HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECT HANDBOOK

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SHIPPENSBURG UNIVERSITY
Honors Program
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INTRODUCTION

The culmination of your Honors Program experience is your Honors capstone project. Your capstone project is a major independent or collaborative research, creative, or service-learning project. Students usually complete their capstone project during their senior year and present their project at the Honors Symposium at the end of their senior year. You have several options for completing your Honors capstone project, including:

- Independent or collaborative research, creative, or service-learning project
- Internship with a related research project
- Student teaching experience with a related research project
- Honors Colloquium: Students work together to design and implement a major interdisciplinary service-learning project.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Which capstone project option should I choose?
The Honors capstone option that you select should relate directly to your academic and professional goals. Your Honors capstone project should serve as a showcase of the content knowledge and skills that you have acquired during your undergraduate experience. Think of it as your ticket to where you want to go when you graduate. For example, if you are planning to attend graduate school, you should probably complete an independent research project because this will impress graduate school admission committees and strengthen your chances of admission. If you are an education major, completing an independent research project while student teaching will make you stand out from other candidates when you are applying for teaching positions.

How do I determine the focus of my project?
First, keep in mind that you will be working on your project for almost a year, so make sure that you select a topic that you are passionate about studying. Second, one of the best ways to choose a topic is to find a professor who is doing research in an area that you are interested in learning more about. Talk with your academic advisor about your interests, and she/he should be able to direct you to the most suitable professors in your department. Keep in mind that most Shippensburg professors are very interested in working on research projects with Honors students. Another good way to generate potential topics is to review what other Honors students have done for their capstone projects. Attend the Honors Symposium in April to see what this year’s seniors are doing, and review the archive of past Honors capstone project abstracts, which is available at http://www.ship.edu/Honors/Curriculum/Symposium_Archive/. And remember that Dr. Klein has worked with many students on their Honors capstone projects, and she’s always interested in meeting with you to discuss potential topics.

Please note that your project must include an element of original research (e.g. use of primary source material, investigation of a new topic/problem, use of a new methodology to research a topic/problem that others have previously explored). Your project cannot be based solely on a review of secondary literature (i.e. what others have already written about your topic).
If I select the independent research or creative project option, how extensive should my project be?
The scope of research and creative projects varies by discipline. A good general guideline is that your final written project should be the length of a standard journal article in your discipline. For history majors, most history journals accept papers of 25-40 pages. Because of their technical nature, journal articles in the sciences and social sciences are usually significantly shorter in length. Browse through the major journals in your discipline and talk with your faculty advisor to get a better sense of the standard for your discipline.

Can I expand a research, creative, or service-learning project that I started in another class and turn it into my Honors capstone project?
Students may base their Honors capstone projects on projects or papers that they developed in earlier classes. For example, students who enroll in HON 440: Seminar in Business and Society often use the research papers that they developed in this class as the foundation of their Honors capstone projects. If you choose this path, in your Honors Capstone Project Proposal, you must explain clearly how your Honors capstone project will be different from and more expansive than your earlier paper or project so that you can justify earning an additional three academic credits for the paper or project.

If I am required to complete a capstone project in my major, do I need to do a second project to complete the Honors capstone requirement?
Not necessarily. In many cases, students can double-count the capstone project required for their major for their Honors capstone project. However, your major capstone project must be one of the Honors options outlined above (e.g., independent research), and it must conform to the scope of Honors projects. Many students discover that by expanding their required major capstone projects, they are able to fulfill their Honors capstone requirement, too. If you are interested in double-counting your major capstone project for your Honors capstone project, meet with Dr. Klein to make sure that it is feasible to do so.

How do I register for academic credit for my capstone project?
Students are required to register for academic credit for their capstone project, so that it appears on their academic transcript. There are several options for registering for credit for your capstone project:

1. Students in several majors (most science and some social science majors, including psychology) can earn academic credit for their project by enrolling in their department’s upper-division research courses. Here are some of the courses that students have used in the past to fulfill their Honors capstone project requirement:

   --Biology: BIO 397: Introduction to Research; BIO 398: Research II; BIO 396: Research III
   --Chemistry: CHM 496, 497, 498: Introduction to Research I, II, and III (1 cr. per semester)
   --Computer Science: CSC 498: Senior Research Methods (2 cr.) and CSC 499: Senior Research and Development (2 cr.)
   --History: HIS 386: History Research Seminar
   --Psychology: PSY 374: Advanced Research in Psychology I; PSY 375: Advanced Research in Psychology II; PSY 381: Honor Thesis I; PSY 382: Honor Thesis II
Note that some research courses listed above are offered for fewer than 3 credits, and to fulfill your Honors capstone requirement, you must earn at least 3 credits. If your department offers another research course that you would like to use to fulfill your Honors capstone requirement, please discuss this option with Dr. Klein.

2. If you are a student in a department that does not offer upper-division research courses (business, some humanities and social science majors), you will register for HON 399: Honors Independent Study in order to earn academic credit for your project. You can enroll in HON 399 in any summer term or regular semester. You should register for this course during the semester in which you intend to complete your Honors capstone project. For example, you may begin your research project during the fall semester of your senior year but may not plan to complete it until the spring semester. Therefore, you should register for HON 399 during the spring semester. Please note that you must complete HON 399 application (available on the Honors Web site) and receive a series of approvals before you will be registered for the course. Please note that the approval process can take up to 4 weeks to complete.

3. If you choose to complete a research project while student teaching, your regular student-teaching credits will fulfill the Honors capstone credit requirement. The courses are:

--Early Childhood/Elementary Education: ECH 489: Early Childhood Student Teaching
--Elementary/Middle Level Education: EDU 495: Student Teaching Experience
--Secondary Education: EDU 495: Student Teaching Experience

When is my capstone project proposal due?
The standard deadline for submitting your Honors capstone proposal is September 1 of your senior year. However, if you plan to begin your project before the fall semester of your senior year, you must submit the form and get the required approvals from your faculty advisor and Dr. Klein before you begin your project. Otherwise, there is no guarantee that the project that you’ve started will fulfill your Honors capstone requirement.

