

**WKU** MAHURIN  
HONORS COLLEGE

STUDENT GUIDE TO THE

**C**apstone  
**E**xperience /  
**T**hesis

Last Revised: February 2021

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## **PART I:** INTRODUCTION TO THE CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE/THESIS (CE/T)

### **An Overview**

A Capstone Experience/Thesis (CE/T) should be the culmination of an undergraduate education for any high-achieving Mahurin Honors College (MHC) student. It offers students the opportunity to contribute to their disciplines, to do hands-on work in their fields, and to explore future careers.

Above all, students should demonstrate that they can identify a problem or issue, use the methods and theories of their individual disciplines to address the problem or issue, contextualize their approach within existing work in their discipline, and communicate effectively about this process. This can be accomplished in one of two ways: through a traditional *thesis* or a *capstone experience project*.

### **ALL CE/Ts...**

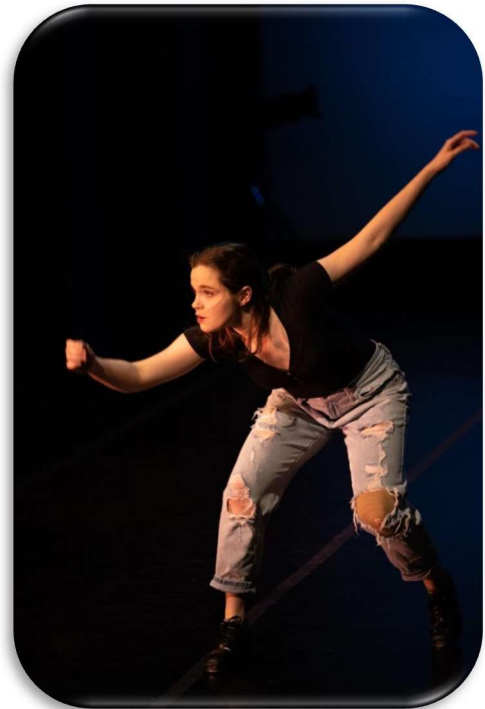
- should be guided by disciplinary standards.
- should be substantial. Students should spend *no fewer* than 270 hours over two semesters working on the project.
- should make an original contribution to each student's discipline by tackling new problems relevant to their disciplines or take a fresh approach to old issues
- have no minimum or maximum page limits; however, the faculty mentor should help students determine the expected length of a project based on disciplinary standards and the contours of individual projects.
- should conform to the academic writing standards of the given discipline.

### **Traditional theses...**

- typically allow students to conduct in-depth examinations of topics that are narrow in scope.
- should be based on original research.
- utilize academic research methods.

### **Capstone projects...**

- are typically better suited for examining relatively broad topics.



Elise Wilham (MHC '20) performed "Unsettled" at The Dance Project 2020, held at WKU, as part of her CE/T, [Tap for the Times: A Study of Contemporary Tap Dance](#). Credit: Jarrett Jarvis

- should contribute original work and/or ideas to each student's chosen field.
- may utilize more applied research methods.
- *must* include documentation of the project: photographs, sound recordings, or other materials deemed appropriate by the faculty advisor and The MHC.
- *must* include a reflection piece that demonstrates a broader understanding of the field and places the CE/T in the larger context of the discipline.

Note: Students may also substitute a professional peer-reviewed journal publication (excluding student journals) in place of the standard CE/T document that is usually submitted post-defense. Please consult p. 28 for more information.



Karla Villa (MHC '20) conducted community-based participatory action research during her Summer 2019 internship at La Casita Center in Louisville. Her CE/T, [\*Let My People Stay: A Nonprofit's Role in Immigrant Lives\*](#), analyzes the significance of the work non-profits are doing to support immigrant lives.

### **Completing a CE/T project has many benefits.**

- Because CE/T projects offer students their first opportunity to engage in independent and original work, the experience can help students decide if graduate school is the right call for their future.
- The completion of a CE/T project will serve as evidence of one's ability to ask and answer complex questions, contextualize thoughts and ideas within the broader discipline, and work independently—all skills that graduate and professional schools and scholarship-granting agencies prize.
- CE/T projects offer students the opportunity to gain real world experience and some of the skills necessary for their future careers. In some cases, students might find that the CE/T process affirmed their ideas about potential careers; in other cases, the process might point students to a new path.
- Ultimately, it can be an important experience that helps students learn about themselves and their abilities and make important decisions about the future.

## Timeline and Summary of Steps

### Pre-CE/T (typically freshman and sophomore years)

- **Complete HON 251—this *must* be taken either before or during the semester in which you will submit your proposal!**
- Take interesting and challenging courses.
- Build relationships with faculty members and talk with them about research opportunities.
- Keep a list of ideas and topics of interest.
- Use term papers, class projects, and colloquia (HON 300) to explore possible CE/T topics.
- Attend a CE/T defense.

### Proposal Submission Semester (typically 1<sup>st</sup> semester of junior year)

- Meet with your MHC Advisor to create an action plan for graduating on the thesis track.
- Take **HON English 300** in order to hone your discipline-specific writing skills just prior to beginning the CE/T process—*strongly encouraged*
- **HON 402** will help you select and refine your topic, find a faculty mentor (project advisor or first reader) and a second reader for your project, become familiar with the CE/T process in general, complete and submit your proposal, and fulfill any university requirements connected to research with human or animal subjects.
- **If you elect *not* to take HON 402**, you should plan to complete the requirements above in consultation with the CE/T Advisor and your faculty mentor. **All proposals must be signed by both the first and second reader and submitted by either August 1<sup>st</sup> if you intend on taking HON 403 during fall** (*October 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term*), **or January 5<sup>th</sup> if you intend on taking HON 403 during spring** (*March 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term*). This course was designed to help students navigate the CE/T process and to make the process itself as transparent as possible. Students will not be registered for HON 403 or HON 404 until the proposal has been approved by The MHC Assistant Director for Academics.
- Students classified as **Honors in the Major** upon acceptance into The MHC are only required to complete HON 404.
- **ALL Engineering majors:**
  - In order to make translating your required senior projects into CE/Ts as seamless as possible, please utilize the 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term deadlines (see above).
  - You can use **ENGR 491** to substitute for 3 hours of HON 403 and **ENGR 490** for 2 hours of 404. It is advised that you take the honors section so you do not have to augment. If there is no honors section available, please ask your major advisor to create one. *If you do not take an honors section, you will have to augment.*
- Upon the approval of your proposal, you will be enrolled in HON 403 and/or 404 according to what your proposal form indicates.

First Semester of CE/T (typically 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of junior year)

\*\*\*If you intend on going to graduate/medical/professional school or applying for [Fulbright](#), it is **strongly recommended** that you start your CE/T during the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester of your junior year.

- During HON 403, you should work closely with your faculty mentor to implement the plan you set forth in your proposal. It is a good idea to communicate regularly with your faculty mentor and your second reader, asking for feedback and assistance as you move ahead.
- Consult with the CE/T Advisor as needed to discuss questions about your CE/T and/or the general process.
- You must present your CE/T project (or some element of it) at an approved conference before your defense. This is a good time to look at conference options that would be appropriate for your discipline.
- You will receive an IP (In Progress) grade for HON 403 until *after* you have defended your CE/T.
- You will be required to complete a written check-in with the CE/T Advisor toward the end of this semester. They will send you the check-in form, along with the deadline for submission of the check-in form.

Final Semester of CE/T (typically 1<sup>st</sup> semester of senior year)

• **Pre-Defense**

- During HON 404, you should work closely with both your faculty mentor and your second reader. It is important to share your work with both of these individuals and incorporate their feedback into multiple drafts of your project. **Communication is essential** to be able to complete and defend your project before finals week.
- The MHC will begin to search for your third reader around the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of classes.
- You must present your CE/T project (or some element of it) at an approved conference before your defense. You will submit proof of a presentation with the [Draft Approval Form](#) (see p. 39-40).
- When you prepare your CE/T project for your defense, make sure that you follow The MHC guidelines for formatting the document (see p. 12-22). Taking the extra time to do this formatting for your defense draft will not only save you time later, but also demonstrate your preparedness for the defense itself.
- Once your readers have read your defense draft and have decided that you are ready to defend your work, they will need to sign the [Draft Approval Form](#). You should contact all three of your readers to schedule your defense. Your advisor will help you to find an appropriate room on

**Schedule your time carefully. Plan to defend before finals week and work backwards.**

campus for your defense once you have a date and time. If you wish to hold your defense in the Thesis Defense Room in the Honors College and International Center (HCIC 2021), please contact the CE/T Advisor ([cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu)) with 3-4 potential dates and times for your defense.

- All of your readers, as well as the CE/T Advisor, need polished copies of your CE/T project **at least two weeks** before your defense.

