

HON 498-01 Honors Capstone Seminar

Course Syllabus

Fall 2025

Instructor: Robert W. Guyker, PhD

Email: guyker@chapman.edu

Office Hours: Appointment via Zoom / in-person

Classroom: Demille Hall 107

Time: Tues / Thurs 10:00–11:15 am

Credits: 3

Prerequisite: Acceptance in the University Honors Program

Course Description

1. Each senior Honors student is required to complete a significant interdisciplinary research project, which is comprised of two parts: (1) an interdisciplinary research paper upon which the project is based; and, (2) an oral presentation of the project at the annual University Honors Conference. In the capstone, students will evaluate, clarify, and frame their project fusing perspectives and scholarship from relevant disciplines.
2. Students are expected to develop and sustain a close analytical reading of the sources used in their capstone projects along with strong logical coherence and persuasiveness of arguments in their in-class and conference presentations of their capstone projects as well as in their research papers.
3. This course is a seminar in which classes take the form of a writers' workshop. As such, class meetings will involve open discussions of students' research projects. Therefore, students are expected to be engaged in ongoing research for their departmental senior project, to give a presentation of their departmental project, to expand this project by adding the methodology and content of at least one other disciplines, to present the results of this expanded research to their classmates, to participate in class discussions of their interdisciplinary research and the interdisciplinary research of others, to make a somewhat formal presentation of their interdisciplinary project to the class in the course of the semester, and to present their interdisciplinary Honors capstone project at the Chapman University Honors Conference on the first Saturday in May.

Restrictions

- Acceptance into the University Honors Program

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Obtain a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
2. Sharpen the ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
3. Understand how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing dramatic challenges shaping the world;
4. Develop effective communication skills, specifically in the areas of written and oral exposition and analysis.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Complete a significant interdisciplinary project – Program Learning Outcome 1;
2. Provide students in the University Honors Program with the opportunity to pursue an interdisciplinary research project and to present the findings of their research to the University community and to the Honors faculty and students – Program Learning Outcomes 2 & 3;
3. Create a community of scholars where students have a chance to converse with each other about their research and thus be participants in a semester-long interdisciplinary conversation – Program Learning Outcome 4;
4. Provide a supportive environment for the completion of the Honors capstone project.

Required Texts

1. *The Senior Honors Project information booklet* and the *Capstone Initiation Forms* – be familiar with both, they can be found on the “Courses” link of the Honors website.
2. Required Reading of all students:
 - Gerald Graff & Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say / I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* (6th edition), New York: W. W. Norton, 2024.

Recommended Further Reading

- Martha Nussbaum, *Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Instructional Strategies

- Weekly seminar meetings

University Policies

Chapman University Academic Integrity Policy

Chapman University is a community of scholars which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of all members to seek knowledge honestly and in good faith. Students are responsible for doing their own work, and academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated anywhere in the university.

Chapman University Students with Disabilities Policy

In compliance with ADA guidelines, students who have any condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services. If you will need to utilize your approved accommodations in this class, please follow the proper notification procedure for informing your professor(s). This notification process must occur more than a week before any accommodation can be utilized. Please contact Disability Services at (714) 516-4520 or (www.chapman.edu/students/student-health-services/disability-services) if you have questions regarding this procedure, or for information and to make an appointment to discuss and/or request potential accommodations based on documentation of your disability. Once formal approval of your need for an accommodation has been granted, you are encouraged to talk with your professor(s) about your accommodation options. The granting of any accommodation will not be retroactive and cannot jeopardize the academic standards or integrity of the course.

Chapman University Diversity Policy

Chapman University is committed to fostering learning and working environments that encourage and embrace diversity, multiple perspectives, and the free exchange of ideas as important measures to advance educational and social benefits. Our commitment and affirmation are rooted in our traditions of peace and social justice and our mission of producing ethical and responsible global citizens. The term diversity implies a respect for all and an understanding of individual differences in age, class, disability, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Methods of Evaluation

Your course grade will be based on class attendance, participation in the semester-long interdisciplinary conversation, the quality of the final interdisciplinary project and/or research paper, and the presentation at the Chapman University Honors Conference.