What types of grants are available to support my capstone project?
To complete your capstone project, you may need to purchase special supplies or equipment, or you may need to travel to do your research. Fortunately, Honors students are eligible to apply for a variety of grants to fund their research projects and the presentation of their projects at local, regional, and national conferences. Here are two important grant opportunities:

University Undergraduate Research Grants Program: The university awards competitive grants to support students’ undergraduate research projects. The application deadline is usually in late September-early October. More information about the university undergraduate research grants program is available at http://www.ship.edu/Student_Research/Funding_ALERT/.

Honors Program Capstone Project Grants: The Honors Program awards competitive grants to support Honors students’ capstone projects and the presentation of their projects at regional and national conferences. There are two deadlines for the grants each year, April 1 and November 1. The grant guidelines and application forms are available at http://www.ship.edu/Honors/Current/Forms/.
Why should I consider presenting my Honors capstone project at an external conference? What are some good options?
Honors students are strongly encouraged to present their capstone projects at local, regional, and national conferences, and you were introduced to some of these opportunities in Honors WIFYS. Making an external conference presentation looks great on your resume, and it is a terrific opportunity to make connections with other student and faculty researchers in your discipline. Plus, if your project is accepted for presentation at a conference, you can apply for a grant from the Honors Program to fund your travel. Keep in mind that most deadlines for applying to make a presentation at a conference are at least four-to-six months before the conference. Here are some good options:

Regional and national disciplinary conferences: Almost every academic discipline has a regional or national conference where undergraduate students are welcome to present their research and creative projects. For example, Honors history majors often present their research projects at the state and regional Phi Alpha Theta conferences, Honors psychology majors can present at the Eastern Psychological Association meeting, and Honors chemistry majors often present their research at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society. Check with your academic or research advisor for conference opportunities in your discipline.

Northeast Regional Honors Conference (NRHC): NRHC, held annually in late March or early April, offers Honors students from all disciplines the opportunity to present their research papers and posters and creative projects. The deadline for applying to participate in the conference is usually in mid-November. More information about the conference is posted at http://www.nrhchonors.org.

National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC): NCHC is the national professional organization of Honors Programs and Colleges. It hosts an annual conference each fall, and Honors students are invited to present research posters and interdisciplinary research papers at the conference. The conference is a wonderful opportunity for Honors students in all majors to network with their Honors peers from across the nation. The deadline for submitting proposals for the conference is usually around March 1, so this conference is most suitable for students who have been working on research projects during their sophomore and junior years. Like the regional Honors conference, Dr. Klein must approve your proposal before you submit it. More information about the conference is posted at http://www.nchc.org.

National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR): This annual conference provides undergraduate students in all disciplines a forum for sharing the results of their research and creative projects. The deadline for submitting proposals is usually in mid-November, and the conference is usually held in late March or early April. Note that the conference Web site changes each year, based on the host institution so search online for “NCUR.”

If you have other questions that aren’t answered here, please ask Dr. Klein.
IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Submit all required forms and other materials to the Honors secretary, Cindy Poe, at the Honors office or cmpeo@ship.edu. Materials may be submitted in hard copy or electronic format, except where a specific format is noted. All forms noted below are posted on the Honors Website at http://www.ship.edu/Honors/Current/Forms/.

Make sure that you submit your capstone project proposal and get the required approvals from your faculty advisor and Dr. Klein before you begin your project. Therefore, if you plan to begin your project before the fall semester of your senior year, you need to submit your proposal before the standard September 1 deadline.

Freshman and Sophomore Years

As you begin to take courses in your major, talk with your academic advisor and other professors about the opportunities that are available to get involved in research and creative projects with professors in your major. Start brainstorming ideas for your capstone project, and make sure to talk with your academic advisor and Dr. Klein if you have any questions.

Junior Year

The steps that you take during your junior year are critical to ensuring that you will be able to complete your capstone project successfully during your senior year. Most importantly, during your junior year, you should identify: 1) a feasible capstone project topic and 2) a professor who could serve as the faculty advisor on your project. Make sure that you talk with the professor about your project during your junior year so that you ensure that he/she has time to work with you during your senior year. If you are having difficulty identifying a topic and/or faculty advisor, make an appointment to meet with Dr. Klein to discuss your interests and brainstorm potential topics and advisors. Here are other specific deadlines to meet during your junior year:

September 15: Election of Honors Capstone Project Form due. On this form, you will indicate which Honors capstone option you intend to complete.

Recommended by March 1: Begin your review of secondary literature by scheduling a research consultation with a librarian. Research consultations are one-on-one appointments with a librarian to help you begin to plan the library research for your Honors capstone project. Follow-up appointments can also be scheduled during the fall semester of your senior year upon request. Sign up at: http://library.ship.edu/hon399.

April 1: Application deadline for Honors Capstone Project Grants. If you need funding for your capstone project during the summer or early fall, you should plan to apply for an Honors capstone grant now. The application guidelines and forms are available on the Honors Website at http://www.ship.edu/Honors/Current/Forms/.

Late April: Attend the Honors Symposium. The Honors Symposium is held in conjunction with the university’s annual Celebration of Student Research. All Honors juniors should attend
the Honors Symposium, the annual event where Honors seniors present the results of their capstone projects. Attending the Honors Symposium can help generate ideas for your own project and help you understand what the scope of your project should be. Seeing what other Honors students have done for their capstone projects will answer many questions that you may have about your own project.

**June 30:** HON 399 Form and Syllabus due (for students who intend to use this course to complete their Honors capstone project in the fall semester; see instructions for completing the form and a sample syllabus below).

