H). You work with your Educational Psychology professor to design a project. That professor helps you plan, gives advice, and then grades your final paper. They serve as your instructor of record and mentor.

**Projects OFF campus:** If you choose to complete a project related to your academic major or minor but the project will take place off campus, OR if you choose to complete a project unrelated to your major or minor—perhaps it is an experiential Capstone, an internship, or an independent project—you should find *both* a mentor and an instructor of record. Your mentor will help guide you through the project, but your instructor of record must be connected to NAU and will assign your grade.

**Example:** You are completing research for a genetics lab in Phoenix. The lab director will be your mentor, who oversees your project and gives you advice. However, you have a Biology professor at NAU as instructor of record for BIO 485 (contracted to add -H) who grades your final paper and assigns you a grade for your Capstone.

## **Honors College Capstone**

### *Mentor/Instructor of Record Selection*

**Example:** You are a Mechanical Engineering student and completing a summer internship with an engineering firm in Tucson for your Honors Capstone. Your mentor is the (on-site) internship staff member who helped you find the position and monitors your participation in the internship. However, you have an Honors professor as instructor of record for HON 408 to read your internship reflection papers and assign you a grade for your Capstone.

### **Instructor/Mentor and Student Expectations:**

As an Honors student, you are responsible for:

- Keeping your instructor of record/mentor informed about Honors College timelines and due dates
- Discussing with your instructor/mentor how you plan to accomplish your Capstone
- Giving your instructor/mentor any drafts of the written project for review and editing before submission

Your mentor is responsible for:

- Helping you narrow the focus of your topic/project to something that you can complete, given the timeframe and your experience
- Giving suggestions on relevant bibliographic materials
- Providing support and advice on your project

Your instructor of record is responsible for:

- Discussing ethical considerations, such as whether you need IRB (Institutional Review Board) approval
- Reviewing and grading your Capstone project materials
- If applicable, your instructor of record can have some of the responsibilities as a mentor

## Proposals:

The proposal should be specific, clear, and succinct: your Capstone focus and scope, how you will complete this project, and why it is meaningful and worth producing.

The proposal should be minimally three to four pages (double-spaced) with resources of at least five sources.

## Finished Proposal Components:

You will include each of these areas in your proposal with the specified sub-headings:

1. **Completed Proposal Form:** Please fill it out accordingly and sign. This will be signed by your 303 instructor after you have completed the course requirements.
2. **Cover Page:** see cover page template
3. **Abstract:** You will develop a coherent abstract which explains, in 200 words or less, the scope of your project and the intention behind it. You will be writing this portion of your proposal at the very end of the process once you are able to articulate your ideas concisely.
4. **Part One: Overview and Goals**
  - Overview: You will frame the scope of your Capstone and articulate the path your Capstone will take. This section should be a bit biographical and explain who you are as a student and whether your Capstone is focused on your personal, academic, or career goals. This section serves as the “what” of your project.
  - Project Goals: This section will clarify the “why” behind your project. You will articulate the goals and aims of your project and the larger impact. This section should include:
    - a. The significance of your Capstone: why it is important to you, and how it will contribute to the larger community?
    - b. Questions shaping your project
    - c. Limitations
    - d. Potential problems or issues impacting your Capstone and possible solutions.
5. **Part Two: Specifics**
  - Specifics: You will clarify how you plan to complete your Capstone and the steps necessary to take. The specifics section will identify the “how” of your project. This section should be in narrative form except for the schedule and timeline for completion, which should be bulleted. This section needs to include:
    - a. Course sequence
    - b. The schedule and timeline for completing your Capstone (should be in bulleted form)
    - c. The research methods and ethics for your Capstone if needed (such as IRB)
    - d. Budget and materials for your Capstone
    - e. Deliverables or products generated: i.e., final paper, reflective synthesis paper, research poster, or other culminating materials.
    - f. Public sharing component: this could overlap with your deliverables.
      - 1) If you are contracting a course for your Honors Capstone, presenting to the class does not fulfill your public component.

**6. Part Three: Evaluation of Resources**

- Evaluation of Resources: You will craft a 250-to-350-word statement that identifies at least five works or resources (two must be academic in nature) and frames them in relation to your own Honors Capstone topic. Use the correct MLA citation for the source. Sources should be related to your topic of interest; they may provide insight or inform your understanding of your project.
  - a. A separate “Works Cited” page with your (minimum) five sources will follow your narrative. This adheres to MLA style guidelines.
  - b. If you will be studying abroad, please include the following items. These websites will not count as separate sources. You can use the following websites to equate as “one source” and will still need to provide 4 more sources:
    - Department of State’s website specifically for [students studying abroad](#).
    - The [travel advisory](#) page that you will monitor while planning for your time abroad.
    - If you do not know your country yet, you can include the Department of State’s [general travel website](#) and any other pages that feel particularly important for your time abroad.
    - I highly recommend that you include [enrolling in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program \(STEP\)](#) on your timeline.

