Lock Haven University
Global Honors Program

Capstone Project Guide and References
For Students and Faculty

Third Edition
Capstone [kap – stone] – noun
The crowning achievement, point, element, or event.

Definition from Dictionary.com

About this Informational Packet

This packet was created by the Global Honors Program Staff in an attempt to explain in as much detail as possible the Capstone Project required for most Honors Students. Any information or dates in this booklet is subject to change without notice and is subject to adjustments on a case-by-case basis. It is important to remember that these are guidelines for the Capstone Project and that not all guidelines may apply to all students. Any questions should be directed to the Global Honors Program Director.

What is a Capstone Project?

The Capstone Project is the culminating project of the undergraduate Global Honors Program experience and a required element for students to graduate from Lock Haven University with the Global Honors designation. The Capstone Project is designed to be the most ambitious academic challenge that students encounter in their undergraduate career. It should be much more involved and elaborate than a standard augmentation, but not to the extent of a Graduate Thesis. The Capstone Project normally includes three major components, all to a different extent: research, writing, and presentation. Sometimes, an Independent Study (offered by departments as a 499 course) may be used through Lock Haven University to collect research while working closely with a professor. A formal document of the research follows, and then a final presentation of the work is given to complete the project.

After undertaking a number of augmentations through the Global Honors Program, this is the student’s chance to take their education to the next level, and to produce a project documenting their undergraduate academic experience. Graduate schools and employers are very impressed with work on this scale, as it proves the caliber of achievement that can be attained based on personal initiative.

Do I need to complete a Capstone Project?

The Capstone Project is a requirement for all students who wish to graduate with Global Honors. However, there are a few situations where students are exempt from completing the Capstone Project. These students need to be sure they complete the Capstone Project Exemption Form, explained later in this packet.
The following students may be exempt from completing a Capstone Project:

- Students in an accelerated program, such as the 3+2 Physicians Assistant Program
- Students completing a Dual Major (or more) in two separate disciplines.
  - Students completing a double major in one discipline (such as Accounting and Business Administration) are NOT exempt from completing the Capstone Project.
  - Students completing a double major in closely related disciplines (such as Foreign Language and International Studies) are NOT exempt from completing the Capstone Project.
- Students with other circumstances approved by the Global Honors Program Director.

The Global Honors Program Director has final say as to whether students shall be exempt from Capstone Projects.

Note: Students who must complete a Capstone Project as a requirement for the home discipline may also use that Capstone Project to fulfill requirements for the Honors Program. These students should complete the same forms as if they were completing the project solely for the Honors Program.

What can I do for my Capstone Project?

The Global Honors Program calls this a “Capstone Project” and not a “Capstone Thesis” for a reason: the possibilities are endless. The project need not take the traditional form of a senior thesis paper, although this is completely acceptable and highly beneficial to students. All Capstone Projects, no matter the form they take, should require dedicated work from the student and follow the general outline of research, written, presentation, to some extent. Some examples of non-traditional works include art exhibits, choreographed/coordinated performances, works of fiction, etc. Whatever the form chosen, it should reflect the work load it would take to complete a traditional project.

For example, a student may choose to write a novel as their project. This would include a much larger written component than a traditional thesis project, but would probably have a smaller research stage. Additionally, the creation of a Marketing Plan as a Capstone Project would require tremendous research and presentation components, but not necessarily as large of a writing component.

It is important to remember to choose a Capstone Project that is tailored to your academic discipline and is challenging and rewarding to you academically. This project is an excellent build-up for Graduate work, or to show prospective employers in job interviews.
Who helps me with my Capstone Project?

You will be assisted in your Capstone Project by a Faculty Mentor and a Second Reviewer. This section outlines the duties and responsibilities of these two faculty members. Both the Faculty Mentor and the Second Reviewer must be professors at the University. While a portion of the research may be conducted within the framework of an internship, externship, study abroad, or field experience, the Capstone Project must be under the direction of an LHU faculty member at all times.

- **Faculty Mentor**: Your mentor will serve as your ‘coach’ and be the primary reviewer of the project. This person will be your primary contact in terms of helping with research, developing an outline for the project, answering discipline-based questions, etc. Choose a professor that you know you can work well and get along with. This mentor should be in the department that the project is being completed in.

- **Second Reviewer**: Your second reviewer has significantly less responsibility than your mentor. This person will simply review your final project in whatever form it takes, and give their approval to whether they believe this is a successfully completed, honors-quality, well-established project. It is suggested that the second reviewer not be in the discipline that the project is being completed in.

