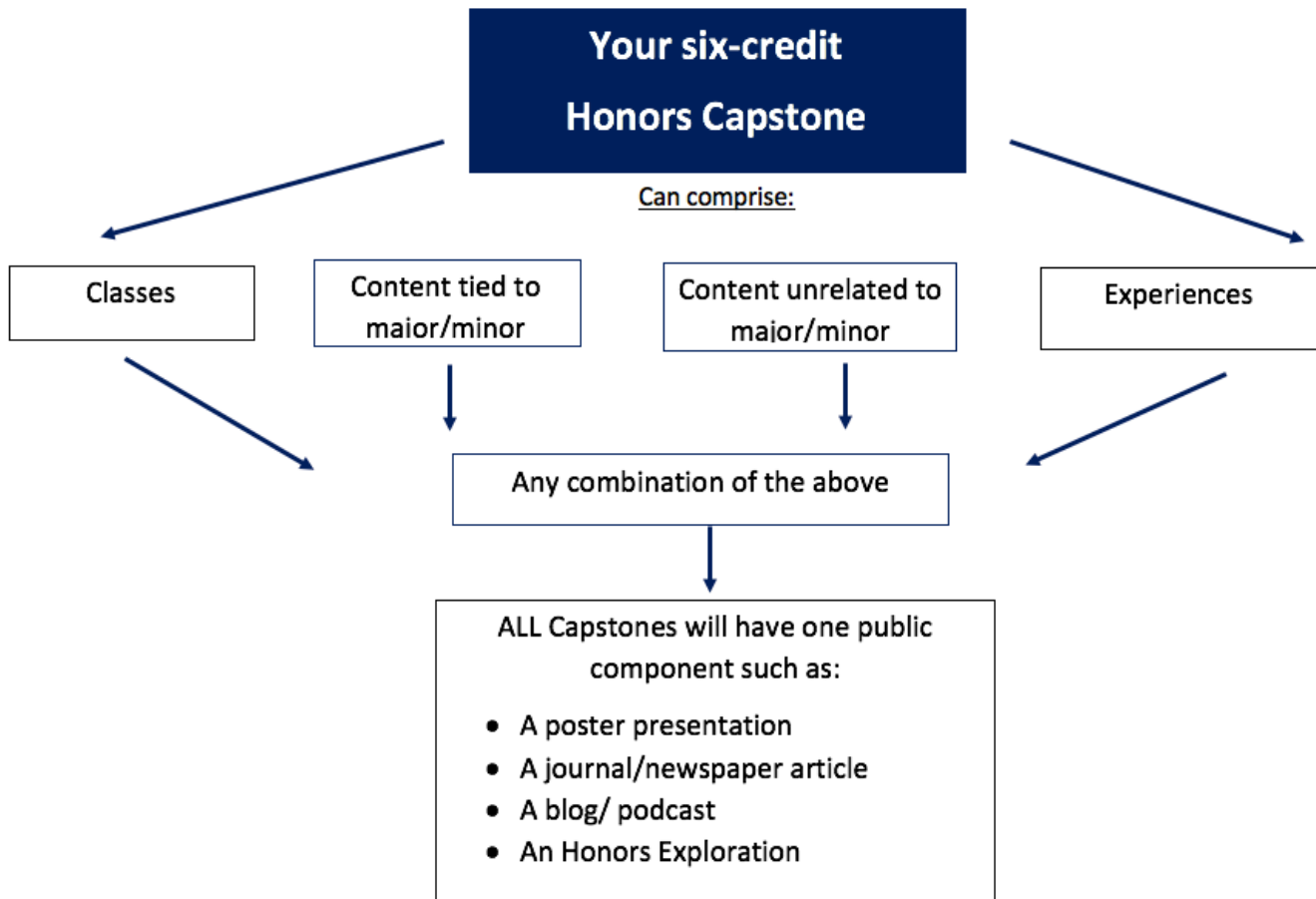


What is the Honors College Capstone?

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?



Embrace the possibilities!

