**RWU Honors Program**

**Honors Capstone Rubrics**

**Overview of the Honors Capstone**

The RWU Honors Program seeks to prepare and inspire students to be dedicated, engaged, and compassionate intellectual leaders locally, regionally, and globally. Our curriculum focuses on skills essential to higher levels of intellectual and creative scholarship, ethical community engagement, and civic communication and action. We have prioritized three domains of a student’s intellectual and professional development that serve as the bases for student learning within the program:

***Scholarly Inquiry: The ability to analyze knowledge and experiences to generate innovative and creative scholarship***

***Community Engagement: Collaboration with local, regional, state, national, and global communities for the mutually beneficial exchange of knowledge and resources***

***The Public Sphere: The application and extension of one’s knowledge, experiences, and skills to civic and social life***

The Honors Capstone requires you to demonstrate an independent, meaningful contribution to a particular field of study (***Scholarly Inquiry***), and to reflect upon the value and application of the capstone for yourself and for society (***the Public Sphere***). This equal emphasis on exemplary scholarship and civic engagement is what distinguishes Honors Program Capstone Projects.

**Honors Capstone Requirements**

The Honors Capstone is a set of requirements representing the culmination of the student’s learning and development as an RWU Citizen-Scholar. Together, the components of the Honors Capstone showcase ***how meaningful and distinguished scholarship and a commitment to integrity and community enriches society.***

To fulfill the Honors Capstone requirement, each student must complete three required components:

1. a Capstone Project
2. the Honors Capstone Reflection
3. the dissemination of the Honors Capstone to the university community via an Honors-sponsored public forum (Honors Senior SASH Symposia or equivalent)

The Honors Capstone is evaluated by the faculty mentor within the discipline. The Honors Capstone Reflection and the Honors SASH presentation (or equivalent) are evaluated by faculty from the Honors Advisory Council. The Honors Program has developed the following two rubrics—the ***Scholarly Inquiry Rubric*** and ***The Public Sphere Rubric****—*to guide the evaluation and feedback process.

**Scholarly Inquiry**

Scholarly Inquiry is at the heart of any successful capstone project, though it can be conceptualized quite differently across disciplines. As an Honors Capstone, students are required to demonstrate an advanced level of mastery of their topic or discipline, as assessed by faculty from within that field of study. The Honors Program also requires students to demonstrate proficiency at two particular learning outcomes within the Scholarly Inquiry Domain: ***Critical Reflection and Inquiry*** and ***Integrative Scholarship***.

***Scholarly Inquiry: the ability to analyze knowledge and experiences to generate innovative and creative scholarship.***

***Critical Reflection and Inquiry***: ***the ability to critique and reflect upon knowledge to pose informed, relevant, and urgent questions.***

***Integrative Scholarship***: ***the ability to synthesize knowledge to express insight and originality through the analysis of disciplinary or multidisciplinary artifacts.***

Regardless of the discipline or genre, the quality of the project is expected to be exceptional. The overall quality of a student’s capstone is measured via a letter grade for the capstone project, submitted by the faculty mentor to the Honors Program Office. This grade should reflect the faculty mentor’s evaluation of the degree to which the capstone meets (or exceeds) the standards of the discipline, including but not limited to disciplinary/theoretical knowledge, methodological tools, and professional standards for publication and presentation. ***A minimum grade of a B+ on the capstone project, assigned by the student’s faculty mentor, is required to graduate with Honors.***

Each of the Honors Capstone components are also evaluated with respect to the ***Scholarly Inquiry*** learning domain***,*** as outlined in the attached rubric***.*** ***Scholarly Inquiry*** is comprised of multiple dimensions relating to independence, originality, and mastery of disciplinary knowledge and methodology. For each dimension of the rubric, the faculty rates the student on a 0-2 scale (Does Not Pass, Pass, or Strongly Pass).

**Scholarly Inquiry Rubric**

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| **Outcome** | **Characteristic** | **Level of Mastery** |
| **Development and Design of the Research Question/Creative Challenge** | Identifies unique research question/creative challenge; Goals/objectives/hypotheses are explicit | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Synthesis of Existing Knowledge and Perspectives** | Inquiry is presented within the appropriate disciplinary framework; Topic is contextualized among sources and materials | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Analysis of Evidence** | Quantitative, qualitative, and/or other symbolic tools are utilized effectively; Evidence is sufficient to address the inquiry question and is well utilized | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Conclusions and Limitations** | Assertions are qualified and well supported; Limitations and qualifications are presented; Demonstrates independent and critical thought | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Quality of Writing and Ethical Use of Resources** | Language clearly and effectively communicates ideas; Errors are minimal; Sources and citations are used correctly | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |

**The Public Sphere**

The reflection and dissemination portions of the Honors Capstone Project prompt students think about their educational and professional growth and/or contributions within a larger civic community.  Through these forums, students will be evaluated on the capstone project with respect to their recognition of and insightful reflection on the capstone experience and their education as a whole.

All intellectual and creative scholarship can be situated in the public sphere—that which comprises (but is not limited to) our civic and social life, politics, and other local, regional, and/or global issues. For the Honors Capstone, students are expected to contextualize their work in the public sphere as demonstrated by proficiency on two learning domains: ***Civic Analysis of Knowledge*** and ***Civic Communication*.**

***Public Sphere: the application and extension of one’s knowledge, experiences, and skills to civic and social life.***

***Civic Analysis of Knowledge: Analyzes and connects one or more academic fields (and its facts, theories, skills, and methodologies) to one’s own participation in civic and social life.***

***Civic Communication: the ability to effectively and persuasively communicate the civic value of disciplinary knowledge to non-disciplinary audiences.***

The analysis and extension of knowledge to the public sphere requires thoughtful, critical interpretation of one’s scholarship. The Honors component of the capstone provides an opportunity to think about these larger patterns of your education and service. Students are expected to articulate and defend the importance and relevance of their capstone for themselves and for society at-large. This requires students to engage in professional, intellectual dialogues with non-disciplinary audiences. Exemplary students will extend this reflection even further, to challenge their own disciplinary lens and to critique their approach to the project from a diversity of social and cultural perspectives.

Designated faculty (a minimum of 2) from the Honors Advisory Council will evaluate the Honors Capstone Reflection and the Honors SASH presentation (or equivalent)across multiple dimensions of ***The Public Sphere,*** using the rubric outlined below. Each faculty rates the student on a 0-2 scale for each dimension (Does Not Pass, Pass, or Strongly Pass).

 **Public Sphere Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outcome** | **Characteristic** | **Level of Mastery** |
| **Diversity of Thought and Experience** | Demonstrates evidence of critical reflection on the specific field of study as it relates to working within and learning from diverse communities and/or cultures | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Civic Analysis of Knowledge** | Connects and extends knowledge (facts, theories, etc.) from one's own academic study/field/discipline to the public sphere, including but not limited to civic and social life, politics, and other local, regional and/or global issues | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Professional Identity and Commitment**  | Draws on experiences in honors and other professional contexts and activities and describes what s/he has learned about her or himself as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of professional identity and continued commitment to public action  | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Civic Communication**  | Tailors communication strategies to the honors and other public (non-disciplinary) audiences. Identifies and explores the role of the honors academic community in addressing issues related to the topic or context | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |
| **Challenging Contexts and Structures** | Challenges the Honors audience to use their education to address important questions/problems as raised by their research | Strong PassPassDoes Not Meet |