- **Defense Time**

- It is important to prepare for your defense. The defense is essentially an hour-long discussion of your work. You should be ready to answer questions and talk about your work intelligently. Review the Evaluation Rubric (see p. 41-42). Talk with your readers about what to expect. Practice talking about your work with friends, family and fellow students.
- On the day of your defense, you should bring a **filled-out** copy of the Final Evaluation Form, any necessary audio-visual aids, and a copy of your project for reference.
- Immediately following your defense, you and any guests present will be asked to leave the room briefly while your committee determines your letter grades for HON 403 and HON 404 and gives your work an honors distinction. Afterwards, they will ask you back into the room to discuss their evaluation. You might be asked to make revisions. If the committee believes substantial revisions will be needed, the final grade may be held until the revisions are complete.
- As soon as the defense is completed, one of your committee members should submit your Final Evaluation Form to The MHC.



Nate Brooks (MHC '20) presented his then in-progress CE/T, [Nice Food: A Nonprofit Food Truck](#), at the Kentucky Honors Roundtable in Louisville.

- **Post-Defense**

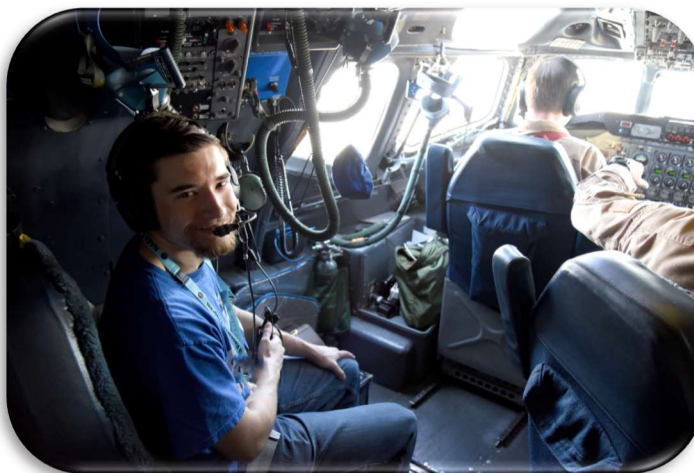
- Once you have made all necessary revisions and checked the formatting of your CE/T, you should submit it electronically to [cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu) in **WORD** format only. You will also need to submit the TopScholar Copyright Form.
- Upon checking the document for proper formatting, the CE/T Advisor will send you the Final PDF, which can be used to purchase bound copies of your CE/T [here](#).



## PART II: BEGINNING THE PROCESS

### Honors 402

Honors 402 serves as an introduction to the CE/T process. In this course, you will learn about the various steps necessary to successfully finish your CE/T. By the end of the course, you will have: 1) found an advisor, 2) found a second reader, 3) conceptualized your CE/T project, 4) completed and revised your proposal, and 5) officially submitted that proposal to The MHC. You should finish this course with a clear topic and detailed plan of how you will proceed, and a better sense of what you need to do and how others have completed this same process in the past.



Dallas McKinney (MHC '20) had the opportunity to fly in a research aircraft that was processing data through the NASA Student Airborne Resource Project (SARP). For his CE/T, he analyzed NASA SARP data using MATLAB and GIS software. Credit: Megan Schill

### Selecting a Topic

Points to consider when selecting a CE/T topic:

- **Appeal:** Completing a CE/T is a major investment in time and energy, so you should select a topic that you find compelling—a question or a problem that you look forward to unravelling over two semesters.
- **Relevance:** Consider topics relevant to your first major and/or the combination of your majors and minors.
- **Originality:** Your CE/T should allow you to make a contribution to your field and build on the knowledge that you have gained in your studies at WKU.
- **Purpose:** A good CE/T topic should help you in the next stage of your education and/or provide professional development for your future career.
- **Focus:** It is common to start with only a vague topic idea. You can develop your topic in HON 402 and in consultation with your faculty mentor.
- **Scope:** Focusing a topic means different things in different fields, but in all fields, it means finding a topic with enough depth to merit two semesters (270 hours).
- **Senior assessment/senior thesis/senior seminar:** Programs that offer the opportunity for students to incorporate CE/Ts into senior projects include Chemistry, Biology, History, Engineering, Broadcasting, English, News/Editorial Journalism, Public Relations, Economics, and Advertising

### Finding a Faculty Mentor

Your faculty mentor will play a major role in your CE/T process. They will help you to develop a research or creative plan and an enhanced understanding of the methods in your field. Your mentor (also called your project advisor or first reader) will provide direction as you search for relevant literature, assist you in the process of limiting the scope of your project to something manageable, and provide careful and critical insight on your work throughout the CE/T process.

Because project advisors typically know a great deal about how their students work and think, they tend to be good people to ask for letters of recommendation. They also are in a good position to help students make important decisions about the future.

**Your faculty mentor will play a significant role in the development of your project and in your undergraduate career.**

Clearly, your faculty mentor will be a significant person, not only in terms of this project, but also in terms of your undergraduate career. How, then, do you find the right person? Ideally, this person has a terminal degree in their field (examples include PhD, MFA, EdD), and they are a full-time, permanent employee of WKU who is willing and interested in working with you.

The MHC recommends that you select a project advisor from the faculty within your major or minor. You should read online faculty profiles and look at the courses faculty members in your department teach. Talk with professors you have had in the past. What are their research interests? While you most likely will not find someone with your exact interests, it is important to find a faculty member with similar interests and can, therefore, be helpful to you throughout the research process. Schedule appointments with faculty members who might be a match. Ask them more about their work and see how they respond to your ideas. Faculty members generally have very busy schedules, so it is important to not wait until the last minute to schedule an appointment.

If you have difficulty finding an advisor, you can also ask the CE/T Advisor for assistance or you can talk with the department head. In the event that a faculty mentor needs to step down, or an advisor and advisee decide they are not compatible, it is essential to notify the CE/T Advisor of any changes in writing as soon as possible.

Beyond the faculty mentor (a.k.a. first reader or project advisor), you will also need to select a second reader. The guidelines above should also help you to identify a second reader. Unlike the first reader, however, the second reader might be from a secondary field related to your topic. For example, a student in math education might select a mathematics professor to be the first reader and an education professor to be the second reader, or vice versa depending on the focus and nature of the



Mimi Burrow (MHC '19) utilized her experience as a person of color studying abroad in Spain, as well as research on minority representation in study abroad programs, to create [outreach programming](#) that helps minority students better prepare themselves financially and emotionally to study abroad. *Also pictured (L to R): Dr. Inma Pertusa, Spanish professor; Katherine Hale, SAGL Advisor; Dr. John Dizgun, Executive Director of KIIS; Dr. Melissa Stewart, Spanish professor*

project. While the second reader might not be as active in shaping your CE/T process, they should still be involved. Plan to meet with your second reader often and share drafts with them.

Together with the third reader (appointed by The MHC), your first and second reader will be your CE/T committee. They will guide you through the CE/T process and, upon completion of your defense, determine your CE/T coursework grade(s) and defense designation.

**Note:** If your CE/T will require IRB Approval (see “Human or Animal Subjects” section below for more details), your faculty mentor *must* also have IRB Approval.

### Writing a Proposal

The [Proposal Form](#) provides detailed instructions for writing a successful CE/T proposal. However, students who have decided not to take HON 402 are strongly encouraged to meet with the CE/T Advisor and their committee members as they draft the proposal.

Proposals serve several important functions:

- 1) The proposal allows students to communicate the basic outline of their project in writing, which can contribute to meaningful discussions between students and their committee members.
- 2) It is a forum for students to clearly articulate a plan to complete their projects. If well-conceived, this plan will put students on the path toward a successful project defense.
- 3) Finally, the proposal alerts The MHC to students' plans so that MHC staff and faculty can help students progress in the CE/T process.

### Human or Animal Subjects

WKU maintains regulations for the ethical use of human and animal subjects in research. All students who will interact with human or animal subjects must abide by

these regulations, including participating in any mandated training programs, submitting any necessary forms, and working with university's Compliance Advisors to ensure that the highest standards of research are met. Two things to note: **1) Human subject research includes interviews and surveys.** **2) IRB approval is required for the use of any pre-existing data that was previously IRB-approved.** Students should visit the Office of Research Integrity's [Web site](#) for more information. Additionally, students are encouraged to talk with the CE/T Advisor and their faculty mentors about the ethics of their research and the institutional review process.

The Human Subject Review Board (HSRB) and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) offer an online training program for all research projects requiring approval through each review board. Upon successful completion of the program, participants receive a certification that is valid for three years. It is necessary to be certified before starting any research.

CITI (Collaborative IRB Training Initiative) is a web-based ethics training course for those conducting research with human or animal subjects. All Principal Investigators, Co-Investigators, and Faculty Sponsors must complete CITI training with a minimum score of 80%. The Compliance Manager is notified by CITI upon successful completion of the relevant course. Completion records of study personnel should be maintained by the Principal Investigator and are subject to periodic inspection by the HSRB or IACUC Committees.