**Senior Year**

**September 1:** Honors Capstone Project Proposal due

**Early October:** Application deadline for University Undergraduate Research Grants. See the following Web site for more information about applying for university undergraduate research grants to fund your capstone project: [http://www.ship.edu/Student_Research/Funding_Alert/](http://www.ship.edu/Student_Research/Funding_Alert/).

**November 1:** Application deadline for Honors Capstone Project Grants. If you need funds to complete your project or attend a conference during the spring semester, you should apply for a grant now. The application guidelines and forms are available on the Honors Web site at [http://www.ship.edu/ Honors/Current/Forms/](http://www.ship.edu/ Honors/Current/Forms/).

**November 15:** HON 399 Form and Syllabus due (for students who intend to use this course to complete their Honors capstone project in the spring semester; see instructions for completing the form and a sample syllabus below).

**February 1:** Information for Honors Symposium Program due (see Honors Symposium information below).

**April 15:** Application deadline for the Outstanding Honors Capstone Project Award

**Mid April (at least one week before the Honors Symposium):** Schedule a session to practice your presentation with your project advisor or Dr. Klein.

**Late April:** Honors Symposium

**Late April:** Honors Spring Banquet

**Last Monday in April:** Deadline to submit electronic copies of:
   1. Final Research Paper (or other written documentation required by your project advisor)
   and
   2. PowerPoint Presentation
COMPLETING THE HON 399: HONORS INDEPENDENT STUDY PAPERWORK

Students who intend to earn credit for their Honors capstone project by using HON 399: Honors Independent Study must complete the required paperwork and submit it to Dr. Klein by June 30 if they intend to enroll in the course in the fall semester and by November 15 if they intend to enroll in the course in the spring semester. The HON 399: Honors Independent Study Form is located on the “Forms” page of the Honors Program Web site at http://ship.edu/Honors/Current/Forms/. Here are some tips for completing your Honors independent study paperwork:

Independent Study Form, Parts I and II:
- Under “Requesting,” check the “Independent Study” box.
- The “Course number and title” are HON 399: Honors Independent Study.
- The “Number of credits” is 3.
- Under “Please provide detailed justification for request,” write: To fulfill the Honors Program’s capstone requirement.
- The faculty member who is serving as the advisor for your Honors capstone project must sign and date the form in two places:
  - In Part I of the form, under “Advisor or Chair” and
  - In Part II of the form, under “Faculty Member’s Signature”

Syllabus
Working with your faculty advisor, you must prepare a syllabus to attach to your HON 399 form. The syllabus must include three key parts:

- Project Description: This should be the same project description that you submitted with your Honors Independent Capstone Project Proposal (Part Two B of the proposal, minus the budget section).
- Detailed Timeline: This is a week-by-week outline of the specific actions that you will take to complete your project.
- Grading Requirements: The final form that your project will take (e.g. paper and length). The formal presentation of your capstone project (e.g. at the Honors Symposium) should account for 10% of your final grade.

Carefully review the sample syllabus that follows on pp. 9-12 of this handbook before you begin working on your own syllabus, and contact Dr. Klein if you have any questions.

Approval Process
After you have completed the above steps, submit your paperwork to Dr. Klein. Dr. Klein will review your materials and contact you if any changes are required. Then, she will sign your form under “Department Chair” and forward it to your College Dean’s office. After your dean reviews your independent study request, he/she will approve or deny it. If your request is approved, your dean’s office will register you for HON 399. Please note that the approval and registration process can take up to four weeks, so make sure that you get your paperwork to Dr. Klein in plenty of time to get the necessary approvals.
REQUEST FOR INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTION OR INDEPENDENT STUDY

INSTRUCTIONS

You must be in good academic standing to apply for individualized instruction or independent study. The course may not be used to repeat or replace a course in which a grade of “D” or “F” was earned. To apply, you must first find a faculty member who is willing to work with you on an individual basis. Complete Part I of this form and have the faculty member submit it for approval. A syllabus must be attached showing course requirements, tentative schedule, and method of evaluation to be used. This form will not be processed without a syllabus.

Individualized instruction—when you need to take a regular course during a semester in which the course is not offered. These courses are generally restricted to students who have completed a substantial portion of their degree program and who need the particular course to complete their degree requirements.

Independent study—must include some new experience of inquiry, evaluation, and/or creative activity. This experience must be one which is not available through an established course, including individualized instruction.

PART I (to be filled out by student and signed by advisor or department chair):

| Student Name: ___________________________ | SU ID #: ________________ | SU email: ___________________________
| Undergraduate ☐ Graduate ☐ Major: ___________________________
| Year: _______ | Fall ☐ Spring ☐ Summer A ☐ Summer B ☐ Winter ☐

Please provide detailed justification for request:

__________________________________________

Student’s Signature: _________________________ Date: ________________

Advisor/Chair Signature: ______________________ Date: ________________

PART II (to be filled out by department and college offering the course):

Requesting (check one): ☐ Independent Study ☐ Individualized Instruction

(Course number and title) __________________________ Number of Credits: __________

☐ Syllabus attached (__________) (__________) Date: ________________

(Faculty Member Print) (Faculty Member Signature)

☐ Approved ☐ Denied __________________________ Date: ________________

(Department Chair’s Signature)

☐ Authorization to raise max credits to: __________

☐ Authorization granted to repeat previous grade of D/F course by College Dean

☐ Authorization granted to repeat previous grade of D/F course by Graduate Dean/Associate Provost

☐ Approved ☐ Denied __________________________ Date: ________________

(College Dean’s Signature)

☐ Approved ☐ Denied __________________________ Date: ________________

(Graduate Dean/Associate Provost)

Course Code: __________________________ Entered by: ______________________ Date: ________________

Revised Date: 4/2/2015
SAMPLE SYLLABUS FOR HON 399: HONORS INDEPENDENT STUDY

Jennifer Hoover
Project Title: The Influence of Company Culture on Self-Insurance

Project Description:

Every state in the U.S. has laws that require employers to have a means for providing compensation for their employees’ injuries or illnesses occurring as a result of their occupation. Employers finance this risk through either market insurance, the most conventional method, or self-insurance, an alternative risk transfer technique. A great deal of literature suggests two theories behind the decision to self-insure. First, companies with low-risk tend to self-insure due to cross-subsidies from low to high-risk firms. Second, companies with high risk tend to self-insure due to high premiums charged by carriers. Current research tends to ignore the relationship that exists between company culture and the decision to self-insure. Inspired by my previous project, this research provides a new, qualitative perspective on the decision to self-insure.

