



ASU ASU at
Lake Havasu
Arizona State University

Senior Capstone Experience

Student Guidebook

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**Let's get
started!**

A Message from the Capstone Coordinator

Congratulations!

You are starting your Senior Capstone Experience! This means you're taking the next step toward graduating from ASU at Lake Havasu. This also means that you are beginning a journey that culminates your undergraduate experience, represents the quality of your academic commitment, and affords opportunity for reward.

The Senior Capstone Experience will enrich your scholarly achievements. Working closely with faculty is an opportunity to engage with professors who are not only nationally recognized in their fields, but are also specifically interested and committed to working with honors students. Our faculty are committed to your success. Students who know their professors well increase the likelihood that their interests and involvement spark a professor to discover their capstone pathway. Topics also emanate from experiences in the classroom, conferences, summer abroad opportunities, research, internship service, and other co-curricular activities.

The Senior Capstone Experience will also provide tangible evidence of your research, writing, and creative skills to prospective employers. Additionally, your project might serve as a writing or research sample for graduate school applications. Overall, a Senior Capstone Experience demonstrates experience with design, execution, analysis, and presentation in a field of study.

From the outset of this endeavor, please keep in mind ASU at Lake Havasu's Capstone Event: The Senior Capstone Experience Symposium. Students in early and late stage of the Senior Capstone Experience work benefit from attendance and presentation of work within this forum. The Symposium is open to ASU, local community members and family who come to see students showcase their work.

ASU at Lake Havasu is here to support you. The more you communicate with faculty and staff, the better you will understand the process and the more you will find that the Senior Capstone Experience enhances your education. Please explore the resources available to you within this guidebook and with your faculty to ensure your success.

What is a Capstone?

Getting Started

The experiences in your classes, Honors Enrichment Contracts, internships, research opportunities, study abroad programs, and other co-curricular experience can all produce ideas for your topic. Assess which academic papers, courses, internships, service work, creative projects, research, professors, and personal experiences hold promise for further exploration.

If something in a class excites your interest, take the time to discuss with the professor how this topic might lend itself to a Senior Capstone Experience. A topic often emerges from substantial knowledge of a specific subject, such as one from your academic major. Every academic experience has the potential to introduce you to ideas that could grow into your Senior Capstone Experience. One key to your success is to be in conversation with faculty as your ideas emerge.

Once you have identified a few ideas for the project, you need to narrow your topic. This should be done under the guidance of Capstone Advisors and other faculty in your area(s) of interest. Develop a topic that is broad enough to be researchable, but specific enough that you can thoroughly dissect and discuss it. You and your Capstone Advisor will create the goals and parameters for your specific topic.

The Capstone Experience

The ASU at Lake Havasu Senior Capstone Experience is a culminating academic opportunity. Students are required to choose a pathway and complete six-credit sequence of research projects, field work, performances, internships, and/or seminar-style courses (400-level) in their major area of study during their senior year.

The Senior Capstone Experience requires students to draw upon and apply their previous coursework and skills across the ASU at Lake Havasu curriculum beyond the classroom. The chosen pathway should relate to the student's major area of study, and students must demonstrate a basic level of mastery in their chosen field by completing this requirement. All pathways incorporate structured mentoring from a faculty and/or community leader and include a public presentation and deliverable.

Visit the Senior Capstone Experience archives for examples of past projects.

<https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>

The Senior Capstone Experience is **an original piece of work** developed by you under the guidance of your Capstone Advisor.

Capstone Pathways

Below is a list of potential Capstone Pathways students may choose from (with advisor approval). This selection is documented and agreed upon in the application.

Capstone Pathway 1 - Original data: Offers the opportunity for the student to frame their own research questions, form a hypothesis, design their own empirically-based project (quantitative or qualitative data collection), and interpret their data to answer a specific question.

Capstone Pathway 2 - Existing Data: Offers the opportunity to gather, interpret, and present existing information in a format commonly used in their field. Students can use this to understand a key world issue and recommend evidence-based solutions and future directions. This may include an in-depth case study, business plan, or policy proposal.

Capstone Pathway 3 - Externship with project and presentation: Offers the opportunity to gain real-world experience while applying concepts learned in the classroom. This can include in-person or remote work with businesses soliciting assistance from the academic community. This externship is above and beyond any required internship required in their program (required coursework) and must include a Capstone Experience deliverable.

