History 4394

Capstone Thesis in History

Overview
The Capstone experience in History involves two components one in the Fall for 3 credits and a second a continuation that is not credit bearing, together this experience spans a period of one year, usually the senior year. The initial preparation of the capstone normally takes place in the first semester of the Senior year in the Capstone Thesis Preparation experience/course which provides an introduction to the process and then links the student with a Capstone mentor as the semester proceeds. The process is intense with the Professor of the Capstone course monitoring student progress. As early as possible in the Fall the student works with their mentor with the goal to conclude a first draft in the first semester and the final version of their paper in the second semester by the beginning of April of their Senior year, while registered for the non-credit course HIST 4095 the Capstone continuation, in the Spring semester just prior to the presentation of their research at UST research day or other appropriate approved scholarly forum. The approval of the student’s paper is by their Mentor/First Reader and subsequently a secondary reader and a grade is awarded by the Professor of record for the Capstone course. Their final grade will reflect the student’s achievements in the preparation course and the capstone thesis, this is normally submitted during the Spring semester of the senior year at the time the research is presented and the paper approved, only then has the student fully completed the Capstone requirements for graduation.

Course Descriptions

HIST 4394 Introduction to Capstone Thesis Preparation for History majors.
This course aides students to research, write and present a capstone thesis in history and present it in a research symposium. The student will be guided in the initial steps of the topic selection and research in preparation for work with a mentor early the Fall semester of senior year the class meets early in the fall and some of the topics covered in the course are: introduction to the thesis statement, the abstract, imaginative topics and sources, historical writing, the limits of History, searching for
sources, work on your topic organization, method of recording and organizing a large body of information in cards and or a computer, research in area research libraries, methods of presentation and critiques of presentations, presentation software and other topics. Books included as texts at this time are: Benjamin, A Student’s Guide To History; Barzun/Graff, The Modern Researcher (selections from it); University of Chicago Style Sheet; History Highway.

The experience is a three credit activity with a professor who coordinates the class and makes some of the presentations and moderates others in what is a process more than a traditional course. The members of the department and a reference librarian all make a contribution to the presentation schedule. Early during the process/course the student is linked to an appropriate mentor and moves into the writing of the paper the second phase of the capstone which begins as soon as possible in the first semester and may carry over into the Spring.

At the end of the First Semester the Professor of record who coordinates the process awards a grade of S—satisfactory or U—unsatisfactory which is temporary. Students with Satisfactory proceed into HIST 4095 in the second semester and receive an “S” on their transcript until they complete the second semester when they receive a final grade from the Professor of record for the process Dr Williams. The grade is based on the student’s performance in 4394 and the quality of their paper and its timely submission. They must also have presented their paper at Research Day usually at the beginning of April or at a scholarly conference.

**HIST4095 Capstone/thesis for History majors Part II**

This non-credit course is a continuation of the first semester process that is the Capstone experience in History and normally takes place in the Spring semester of the Senior year. Normally a student would need a satisfactory grade evaluation for progress in HIST 4394 to continue to the Spring semester. This Satisfactory grade would normally presuppose the students submission of a first draft of the paper in the fall, the Monday after Thanksgiving.
HIST 4095 during this period the student works on finishing the final version of their capstone, the first draft having been submitted immediately after Thanksgiving. The final version will be submitted to the mentor before the oral presentation in April with their mentor and then submitted to a second reader for review, and then for final approval for their Capstone Thesis, in accord with departmental policy.

Catalogue descriptions

HIST 4394 Introduction to Capstone Thesis Preparation for History majors.
This course focuses on getting the student started to research, write and present a capstone thesis in history and present it in a research symposium. The student will be guided in the initial steps of the topic selection and research in preparation for work and then as soon as possible will consult with a mentor on their work and the completion of a first draft.

HIST 4095 Capstone continuation History majors Part II
This non-credit course component is a continuation of the Capstone Thesis experience in History and is taken in the Spring semester of the student’s senior year during which the student completes their Capstone Thesis with approval of a mentor and a second reader. The successful completion of a Capstone Thesis and the presentation of the research at UST Research Day are requirements for graduation.