My previous research investigated firm-specific factors that influence manufacturers’ decisions to manage workers’ compensation risk via self-insurance. However, as with most research on self-insurance it focused on quantitative analysis and correlations. Factors such as ownership type, sales revenue, NAICS incidence rates, and years in existence were found to be related to self-insurance, but they did not form the entire picture. This research will begin with an extensive literature review defining company culture and best practices for creating and maintaining the desired culture. The literature review will also address definitions and current theories relating to the decision to self-insure. Manager interviews and data analysis will be used to identify the relationship between company culture and self-insurance. The paper will conclude with a discussion of techniques to develop a culture conducive to self-insurance and an overview of effective risk management strategies.

The analysis for the project uses data from the 2010 Pennsylvania Manufacturers Register and Database which contains company profiles of 20,811 manufacturing firms located in Pennsylvania. The insurance status of each of the manufacturers has been confirmed by the Self-Insurance Division of the Bureau of Workers’ Compensation in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. It will be used for some quantitative analysis and also to identify companies and their contact information to interview. Interviews with managers of self-insured manufacturing firms will be conducted and used as evidence of company culture and risk management techniques.

Understanding the manufacturers’ decision behind self-insurance carries valuable information about how such firms make decisions under uncertainty. Self-insurance can also be a very cost-efficient insurance mechanism. Ultimately, companies could use this research to decide if their firm is suitable for self-insurance or to implement a cultural shift necessary for a successful self-insurance program. This research could be utilized by any company wishing to build a stronger safety culture.
The accounting and finance fields are in many cases closely interlinked. In a corporate setting rarely will strictly one field be used, and an understanding to at least some degree of other disciplines is necessary for high-quality work. Working in Excel and conducting manager interviews will develop technical and communication skills valuable in any business career. This research will also be presented at an undergraduate research conference such as the Northeast Regional Honors Conference. Presenting at a conference will provide me with the experience of sharing my research and hearing other professionals’ opinions and feedback on my research. It is a great networking opportunity that may facilitate future research.

Grading Requirements:

- Final Paper (15-20 pages in length): 90% of final grade
- Presentation at the Honors Symposium: 10% of final grade

Project Timeline:

Week 1:
- Review previous research project, “Why do Pennsylvania Manufacturing Companies Self-Insure for Workers’ Compensation Liability?”
- Begin review of secondary literature on self-insurance
  - Definitions of concepts and important terms
  - Benefits of self-insurance
  - Competing theories
  - Determinants of self-insurance
- Consider submission of proposal to undergraduate research conference

Week 2:
- Prepare abstract to submit to conference
- Begin review of secondary literature on company culture
  - Definition of culture
  - Building culture
  - Creating cultural change
  - Culture and safety

Week 3:
- Complete review of secondary literature on self-insurance
- Continue review of secondary literature on company culture
- Develop questionnaire to be used in interviews with managers of self-insured companies

Week 4:
- Select companies to interview from manufacturing database and other sources
- Schedule interviews with managers of self-insured companies
- Begin rough draft of literature review
Week 5:
- Review quantitative analysis and charts from previous research
- Continue rough draft of literature review
- Conduct interviews of managers of self-insured companies
- Schedule additional interviews with managers of self-insured companies

Week 6:
- Conduct additional interviews as needed
- Begin to draw conclusions about the relationship between company culture and self-insurance
- Organize and document results of interviews using graphs and tables when appropriate
- Continue literature review

Week 7:
- Complete literature review
- Based on interviews and existing literature, identify best practices for building a culture conducive to self-insurance
- Compile list of effective risk management techniques used by self-insured companies
- Begin rough draft of final paper

Week 8:
- Prepare charts and graphs to be included as an appendix to final report
- Continue work on final report
- Conduct additional interviews as needed

Week 9:
- Begin work on PowerPoint presentation to be used at Honors Symposium
- Work on final report

Week 10:
- Complete PowerPoint presentation
- Practice presentation with professors/peers and make any necessary changes
- Continue work on final draft of report

Week 11:
- Possibly present at regional conference
- Alter presentation based on effectiveness

Week 12:
- Review final report and make corrections and changes as needed
- Possibly submit research for publication
- Practice presentation for Honors Symposium
Week 13:
  • Present research at Honors Symposium

Week 14:
  • Submit final report and copy of presentation to the Honors Program
HONORS SYMPOSIUM

The Honors Symposium, the annual event where Honors students present their capstone research projects, is held in conjunction with the university’s Celebration of Student Research. The Honors Symposium is usually held during the third week of April. The date is posted on the Calendar of Events on the Honors Web site at the beginning of the academic year.

In order to plan the Honors sessions and ensure that accurate information is included in the symposium program, students who will be presenting their capstone projects must email the following information about their projects to Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu by February 1:

1. Project Title

2. Project Abstract: Your abstract summarizes your project’s topic and its significance. Your abstract should be approximately 3-5 sentences long. Abstracts are limited to 1000 characters (spaces are counted as part of the 1000-character limit). Calculate the number of characters in your abstract before submitting your abstract to ensure that it does not exceed the limit. Sample abstracts of past projects are included in the “Model Honors Capstone Projects” section of this handbook, and additional examples are posted on the Honors Web site at http://www.ship.edu/Honors/Curriculum/Symposium_Archive/.

