

(updated 3/2023)

## HONORS CAPSTONE PROJECT

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES AND CULTURES

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Liaison Honors-Department of Foreign Languages

### Eligibility

Foreign Language majors already in the Honors College with a cumulative 3.00 GPA or higher are eligible to write a senior honors capstone project.

### Description

The Honors Capstone Project in the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures is a substantial and original research project conducted (completely or partially) in a foreign language. It stretches over three semesters. Upon successful completion of their Honors Project the students will get 6 credits. These 6 credits can count as electives towards the requirements for the Foreign Language major (the total is 33 credits).

Students enroll under a 499-course number each semester: 499A (1 credit), 499B (3 credits), and 499C (2 credits). The grades assigned for the 499 courses should reflect the quality of the work completed.

A capstone project in Foreign Languages should be written completely or partially in the foreign language and be around 30-50 pages long, double-spaced. The final copy should also include a complete bibliography and follow the formatting guidelines specified by the Honors College.

It is highly encouraged to maintain an ongoing communication among student, advisor, reader(s), and liaison.

Honors students also have the option to complete an interdisciplinary Senior Portfolio Project through Honors, which is completed during the final two semesters at JMU. Students will enroll in HON 401 and 402 for a total of three credits. In order to satisfy the remaining three credits of the Honors Capstone, students should work with the Honors Advisors and the Director of Student Engagement to either: 1. Identify a project-based course with your major in one of the foreign languages or a related field that can be applied to the Honors project; 2. Find an additional 3-credit Honors course to take.

## **Committee**

The project advisor (a full-time faculty member in the Department of FLLC) and at least one reader form the committee. Second and third readers are optional.

## **Advisor**

The advisor agrees on guiding the student for the duration of the project. During the first semester (499A), they will help the student write a strong project proposal. The topic of the project needs to be viable and related to the student's Foreign Language major. The advisor signs off on the project application submitted to the Honors College for approval. During the last two semesters (499B and 499C), advisors help students develop and strengthen their research projects. For that reason, students should do their best to choose faculty advisors whose area of interest and expertise match their proposed project.

A capstone project involves an important time commitment on the part of both students and faculty. The student is strongly encouraged to choose an advisor with whom they know they can work well. Faculty should only accept students they have had in one or several advanced classes.

## **Reader(s)**

The student and the advisor need to have chosen at least one reader during the first semester of the project. As stated above, second and third readers are optional.

The reader(s) agree to help guide students regularly throughout the process, though they typically see and comment on fewer drafts than the primary advisor. It is highly recommended that the reader(s) get involved with the project since the early beginning.

## **499A**

Students registered for 499A work on their capstone project in consultation with the advisor. They start to review the pertinent literature and select at least one

reader who will assist the adviser in guiding the project. The course is worth 1 credit. Prior to the end of the semester during which they enroll for 499A, students should submit their completed Senior Honors Project Application and project proposal to:

a—Dr. Cardillo, the Honors Liaison for the Department of Foreign Languages, Literatures and Cultures.

b—The Honors College.

The Proposal should be 4-5 pages in length (see the Honors Program website for details).

The proposal should follow these guidelines:

a—It should include a title and an abstract that summarizes the project.

b—It should include two texts: one in the foreign language, and the other one in English (so that it can be evaluated by the Honors College).

c—It should include the signature of the project advisor and the reader (or readers) who agreed to help the student with the project.

d—It should include a preliminary bibliography.

The project will not be officially approved until the Honors Program has validated it.

#### **499B**

Students registered for 499B (3 credits) complete the research necessary for their project and write their project in consultation with their faculty committee. During this semester, the student should plan to meet with their advisor every other week to submit and discuss new sections of the project. They should also keep their reader(s) informed of their progress. It is the students' responsibility to be aware of deadlines, and allow time for faculty members to provide feedback and constructive criticism. The student will complete most of the writing work during this semester.

The advisor should encourage his/her advisee to submit written work regularly, and agree to provide timely feedback.

#### **499C**

A completed draft of the project should be submitted to the advisor before mid/late March 15. The reader(s) should receive a draft no later than late March. These deadlines will allow the advisor and the reader(s) the time to review the draft and share feedback with the student before the project is completed. The deadline to send the complete Honors College is April 15.

## **Students' Research**

It is highly encouraged that the student presents his/her research at conferences at JMU: the annual Global Studies conference hosted by the Department of Foreign Languages, MadRush and, in particular, JMU's Honors Symposium.

## **Timing**

### **Junior year-Fall/First week of Spring**

Students interested in completing an Honors Capstone Project should meet with the Honors Liaison, Dr. Giulia Cardillo (cardilgx@jmu.edu) at the latest during the first week of the spring semester of their junior year (or a semester earlier if they plan on being away from campus for one of their last three semesters, or on graduating early).

The student asks a faculty member in Foreign Languages to be the advisor of the Honors capstone project.

They both can then register for 499A through the Department of Foreign Languages. This 499A is unique to the student. Laura Stewart, FLLC's administrative assistant, will help with the registration (stewarla@jmu.edu).

The director and the student will agree on the composition of the committee.

It is highly recommended to set up a meeting in early spring. The liaison, the advisor, the reader(s), and the student will attend this meeting.

### **Junior year- Spring**

The student will complete the requirements of 499A.

### **Senior year-Fall**

The student will complete 499B.

### **Senior year-Spring**

A completed draft of the project should be submitted to the advisor before March 15. A draft should be given to the reader(s) no later than late March.

The deadline to send the complete project to the Honors College is April 15.