Follow the steps below to sign up for CITI Training:

- Go to [www.citiprogram.org](http://www.citiprogram.org)
- Select "Register"
- Step 1 - Participating Institutions: Western Kentucky University
- Step 2 - Create a username and password
- Step 3 - Enter your name
- Step 4 - Enter e-mail address
- Complete contact information fields
- Check the course you are required to complete

IRB applicants are required to complete – [1] Social/Behavioral Research Course (live human beings) & [2] Social and Behavioral Responsible Conduct of Research Course (RCR). Each of the two modules have been reported to take roughly a minimum of 2-3 hours to complete, so please consider this in your research timeline. **CITI Training must be completed BEFORE submitting your IRBNet application packet** (IRBNet information can be found [here](#)).

IACUC applicants are required to satisfy the CITI modules pertaining to the intended research and will be directed by the IACUC board.

If you have already completed the CITI program through another institution within the last 3 years, you may affiliate your scores to reduce or eliminate the need to re-

take the test modules at this time. Please sign into your CITI Program.org account, choose the “Affiliate with Another Institution” option towards the top of your main menu, and select “Western Kentucky University.”

For IRB applicants: If you make any modifications to your original IRB proposal or need to extend the time line of the project (if it will take longer than one year’s time), you *must* complete and submit a Continuing Review Form. The approval process for making proposal changes typically takes 2-3 days. Project timelines can be extended for up to 3 years.

### ***PART III: CONTINUING THE PROCESS***

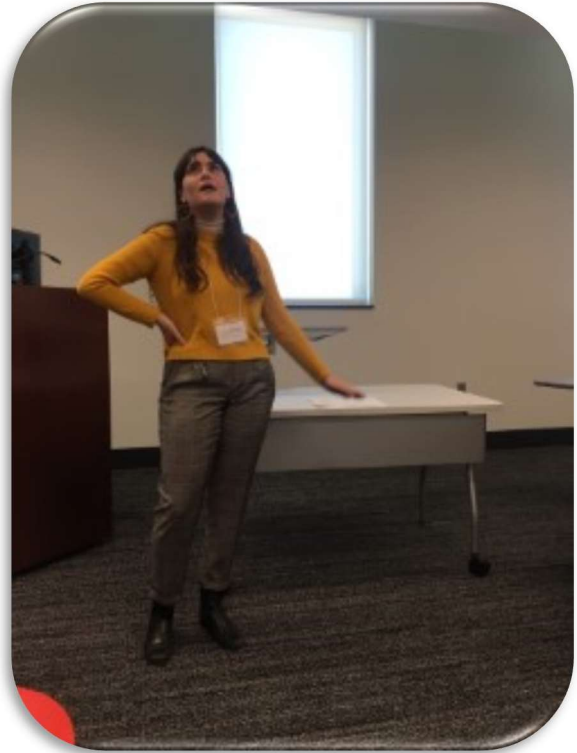
Honors 403 and 404 are independent study courses connected to the CE/T process. There are no set syllabi, BlackBoard sites, or class meetings for these courses; instead, students must set and implement their own agendas with the support and approval of their faculty mentor and second reader.

Students are registered for 3 hours of HON 403 and then for 3 hours of HON 404. The MHC recommends students take HON 403 the second semester of their third year and HON 404 during the first semester of their fourth year. While there are no set meeting times, students are strongly encouraged to schedule regular meetings with their faculty mentor and second reader.

During HON 403 and 404, students should execute the plan set forth in their CE/T proposals. It is expected that students complete their research and/or creative work and write and revise the thesis or reflection piece. Students should spend no fewer than 270 hours working on the CE/T project while they are registered for these courses. Students will also be required to complete a written check-in with the CE/T Advisor toward the end of the first semester of their CE/T (the check-in form and deadline for submission of the form will be sent by the CE/T Advisor). It is the responsibility of the student to communicate their progress and any problems they encounter to their first and second readers. The CE/T Advisor will also be available to meet with students to discuss difficulties or questions.

*Students may also substitute CE/T coursework with other courses from their major in place of HON 403/404.* All 3 hours of HON 403 and up to 2 hours of HON 404 may be substituted. Any course used for HON 403/404 substitution *must* be

- 1) taken for honors credit either as a HEEC or through an [Honors Augmentation Contract](#),
- 2) directly related to the CE/T, and
- 3) taught by either the first or second reader.



Becca Willenbrink (MHC '20) performed an excerpt from her then in-progress CE/T, [The Secret Houses: A Study in Theatrical Translation from Spanish to English](#), at the Kentucky Honors Roundtable in Louisville.

## **PART IV: FORMATTING AND DEFENDING YOUR WORK**

### **CE/T Format Guidelines**

In general, CE/T formatting guidelines help maintain continuity and are designed to prepare documents for binding. For example, all CE/Ts must have left margins of 1.5" and right margins of 1". This extra space on the left makes bound pages appear even. Below you will find an outline of the major formatting requirements; however, it is equally important to examine and follow the format of the sample pages included in this manual.

- **Margins:**
  - Top:* 1"—except on the first page of each major section where it is 1.5" (three blank lines from the top 1" margin)
  - Right:* 1"
  - Bottom:* 1"
  - Left:* 1.5"
- CE/Ts should utilize standard 12-point fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, Helvetica, Cambria). Students completing creative CE/T projects might wish to use different fonts for artistic reasons. In such cases, students should talk with their faculty mentor and the CE/T Advisor. In all cases, however, students must adhere to the margin standards listed above.
- All page numbers must be centered in the footer, with the footer set 0.5" from the bottom. Preliminary pages should be numbered with Roman numerals, and Arabic numbers should be used for the body of the CE/T, including chapters, illustrations, the bibliography, and appendices. Front matter should have consecutive numbering, and the actual text should begin on page 1, numbered consecutively thereafter. For additional help with page numbers, consult <http://word.mvps.org/FAQs/Formatting/NumberingFrontMatter.htm>.
- Each illustration should appear in a list of figures and should be numbered (e.g. Figure 1 or Figure 1.1). Appendices should be labeled with letters (e.g. Appendix A).

#### **Elements:**

- **Title page**
- **Copyright page**
- **Abstract**
- **Dedication (optional)**
- **Acknowledgments (recommended)**
- **Vita**
- **Table of Contents**
- **List of Figures/Tables (required of any CE/T with illustrations)**
- **Body of the CE/T**
- **Bibliography**
- **Appendices (required for students who have elected to complete capstone experience projects instead of traditional theses)**

- Citations should conform to the accepted style manual of the student's discipline. Consult with your faculty mentor if you are unsure about citation style.
- Immediately following the title page, students should include a copyright page, followed by an abstract. The abstract is the first numbered page (ii).
- The text of the abstract should clearly and concisely summarize the subject and arguments of the CE/T. The abstract is a stand-alone statement that briefly conveys the essential information of your CE/T project. It should be approximately 150-200 words long and fit within a single page on your final draft.

### **Sample CE/T Pages**

Please consult the following sample pages for additional formatting guidance.



# Sample Title Page

Margins

Top: 1.5" on major sections, 1" otherwise  
Right: 1"  
Bottom: 1"  
Left: 1.5"

TITLE OF DOCUMENT GOES HERE:  
BE SURE TO USE ALL CAPS FOR TITLE

A Capstone Experience/Thesis Project Presented in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree Bachelor of (Science/Arts/Fine Arts)  
with Mahurin Honors College Graduate Distinction  
at Western Kentucky University

Use the correct degree title (Science/Arts/Fine Arts)

By

Jane E. Doe

Use your name as it appears on university records

Graduation month and year

May 2019

\*\*\*\*\*

CE/T Committee:

