SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

The Student Capstone Experience (SCE)

The SCE requires students to demonstrate the ability to think critically and to engage in a project of active learning in their major field of study. In the SCE, which is required of all graduating seniors, students integrate all relevant knowledge and skills from their entire academic program into a senior project demonstrating mastery of a body of knowledge and intellectual accomplishment that goes significantly beyond classroom learning.

Senior Capstone Experiences can take several forms: research papers, comprehensive exams, professional portfolios, and artistic creations or performances. Whatever the design, Senior Capstone Experiences will be informed by the following expectations:

- Demonstrated student initiative
- Significant preparatory work
- Active inquiry
- Integration of acquired knowledge and skills
- Culmination of previous academic work
- For those majors which require or allow the comprehensive exam:
  - Fulfill all departmental requirements (methodology courses, review sessions, etc.) designed to prepare students for the exams.
- Passed the comprehensive exam.
- For those majors which require or allow a thesis or senior project:
  - Select paper or project topic no later than the fourth week of classes in the fall semester of the senior year.
  - Submit outline (if required).
- Submit rough draft of thesis or project by the deadline established by the department.
- Submit final draft of thesis no later than the established departmental deadline or the last day of classes of the semester in which the student is graduating, whichever is earlier.

Members of the faculty, mentor seniors intensively as they work to complete their Senior Capstone Experiences. As part of the process, students are expected to share with the College community in appropriate ways the results of their Senior Capstone Experience. The Curriculum Committee reviews, at regular intervals, departmental policies regarding the Senior Capstone Experience to ensure compliance with the expectations listed above and overall equality of demands across departments. *More information about policies governing SCE courses is available in the Registration Policies section below.*

Because each department sets its own intermediate deadlines for submission or completion of requirements for the Senior Capstone Experience, students should refer to their department's established deadlines or consult their department chair regarding each of the above checklist items.

Students who fail to meet their department's deadlines or other requirements may earn a failing grade for their Senior Capstone Experience regardless of the College deadline of the last day of classes.

Excellent work on the Senior Capstone Experience, along with the quality of work done in major courses, can result in Departmental Honors. *More information about Honors at Graduation is available in the Graduation Policies section below.*

Registration for the Senior Capstone Experience

Students in their senior year will be advised to register for a Senior Capstone Experience course worth four credit hours. With departmental approval, students who double major may complete one integrated Senior Capstone Experience course. The final grade for this course will be determined by the SCE advisors from both majors in consultation with one another and with other faculty from the two departments who participated in the student's capstone experience. When such integration is not advisable, double majors will register for two separate SCE courses worth two credit hours apiece, one for each department. The final grade for each individual course will be determined by the SCE advisor in consultation with others from the student's major department who participated in the student's capstone experience. Students who decide to drop a second major after the drop/add deadline and before the withdrawal deadline will receive a W grade on that SCE. The remaining SCE will be updated to four credits. Exceptions to this deadline must be approved by the Associate Dean of Academic Success.

The four credit hours awarded through the successful completion of the Senior Capstone Experience course(s) is part of the 128 credit hours required to graduate from the College. Students may not earn more than four credit hours in fulfillment of their Senior Capstone Experience.

Departments determine whether to assign a letter grade or designate Senior Capstone Experiences in their department with honors or a Pass/Fail grade. For Departments that use letter grades, only Senior Capstone Experience courses receiving a letter grade of A- or better qualify for honors.

Senior Capstone Experience Grades & Fees