

Senior Capstone Experience Proposal 20 October 2011

Capstone Experience Team
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Overview of Proposal

The Capstone Experience Team proposes three educational offerings that are intentionally sequenced to leverage the experiences of students as they prepare for internships and anticipate entering seminary or employment after obtaining an undergraduate degree.

These educational offerings include a 3-hour course called *Ministry in Context*, a 2-hour *Summer Internship*, and a 1-hour *Senior Capstone Experience*.

The *Ministry in Context* course will occur during the spring of students' junior year. The *Summer Internship* will occur during the summer following the junior year. The *Senior Capstone Experience* will occur in the fall of the senior year and comprise 15 hours of face-to-face time together.

The following table outlines these courses in their sequence.

	FALL SEMESTER	SPRING SEMESTER	CREDIT HOURS
JUNIOR		Ministry in Context	3
Summer	Summer Internship		2
SENIOR	Senior Capstone Experience		1

Ministry in Context (Junior Year)

Content:

- Writing a resume and cover letter
- Interviewing strategies: asking the right questions and knowing how to answer
- Successful Internships; best practices
- Panel of Ministers: Preaching, Children's, Youth, Chaplain, Missionary, Non-profit
- Pastoral Ministry: understanding authority, "First do no harm"
- Principles of leadership, organization, and administration
- Non-profits: creating a business plan, fundraising, marketing, identifying customers
- Time management – personal and professional time
- Financial management – personal finances, church/missions budgets,
- Taxes and ministry

Projects: (Possible menu of assignments tailored to anticipated future ministry area)

- a. *Resume*
- b. *Compose a Wedding Ceremony, Funeral, Baby Blessing, and Baptism*
- c. *Create a business plan for a non-profit*
- d. *Ethnography of Internship Location (research emphasis)*
Research specific church, ministry, or site, including politics, power structures, industry, employment, history, etc.
- e. *Philosophy / Metaphor of Ministry and Missions*
- f. *Reflection based on Financial / Time Journal*
Prior to assignment: How do I spend my time, money, etc.?
Assignment: Students record how time, money are spent during one week
Reflection: Learning about self and how I live

Summer Internship (Between Junior and Senior Year)

In addition to completing reflective writing assignments on the internship, students will be required to read a spiritual formation text and complete an assignment on that text upon their return in the fall.

Senior Capstone Experience (Senior Year)

Content:

- Managing conflict and controversy
- Theological reflection
- Communal discernment through writing and processing cases
- Writing Intensive Course: writing in the discipline and for publication

Projects:

- a. *Written Case Study*
- b. *Cumulative Written Project – Internship Ethnography and Reflection on Internship (fulfilling the requirements for the writing-intensive course.)*
- c. *Independent Research Project based on personal interest or future ministry*
This project is intended to be both research based and solution oriented

Scheduling the Capstone Experience

We recommend the Senior Capstone Experience be “front loaded” in the fall semester so that the course meets every Tuesday and Thursday for 1 hour and 20 minutes for the first 5 weeks of the semester and then gathers again for the scheduled final exam meeting with meetings between faculty and individual students for advising throughout the semester.