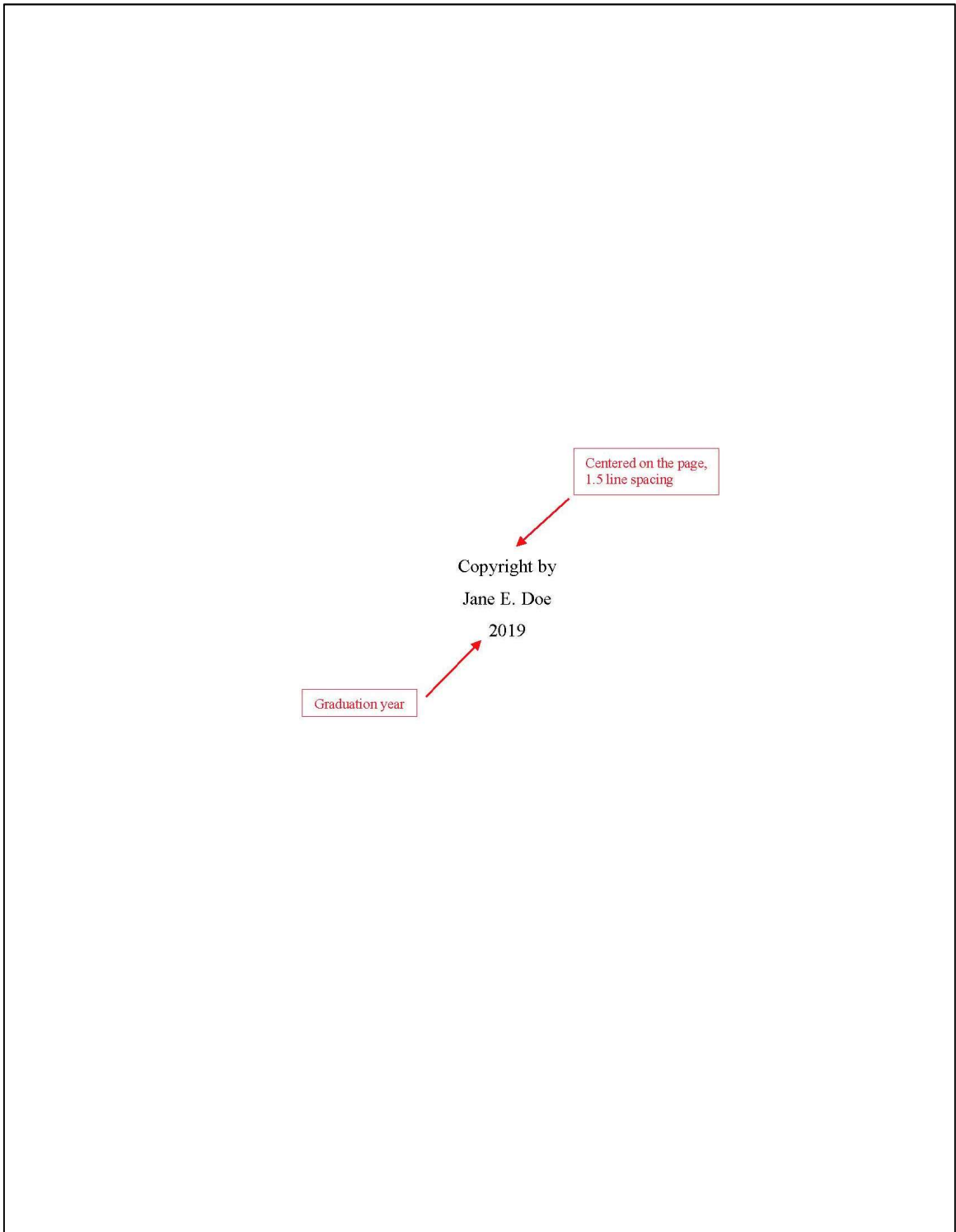
Dr./Prof. Joe Johnson, Chair

Dr./Prof./Mr. John James

Dr./Prof./Ms. Janet Jackson

No page number on the title page

## Sample Copyright Page



## Sample Abstract

Margins  
Top: 1.5" on major sections, 1" otherwise  
Right: 1"  
Bottom: 1"  
Left: 1.5"

Centered and in all capital letters

ABSTRACT

Two blank lines

The abstract of your project should give a general summary of your work. A good place to start would be outlining the general problem, what your project does to address it, and briefly summarize your results. Your abstract gives a potential reader an overview of what you have done so that they can decide to dive deeper into your project through your actual paper. Your abstract should be around 150-200 words. Different disciplines have different expectations for abstracts, so make sure to discuss it with your readers to understand their expectations and opinions.

The rest of this section is filled with filler text so you can get a general idea of the typical length of an abstract. Morbi sem lorem, adipiscing et eleifend eget, tempor nec leo. Praesent enim elit, elementum auctor scelerisque ac, vehicula ut turpis. Curabitur varius tincidunt egestas. Nam vehicula ligula at tortor molestie ac dictum libero vulputate. Nulla vel nisl diam, ut dictum magna. Donec sit amet massa metus. Donec vehicula pellentesque tincidunt. Maecenas ac felis a dui tempor malesuada sit amet ac ligula. Donec ligula ipsum, facilisis in vehicula ornare, tempus a orci.

The body of the abstract should be approximately 150-200 words and should be double-spaced.

Page numbers should be centered in the footer. Roman numerals are used for preliminary pages.

ii


## Sample Dedication (optional)

I dedicate this thesis to my parents, William and Suzy Missu, who are a great inspiration to me. Also, I also dedicate this work to my friend Ellen, who helped greatly in acquiring the data and editing this manuscript.

## Sample Acknowledgments (recommended)

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Aenean odio ligula, vestibulum quis mollis nec, laoreet vitae dui. Nunc leo nibh, placerat in fringilla nec, sagittis at velit. Vestibulum vel nunc erat. Duis elit turpis, lacinia eleifend consequat nec, convallis in est. Suspendisse potenti. Nulla non ultrices nulla. Curabitur elementum neque eu tellus gravida sit amet semper lorem pellentesque. In semper eleifend neque, imperdiet vestibulum elit cursus sed. Nunc venenatis fermentum porta. Vivamus non enim a arcu pharetra tempus in ac erat. Nam arcu turpis, hendrerit eu placerat sit amet, scelerisque ut neque.



This is your opportunity to thank and acknowledge those who have helped you in the creation of this project, be it through editing, providing data, emotional support, or for their general influence on your academic career.



This is a great place to acknowledge any financial support you may have received to support your research. Be sure to name the granting agency and award name.

# Sample Vita

There is some flexibility to these sections, but education must be included. Other sections that you may add could include publications, presentations, etc.

## VITA

### *EDUCATION*

Western Kentucky University, Bowling Green, KY B.A. in Psychology – Mahurin Honors College Graduate Honors CE/T: <i>Selling Fifth Avenue: How Manhattan's Luxury Real Estate Agents Organize the Global Elite</i>	May 2019
Webster County High School, Dixon, KY	May 2015

### *PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE*

The Center for Gifted Studies, WKU Research Assistant	May 2018- Present
Library Special Collections, WKU Student Worker	Aug. 2016- May 2018

### *AWARDS & HONORS*

Summa Cum Laude, WKU, May 2019  
Psychology Department Undergraduate Research Award, WKU, May 2019  
Gilman Scholar to Taiwan, Summer 2018  
Award of Excellence Academic Scholarship, WKU, 2015-2019

### *PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS*

National Association of School Psychologists (NASP)  
Kentucky Association for Gifted Education (KAGE)

### *INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE*

Nanjing University, Nanjing, China Chinese Language Flagship Program Capstone	Aug. 2018- May 2019
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Double-spaced

Tables and figures should be numbered sequentially. If you have a significant number, you may consider naming them by section (1.1, 1.2, 2.1, etc.).

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## Sample Body Page

SECTION ONE

Nunc et tortor tortor. Pellentesque et erat elit, sed ornare lorem. Phasellus accumsan justo vitae neque pellentesque ac ornare neque scelerisque. Integer sit amet nisi at mi consectetur ultrices blandit eu dui (Harlow, 1983). Vestibulum velit urna, feugiat eu porttitor quis, laoreet sed magna (Kernis et al, 1993). Aliquam blandit, sapien nec interdum fringilla, est diam mollis nisi, sit amet dictum elit enim ut elit. Ut vehicula consequat tristique (Plath, 2000). Duis fermentum vulputate suscipit. Suspendisse ut elit sit amet odio elementum fringilla. Curabitur imperdiet eleifend luctus. Ut euismod mi orci. Duis mattis dolor vitae purus commodo tristique eu vel lorem. Duis cursus risus sed lacus pellentesque condimentum eleifend ligula pulvinar. In et metus felis. Donec porta mollis ante, sed aliquam lectus varius eget.

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## The Defense

The CE/T Defense is an hour-long oral examination conducted by your project advisor, second reader, and third reader (your CE/T committee). It is open to the public, and students are encouraged to invite fellow classmates, friends, and family members to attend. Each discipline takes a slightly different approach; therefore, it is important to talk with your first and second reader about their expectations. Generally, students are asked to give a brief overview of their work (keep in mind that the committee will have already read, seen, and/or listened to your work). In some disciplines, students will be expected to give a presentation with visual aids. In other disciplines, students will be asked to talk about their choice of topic, the research experience, and/or summarize their conclusions. In all cases, students should expect to field questions. Your committee will often ask challenging questions that force you to defend your conclusions or creative choices and connect your own work to the work of others in your field.

At the end of the hour, your committee will ask you and any guests to leave the room to evaluate your work and determine your grade and defense designation (see the [Evaluation Rubric](#) for more information). You might be asked to make revisions. If the committee believes that substantial revisions will be needed, the final grade may be held until the revisions are complete.