1. **Attendance & Participation – 10 points:**

- Class attendance is required. You are expected to attend all class meetings and to have assignments prepared when they are due. More than three absences will result in zero points for class attendance. For each excused or unexcused absence beyond three there will be a 5% deduction from your possible course grade.
- Participation does not mean mere presence in the classroom. Instead, it means active listening – that is, the willingness to engage in the back-and-forth of open-ended and reasoned conversations by being open to what others have to say, risking our opinions, asking questions, and surfacing disagreements. Such “active listening” is essential to a successful seminar and to being a community of scholars.

2. **Outline & Presentation of chapter in *They Say / I Say* – 5 points Due by scheduled deadlines**

- The following is required of each student: (1) explore one of the chapters of *They Say / I Say*, and (2) lead the class discussion of that chapter. This will involve preparing (1) an outline and (2) a slide show of that chapter, both to be turned in and graded.

3. **Outline of Capstone Research Paper – 5 points Due by October 2, 2025**

4. **Annotated Bibliography of Capstone Research Paper – 5 points Due by October 16, 2025**

5. **Rough Draft of Capstone Research Paper – 10 points Due by October 30, 2025**

6. **Presentation of Capstone research project to the class – 5 points Due by the scheduled deadlines**

7. **Full Draft of Capstone Research Paper - 10 points Due by December 12, 2025**

8. **Final Capstone Research Paper = 25 points:**

- a. **Knowledge:** the demonstration of familiarity with the appropriate conceptual and theoretical frameworks for the Honors capstone as well as with theoretical understanding and application of interdisciplinarity.
- b. **Analysis:** the understanding of the historical context of the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of your Honors capstone project and the application of those frameworks to contemporary concerns in an insightful, critical, and logical manner.
- c. **Expression:** the ability to write in accordance with acceptable grammatical standards, and a demonstrated familiarity with the vocabulary of the disciplines at play in the Honors capstone project. It also represents the ability to orally present your interdisciplinary research project in the semester-long conversation.
- d. **Interdisciplinarity:** the integration of multiple disciplinary insights and/or methods.
- e. **Final version of Capstone Research Paper** (minimum length 20 pages / 5,000 words) due on **April 12, 2025**

9. **Conference Presentation = 25 points**

- The conference presentation will be graded for the delivery and effectiveness of your communication, your response to the audience’s questions, the clarity of your research question and/or thesis, the organization of your argument, and your supporting evidence.
- This presentation is on **Saturday, May 2, 2025**.

Grading basis of 100 points:

- a. **Attendance & participation = 10 points**
- b. **Outline & Presentation of required reading = 5 points**
- c. **Outline of Capstone Research Paper (due October 2, 2025) = 5 points**

- d. Annotated Bibliography (due October 16, 2025) = 5 points
- e. Rough Draft of Capstone Research Paper (due **October 30, 2025**) = 10 points
- f. In-class Presentation of Capstone Research project = 5 points
- g. Full Draft Capstone Research Paper (due **December 12, 2025**) = 10 points
- h. Final Capstone Research Paper (due **April 12, 2026**) = 25 points*
- i. Honors Conference Presentation (**May 2, 2026**) = 25 points*

* Assigned by the Director of the Honors Program after the Honors Conference.

Honors Program Assignments

1. By **September 18, 2025**, please complete the online [Honors Capstone Initiation Form](#) and send to your proposed capstone mentor in advance of the due date. You will need to provide a brief description of your capstone project and confirm that your proposed capstone mentor has agreed to serve as your mentor for the project when completing your portion of the initiation form.
2. On **November 11, 2025** the completion of the Senior Exit Survey which can be found at <http://www.chapman.edu/academics/honors/exit-survey/index.aspx> is due.
3. **April 9, 2026**, your official capstone title and description for conference booklet is due. This should include the following:
 - Title of your presentation
 - Description of presentation – 100 to 120-word limit
 - Major(s) and degree(s)
 - Minor(s)
4. **April 13, 2026**: a digital copy of your final Honors interdisciplinary research paper on which your Honors capstone project and Honors Conference presentation is based, is due by 4pm. *The failure to turn this in on time will affect your grade.*
5. **Saturday, May 2, 2026**: presentation of your Honors capstone project at the Chapman University Honors Annual Conference.