3. Special equipment needs: Please note that a computer, overhead projector, and screen will be available for your PowerPoint presentation. If you need any other special equipment, please let us know now.

4. Name(s) of your faculty mentor(s), if they are different from those that you noted on the Honors Capstone Project Proposal form that you submitted in September.

5. Names and addresses of parents and any other family members and friends that you would like to invite to the symposium. The Honors Program will send out invitations to your family, friends, and faculty mentors.

6. Any obligations (classes, student teaching) that you have on the date of the Honors Symposium after 2:00 p.m. The program planning committee will attempt to schedule your presentation so that it does not conflict with your other obligations.

Important Note for Students Who Won University Undergraduate Research Grants: If you were awarded a university undergraduate research grant, you do not need to submit a separate registration for the Celebration of Student Research as you will be presenting only once (during the Honors sessions) at the event. You may disregard any reminders that you receive about registering online because Dr. Klein will submit your registration information as a group. If you were involved in a collaborative research project with students who are not in the Honors Program, your research partners are welcome to present with you at the Honors Symposium.
Preparation and Evaluation of Symposium Presentations

Schedule and Timing of Presentations: Presentations are grouped into panels of two-to-four presentations. Your presentation should be 10-12 minutes long. This will leave some time for questions at the end of panel. The moderator of your panel will time your presentation (and stop you if your presentation exceeds the limit) so practice your presentation to ensure it meets the time limit.

Evaluation of Presentations: Your presentation will be evaluated by professors using a rubric developed by the Honors Program Advisory Board. The rubric is on pp. 18-20 of this handbook. As you prepare your presentation, review the rubric guidelines carefully. As the rubric summarizes, your presentation will be evaluated in five major areas:

1. Presentation: elocution, delivery style, vocabulary, command of material
2. Content: organization, genesis of research, methodology, results and conclusions, sources
3. Visual materials
4. Question-and-answer period
5. Overall professionalism

Review the rubric carefully so that you are familiar with the factors that constitute a strong presentation in each area. Keep in mind that you should not “read” your paper. Your presentation should explain your project’s focus and significance so that it is clear to an educated audience, but one that includes people who are not all specialists in your field.

As you prepare your PowerPoint, please make special note of the “Content” guidelines on the rubric. Make sure that your PowerPoint includes a clear summary of your research question, methodology, major sources, research findings, and the significance of your findings. If you have any questions, please note that Dr. Klein is available to assist you with any aspect of preparing your presentation.

Practice Session: To ensure that your presentation meets these guidelines, you should practice your presentation with your project advisor or Dr. Klein at least one week before the Honors Symposium. Getting feedback on your presentation from your advisor or Dr. Klein before the Honors Symposium is a critical step in making a final presentation that you can be proud of.

Appropriate Attire: You are making a professional presentation so plan to wear professional attire. For men, a jacket and tie are recommended; for women, a jacket with skirt/dress/pants are acceptable.
On the Day of the Symposium

You will receive the schedule of presentations for the Honors Symposium at least one week before the event. Find your presentation time on the schedule, and:

1. Make sure that you arrive at least 15 minutes before the time block in which you are scheduled to present.

2. A computer will be available to project all presentations. Please bring your presentation on a flash drive or have it loaded on a university shared drive and open it onto the computer before your presentation block begins. Do not plan to email it to yourself and then open the email at the symposium, just in case the wireless connection is weak.

