

CAPSTONE PROJECT

All Chicano/Latino Studies majors must complete a Capstone research project during their senior year. This requirement is central to the design of the Chicano/Latino program. Planning and pursuing a serious original project is the most rewarding and demanding academic task most undergraduates undertake, and represents the culmination of the coursework in the major. To successfully complete the Capstone research project requires serious thought and careful planning.

Goals

The purpose of the capstone research project is to help the student:

- Integrate reflectively and critically what you have learned in your Chicano/Latino courses and other courses outside your major at Sonoma State University.
- Hone your theoretical and methodological skills by applying the Chicano/Latino perspective to some aspect of our past or future life experiences, or to some local social problem.
- Become an expert at locating, evaluating, and summarizing both print and online data sources related to the field you will soon enter.
- Prepare yourself for what comes after graduation - whether this is a job that utilizes your Chicano/Latino expertise or post-graduate study.

Capstone projects must be approved by the CALS faculty to fulfill graduation requirements.

Capstone Deadlines

CALS majors are welcome to begin working on their capstone projects whenever they discover a topic that moves them. Students must have a capstone topic and preliminary research completed by the end of the first semester of their senior year.

Capstone Proposals Submitted	First Semester of Senior Year (week 14)
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Capstone Contract Submitted	Second Semester of Senior Year (week 2)
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Outline of Capstone Submitted	Second Semester of Senior Year (week 3)
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First Draft of Capstone Submitted	Second Semester of Senior Year (week 10)
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Abstract of Capstone Submitted	Second Semester of Senior Year (week 13)
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Final Draft of Capstone Submitted	Second Semester of Senior Year (week 14)

Requirements

How do I fulfill the Capstone research requirements?

- a.) Complete Capstone Proposal Form. This form must articulate a clear and focused research question and a detailed bibliography pertinent to the research question. You should also list the course in which the capstone project will be completed. **This form must be completed and given to your advisor prior to the end of the semester before you graduate.**

- AND -

- b.) Complete Capstone Contract Form. In order to do this, you will want to develop your ideas for your research project in consultation with one or more faculty members in the department. You will also need to choose a CALS faculty member as your Capstone Advisor. Once you have chosen a Capstone Advisor, you will consult them in order to complete the Capstone Contract form, which must be submitted to the Chair of the Department within the first two weeks of the semester in which the capstone will be completed. The Capstone Advisor will guide the student on research, analysis, writing, and other scholarly aspects of the work.

- AND -

- c.) Enroll in one of the following courses: CALS 405, CALS 426, CALS 445, CALS 458, CALS 480 OR CALS 474. All of these courses include a substantial research component. The professor teaching the class may be asked to serve as capstone advisor. Students who are not able to enroll in one of the designated capstone courses can enroll in CALS 495 and have the faculty member sponsoring that section serve as their capstone advisor.

- AND -

d.) Capstone Research Paper. Write a 15 to 20 page research project (excluding references and appendix). This should be an empirical research paper. The research project will be evaluated by the CALS faculty according to the criteria listed below. A successful capstone project should:

- Integrate factual, theoretical and methodological knowledge learned in your CALS courses and other courses outside your major into a rigorous investigation pertaining to the lives and experiences of Latino populations.
- Rely primarily on original empirical research (primary sources, surveys, interviews, and participant observation.)
- Include an explanation and rationale for the methodology used to explore the proposed research question.
- Draw upon contemporary social theories in crafting a research question and in explaining the results of your investigation.

Keys to Success

START EARLY

Begin to brainstorm possible capstone projects no later than the spring of your junior year and utilize the relevant courses to solidify and focus your ideas.

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH MENTORS AND ADVISORS

In the fall and spring of your junior year, you should begin to seek a Capstone Advisor. Your Capstone Advisor will also be your mentor and should be a full-time faculty member versed in the area you wish to pursue, willing and able to advise you in the planning and proposal stages, as well as the execution and documentation of the project.

CRAFT A WELL-THOUGHT CAPSTONE PROPOSAL

The capstone proposal must articulate a clear and focused objective, a series of assessable outcomes, and a well-considered, detailed methodology appropriate to the research question. Don't be afraid to integrate an allied discipline (AMCS, WGS, History, Sociology, Education, Math) when constructing your proposal. Also feel free to integrate internship, research, work experience as well as coursework in your capstone project.

GET FEEDBACK THROUGHOUT

Use your mentors as sounding boards for your ideas, frustrations and inspirations. Share your experiences with your fellow CALS students who are also working on the capstone.

CAPSTONE PROPOSAL

This form must be turned in to your major advisor NO LATER THAN WEEK FOURTEEN (14) of the first semester of your senior year. **It is imperative that you complete this requirement prior to the start of you last semester at SSU.** Failure to meet this deadline may compromise your ability to graduate as planned.

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Expected Graduation Date: _____ Major Advisor: _____

Course in which capstone project will be completed: _____

Capstone Project Subject: _____

List the CALS courses you will be integrating in this project: _____

Research Question

In the space below briefly describe the research question your project will address:

Methodology

In the space below articulate the methods you will utilize to complete the capstone project:

Bibliography

Please attach a bibliography listing at least ten (10) pertinent academic sources you plan use as part of your capstone project to this form. **Project proposals will be considered incomplete unless a bibliography is attached.**

Date Received: ___/___/_____

Approved by: _____