Projected Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Tues., Aug. 26	General introduction to the course <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Class members introduce themselves ▪ Review syllabus: objectives/expectations of the course
Thurs., Aug. 28	Open Work Session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say Introduction</i> – pages 1-18 ▪ Work on Capstone research project topics
Tues., Sept. 2	Discussion of Capstone topics and Mentors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, select chapters from Part 4, pages 188–306 ▪ Writing & Interdisciplinary Research: How are ideas disseminated in your discipline(s)
Thurs., Sept. 4	Open Work Session – Work on Research Topics Capstone Research Project Topics due – submit to canvas

Tues., Sept. 9	What Others are Saying & the Art of Summarizing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapters 1 & 2 – pages 19–46 ▪ Presentation on Chapters 1 & 2
Thurs., Sept. 11	Open Work Session – Paraphrasing Exercises & Identify and contact potential Mentors
Tues., Sept. 16	Strategies in Quoting & Responding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 3 & 4 – pages 47–73 ▪ Presentations on Chapters 3 & 4
Thurs., Sept. 18	Open Work Session – Quoting & Responding Exercises Signed Mentor form due via Qualtrics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A digital copy of your picture for the Honors Conference booklet is due – please send that to Ashley Cosgrove in the Honors office.
Tues., Sept. 23	Taking Intellectual Positions & Situating Skeptics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 5 & 6 – pages 74–96 ▪ Presentations on Chapters 5 & 6
Thurs., Sept. 25	Open Work Session – Positionality Exercises
Tues., Sept. 30	Speaking from Experience & Saying What Matters <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 7 & 8 – pages 97–122 ▪ Presentation on Chapter 7 & 8
Thurs., Oct. 2	Open Work Session – Personal Narrative & Organization Outline Due
Tues., Oct. 7	Synthesizing & Writing in Your Own Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 9 & 10 – pages 123–153 ▪ Presentation on Chapter 9 & 10
Thurs., Oct. 9	Open Work Session – Writing, Research & Synthesizing
Tues., Oct. 14	Metacommentary & Revising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 11 & 12 – pages 154–187 ▪ Presentation on Chapter 11 & 12
Thurs., Oct. 16	Open Work Session – Strategies in revising and editing Annotated Bibliography Due
Tues., Oct. 21	When “They” are Bots <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Read: <i>They Say / I Say</i>, Chapter 19 – pages 290–306 ▪ Presentation on Chapter 19
Thurs., Oct. 23	Open Work Session – Strategies for Collaborating with AI
Tues., Oct. 28	Peer-review Process in Academic Publishing
Thurs., Oct. 30	Open Work Session – Peer-review Drafts Rough Drafts Due
Tues., Nov. 4	Focused Session – Editing & Revising Drafts

Thurs., Nov. 6 Open Work Session – Revise Drafts

Tues., Nov. 11 Compelling Presentations & Academic Venues

- **Complete the Senior Exit Survey** which can be found at <http://www.chapman.edu/academics/honors/exit-survey/index.aspx>

Thurs., Nov. 13 Focused Session – Work on Capstone Project Presentations

Tues., Nov. 18 Capstone Project Presentations

Thurs., Nov. 20 Capstone Project Presentations

***** Thanksgiving / Fall Break, November 24–28 *****

Tues., Dec. 2 Capstone Project Presentations

Thurs., Dec. 4 Capstone Project Presentations

Fri., Dec. 12 **Full Draft of Capstone Research Paper Due**

Important Dates in 2026

- **April 9** = Official capstone title and description for conference booklet – *deliver* to Ashley Cosgrove in the Honors office – consisting of:
 - Title of your presentation
 - Description of presentation – 100 to 120-word limit
 - Major(s) and Minor(s) degree(s)
- **April 12** = A digital copy of your Honors Capstone interdisciplinary research paper (on which your Honors capstone project and Honors Conference presentation are based) due by 4 p.m. – *submit* to Ashley Cosgrove in the Honors office
- **Saturday, May 2** = Honors Annual Conference (this date is set)

Prepared by Carmichael Peters, Spring 2009

Revised by Gordon Babst Fall 2023, Spring 2024, Fall 2024

Revised by Robert Guyker Fall 2024, Spring 2025, Fall 2025 (with Tara Gruenewald)