

CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROPOSAL

Honors 3990

Spring 2017

Day/Time: TBA

Location: C-215D and IC 100D



Prof. Ellen E. Bell

Office hours:

Tuesdays, 2-5pm and by appointment



Office: C-215D

Tel. 209-667-3188

Email: eebell@csustan.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

(From the Catalog) Independent research and discussions with research mentor leading to an approved research proposal for thesis or capstone project. Emphasis on framing a creative approach to research topic using congruent methods from different disciplines. (Spring of junior year.)

(From the Professor) Along with HONS 3500, HONS 3990 is designed to support Honors students as you begin the Capstone project you'll complete in your senior year. The course focuses on exploring a topic that interests you in the context of different disciplines and research methods. There is a strong emphasis on developing flexibility and curiosity as you formulate research questions and on deepening your knowledge by reading further "into" your selected topic through a detailed literature review. During the first weeks of the semester, you will develop solid research skills, learn to milk the resources available through the University Library for all they are worth, explore ethical practices and research protocols (including IRB and IACUC review), and design a research project. Later in the semester you will complete a pilot study, draft a preliminary research report, and present your initial findings in a poster session at the Honors Capstone Conference. You will learn to give (and take) peer feedback by working with a research partner, in disciplinary cohorts, and with the class as a whole. You will also interview a faculty member to learn more about his or her research. By the end of the semester you will have made significant progress on your Capstone project, giving you the skills you'll need to complete it and other research projects during your senior year and beyond.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate flexibility and curiosity in the formulation of research questions
2. Demonstrate a deeper understanding of a research topic through a detailed literature review
3. Display solid research skills, including the ability to access University Library resources effectively
4. Display a familiarity with ethical practices and research protocols (including IRB and IACUC review) by designing an ethically sound research project

5. Demonstrate the ability to identify and contextualize a research question, design a research project, complete a pilot study, and analyze, interpret, and disseminate the results
6. Exhibit facility in giving and receiving peer review.
7. Exhibit the self-discipline required to evaluate and revise work with a thoughtful, ruthless attention to clarity and correctness.

General Education: none

Prerequisites: Junior standing, discipline-specific research methods class, good standing in the Honors program, or consent of the professor.

RECOMENDED TEXTBOOK

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams

2008 *The Craft of Research*. 3rd Edition. University of Chicago Press, Chicago.

ISBN-13: 9780226065663

Also available as **a free ebook** through the CSU Stanislaus library.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

Students will be graded based on their scores on the following required assignments:

30% Research Proposal

30% Research Poster

40% Research Report

The +/- system **WILL** be used for this course. On a 100 point scale, final letter grades will be assigned as follows: A (93+), A- (90-92.9), B+ (87-89.9), B (83-86.9), B- (80-82.9), C+ (77-79.9), C (73-76.9), C- (70-72.9), D+ (67-69.9), D (63-66.9), D- (60-62.9); F (0-59.9). Please note that a grade of C- (70%) or higher is required for credit to be granted for those enrolled under the Credit / No Credit option.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1.) **Research Proposal:** This is a written representation of your intellectual journey and a road-map of the steps you'll take to test your hypotheses, address your research questions, and analyze, interpret, and share your findings. It will present your research topic and question, review the related literature to place your question in context, outline the methods you'll use to explore the topic and address the question, explain how you will analyze and interpret the results, and conclude with a properly formatted "Works Cited" or "References" list. Successful proposals (A & B grades) will state the research question clearly and succinctly; present sufficient background information to contextualize the question; make original, well-supported, and persuasive arguments about the importance and feasibility of the project; and include a clear, well-organized, and feasible research methodology. Successful papers will also be at least 5 typed, double-spaced pages in length (not including title page, Works Cited, or References lists), well-written, free of grammatical and spelling errors, and cite sources properly. All proposals will be graded for argument, organizational structure, mechanical correctness, and accuracy and relevance of citations.

4.) **Research Poster:** You will create a poster for presentation in class and at the Honors Capstone Conference during Finals Week (**Friday May 19, 12-5pm** in the Faculty Development Center). The poster is modeled on those presented at professional research conferences and will summarize your findings to date. Poster guidelines will be provided in class and on Blackboard.

5.) **Research Report:** You will write a research report that summarizes the work you have completed during the semester and your findings to date. This report builds on your research proposal and will include the results from your pilot study, a thorough literature review, a summary of the methods you used to address your research question, a discussion of the analyses you completed, and your interpretations of the data and their significance. It will also include a properly formatted Works Cited or References list and appropriate in-text citations. You will draw on this document as you revise and expand your project during your senior year.

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism—All work submitted must be your own, and all sources on which you draw to produce that work must be properly credited. Absolutely no infractions of the academic honesty policy (<http://www.csustan.edu/JudicialAffairs>) will be tolerated. In **addition** to any administrative disciplinary actions, any student caught plagiarizing, cheating, or otherwise violating the academic honesty policy will be given an F for the assignment and, at the discretion of the professors, may **fail the entire course**.

Students with Disabilities—if you have a disability that requires classroom or test accommodations, please see me as soon as possible after class or during office hours. If you haven't done so already, you should contact the Disability Resource Center (MSR-210, Tel. 209-667-3159, TTY 209-667-3044), which is responsible for coordinating accommodations and services for students with disabilities. All information and documentation of disability is strictly confidential.

Office Hours—Office hours are set aside for you—please take advantage of them! If you have any questions about the course material, assignments, your research project, etc. please stop by my office during office hours to talk (Classroom Bldg. C-215D). Outside of office hours, the best way to reach me is by email (eebell@csustan.edu). If you can't make it to office hours, we can schedule another time to meet or to talk on the phone if that's more convenient.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND DUE DATES

Week 5	Feb 20-24	Research Proposal Draft 1 due
Week 7	Mar 6-10	Research Proposal Draft 2 (including pilot study) due
Week 10	Apr 3-7	Research Report Draft 1 due
Week 12	Apr 17-21	Research Report Draft 2 due
Week 14	May 1-5	Poster Draft due
Week 15	May 8-12	Final Poster due via Blackboard link
Finals week	May 15-19	Research Report due
	May 19	Poster Presentation at the Honors Capstone Conference (12-5pm, FDC)