**Expectations for the Capstone Proposal:**

Your Capstone Proposal should be double-spaced and formatted in 12-point Times New Roman font with one-inch margins on all sides. Please adhere to the following guidelines to format your work:

- Use MLA format to cite any sources
- Subheadings should be in boldface type and left-justified
- Last name and page numbers should be in the upper right-hand corner

Your HON 303 instructor will review your final draft of your Capstone Proposal before signing your Capstone Proposal Form. You are responsible for ensuring that you address all of your instructor's editorial comments and that all necessary revisions are made. Additionally, you may want to have your Capstone instructor of record/mentor look over your proposal because they may suggest aspects or components that have not been outlined above.

**Before Submitting:**

Keep in mind that the Capstone Proposal you submit to the Honors College is more than a class assignment. Your submission will be a permanent record that is your culminating experience as an Honors student. All Honors Capstone Proposals are kept on file for consultation by future students who want to see an example of what constitutes an Honors-worthy Capstone. For this reason, you should strive to make it the best presentation it can be, with careful attention to organization, writing, and overall presentation. The Honors College will review your submission carefully and will return it to you for revision if it does not meet the College's expectations regarding format, writing, and production.

**Timeline for the Honors Capstone Process:**

The timeline for your Honors Capstone will vary based on your major and other coursework. However, most students should aim to complete their Capstone in the manner listed below:

**Sophomore Year to early Junior Year:**

- Take HON 303 course
- Submit Capstone Proposal document to the Honors College for approval
  - If Capstone Proposal is approved, you can move forward on starting your experience
  - If Capstone Proposal is not approved, revise and resubmit utilizing the feedback from the College

**Late Sophomore Year through Senior Year:**

- Complete your Honors Capstone
  - Please note that approval of your Capstone Proposal does NOT ensure enrollment, and you will still need to enroll in your coursework. Please see “Next Steps” for information on what to do for course enrollment.
- Verify completion of your Capstone and public component

## How to Enroll in Capstone Coursework:

After your Capstone Proposal has been approved, you may need to submit the appropriate paperwork to enroll in your courses. Below is information on how to enroll in contracted classes, independently arranged units, and study abroad. Some students have the option of directly enrolling in a class that is already “Capstone” and “Honors”, such as BIO 488CH (Medical Microbiology – Honors). However, most students need to take additional steps to enroll in their Honors Capstone units.

### Honors Contracts

#### What are they?

Honors Contracts allow you to enroll in an upper-division, non-Honors class and turn it into an Honors class by working with your professor to identify an Honors component. This does not mean *more* work, it means different work, as you are encouraged to modify or add a component to the class that will enrich your overall experience. Think creatively about what this might be and how the Honors component might give you a richer understanding of the material in the class, how it might provide you an opportunity to learn some different material or enhance your future ambitions or goals. You may only contract up to 12 units of classes at the 300-level or above.

#### Steps to Completing an Honors Contract:

1. Think about what you might like to add/change to the course to turn it into an Honors experience. You can consider adding on an experience, modifying an assignment, a presentation, or more. Draft a few ideas to bring to a meeting with your instructor.
2. Meet with your instructor to discuss options. Bring your ideas, and email and/or print a copy of the letter to your faculty member [from Dean Gustafson](#) explaining the contracting process.
3. Write up your proposal and complete the Honors Contract paperwork. Make sure to include:
  - a. Secured approval of faculty and department chair
  - b. A written proposal of no more than 500 words in which you explicitly state what you will be adding/changing in the class. Be specific! For example: *How long will the paper be that you write? How long will the presentation be that you are giving? How many sources are required in your paper? What is the topic you will be covering? How often will you meet with your instructor outside of class? How many hours will you be working at an internship site? When will the Honors component need to be completed?* This is NOT an exhaustive list—be as detailed as you can. If you do not know that information, outline when you will have it determined. You also need to note how many points it will be worth and how this changes the overall point value. Usually, contracts represent about 10-15% of the total course grade. Explain when you will turn in this component and how your instructor will grade it.
  - c. The original syllabus for the class
4. After your contract has been approved by the instructor and department chair, ensure that any materials are submitted to Honors. They are due by the add/drop date of that semester you are taking the class.
5. Once you submit your contract, expect to be enrolled in the Honors version of the course in 1-2 weeks. This is a manual process where we swap you from the non-Honors course into an Honors version, and then move you back into the “regular” Canvas shell for the class. This process takes time, so please be patient. You will hear from the department if there are any revisions necessary to your proposal.

### **Honors Independently Arranged Options**

#### **What are they?**

Honors Independently arranged options (HON 408, HON 466, HON 475, HON 485, HON 490, and HON 497) allow you to design a course around your interests. You work directly with a faculty member to design a course of study, grading procedure, and timeline for the scope of an independent project. These units can come from research, an internship, or an independent study course. Keep in mind that the course must fulfill ABOR standards and thus, for every unit of coursework, you should have 45 hours of academic work and around 10 pages of academic writing in the course. For example, a three-unit course requires 135 hours of academic work and around 30 pages of academic writing.

