

**Northern Arizona University Theatre  
Senior Capstone Experience (TH 490C)  
The Process of Application**

**THE SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE**

Throughout this document you will see three terms referred to: the Senior Capstone Experience, the Senior Project and the Senior Seminar. The SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE (is an exploration of your learning during your tenure with NAU Theatre. You will examine your processes and learn to articulate what it is we do as artists. The SENIOR CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE also refers to the entire process. The SENIOR PROJECT is the actual plan of what you intend to accomplish during the designated semester. The SENIOR SEMINAR is the class that you enroll in which serves as a forum for career planning and preparation for your departure from the program.

As you prepare for your senior year and the Senior Capstone Experience, we ask that you value the process as well as the product, but recognize that without the process there wouldn't be a product. We ask that you are open to discovery, throwing away the rigidity that deadens any avenue for creativity. Throughout the experience, we request that you delve into articulating your process, exploring artistic philosophy emerging in you and your work, and remain open to the discovery, wherever it may lead.

It is important for you follow the guidelines for preparation carefully, not only for the sake of planning but so that you carefully explore the Senior Capstone Experience as a student artist and scholar. We believe that the Senior Capstone Experience is a vital component in preparing you for life beyond NAU and so we encourage you to take it seriously.

**Please remember that the best projects coordinate the efforts of all possible senior capstone students;** for instance, if a student playwright pairs with a director and an actor the project would better use departmental resources and would make a better case for acceptance. Additionally, remember that to fully complete your application you must submit a primary plan (which may be connected to the mainstage or second stage season) and a secondary plan that is **not** connected with either production season. If the secondary plan is connected to the Mainstage production season, it is imperative that you outline a plausible approach to securing a role or position with the team. And remember that your Senior Project Capstone Experience goes beyond what would normally be required of production involvement, especially in the documentation of process.

The final application deadline is February 1<sup>st</sup> prior to the academic year of completion. For example, if your senior project is planned for April 2009 then your application deadline is February 2008.

**GUIDELINES FOR PREPERATION:**

- A. You must begin the thought processes early. Begin by asking yourself what it is you have learned in your time at NAU. Learning in a Liberal Arts institution refers to your entire experience, not just what you found in your major area of study. Perhaps a course

in Religious Studies influenced the way you look at the world and the plays we read. Perhaps a course in Astronomy will lead you to wonder about the relationship between man and the heavens and you would like to explore that further with your SENIOR PROJECT. Many of you minor in areas that might be an excellent integration of study but it does not need to be a minor to be an important link to your project. Ask yourself how you can synthesize the learning and reinforce it, as well as find new discovery in the Senior Capstone Experience.

- B. Depending on your focus, ask a faculty member to sit as your main advisor on the project. However, please remember that the grade for the course will be an average of the entire faculty's grades and that you will be graded on process (beginning here with selection), product, and documentation.
- C. Meet with your advisor **early and often** to begin discussion of your ideas and to formulate plans.
- D. Formulate your plans (both PRIMARY and SECONDARY) and complete the Proposal Form, making sure to include the narrative portion of the document. This is to be typed and in proper diction, grammar and spelling. Make the best impression you can in this proposal because it is a first impression. Please make sure to type the form and to include additional documentation where asked and needed.
- E. Meet with your advisor to finalize your proposals, to outline expectations and requirements, and to gain advisor approval. Turn the proposal into the Department Chair by February 1<sup>st</sup>. **NO LATE PROPOSALS WILL BE ACCEPTED.**
- F. The advisor will present the plan to the entire faculty, who will meet to give final approval.
- G. Once you have been informed of the approval, your plans can begin to be put in place.
- H. After your project is approved, it is important for you to meet with your main advisor regularly. At this point, the official project outline of expectations will be presented to you. Remember that although you take the course in only one semester, the project is a lengthy process. You will have deadlines and expectations throughout the process which must be met and will have an impact on your grade.
- I. After the completion of the project, you will meet with the faculty in a **Post Mortem/Defense** to discuss your process, success and challenges, what you learned from the project, and where you go from here. You will be expected to articulate your process and to share the artistic philosophy that you are incubating. This is a time dedicated to exploring and reflection, both of which are important components of life-long learning. As artists, we embrace life-long learning and the freedom to discover. We will ask that you respect the process of reflection as an important tool in the overall process.