

Guidelines for the Capstone Project for the Secondary Field in Educational Studies

The Capstone Project ensures that all graduates of the Secondary Field in Educational Studies have a sustained and deep learning experience in the field of education. The Capstone Project requirement can be fulfilled in a number of ways:

- Writing a senior thesis on a topic related to education

Students who are writing a senior thesis for their concentration can also count it as their Capstone Project for the Secondary Field if the thesis addresses issues related to education. The thesis advisor must approve of the student also using their thesis as the Capstone Project and must agree to certify that thesis was completed at a high level of academic quality.

- Taking a course that requires a significant research project

Students can fulfill their Capstone Project in a course with a substantial research requirement. The course can be related to education and can count as one of the students' five required courses for the Secondary Field or it can be in a course not specifically related to education but with an assignment that the student can focus on education. In order for the project to count as a Capstone Project, students must design the research project themselves and write a twenty-page (or longer) paper. The course instructor must approve the student using the paper for the Capstone Project and must agree to certify that the paper was completed at a high level of academic quality.

- Completing an independent study focused on education

Students with a specific project may arrange to work with a faculty member to design an independent study. The course instructor must approve the student using the independent study project for the Capstone Project and must agree to certify that the project was completed at a high level of academic quality.

- Working in a laboratory or as a research assistant on a study related to education

Students who work as researchers on projects related to education may turn that work into a Capstone Project if they are responsible for a largely independent part of the research and they produce a paper and/or presentation analyzing the findings of their research. The director of the larger research project must approve the student using their research for the Capstone Project and must agree to certify that the student's research was completed at a high level of academic quality.

- An extracurricular project that involves significant learning and reflection

Students who undertake significant work as an educator, as a leader in an educational institution or in another role related to education may be able to use this work as the basis of their Capstone Project. In addition to the work itself, students must complete a paper, presentation or other project reflecting on what they learned and applying that learning to either the organization they worked for or for educational practice or policy more broadly. The student's supervisor must agree that the student can use their work as the basis of the Capstone Project and must agree to certify that the student's work was of a high level of quality and that the student completed the supplemental project demonstrating what they learned.

The Director of the Secondary Field in Educational Studies must approve the Capstone Project **before it is commenced**. Students should consult with the Director about their ideas for their Capstone Project early in the process. The Director can help students identify opportunities for the fulfilling their Capstone Project if they need it. The Capstone Project Agreement Form has a section for students to attach a short word document proposal outlining their project as well as sections to get Proposal Approval signatures from both the student's supervisor and the Director of the Secondary Field in Educational Studies. Once the Capstone Project is satisfactorily completed, the same form affords the student the ability to obtain Completion Approval signatures from both the Supervisor and the Director.