HON 408 = Fieldwork (Internship)

HON 466 = Arizona Legislative Internship

HON 475 = Directed Readings

HON 485 = Undergraduate Research

HON 490 = Honors Thesis

HON 497 = Independent Study

#### **Steps to Completing Honors Independently Arranged Units:**

1. Work with your instructor of record to design a program of study for your course. You will need to discuss the objective, scope, and parameters of the study, the length and detail of your project, and the instructor's means of evaluation.
2. Write your proposal and complete the appropriate Honors Independently Arranged Unit proposal form ([HON 485 or HON 497](#), [HON 408](#), [HON 466](#), or [HON 490](#), or [HON 475](#)). Make sure to include:
  - a. Secured approval of your instructor of record
  - b. A thorough proposal of at least two pages where you specify:
    - i. Your key objectives
    - ii. Your motivation for pursuing these independently arranged units
    - iii. What related theory and frameworks this project fits into
    - iv. Your work plan — BE SPECIFIC. This proposal serves as a “syllabus” so you must detail due dates, grading, meeting times, and resources used in class
    - v. The final project and how it will be graded
    - vi. The evaluation method for the class
3. After your contract has been approved by the instructor and department chair, ensure that your materials are submitted to Honors. They are due by the add/drop date of the semester you are taking the class.
4. Once the proposal is submitted, expect to be enrolled in the independently arranged units in 1-2 weeks. This process takes time, so please be patient. You will hear from Honors if there are any revisions or clarification necessary to your proposal. Keep in mind that this is adding on units to your semester, so if the independent study units will put you over 19 units, you will need to submit a Unit Load Override Approval in LOUIE.

**Study Abroad**

| Type of Program  | How to earn units that can be used to fulfill Honors Capstone requirements?   | What to submit to Honors?  | When to submit to Honors?     |
|--|---|--|-------------------------------|
| <a href="#"><u>Faculty-Led Program</u></a>                           | Work with the faculty leader of the trip to include an HON component to the course to turn it into an Honors course. You may only use up to <u>four units of faculty-led programs</u> in fulfillment of the Honors Capstone.  | Honors Study Abroad form—please check the “Honors Capstone” box. You MUST attach a syllabus and a brief proposal identifying the Honors component. | Four weeks prior to departure |
| <a href="#"><u>Interdisciplinary Global Programs (IGP)</u></a>       | IGP students may only use up to <u>four units of internship units</u> (SPA 408H, GER 408H, etc) in fulfillment of the Honors Capstone. Honors units may be earned through an additional assignment. Unique prompts will be sent upon approval.<br><u>Note:</u> The LAN Honors units offered in the fall are not applicable to the Honors Capstone but can be used for Honors units.             | Honors Study Abroad form—please check the “IGP” and “GRIP credit” boxes.   | April 1 prior to departure    |
| <a href="#"><u>Global Research and Internship Program (GRIP)</u></a> | GRIP students may only use up to <u>four units of internship units</u> in fulfillment of the Honors Capstone. Honors units may be earned through an additional assignment. Unique prompts will be sent upon approval.<br><u>Note:</u> Internship units earned abroad must follow Education Abroad’s GRIP credit guidelines.   | Honors Study Abroad form—please check the “GRIP” and “Honors Capstone” box.  | Four weeks prior to departure |
| <b>HON 491C - Honors Capstone Experience (Study Abroad)</b>          | <u>Three</u> Honors Capstone units are earned through this option. HON 491C is an online course taken during the semester abroad (fall or spring <u>only</u> and not offered over the summer). Students are not pursuing the 3 Essay option. You will sign up for this course in addition to the other units earned abroad. Your study abroad program must be <u>at least four weeks long</u> . | Honors Study Abroad Form—please check the “HON 491C Honors Capstone Abroad” box.   | Four weeks prior to departure |

**Note about studying abroad:**

- Students choosing the “3-essay” option must be studying abroad for minimum four weeks to receive Honors units.
- Students should begin meeting with an Education Abroad Advisor as soon as they choose to explore earning Honors units with a study abroad opportunity.

## **Public Component:**

1. On the Capstone Proposal form, please designate which type of public component your Capstone will satisfy:
  - a. Physical final product (Text, Article, Website, Blog, Vlog, etc.)
  - b. Presentation at a conference or other academically focused event
  - c. Honors Exploration
  - d. Other (confirm with instructor)
2. If you are contracting a course for your Honors Capstone, presenting to the class does not fulfill your public component.
3. During the semester you are completing the public component, send verification of completion to [Honors.Capstone@nau.edu](mailto:Honors.Capstone@nau.edu). Please include any attachments or online versions that showcase your work. This can include writing/papers you finished, photos, posters, videos, etc.
4. If your public component needs to change for any reason, please follow the guidelines below ("Capstone Changes") to note that this portion of your Capstone has changed.

## **Capstone Changes:**

You may need to amend or change your Honors Capstones for a variety of reasons. In this case, you will fill out the [Changing Honors Capstone form](#). You will receive feedback from Dean Gustafson by the end of the following week you submitted the online form.

Once approved, these changes will be reflected on your Capstone Proposal paperwork in the Honors College.