Here, as with all stages of the CE/T process, communication is key. Students who have submitted multiple drafts and who have had regular meetings with their first and second readers are generally more prepared for the defense and have a better sense of what to expect.

Project advisors and second readers play an important role in determining when students are ready to defend their work. Both the project advisor and second reader must read a complete draft of the CE/T project and decide that the quality of the work is sufficient enough to proceed to the defense.

## Scheduling

The student must consider room availability and the schedules of all three readers when scheduling the defense. Web sites like [Doodle](#) can simplify the process. If you plan to use the HCIC Thesis Defense Room, try to find 3-4 potential dates and times to give to the CE/T advisor as options.

Then, the student should contact the CE/T Advisor ([cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu)) to reserve the Thesis Defense Room, unless another location is more appropriate. In that situation, the faculty mentor and student should work together to make arrangements. It is the student's responsibility to notify the CE/T advisor of all arrangements.

Finally, the student should submit the [Draft Approval Form](#) to the CE/T Advisor. **Please note: The Draft Approval Form and a polished draft of your project must be turned in at least two weeks before the defense.**

## ***PART V:*** FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Because CE/Ts should be based on original research or creative endeavors, students often need financial support to implement their academic agendas. Funding a CE/T project might require that students apply for support from several different groups. Below are some general suggestions.

### **Mahurin Honors College Support**

Honors Development Grants (HDGs) support MHC students' intellectual development by providing up to \$500 to offset costs for traveling to professional conferences to present academic papers, conducting academic research, and purchasing tangible items to support academic endeavors.

A limited number of CE/T Excellence (CE/T-E) Awards of up to \$1,500 are available to support projects that have the potential to make a significant contribution to their field. When considering applications, the Honors Development Board will consider the projects' ability to gain a wide academic audience due to the additional funding. The CE/T-E Award uses the same application as the HDG, but also requires a letter of support from the faculty mentor. Students who do not receive a CE/T-E Award are automatically considered for an HDG. Consult The MHC Web site for detailed [instructions](#). Semester deadlines will be posted on The MHC's home page under "Events."

### **Campus-wide Resources**

The Student Government Association (SGA) offers a Scholar Development Grant. The Scholar Development Grant is intended to help offset expenses associated with traveling to professional conferences to present academic research, conducting academic research, and purchasing tangible items to support academic endeavors. All WKU students are welcome to apply. Applications can be picked up in the SGA office or department offices, as well as downloaded from the SGA website. Students may apply multiple times throughout the year. The maximum amount per single application is \$250. However, students may continue to apply until they are granted the maximum amount of \$500 per academic year. Please visit the SGA [Web site](#) (look for "Scholar Development Grant" under the Scholarships tab) for more information.

Many departments offer scholarships or are willing to provide some financial assistance to students working on creative or research-based projects, particularly those who have applied for funds from numerous sources. The Office of Student Financial Assistance maintains a [list](#) of links to department scholarships. Even if you do not find a scholarship on this list that would apply, check with your project advisor and department head. Additionally, some of the academic colleges on campus have discretionary research funds. Check with your project advisor and/or department head about approaching your academic dean.

## **Outside Support**

Talk with your faculty mentor. What are the key professional organizations in your field? Are there any field-specific honors societies you can join? Professional organizations and field-specific honors societies are a good place to start, and your faculty mentor should be able to point you in the right direction. You might also look into more general honors societies.

If you think that you will need off-campus support to finish your project, you should contact the Office of Scholar Development (OSD). OSD supports students throughout the process of finding and applying for grants, scholarships, internships, and a variety of post-graduation opportunities. Staff members help students develop strong applications and proposals. Please visit the OSD [Web site](#) for additional information and resources.

## ***PART VI:*** REQUIRED PRESENTATION

### **Presentation of Project**

Any student completing a CE/T must present some element of their CE/T work at an academic conference before the defense. Students may fulfill this requirement by presenting their work at WKU's annual Student Research Conference during the spring semester; a regional, state, or national honors conference; a regional, state, or national student conference; or a discipline-specific conference. Students will be required to submit documentation of the presentation when they submit their Draft Approval Form. Contact the CE/T Advisor for approval of alternative forums.

Talk with your faculty mentor about options. They should be able to recommend conferences and guide you through the application process. Students can apply for MHC and SGA grants to pay for conference-related travel. Talk with OSD for additional ideas.

## ***PART VII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION***

### **Peer-reviewed Journal Publication in Place of the CE/T**

In order to be eligible for this alternative CE/T option, the student and their mentor must meet the following guidelines:

- The article must be single-authored, or the student must be the first author on the manuscript that is selected for publication. Other authors are allowed, but the student's faculty mentor must verify in writing to The MHC that the student met the CE/T time-invested criteria. The criteria for determining the amount of time that should be invested in a CE/T project within The MHC is 45 hours per credit (6 credits equal 270 hours).
- The manuscript must be accepted by a faculty/professional level peer-reviewed journal (not a student journal) by September 1 for MHC students graduating in the fall semester and by February 1 for MHC Students graduating in the spring semester. The MHC must receive a copy of the formal acceptance from the journal's editor by these dates in order to be eligible for this alternative policy.
- After The MHC receives a copy of the formal acceptance letter, the student will also be responsible for (1) submitting a copy of the accepted manuscript to The MHC so it can be bound and placed in the CE/T library, and (2) submitting a copy of the edition of the journal in which the manuscript is published (this will likely occur sometime after the student's graduation, in which case, the issue of the journal can be mailed to The MHC). The accepted manuscript must meet all necessary administrative requirements (e.g., CE/T Proposal on file with MHC) and follow all writing stylistic guidelines (e.g., title page, acknowledgement page, table of contents, abstract, etc.).
- Manuscripts in peer-reviewed journals are typically shorter and more concise than the standard CE/T option. Therefore, if a manuscript is not accepted by the deadline dates listed above, the student will have approximately 10-12 weeks to submit a traditional CE/T under the CE/T guidelines. This will require the student to work with their mentor to submit a more thorough document, which can include a more comprehensive discussion of the research methods, findings, conclusions, strengths and limitations of the research, and avenues for future research. A more thorough literature review may also be included.
- If the article is not accepted by the due dates listed above and the student selects not to evolve their manuscript into a traditional CE/T project, the student can count the time invested in the project toward Honors Independent Study credits.

### **Time Constraints and Extensions**

Students typically receive one or more "In Progress," or IP, grades as they work to complete their CE/T projects (they do not receive grades for HON 403 or 404 until they have defended the project and submitted all paperwork). It is the Registrar's policy that IP grades become failing grades after one year. For example, if a student took HON 403 in Fall 2018 and received an IP grade, that grade would convert to a

failing grade at the end of Fall 2019. If students need more than one year to complete the CE/T, they must petition for an extension by the last day of classes the semester their IP will expire. Please contact your Honors Advisor or the CE/T Advisor for more information.

### **Honors Standing and Withdrawals**

Students who are withdrawn from The MHC for failure to maintain Good Standing will be withdrawn from incomplete CE/T hours. Students who would like to continue working on their CE/T projects must submit a [Continuance of CE/T Hours](#) petition within one month of receiving notification that they will be removed from The MHC.

Students who would like to withdraw from CE/T hours must meet with their MHC Advisor to change tracks.

### **IP Grades and the President's/Dean's List**

Because students do not receive a grade for HON 403 or 404 until they have defended the CE/T project and submitted all necessary paperwork, this means that students typically have an "In Progress," or IP, grade on their transcripts for one or more semesters. Students should note that IP notations are removed from the transcript, but they must have at least 12 hours of other graded credit to be eligible for the President's or Dean's List. CE/T hours temporarily awarded IP grades will not contribute to that total, nor the total of 12 graded hours necessary for various scholarship requirements. "In Progress" or IP grades will change to failing grades one semester after the CE/T defense if all necessary paperwork and revisions are not submitted to The MHC.

## Sample Projects

Students from any major can find a CE/T project that will enhance their knowledge and skills and contribute to their future development. Below you will find a sampling of recent CE/T titles. Students have done everything from completing traditional research in the laboratory or the library to doing photojournalism studies to writing a novel and composing music. You can learn more about what other students have done by visiting The MHC or looking at CE/Ts on [TopScholar](#).