Capstone Pathway 4 - Service Learning Community Project: Offers the opportunity to identify community service needs and work on a project that addresses those needs. The community service path requires guidance from faculty as well as field supervisor mentorship. A deliverable will be required that represents the culmination of your efforts.

Capstone Pathway 5 - Performing or Fine Arts Exhibits: Offers the opportunity to apply learned skills to a deliverable project for their personal portfolio. Using the knowledge of their field, create a product that highlights the skills and knowledge they have learned.

Capstone Pathway 6 - ASU Study Abroad Experience with Deliverable: Offers the opportunity to enhance a traditional study abroad experience by developing a project connecting this experience with their broader coursework.

Deliverables

Every Senior Capstone Experience Pathway will include a presentation and deliverable to ASU and the community. The deliverable mode will vary and must be approved and agreed upon with the faculty mentor as part of the student's application.

The Advisor

Capstone Advisor

The Advisor is responsible for providing project expectations, guidance, and evaluation of your final work. A strong working relationship is the key to a successful partnership. This is defined by regular communication, frequent meetings throughout the duration of the project, and feedback sessions.

The Thesis/Creative Project is a collaborative effort between the student and the advisor.

The Advisor may be any member of ASU at Lake Havasu faculty with professional expertise in the project area. Students may also choose to work with multiple faculty as a committee; however, one lead advisor must still be identified.

Finding a Capstone Advisor

Think of memorable professors:

- Who was easy to talk with?
- Which classes did you enjoy?
- Which class projects were fulfilling?

Learn more about professors:

- Have you reviewed their ASU profile, area of expertise, and faculty webpage?

<https://havasu.asu.edu/faculty>

- Have you read their publications?

Contact your Academic Advisor or the Capstone Coordinator for recommendations and more information.

Learn more at: <https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>

Meeting with Potential Advisors

Faculty to Approach

Meeting Times

Idea Takeaways & Recommendations

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Applying for Capstone

Capstone Application

Students are required to file an application the semester prior to beginning their capstone. This application must be completed in order to register for their first capstone course. It establishes the capstone path chosen, faculty mentor/committee, subject area, deliverable, and agreement to the expectations of the capstone experience. The application outlines the individualized plan of study agree upon by the student and their faculty mentor and must be signed by both (or all if the committee is chosen).

Every Senior Capstone Experience

officially starts with the submission of an application.

It is **strongly recommended** that you meet with potential advisors before completing your application in order to discuss topics and recommendations.

Submission

Submit your application online at <https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>

You can examine the Application Form at the link, but your application must include:

- Your full name.
- Your ASU email address
- Your anticipated graduation date
- Your major.
- Your plans after you graduate
- Your top two preferred capstone pathways. (These may change after the application.)
- At least two possible advisors, listed in your order of preference.
- Your top 3 areas of interest for capstone in order of preference. This could be a specific research question, a broad topic, or an area that would help you in your future career.

Deadline

Meet the application deadline by submitting the application the semester prior to beginning your Senior Capstone Experience. For most students, this is the second semester of their Junior year. Deadlines are set as March 31st for a Fall start and October 31st for a Spring start. Registration will not be permitted until the application is received.

Semester I

This is when you will establish yourself as an expert on your topic.

Commons goals to start your first semester:

You are required to establish regular **meetings** with your Capstone Advisor to discuss your progress.

1. What is the compelling question or idea?

- From what field of study is the question derived?
- What is interesting about this topic?
- What are the main goals of this project?

2. How will research be conducted?

- What resources are needed?
- How many sources will you analyze?
- Will this require Institutional Review Board approval, and what is the deadline? (See page 12)

3. How often will you meet with your advisor?

- When, where, and how many times each semester will you meet?
- How will meeting agendas be determined?
- What are your goals for the meetings?

4. Outline the two-semester timeline with goals and milestones.

- Develop a schedule of internal due dates while adhering to Senior Capstone Experience deadlines.
- Decide on format, length, and style for any written component/deliverables.
- Discuss review periods for each draft of your work.
- Discuss grading criteria.