3. Make sure to thank your advisor at the end of your presentation!

After the Symposium

Don’t forget to submit electronic copies of your PowerPoint presentation and your final research paper (or other written documentation required by your project advisor) to Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu. Submissions are due by the last Monday in April.
# HONORS SYMPOSIUM PRESENTATION RUBRIC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRESENTATION</th>
<th>1 = Does not meet expectations</th>
<th>2 = Meets expectations</th>
<th>3 = Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Elocution</strong></td>
<td>Poor. Halting, uneven pace. Difficult to hear due to mumbling, speaking too softly, too quickly, or too monotone.</td>
<td>Adequate pace and volume. Speaks clearly but lacks sufficient variations in vocal intonation for emphasis.</td>
<td>Fluid, natural delivery of information. Speaks at a good pace using good vocal variety, articulation, and volume.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Delivery Style</strong></td>
<td>The presentation is boring and difficult to follow due to poor poise, no eye contact, and fidgeting. Audience is distracted by poor use of eye contact, gestures, and the reading of the presentation.</td>
<td>The presentation is adequate. Speaker uses inconsistent eye contact, gestures, and expression. Speaker poise and body language fairly comfortable and natural; but could use improvement.</td>
<td>The presentation is engaging. Student is poised, uses strong eye contact, gestures, and expressions to enhance presentation. Speaker looks comfortable and natural.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vocabulary</strong></td>
<td>Completely inappropriate use of professional vocabulary. Excessive use of colloquialisms.</td>
<td>Adequate use of professional vocabulary. Some use of colloquialisms.</td>
<td>Completely appropriate use of professional vocabulary. No colloquialisms.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Command of Material</strong></td>
<td>Poor. Struggles to find words, reads most of the presentation, and appears to lack the overall knowledge to impart the information adequately.</td>
<td>Adequate. Sometimes struggles to find words, occasionally reads parts of the materials, and overall knowledge is adequate.</td>
<td>Excellent. Does not read from notes or slides. Expresses knowledge fluently in own words. Overall knowledge is outstanding.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT</strong></td>
<td> </td>
<td> </td>
<td> </td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall Organization</strong></td>
<td>Poor. Audience struggles to understand overall content due to poor sequencing of content.</td>
<td>Adequate. Struggles somewhat to convey overall content due to inconsistent sequencing of content,</td>
<td>Excellent. Student presents information in a logical, interesting sequence which the audience can follow.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Genesis of Research</strong></td>
<td>Poor. Student fails to establish the genesis of the research. Student does not convey the purpose of the study.</td>
<td>Adequate. Student adequately establishes the genesis of the research and imparts the purpose of the study.</td>
<td>Excellent. Student establishes the genesis of the research and imparts the purpose of the study.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpose of the Study</td>
<td>Questions Remain.</td>
<td>Study with Excellent Clarity</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Methodology</td>
<td>Poor. Student fails to provide enough detail about methods for the audience to understand the results. The approach is not technically sound as presented.</td>
<td>Adequate. Student provides adequate detail about methods for the audience to understand the results, although there may be confusion. The approach appears to be technically sound as presented.</td>
<td>Excellent. Student provides details about methods so the audience can easily understand the results. The approach is technically sound as presented.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Results and Conclusions</td>
<td>Conclusions are not stated clearly, lack the information necessary for the audience to understand, and are not supported by results.</td>
<td>Conclusions are adequately stated but may lack some necessary information for the audience to understand. The conclusions are somewhat based on the results.</td>
<td>Conclusions are stated clearly and contain all of the supporting information based on the results.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Sources</td>
<td>Sources were poorly cited, explained, or irrelevant to the overall content.</td>
<td>Sources were adequately cited and explained and somewhat relevant to the overall content.</td>
<td>Sources were clearly cited and explained and were completely relevant to the overall content.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Visual or Extra Materials</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Information</td>
<td>Visual information is difficult to understand, does not relate to oral presentation, and does not contain accurate or relevant information.</td>
<td>Visual information is understandable but may not completely relate to oral presentation. Contains mostly accurate and relevant information.</td>
<td>Visual information is easy to understand, relates to oral presentation, and contains accurate and relevant information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Overall Design</td>
<td>The visual materials are not comprehensive and are sloppy. The materials do not appear to have a logical sequence, and there are many spelling and grammatical errors.</td>
<td>The visual materials are adequate. They are fairly comprehensive, somewhat logically sequenced, and may have a spelling or grammatical error.</td>
<td>The visual materials are comprehensive, neatly prepared, logically sequenced, and have no spelling or grammatical errors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD</td>
<td>PROFESSIONALISM</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Knowledge and Skill</td>
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<tr>
<td>The presenter's knowledge of the subject is limited. He/she has difficulty answering any audience questions.</td>
<td>The presenter's knowledge of the subject is adequate. He/she experiences some difficulty when answering audience questions.</td>
<td>It is apparent that the presenter's knowledge of the subject is comprehensive because he/she is confident and poised when answering audience questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Overall</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unacceptable. Numerous problems in all areas degraded the quality of the presentation including distracting professional attire, lack of punctuality, poor set up, poor pacing, and not respecting time limits.</td>
<td>Acceptable. A few minor problems in the presentation were noted. Professional attire was adequate as was punctuality, set up, pacing, and respecting time limits.</td>
<td>Excellent. No problems were noticed in the presentation. Professional attire, punctuality, set up, pacing, and respecting time limits were strong.</td>
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</table>
MODEL HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECTS

Christopher Eby, Computer Science Major, 2011
Finding the Farm: Postal Address-Based Building Clustering
Geocoding, the act of mapping place names and addresses to locations on digital maps, is an important feature of many geographical information systems. Yet, traditional geocoding algorithms can be very inaccurate, especially in rural areas. Land plot maps maintained by local governments can be used to increase accuracy, but are not always available. A method that has the potential to greatly increase accuracy by exploiting two widely available datasets, phone book addresses and building locations derived from aerial photographs, has been proposed; but it may still be inaccurate when the number of buildings does not correspond to the number of addresses. Therefore, this research describes a method of taking addresses and building locations and grouping the buildings into clusters where each cluster contains the buildings present at a single address. These clusters can then be geocoded to produce more accurate results in rural areas than existing methods.

Jacob Lutter, Chemistry Major, 2013
Synthesis of Novel Anisotropic Single-Molecule Magnets
In order for a material to function as a single-molecule magnet (SMM), it must be able to remain in a particular spin state, made possible by an energy barrier between the up and down states. For an SMM, the energy barrier is equal to |D| x S², where D is the magnetoanisotropy and S is the spin state. Thus, the goal of SMM research is to produce an energy barrier of sufficient height that the molecule is able to store information at room temperature. To generate a SMM with memory properties at higher temperatures, one can increase the D value by producing a less symmetric molecule and/or increase the maximum spin state. To increase the spin state one could increase the number of metal atoms in a molecule; however, this tactic tends to produce spherical molecules of high symmetry, which possess a very small D value. The goal of the proposed research is to design a molecule that possesses a large spin value but is also asymmetric.