- Cayla Baughn, *Highway Construction or Stream Destruction: A Water Quality Analysis in the Black Warrior Basin, Walker County, Alabama*
- Olivia Bowers, *A Political Perch: A Historical Analysis and Online Exhibit of the U.S. Senate Clerk's Desk*
- Nate Brooks, *Nice Food: A Nonprofit Food Truck*
- Erika Brown, *Tragedy and The Vicious: Moral Education in Aristotle's Poetics and Future Applications to Contemporary Art*
- Hannah Chaney, *Analysis of Permaculture's Water Conservation and Crop Supporting Abilities*
- Jason Fox, *The Voice of Iceland: Communication of Climate Science through Choral Music*
- Christopher Hodges, *The Financial Exploitation and Abuse of the Elderly*
- Emily Houston, *Appalachian Goodbyes*
- Jacob Leonhardt, *Geekreformation.com*
- Terrance Life, *Development of an Autonomous Aerial Toolset for Agricultural Applications*
- Hannah McCarthy, *Women on the Floor: A Study of Feminism in Modern Dance History*
- Seth McDowell, *Addicted to Drug Control: The History of American Drug Prohibition and its Consequences for Modern Psychedelic Medicine*
- Dare Norman, *Letters to Mei Lanfang*
- Jay Todd Richey, *Academic Freedom as a Human Right: The Problem of Confucius Institutes*
- Meghan Ryckley, *Evaluating the Social Behavior and Activity Patterns of Clouded Leopards (*Neofelis nebulosa*) at the Nashville Zoo: Research and Literature Review*
- Josie Schultz, *Bridging the Music Education Gap: Designing a Curriculum for Students with Autism to be Taught by Pre-Service Teachers*
- Kanyawee Skulsillapakorn, *#ReviewBowlingGreen: Food and Attractions Guide for International Students*
- Tara Sorrels, *Icelandic Fisheries: Scenario Planning for Climate Change*
- Kaitlin Ward, *An Evidence-Based Approach to Designing Low-Income Housing Communities*
- Francis Wilson, *When Youth Run for Office*
- Jessica Vaughn, *Antibiotic Resistance of Bacteria Isolated from Soils*
- Nicole Ziege, *The Importance of Clothing in 1960s Protest Movements*



## Tips for Students

- Plan ahead. Keep a notebook of ideas before you even begin to actively think about your CE/T. If you are in an interesting class in your major and your professor mentions an understudied area that you find interesting, write it down.
- Talk with faculty in your major. They know what has been done, and they often have great ideas for what should be studied. Talking with your professors during their office hours also has other benefits. You will be getting to know the people you might ask to be on your CE/T committee, and they will be getting to know you. Faculty members who know you well will write the best letters of recommendation and will be in a better position to give you advice about graduate school and future career options.
- Once you begin working on your CE/T, stay in touch with your CE/T advisor and second reader. Plan to meet with your advisor every week or every other week. Talk with your readers about your ideas, your progress, and any problems you have encountered. Share many drafts with your readers. Students often run into trouble when they have not been in contact with their readers. You want to know if your readers have issues with your work early so that you can correct any problems or change course if need be.
- Also, stay in touch with The MHC and, specifically, the CE/T Advisor who will make sure that you are on track and making progress. Communication is key to a successful CE/T experience.
- As you prepare for your defense, make sure that you have allowed enough time for each committee member to read your work. Before you schedule your defense, meet with your faculty mentor to discuss the defense. Each field and each faculty member have slightly different ideas of what a defense should be. You want to know what your readers think so that you will be prepared.
- Make sure that you format your CE/T properly and complete all of the necessary paperwork. The MHC will not submit your grade until you have completed all of the necessary paperwork and submitted a final, correctly formatted, digital copy of your CE/T. Check with the CE/T Advisor to make sure that you are on track.
- Consult the student checklist located on p. 33.

**Communication with your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> readers and The MHC is key to a successful CE/T experience.**

## Tips for Faculty Mentors

- Read over the Evaluation Rubric early. These forms provide guidance about The MHC's expectations for CE/Ts.
- Contact the CE/T Advisor if you have any concerns about the process.
- Students working on CE/Ts most often encounter trouble when they have not been in contact with their advisors. Have your student set small goals and meet with you to discuss progress toward completing those goals.

- If your student stops making progress or drops out of contact, let the CE/T Advisor know.
- Students are often very nervous about the defense because they do not know what to expect. The MHC requires that the defense (presentation and discussion) last for one hour, but beyond that, the faculty mentor should lead the defense, guided by disciplinary standards. Talk with your student early about what to expect and how to prepare.
- Include your involvement in your annual activities report.
- Consult the faculty checklist in the back of the guide.
- To acknowledge the contributions of faculty members, The MHC offers primary CE/T advisors a grant of \$150 for each student who has successfully completed the CE/T process. These funds are distributed to your departmental index the semester after the student has completed the CE/T process.

### **Third Readers**

A third reader will be assigned by The MHC to each CE/T project when the Intent to Defend online form is submitted to The MHC. As representatives of The MHC, third readers have typically served on multiple CE/T committees, so their participation ensures fairness and facilitates discussions of students' defense designations and grades. Third readers play a substantial role in determining students' defense designations, but generally do not contribute to decisions regarding a student's letter grade. An exception would be in the case they are in the same (or a closely-related) discipline as the student, or the first and second readers cannot reach an agreement on the grade.

Third readers serve as a reference and provide guidance to project advisors and second readers regarding expectations for CE/Ts. If a conflict should arise, third readers will assist the student and/or the rest of the committee and will keep The MHC informed.

## PART VIII: CE/T CHECKLISTS



## CE/T Student Checklist

All forms can be found at [www.wku.edu/honors/academics/cet/index.php](http://www.wku.edu/honors/academics/cet/index.php)

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- Signed CE/T Proposal Form on File with The MHC the last week of the semester before you take HON 403
  - This must be typed, accompanied by the proposal, and have 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reader signatures on it.
- Have regular appointments with your first and second reader throughout the semester you're enrolled in HON 403
- Submit a written check-in form by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of working on your CE/T. *The CE/T Advisor will send you the check-in form, along with the deadline for its submission.*
- Must present your CE/T or a portion of it at an approved conference—check with CE/T Advisor for a list of possible conferences
- Your Readers agree your CE/T is ready for a defense.
- File the Draft Approval form *at least **two weeks*** prior to your defense. It *must* have the signatures of both readers. All three readers and the CE/T Advisor *must* have a polished copy of your CE/T **two weeks prior to the defense**.
- Review the Evaluation Rubric before your defense
- Invite your friends and colleagues to watch your defense
- Day of the Defense
  - Bring a filled-out copy of the Final Evaluation form for your readers
  - Bring any visual aids/audio aids
  - Bring a copy of your CE/T project and/or PowerPoint for referral
- Once you have made all the necessary changes and checked the formatting of your CE/T, you should submit the **WORD** version electronically to the CE/T Advisor ([cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu)).
- Submit 2-3 pictures of you engaging in your CE/T process (e.g. conducting research, working on your project, presenting at a conference, etc.)
- Turn in the TopScholar Copyright form.
- Turn in the Final Submission form.
- Receive final PDF of your CE/T from the CET Advisor to order additional personal bound copies.

\*If you wish to withdraw from the CE/T, you **must** contact your MHC advisor and the CE/T advisor.

All forms can be found at [www.wku.edu/honors/academics/cet/index.php](http://www.wku.edu/honors/academics/cet/index.php)

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- Review the CE/T Proposal: If the proposal meets your approval, sign the CE/T Proposal form. A student must have a signed proposal form on file with The MHC before they can register for HON 403 and HON 404. The student can deliver this form. Some departments allow students to count CE/T hours toward the major. If you would like to pursue this option, the student must obtain permission from their department.
- Have regular appointments to meet with your CE/T students (every week or every two weeks)
- Students must present their CE/T or a portion of their CE/T at an approved conference. Check with the CE/T Advisor for a list of possible conferences if you do not have a discipline-specific conference in mind.
- Once the committee agrees the CE/T is ready to defend, the student must submit a Draft Approval Form to The MHC. The Draft Approval Form requires all CE/T committee signatures, a polished copy of the CE/T to each reader (including the third reader), and documentation of a conference presentation.
- Before the defense, review the CE/T Evaluation Rubric (located on p. 43-44)
- Day of the Defense:
  - Fill out the Final Evaluation Form.
  - A member of the CE/T committee (typically the third reader) should bring the Final Evaluation Form to The MHC (campus mail, hand delivery, or e-mailed with verified electronic signatures)
- Once the Final Submission form, the TopSCHOLAR Copyright permission form, and an electronic **WORD** version of the CE/T have been submitted to [cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu) by the student, first readers will be sent an email regarding their grant funds. The aforementioned forms are submitted by the student and no action is necessary for committee members.

## ***PART IX:*** SAMPLE FORMS

Sample CE/T forms can be found on the pages that follow. The forms included here are for informational purposes. Official copies of all of these forms can be found on The MHC's CE/T webpage: <https://www.wku.edu/honors/academics/cet/index.php>. All forms should be **typed**.