- Honors Capstones can fall into one of three categories:
 - All six credits can come from Capstone or other classes that have been contracted for Honors credits or have Honors seats.
 - All six credits can come from one or more projects or experiences by enrolling in independently arranged credits (HON 408, HON 497, HON 485).
 - The six credits can come from a mix of classes, projects, and/or experiences.
- The Honors Capstone can be related to your major or not. Stay focused or expand your horizons. It is your choice.
- 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 UGRADS or an Honors Symposium, 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 credits (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 the Capstone requirements in your major? Do you want to incorporate these in fulfillment of your Honors 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, working in a lab, or completing 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?

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

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 will be helpful.

What is an instructor of record?

Each student must have official instructors of record who assign grades for all six Honors Capstone credits. All instructors of record must be able to assign grades. NAU staff do not qualify. Instructors of record may act as mentors who guide you through your project, but also may be just the people who grade your work. The role of instructors of record will vary based on what type of Capstone you choose. You do not need to identify instructors 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.

Selection Process:

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

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

Example: You are a Psychology student completing an independent research project on learning theory. You work with your educational Psychology professor to design a project. That professor helps you plan, gives advice, and then grades your final paper.

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 you a 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 who grades your final paper and assigns you a grade for your Capstone.

Example: You are an Engineering major but are completing an internship with a cooking company in Phoenix for your Honors Capstone. Your mentor is the internship director who helped you to get the position and monitors your participation in the internship. However, you have an Honors professor as instructor of record at NAU to read your internship reflection paper and assign you a grade for your Capstone.

Mentor/Instructor and Student Expectations:

As an Honors student, you are responsible for:

- Keeping your mentor/instructor of record informed about Honors College timelines and due dates
- Discussing with your mentor/instructor how you plan to accomplish your Capstone project
- Letting your mentor/instructor know that you will use the Writing Center
- Giving your mentor/instructor 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

Proposals:

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

The proposal should be three to four pages (double-spaced), with an added evaluation of 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: This will be signed by your 303 instructor after you have completed the course requirements.
2. Cover Page: Include your name, project title, and date.
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 most likely write this portion of your proposal at the very end of the process, once you are able to articulate your ideas concisely.
4. Capstone Overview: You will frame the scope of the project and articulate what path or track 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.
5. Project Specifics: You will clarify how you plan to complete your Capstone and the steps necessary. The project specifics section will identify the “how” of your project. This section should be in narrative form, with the exception of the schedule and timeline for completion, which can be bulleted. This section should include:
 - a. Course sequence
 - b. Research methods and ethical guidelines for your project
 - c. Schedule/timeline for completing the project (can be in bulleted form)
 - d. Resources/budget needed for project
 - e. Deliverables or products generated from the project: i.e., final paper, reflective synthesis paper, research poster, or other culminating materials.
 - f. Public sharing component
6. 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 project--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 project.

7. **Evaluation of Resources**- This section will include at least five sources used in drafting your proposal. You will craft a 250 to 350 word statement that identifies at least five works or resources 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. Your HON 303 instructor will help you to select appropriate and relevant works and resources.

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 style
- 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 off on your Capstone Proposal Form. You are responsible for ensuring that you address all of your instructor's editorial comments and that all of the necessary revisions are made. Additionally, you may want to have your Capstone mentor/instructor of record look over your proposal, because he or she 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 describes your crowning achievement 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 with regard to format, writing, and production. If changes to your proposal arise, you will send an email update to Kevin.Gustafson@nau.edu.

If you would benefit from assistance with your written proposal, the Honors College recommends making an appointment at the Honors Writing Center (Honors.Writing@nau.edu).

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 or 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 department

Junior Year through Senior Year:

- Complete your Honors Capstone
 - Please note that approval of your Capstone Proposal does NOT ensure enrollment. You still need to fill out the appropriate paperwork to actually 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 need to fill out the appropriate paperwork to actually enroll in your courses. Below is information on how to enroll in contracted classes, independently arranged credits, and study abroad.