Nitasha Kaur and Ashley Martin, Biology Majors, 2011
Role of Atg5 on Kinetics of Expression of Autophagy-Related Genes in Adherent Glioma Cells
Autophagy is a cellular process that involves recycling organelles and cytosol macromolecules in response to cellular stress. Autophagy has also been implicated in various differentiation pathways, processing of pathogens, cell survival, and neurodegenerative diseases. Further, it may represent an alternative mechanism of programmed cell death and tumor suppression. It is regulated by multiple Atg genes and involves wrapping cytoplasm contents in double membrane vesicles, autophagosomes, for targeting to lysosomes. Previous studies in our lab demonstrated that Atg 5, which is critical for autophagosome formation, is mutated and not functional in SNB19 glioma cells (SNB19M). In this study, we used RT-PCR to compare the expression of autophagy proteins, Atg5, Beclin, LC3, Atg 12, and Atg 13 in SNB19M and SNB19 cells expressing functional Atg5 (SNB19N) under conditions that stimulate autophagy. The data indicate that the expression of functional Atg5 shifts the kinetic pattern of expression of all Atg genes investigated in this study.
Sarah Montanari, English Major, 2013
"You’re Doing It Wrong": William Faulkner’s Happy Existentialism
Existentialism is perceived to be a blind wandering through life: only the truly enlightened discover the futility of existence and despair accordingly. Yet, William Faulkner’s *Light in August* posits an alternative, serving as a forerunner for the surprisingly optimistic worldview that the existential movement offers. Thus, his narrative foreshadows the existential philosophy that suggests that life is not a directionless wandering but, rather, a journey in which the end is ambiguous because there are no absolutes. The search for the self, then, becomes a nonlinear passage in which even time is relative. Faulkner’s narrative anachronistically presents this existential ideal through the character of Lena Grove while illustrating the inevitable failure of the other characters as they stray from this ideal, particularly Joe Christmas.

Kristen Imboden, Elementary Education Major, 2011
Leading Reading: Improving Literacy Education in the Dominican Republic
Can American research-based literacy strategies transcend culture and provide effective instruction for all children? The unique opportunity to answer this question presented itself thanks to a partnership between the Shippensburg University Honors Program and several child development centers that serve low-income children in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. A researcher-designed literacy education manual was used to lead a teacher training workshop on literacy instruction at one child development center. Through pre- and post-surveys, as well as interviews and observational reports, data revealed the effectiveness of the workshop and literacy strategies. The trends provided insight into how literacy education can span cultural divides.

Elizabeth Cooper, Elementary Education Major, 2014
Implementing Strategies Designed for Gifted Students in an Inclusive Classroom
This project seeks to determine if using strategies often implemented for gifted and high-level students (or enrichment classrooms) can be implemented in typical classrooms is such a way that all students can benefit while the students who are high-level or gifted are still being challenged. The project will use the three strategies of high-stimulus learning, interest-based lessons, and integrated material to test the research question. The project also seeks to answer the question of how using these strategies compares to more typical classroom teaching methods. Qualitative and quantitative data will be taken to compare traditional lessons with lessons incorporating the mentioned strategies.

John Paul Bennett, Finance Major/International Studies Minor, 2010
A Cross-Cultural Initiative: Engaging China’s Middle Class
This study evaluates China’s growing middle class, the new consumers for world economies. By analyzing market and nonmarket variables, I explain how the future growth rate of China’s middle class is dependent on four issues: market demands from Generation Y, the implications for U.S. consumers when products “Made in China” are “Sold in China,” western products best suited for Chinese consumers, and the effect that social-economic inequalities in western China will have on development measures of the middle class. I will discuss the decreasing strength of consumers in the U.S., domestic consumption trends of Generation Y in China, the valued opportunity of science and technology, and unemployment shifts caused by the brain drain. I demonstrate how these issues will influence consumer behavior, reform policies, and the growth of the middle class in China.
APPENDICES:

HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECT FORMS
# Shippensburg University Honors Program

## Election of Honors Capstone Project

*This form must be submitted to the Honors secretary by September 15 of your junior year.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Major(s):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Minor(s):</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anticipated Graduation Date: (month and year)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

## I intend to complete the following option for my Honors capstone project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Honors Colloquium (service learning seminar offered each fall semester; students complete a collaborative, interdisciplinary service project)</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent research or creative project *</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internship with a related research project*</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student teaching experience with a related research project*</td>
<td>□</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course (number and title) that you plan to enroll in to earn academic credit for your Honors capstone project (e.g. HON 399: Honors Independent Study)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* Students who intend to complete an independent capstone project must submit the Honors Capstone Project Proposal Form to the Honors director by September 1 of their senior year.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part One: Student Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
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<tr>
<td>E-mail:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Major(s):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Minor(s):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Credit Hours Completed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honors Credit Hours Completed:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current QPA:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated Graduation Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(semester/year):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part Two A: Honors Capstone Project Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Honors capstone project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(e.g. independent research, student teaching, service-learning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working title of Honors capstone project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course (number and title) that you will enroll in to earn academic credit for your Honors capstone project (e.g. HON 399: Honors Independent Study)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semester/Year that you plan to enroll in your Honors capstone project course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Part Two B: Honors Capstone Project Proposal

Please attach your Honors capstone project proposal. The proposal should be written so that the project's significance can be understood by a general audience. The proposal should be approximately 3-4 pages long (typed, 12-point font, double-spaced), and must include the following information:

- **Topic and objectives:** What do you plan to research or create and why?

- **Methods and process:** How do you plan to go about your research or creative project?

- **Originality:** Explain how your project includes at least one element of original research (e.g., use of primary source material, investigation of a topic/problem that has not been previously explored, use of a new methodology to research a topic/problem that others have previously explored). Please note that your project cannot be based solely on a review of secondary literature (i.e., what others have already written about your topic).

- **Review of secondary literature:** What have other scholars researched and written about your topic? How does your work fit in? For assistance with your literature review, please schedule an appointment with a research librarian at http://library.ship.edu/hon399.

- **Your previous work on this topic:** Is your Honors capstone project an extension of a paper or project you began in an earlier class? If so, please explain how this project represents a significant expansion of that project and how the effort involved is worth earning additional academic credit.

- **Timeline of the research/creative/writing process** (see the sample timeline in the Honors Capstone Project Handbook)

- **Budget**

- **Form in which project’s results will be reported** (e.g., research paper, portfolio, video)

- **Relevance and value of project to you and your field(s) of study**
### Part Three: Approval of Faculty Advisor

**Name of Faculty Advisor:**

**I have read and approved the proposal, and I agree to serve as faculty advisor:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Department:**

**Telephone Number:**

**E-mail:**

**Comments:**

### Part Four: Approval of Honors Program Director

**I have read and approved the proposal.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</table>

**Comments:**
Honors Capstone Project Grant Application Guidelines

Description of Grants: The Honors Program will award grants of up to $1000 through a competitive application process to support Honors students’ capstone research, creative, and service-learning projects.