# Proposal Form (1)



## Capstone Experience/Thesis Proposal

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Fill out the form below and return to The Mahurin Honors College with your 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> project advisors' digital signatures (instructions on using digital signatures can be found on The MHC's CE/T Webpage). The form is due to the CE/T Advisor (cet.advisor@wku.edu) via email by either **August 1<sup>st</sup>** if you intend on taking HON 403 during **fall** (October 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term), or **January 5<sup>th</sup>** if you intend on taking 403 during **spring** (March 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term). The form should be complete with an attached typed proposal. Please follow the guidelines outlined on the following pages when writing your proposal.

**Forms must be completed digitally and completely. Incomplete forms will not be accepted.**

### Student Information

Name:		WKU ID:	
WKU e-mail:		Phone number:	
Major(s):			
Expected Graduation	SEMESTER	Expected Defense	SEMESTER
Project title:			
Degree:	<input type="checkbox"/> Mahurin Honors College Graduate entered The MHC as a freshman	<input type="checkbox"/> Honors in the Major Graduate transfer student who entered The MHC with 45 to 75 hours	
Do you have a FUSE grant?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

### Credit Hour Approvals

**Credit Hour Approvals:** The plan of courses you intend to enroll in or the courses you plan to substitute must be indicated on this page. Mahurin Honors College graduates must take 6 hours of CE/T coursework--3 hours each of HON 403 and 404. Students may substitute all 3 hours of HON 403 and up to 2 hours of HON 404, as long as the course is 1) for **honors credit** either as a HEEC or though augmentation\*, 2) **directly related to the CE/T, and** 3) **taught by either the first or second reader**. For example, students commonly use research/capstone experience courses from their major to substitute for HON 403 credits. **To complete the CE/T requirements, all students must sign up for a minimum of 1 credit hour of HON 404.** Honors in the Major graduates need only take 3 hours of HON 404. Similarly, up to 2 of these 3 hours may come from a HEEC or augmented course in your major. *In the space below, please indicate your planned course of study for completing the required CE/T hours.*

#### HON 403/404 Hours

HON 403 \_\_\_\_\_ and HON 404 \_\_\_\_\_  
# OF HOURS, SEMESTER # OF HOURS, SEMESTER

#### Optional Substitutions

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_ taken/to be taken \_\_\_\_\_ to substitute for HON 403 for \_\_\_\_\_ credits.  
CLASS NAME SEMESTER, YEAR INDICATE 1, 2 OR 3
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_ taken/to be taken \_\_\_\_\_ to substitute for HON 404 for \_\_\_\_\_ credits.  
CLASS NAME SEMESTER, YEAR INDICATE 1 OR 2

\* It is **your** responsibility to ensure the substituted classes are augmented and that this is reflected on your transcript on TopNet.

Last Revised: January 2021

## Proposal Form (2)

IRB Approval Needed:  Yes  No

All research that involves the use of humans (e.g. survey, experimental, evaluation, biomedical research) must be approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), according to the University's Assurance of Compliance Agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services.

CITI Program Certification Needed:  Yes  No

If YES, please supply: Name of Faculty Mentor: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Completion Record ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

When do you expect to complete your CITI certification? \_\_\_\_\_

If you are using human or animal subjects in your research, you will need to complete the online CITI course.

### Student Signature

By signing below, **the student attests that they have read the CE/T Handbook and have familiarized themselves with the process for completion**, including presenting the project as a work in progress at a conference before defense, the timeline for turning in forms, and the correct document formatting requirements.

### Proposal Approval (Completed by Project Advisors)

By signing below, committee members give their assurances that they have read the proposal, see it as a legitimate MHC research/creative project, understand the responsibilities of their position on the committee, have seen the CE/T rubric used to evaluate CE/T projects and are willing to serve on this CE/T project. After the student submits the completed CE/T proposal, it will be presented to The MHC's Assistant Director for Academics for approval.

Project Advisor:	(signature)	(e-mail)	(Department)
Second Reader:	(signature)	(e-mail)	(Department)
Mahurin Honors College Approval	(Asst. Director for Academics)	(date)	

### Proposal Guidelines

Your CE/T project proposal has several goals. First, the proposal allows you to communicate the basic outline of your project in writing, which can contribute to meaningful discussions between you and your readers. Second, it is a forum for you to clearly articulate a plan to complete your project. If well-conceived, this plan will put you on the path toward a successful CE/T defense. Finally, the proposal alerts The MHC to your plans so that we can help you make progress on your CE/T.

The CE/T proposal, signed by your faculty mentor and second reader, is due to The Mahurin Honors College by either **August 1<sup>st</sup>** if you intend on taking HON 403 during **fall** (*October 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term*), or **January 5<sup>th</sup>** if you intend on taking 403 during **spring** (*March 1<sup>st</sup> for taking 403 during 2<sup>nd</sup> bi-term*). Proposals must be **3-5 typewritten, double-spaced pages** in length. Please consult the guidelines below as you complete your proposal.

**Title:** Provide a short, descriptive title of your proposed thesis project. Generally, it should be self-explanatory with a level of intrigue that leads a casual reader to pick up the project. Please consult with your faculty mentor as you contemplate a title for your work. Most disciplines have typical conventions that shape the way that scholars name their work.

**Introduction:** Your proposal should begin with a brief introductory statement of intent that focuses your project for a general reader. A good place to start is to consider the typical level of knowledge of your Honors 402 classmates. Obviously, you cannot say much at this point, but you can sketch the projected focus/direction of your project.

Last Revised: January 2021

## Proposal Form (3)

**CE/T Statement (Define the Issue):** Include a one-sentence statement of the nature of your CE/T project and then contextualize that statement. This statement can be in the form of a thesis statement, hypothesis, research question, or goal statement. The CE/T statement should capture the essence of your intended project and also help put boundaries around what you intend to do. What is your question? What will your effort contribute? Every CE/T project must answer the “So what?” question. Essentially, why are you spending a year working on this project?

**Approach (Methodology):** Describe the overall approach you will take. What methods will be used? How will data be collected and analyzed? What materials will be used? How will a particular theme be carried through a creative work? Are there particular challenges that need to be overcome? Are there potential pitfalls? Differing degrees of specificity are required so be sure to consult with your CE/T chair/mentor in advance. Are you required to get official permission from the Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB)? Projects in the humanities and performing arts should also make clear statements about intent and focus. Normally, this section will have a short literature review discussing some of the relevant schools of thought and/or academic debates related to the project. Creative writing efforts may have their own format but will still set out a projected storyline. Overall, consider this section the “how” statement.

**Expected Results and Significance (ANTICIPATED OUTCOME AND SIGNIFICANCE):** What do you expect to produce, learn or create? What will be its expected significance for your discipline/field? What scholarly contributions do you expect to make? In short, what results are you anticipating and what issues/questions will they address? This is a preliminary or tentative answer to the “so what” question.

**Outline/Timeline:** You must outline the major contours of your project by providing a general timeline for each stage of the project. A list of the anticipated chapters, accompanied by brief discussions on what will be addressed within each chapter, is encouraged.

**Resource Requirements:** What do you need to complete this project? Does WKU possess the necessary books, equipment, etc.? Will you need to apply for an Honors Development Grant (HDG) or CE/T Excellence Award? Does this project require travel for data collection, library visit(s), etc.? Have you discussed funding opportunities through The Mahurin Honors College, or other campus entities, with your CE/T chair?

Last Revised: January 2021



## Draft Approval Form (1)



### **Capstone Experience/Thesis Draft Approval**

This form must be signed by your first and second readers and submitted to the CE/T Advisor (cet.advisor@wku.edu) **no fewer than two calendar weeks before the CE/T defense date**. In addition to this form, e-mail a digital copy of your CE/T draft to the CE/T Advisor *and* your readers. Finally, please attach a copy of your acceptance letter and/or a conference program listing your presentation.

**No defenses may be scheduled during the last week of class or during finals week.**

#### **Student Information**

**Date:**

Name:		WKU ID:	
WKU Email:		Phone:	
Major(s):			
Project title:			

#### **CE/T Committee Members**

Student's Project Advisor:		E-mail:	
Student's Second Reader:		E-mail:	

***By signing below, the committee members judge that the student's draft is of sufficient quality to proceed to the defense.***

Signature, Project Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature, Second Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Revised: July 2020

## Draft Approval Form (2)

### Defense Date and Time

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Note: You *must* e-mail the CE/T Advisor ([cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu)) if you wish to schedule your defense in the Thesis Defense Room (HCIC 2021).

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Building/Zoom: \_\_\_\_\_ Room/Meeting ID: \_\_\_\_\_

### Required Presentation

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Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Conference Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Presentation Title: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please attach a copy of your acceptance letter and/or the conference program listing your presentation.**

Last Revised: July 2020

## Final Evaluation Form (1)



### Capstone Experience/Thesis (CE/T) Final Evaluation

Students should complete the first section of this form before e-mailing it to their readers the day before the defense. Once signed, this form (the Final Evaluation **and** Evaluation Rubric) must be submitted to the CE/T Advisor ([cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu)) by a member of the CE/T committee immediately following the defense.