In addition to these two faculty members, the Global Honors Program Director is always available and more than willing to answer any questions you may have regarding your Capstone Project. Feel free to email the Global Honors Director with any questions, or stop by the Honors House.

When should I complete my Capstone Project?

You should plan your Capstone Project so that you have two full academic semesters to work on the actual project. For students graduating at the traditional time, this means the actual project should be completed during the fall and spring semesters of the Senior Year. For students graduating early in the fall of the senior year, this means the actual project should be completed during the spring of the junior year and fall of the senior year.

Students who have a non-traditional final semester (i.e. student teaching, internship away from campus, etc.) are encouraged to complete their capstone before they participate in these experiences. They should follow the deadlines as if they are graduating a semester early. Students traveling abroad for a semester should also plan ahead.

A full breakdown of when Capstone components should be completed is provided later in this packet.
Can I be Exempt from any Honors Hours when I’m completing my Capstone Project?

Yes! When completing your Capstone Project, you are eligible for two (2) semesters of Activity Group Exemption. In order to be eligible for this exemption, you must have submitted a Capstone Project Proposal Form. Note that this exemption is only good for a maximum of two (2) semesters, so please plan accordingly. (You must complete a Request for Honors Hours Exemption form online at the beginning of each of the two semesters in order for this exemption to apply.)

How and when do I present my Capstone Project?

All students who complete a Capstone Project are required to publicly present their Project for the University community. Ideally, this presentation would be a speech, performance, forum on work, etc. This may include a paper presentation at an Honors Conference, LHU Celebration of Scholarship Day, national conference related to your major, or other approved event. The Global Honors Program will work with students in finding a way to present their Projects. In some situations, a poster presentation at the LHU Celebration of Scholarship Day may be an accepted presentation if no other presentation venues can be found.

What Paperwork/Forms must be completed for my Capstone Project?

This section gives descriptions of the required forms in regards to Capstone Projects. These forms serve as official records of Capstone Project and must be completed on time to stay “In Good Standing” in the Global Honors Program. Please see the Timeline for Completing Capstone Forms at the end of this packet for guidance on when these forms should be submitted.

Capstone Project Ideas Form
This is the first form completed and starts the process of completing a Capstone Project. This form is very simple and just requires that you start brainstorming ideas for your Capstone Project. It will ask you to list at least four possible ideas, topics, or areas of study for your Capstone Project. These ideas do not need to be extremely detailed, but should also give enough detail that two projects can be distinguished from each other without ambiguity.

Capstone Project Pre-Proposal Form
This form requires that you start narrowing down possible ideas for your Capstone Project to at most two possible ideas. These project ideas should be more developed than those listed on the Capstone Ideas Form, but still do not need to be fully developed. These ideas must not necessarily be an idea that was listed on the Capstone Ideas Form. Additionally, this form asks you to list possible Faculty Mentors and Second Reviewers for each project idea. It is good to list at least two Mentors and Second Reviewers for each idea, in case one professor is unable to assist you.
**Capstone Project Exemption Form**
This form is for students who are exempt from Capstone Projects (explained at a previous point in this packet) and must be completed in order to be officially exempt from the project.

**Capstone Project Proposal Form**
This is where you choose a project and lay out the direction you will take. This form must include a descriptive explanation of your project goals, how you will achieve those goals, how you will submit the project (i.e. traditional paper, video, performance, etc.), as well as a Faculty Mentor and Second Reviewer (signatures required). Provide as much information on your project as you can at this point.

**Capstone Project Completion Form**
This form certifies that you have successfully completed your Capstone Project with approval from your faculty mentor and second reviewer (signatures required). A copy of your Capstone Project must be submitted with this form (if completing a non-traditional project, please discuss with the Honors Director ways to submit a copy of your project). If approved by the Honors Director, you have successfully completed your Capstone Project.

All of these forms can be found at the end of this manual. They may also be downloaded from the Global Honors Program Website at [www.lockhaven.edu/honors](http://www.lockhaven.edu/honors).


**Timeline for Submitting Capstone Project Forms**

Each semester has a Proposal and a Completion deadline. Below is a table of when forms should be completed in regards to which semester and by what deadline:

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<th>Form</th>
<th>Early Graduation – Fall of Senior Year</th>
<th>Normal Graduation Time – Spring of Senior Year</th>
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<td><strong>Ideas Form</strong></td>
<td>Spring Sophomore Year – Completion Date</td>
<td>Spring Sophomore Year – Completion Date</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Proposal Form</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Proposal / Exemption Form</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Completion Form</strong></td>
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