

American Studies Capstone Project (9-28-2016)

Students entering the PhD Program who have not previously earned an MA are required to complete a capstone project based upon original research. This project should be similar in scope to an article-length study in a scholarly journal. The capstone project may take the form of an essay (no less than 25, no more than 35 pages), a policy white paper, an exhibition curation project, or a digital humanities work.

In the Spring of their first year:

- Each student chooses an advisor and a topic to focus upon.
- In consultation with the advisor, the student develops a bibliography of at least 15 texts and/or works (secondary and primary and all specific to their concentration) that will be central to their project.

In the Summer between the first and second year:

- Each student studies the reading list s/he has developed for the capstone project and conducts necessary research (library, archival, ethnographic, etc.).

In the Fall of their second year:

- Each student signs up with his/her primary advisor for AMST 901 MA Research Seminar.
- A second advisor should be chosen at this time for the Spring capstone project defense.
- Students work on key concepts for their capstone project with their primary advisor, with the goal of producing a workable first draft of the project by the first week of December.

In the Spring of their second year:

- Each student signs up with his/her primary advisor for AMST 992 Master's (Non-Thesis).
- Students then work with their primary advisor to revise and expand upon the draft project, with a goal of March 1st for submitting the full polished draft of the capstone project to the primary advisor.
- Primary advisors are to then read the project and respond with queries and/or emendations by the third week of March.
- Students make the required revisions and submit the revised project by April 1st to both the primary and secondary advisors. At this time the student consults with both advisors and schedules the capstone project defense during the last week of classes.

- At the defense the primary advisor should sign the Report of Approved Substitute for a Master's Thesis form <http://gradschool.unc.edu/pdf/mform2.pdf>. The student should deliver it to the Graduate Student Services Specialist, who will keep a copy in the student's file and forward the original to the Graduate School.
- Because the capstone project is not considered a thesis it does not need to be submitted to the Graduate School. The student should advise the Director of Graduate Studies that s/he has successfully defended the capstone project and should upload a copy of his or her project to the AMST PhD Dissertation Prospectus Sakai site.