Honors Contracts

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 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, adding a presentation, or more. Draft a couple of ideas to bring to a meeting with your instructor.
2. Meet with your instructor to discuss options. Bring your ideas and print a copy of the letter to your faculty member from Dean Gustafson (located on the Honors Capstone webpage) explaining the contracting process. Make sure to discuss what the project will be, when it will be due, how many points it will be worth, and how it will be graded.
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! 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 don't know that information, outline when you will know it or 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 your materials are submitted to Honors. They are due by the add/drop date of the semester you are taking the class.
5. Once you submit your contract, expect to be enrolled in the Honors version of the course in about 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” Bb Learn shell. 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 Credits

Honors Independently Arranged Credits: What are they?

Honors Independently Arranged Credits (HON 408, HON 485, 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 credits can come from research, an internship, or an independent study course. Keep in mind that the course must fulfill ABOR standards and thus, for a three-unit course, you should have 135 hours of academic work and around 30 pages of academic writing in the course.

Steps to Completing Honors Independently Arranged Credits

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 up your proposal and complete the Honors Independently Arranged Credit proposal. 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 credits
 - 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 credits in about 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 credits to your semester, so if the independent study credits will put you over 19 units, you will need to seek a unit load override from an advisor.

Study Abroad

What type of Program?	How to earn credits that can be used to fulfill Honors Capstone requirements?	What to submit to Honors?	When to submit to Honors?
Faculty Led Program	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</u> units of faculty led credits 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
IGP	IGP or GSEP or GLBP students may only use up to <u>four</u> units of internship credits ex: (SPA408H, GER408H) in fulfillment of the Honors Capstone. Honors credits may be earned through an additional assignment. Unique prompts will be sent upon approval. Note: The LAN Honors credits 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 "Honors Capstone" box.	April 1 prior to departure
GRIP (Research or Internships Abroad)	GRIP students may only use up to <u>four</u> units of internship credit in fulfillment of the Honors Capstone. Honors credits may be earned through an additional assignment. Unique prompts will be sent upon approval. Note: Internship credits earned abroad must follow CIE GRIP credit guidelines.	Honors Study Abroad form-- please check the "GRIP" and "Honors Capstone" box.	Four weeks prior to departure
HON 491C- Honors Capstone Abroad	<u>Three</u> Honors Capstone credits may be earned through this option. The HON 491C is an online course taken during the semester abroad. You will sign up for this course in addition to the other credits earned abroad. Your study abroad program must be at least four weeks long.	Honors 491C form. Check the "Honors Capstone Abroad" box.	Four weeks prior to departure

Public Components

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, class presentation, etc.
 - d. Other (please explain)
2. During the semester you are completing the public component, send verification of completion to Chelsea.McKeirnan@nau.edu
3. If your public component needs to change for any reason, please follow the guidelines specified in "Amendments to Honors Capstones"

Required Capstone Reflection

Before your Academic Requirements report is modified to indicate the Honors Capstone requirement is complete, you must submit a 2-3 page Honors Capstone Reflection to the Honors College (honors@nau.edu) that incorporates reflection upon the Honors Curriculum, peer leadership and extra-curricular experiences in Honors, and how Honors may have shaped your general educational experience at NAU and your future education or professional direction/trajectory.

This reflection should have some structure to it similar to an academic paper you would write for a class, but this really is about giving you an opportunity to think back on your time at NAU and in Honors and in Flagstaff. This reflection should be no less than 2 pages long and approximately 3 pages total. Submit to honors@nau.edu with "Honors Capstone Reflection" in the subject line.

A reminder with more specific prompts will be sent to you in the term in which you are completing your final Honors Capstone experience.

Capstone Changes

You may need to amend or change your Honors Capstones for a variety of reasons. We fully expect that your plans do and will change between their initial proposal submission and graduation. In this case, you should take the following steps:

- Send a detailed (200-300 word) email to Dean Gustafson (Kevin.Gustafson@nau.edu) and Chelsea McKeirnan (Chelsea.McKeirnan@nau.edu) explaining the following:
 1. The original project
 2. Why you no longer can or want to pursue that project
 3. The new project you want to undertake
 4. How this new project will involve a commensurate amount of work and help you meet the goals you established in the original proposal.

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