Semester II & Symposium

This is when you further your expertise on your topic and finish the hard work of completing your project. The second semester culminates with a presentation and celebration of your work to the ASU community and the public.

Commons goals to start your second semester:

1. What work has been completed?

- What have you learnt so far on your topic?
- What information is still unclear?

2. How much work is still left to do?

- Determine timeline for remaining deliverables.
- For original data projects, conclude data collection and analysis

Senior Capstone Symposium

The Senior Capstone Experience Symposium takes place on the last day of instruction for each semester, the Friday before Final Exams. Although the Senior Capstone Experience projects look vastly different from each other, the common deliverable is students must present their work at the Senior Capstone Experience Symposium. This night is about summarizing and sharing your hard work at the Symposium:

- Poster Presentation - You will create an academic conference style poster summarizing their work, deliver a brief talk on their work, and answer questions from the audience.
- PowerPoint or formal presentation - utilizing the presentation software and style of choice, you will give a 10 minute presentation of their work, followed by a question and answer session with the audience.

The Symposium

Before the Symposium

A title and 100 word abstract of your presentation will be due to your advisor two weeks prior to the Symposium for advertising.

Your presentation or poster file should be finished two weeks prior to the Symposium in order to allow time for printing, practice, and unforeseen circumstances.

Your advisor will be responsible for having the poster printed if you choose a poster.

Professional attire is required.

Tips for the Presentation

Your advisor will help you determine the best format for your presentation for both communication and developing skills for your career future.

Regularly check your email in the weeks before the Symposium for updates from your advisor or the Capstone Coordinator.

Keep in mind that creating files or printing posters may take longer than expected, and discuss a reasonable timeline with your advisor.

Your presentation or poster may not be the same as other deliverables or portions of the project, many Senior Capstone Experiences include additional deliverables. For example, if your Capstone project was developing a training presentation for local professionals, your Symposium presentation will not just be showing that training.

Look like the expert you have become during this process. You are not just a student; you are a professional. Make sure to dress your part!

Capstone Checklist

- Attend a Senior Capstone Experience Symposium before embarking on your Senior Capstone Experience Journey.
- Brainstorm ideas for your topic from previous coursework, personal interests, and past projects.
- Visit the Senior Capstone Experience archives page to view past projects. (see page 12)
- Schedule meetings with your potential Capstone advisor. Refer to your academic advisor for additional assistance. <https://havasu.asu.edu/advising>
- Submit your Capstone application online. <https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>
- Confirm your Capstone advisor.
- Register for appropriate Capstone credits with your academic advisor.
- Set a first meeting with your Capstone advisor in the first week of Semester I of your Senior Capstone Experience.
- Work on your project and meet regularly with your Capstone advisor regarding your progress.
- Note the date and time for your Senior Capstone Symposium.
- Submit your title and 100 word abstract to your Capstone advisor 2 weeks prior to the Symposium.
- Complete your presentation or poster file 2 weeks prior to the Symposium.
- Discuss printing needs with your Capstone advisor. (If you choose to complete poster)
- PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE YOUR PRESENTATION!
- Present your poster or presentation at the Symposium. Dress professionally!
- Submit your final project/presentation to the Learning Resource Center for archives.

**You're
almost
there!**

ASU Library Resources

Ask a Librarian

Online chat service powered by real library professionals providing live, online support.

lib.asu.edu/help

Library Guides

Quick access to best library materials for specific subjects and courses prepared by ASU librarians. libguides.asu.edu

Library Homepage

The homepage serves as a dashboard for library resources and services.

lib.asu.edu

One Search

Browse, share, customize and access free, full-text resources for your research papers.

lib.asu.edu/one

ASU Library Resources | Senior Capstone Experience

ASU at Lake Havasu Senior Capstone Experience Archive

This online collection features the work of ASU at Lake Havasu students while providing a research model for current students looking to develop their own project.

<https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>

The Institutional Review Board

The role of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) is to review all proposed research involving human subjects to ensure that subjects are treated ethically and that their rights and welfare are adequately protected. The human subjects review process is administered through the Office of Research Integrity and Assurance.

All research activities involving the use of human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before data collection can begin. You may not solicit subject participation or begin data collection until you have received written approval from the IRB. Please discuss this with your Director and visit the IRB website:

<https://havasu.asu.edu/senior-capstone-experience>