Eligibility: Applicants must be juniors or seniors in good standing in the Honors Program.
- Students must have a minimum 3.25 GPA overall and in their Honors courses
- Students must have fulfilled the Honors Program’s participation requirement

Eligible Expenses: All academically necessary costs related to the execution and presentation of the Honors capstone project, including, but not limited to:
- Laboratory equipment or supplies
- Computer software, hardware, or time
- Art equipment or supplies
- Books or published materials not available through the library
- Photocopying
- Travel related to data collection or field work
- Printing of research posters
- Travel to professional meetings to present capstone project

Grants may not be used to pay faculty or students for their assistance with the project.

Application Requirements: Submit an electronic copy of the following documents to the Honors Program secretary. Forms with an * are available on the Honors Program Web site.
- Honors Capstone Project Grant Application*
- Honors Capstone Independent Project Proposal (only if you have not already submitted your proposal)*
- Itemized budget
- Letter of recommendation from the faculty advisor for the project

Application Deadlines
- November 1 for projects beginning in the spring semester
- April 1 for projects beginning in the summer and fall semester

If the deadline falls on a weekend, applications will be due on the following Monday.

Selection Process and Criteria: The Honors Program Advisory Board’s Capstone Grants Committee will review applications and select the grant recipients. Awards will be made on a competitive basis, and selection will be based on the following criteria:
- Strength of academic record
- Progress toward completion of University Honors Program curricular requirements
• Quality of the grant proposal and the Honors capstone research to be funded
• Justifiable budget
• Number of qualified grant applications received

Award amounts will vary, and the Honors Capstone Grants Committee reserves the right to fund proposals at less than the amount requested. The grant committee will notify students regarding the status of their applications approximately three weeks after the application deadline.

Responsibilities of Grant Recipients
• Present results of Honors capstone project at the Honors Symposium
• Submit one copy of the completed project to the Honors Program office
• Submit a final budget report, including receipts, to the Honors Program office. The budget report must be submitted before the final project will be approved.

For More Information: If you have any questions regarding the grants or application process, please contact Dr. Kim Klein, Director, Honors Program, at kmklei@ship.edu or 477-1604.
Shippensburg University Honors Program

Honors Capstone Project Grant Application

Please submit an electronic copy of this cover sheet along with the other application materials required by the Honors Capstone Project Grant Application Guidelines to the Honors Program office by April 1 for funding to begin in the following summer or fall semester and by November 1 for funding to begin in the following spring semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local Address:</td>
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<td>E-mail:</td>
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<td>Telephone Number:</td>
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<td>Academic Major(s):</td>
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<td>Capstone Project Title:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capstone Project Proposal:</td>
<td>Select One</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proposed funding period will:</td>
<td>Begin:</td>
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Have you applied for and/or received other funding to support your project? Select One

If yes, please identify the funding sources and specify the amounts requested, pending, and received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Sources:</th>
<th>Amount Requested:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amount Pending:</td>
<td>Amount Received:</td>
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Student's signature Date

Capstone project advisor's signature Date

For office use only.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Received:</th>
<th>Honors Standing:</th>
<th>Grant Award:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decision: Select One</td>
<td>Comments:</td>
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</table>
Shippensburg University Honors Program
Honors Capstone Project Grant Reimbursement Request

Student's Name ____________________________________________
E-mail ________________________________________________
Address ________________________________________________

Title of Honors Capstone Project ________________________________
Amount of Honors Capstone Grant Award __________________________

Each student may claim only his/her expenses. Expenses must be documented on the table below with all receipts attached to this form in order for the reimbursement to be approved. Please submit this form and receipts to the Honors Program office. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu or Dr. Kim Klein at kmklei@ship.edu.

Note: If you incurred any travel expenses, please apply for the reimbursement of those expenses using the "Travel Reimbursement Form."

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Vendor</th>
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<td>TOTAL</td>
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I certify that the statements and expenses claimed are accurate and reasonable, and that I will not accept reimbursement of any of these expenses from any other source.

_________________________________________  ____________________________
Signature                                      Date
Shippensburg University Honors Program
Travel Reimbursement Request

Name

E-mail

Home Address

Each traveler may claim only his/her expenses. Expenses must be documented on a daily basis with all receipts attached to this form in order for the reimbursement to be approved. Please submit this form to the Honors Program office within fourteen days following the final expense. If any requirements are attached to your travel grant (e.g. writing a reflection on your experience for the Honors Chronicle), you must complete these requirements before your reimbursement will be processed. If you have any questions, please contact Cindy Poe at cmpoe@ship.edu or Dr. Kim Klein at kmklei@ship.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Air or Train Fare</th>
<th># of Miles*</th>
<th>Parking &amp; Tolls</th>
<th>Lodging</th>
<th>Meals**</th>
<th>Registration Fee</th>
<th>Other (please specify)</th>
<th>Daily Total</th>
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SUBTOTAL

MILEAGE EXPENSE*

TOTAL

* Mileage is reimbursed at the rate set by the U.S. General Services Administration. The current rate is posted at [http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715](http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715).

** Meals included in the conference registration fee may not be submitted for reimbursement. The maximum daily reimbursement for meals is $30 ($5 for breakfast, $10 for lunch, $15 for dinner).

Purpose of Travel (e.g. presentation or participation at regional or national Honors conference, include dates and location of conference)

I certify that the statements and expenses claimed are accurate and reasonable, and that I will not accept reimbursement of any of these expenses from any other source.

Traveler Signature

Date