Student Name:		WKU E-mail:	
Defense Date & Time:			
Final CE/T Title:			

*Please ensure the following section is filled out and understood by student and committee.*

Revisions:

Revision Deadline: \_\_\_\_\_

Student elects to make revisions.

Student elects NOT to make revisions.

Signature, Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Revision Outcomes: Revisions should be sent via email to [cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu) on or before the revision deadline.**

Last Revised: July 2020

## Final Evaluation Form (2)

This section is to be completed by the *third reader* based upon the completed **Evaluation Rubric** on p. 3-4:

Scholarly/Intellectual/Creative Merit score (50%): \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Style and Quality score (30%): \_\_\_\_\_

Follow Guidelines of MHC score (10%): \_\_\_\_\_

CE/T Defense score (10%): \_\_\_\_\_

### Distinction Assessment Scale

**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

Pass w/ <i>Distinction</i> : 100-95	(clearly superior in every way, ~10% of CE/Ts)
Pass w/ <i>Honors</i> : 94-85	(~80% of all CE/Ts)
Pass: 84-70	(~10% of all CE/Ts)
Fail: 69 and below	(extremely rare designation)

Decision to be awarded if revisions are completed and accepted: \_\_\_\_\_

Decision to be awarded if revisions are inadequate/not completed: \_\_\_\_\_

The following section to be completed by the *first and second readers*.

Letter Grade

HON 403: \_\_\_\_\_

HON 404: \_\_\_\_\_

### Project Mentor/First Reader (to be signed at the conclusion of the CE/T Defense):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Second Reader (to be signed at the conclusion of the CE/T Defense):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Third Reader/MHC Representative (to be signed at the conclusion of the CE/T Defense):

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Revised: July 2020

## Evaluation Rubric (1)



### CE/T Evaluation Rubric

Scholarly/ Intellectual/ Creative Merit <i>points awarded</i>	POOR/FAIL <i>0-5.5 points</i>	PASS <i>7 points</i>	PASS WITH HONORS <i>8.5 points</i>	PASS WITH DISTINCTION <i>10 points</i>
<i>Rationale</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	no clear rationale or a weak rationale for the project	some rationale presented, begins to motivate the work	provides and discusses a suitable rationale	persuasive and creative rationale
<i>Complexity in Framing Topic</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	frames complex questions as simple ones	invests question with some complexity, may oversimplify or overextend	reasonable balance between focus and complexity	frames the topic with a full appreciation of its complexity while retaining appropriate focus
<i>Approach/ Methodology</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	not clear what was done or why, or an inappropriate method	approach is generally appropriate and properly executed	clearly described and justified, well-chosen and appropriate, and well-executed	creative and sophisticated methods
<i>Scholarly Content</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	does not demonstrate awareness of appropriate scholarship, may over rely on too few sources	demonstrates a reasonable awareness of appropriate scholarship	demonstrates broad awareness and situates own work within the appropriate scholarship	demonstrates a broad awareness of appropriate scholarship, situates own work within the appropriate scholarship, and makes contributions to the field, or identifies a new direction for investigation
<i>Position</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	does not take a clear or defensible position or draw a clear conclusion	clearly describes, or begins to support, test, extend, or critique a position that is already in previous scholarship	thoroughly and effectively supports, tests, extends, or critiques a position that is already in previous scholarship	develops a clear and defensible position of his/her own, draws a significant conclusion
<i>Argument</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	weak, invalid, or no argument, perhaps a simple assertion	Some arguments valid and well-supported, some not	main arguments valid, systematic, and well supported	arguments both well supported and genuinely compared to conflicting explanations
<i>Use of Data/ Evidence</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	draws on little or no evidence, mostly relies on assertions or opinions, or evidence not clearly presented	some appropriate use of evidence but uneven	feasible evidence appropriately selected and not over interpreted	fully exploits the richness of the data/evidence/ideas, and is sufficiently persuasive
<i>Insight, Seeing Patterns and Connections</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	treats related ideas or data as unrelated, or draws weak or simplistic connections	begins to establish connections and perceive implications of the material	brings together related data or ideas in productive ways, thoroughly discusses implications of material	develops insightful connections and patterns that require intellectual creativity

total: \_\_\_\_\_ x 0.625 = **score for section** \_\_\_\_\_ (out of 50 max)

Last Revised: July 2020

## Evaluation Rubric (2)

Writing Style and Quality	POOR/FAIL 0-5.5 points	PASS 7 points	PASS WITH HONORS 8.5 points	PASS WITH DISTINCTION 10 points
Grammar and Spelling, Usage <input type="checkbox"/>	significantly impairs readability	numerous errors	some errors	a few minor errors
Organization <input type="checkbox"/>	author does not demonstrate awareness of the scholarly literature, may over rely on too few sources	structure is of inconsistent quality, may have choppy transitions and/or redundancies or disconnections	structure supports the argument, clearly ordered sections fit together well	structure enhances the argument, strong sections and seamless flow
Clarity, Style, Readability as Appropriate to Genre/Discipline <input type="checkbox"/>	gets in the way of reading for content	style is inconsistent or uneven	good, easy to follow and read for content	exceptional, including elegant style, transparent argument structure

score for section \_\_\_\_\_ (out of 30)

Follows MHC Guidelines	POOR/FAIL 0-5.5 points	PASS 7 points	PASS WITH HONORS 8.5 points	PASS WITH DISTINCTION 10 points
Size of Project (Treat as a Continuum of Where This Project Falls) <input type="checkbox"/>	workload (research & resulting CE/T) equivalent to less than the work for one 3-hour course	workload equivalent to one 3-hour courses	workload equivalent to two 3-hour courses	workload equivalent to more than two 3-hour courses

score for section \_\_\_\_\_ (out of 10)

CE/T Defense	POOR/FAIL 0-5.5 points	PASS 7 points	PASS WITH HONORS 8.5 points	PASS WITH DISTINCTION 10 points
Oral Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	very weak or poor oral presentation (disorganized and difficult to follow)	a weak oral presentation, unclear at times, difficulty answering questions	a solid, but not great oral presentation	a superior defense: took the presentation beyond the written work; handled questions well, showed poise and confidence.

score for section \_\_\_\_\_ (out of 10)

Scholarly/Intellectual/Creative Merit score (50%): \_\_\_\_\_

Writing Style and Quality score (30%): \_\_\_\_\_

Follow Guidelines of MHC score (10%): \_\_\_\_\_

CE/T Defense score (10%): \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DISTINCTION AWARDED:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Distinction Grading Scale

Pass w/ Distinction: 100-95

Pass w/ Honors: 94-85

Pass: 84-70

Fail: 69 and below

(Clearly superior in every way, ~10% of CE/Ts)  
(~80% of all CE/Ts)  
(~10% of all CE/Ts)  
(extremely rare designation)

Last Revised: July 2020

## Evaluation Criteria (1)



### CE/T Evaluation Criteria

A CE/T project is evaluated in two ways: first, a letter grade and second, an honors designation. The members of the CE/T committee determine both after the project's defense. The CE/T committee members (specifically, the project advisor/chair and second reader) provide a grade based on equivalent independent work within their discipline. A second evaluation is done based upon Mahurin Honors College criteria (here the MHC representative should have greater influence). The evaluations are Pass with Distinction, Pass with Honors, Pass, and Poor/Fail. There is not intended to be a direct correlation between letter grade and the honors designation. For example, the vast majority of CE/T projects earning "A" grades will not be awarded the Pass with Distinction designation, but there should not be any projects earning the Pass with Distinction designation that do not earn "A" grades. The committee may decide to withhold passing the CE/T until necessary revisions are made. In such cases, a time limit should be set for completion of the revisions.

The committee's evaluation must consider the student's performance in the following areas:

- Scholarly/Intellectual/Creative Merit;
- Adherence to guidelines set forth by the Mahurin Honors College;
- Quality and style of writing and/or any additional work presented (as appropriate to discipline); and
- Quality of the oral defense/presentation.

Pass with Distinction: Clearly a *superior* project in every way. This designation is granted only to those candidates whose performance is superior and distinctive in all areas and if the draft presented at the defense requires only minimal revision. Additional guidelines that might be helpful are:

- The student's performance on the oral exam is clearly outstanding;
- The student showed extraordinary initiative and originality during the project;
- The project is clearly in the top 10% of CE/Ts;
- The CE/T is publishable, in part or whole (depending on the traditions of the disciplinary press) or deemed competitive in juried forums appropriate to field; and
- The CE/T is comparable to competent graduate work at the M.A. or M.S. level.

Pass with Honors: This designation is the typical decision; it should be awarded to students whose CE/T work is, at a minimum, *good* in all of the listed categories. A CE/T that is outstanding in a few of the categories, but not in most or all, should be awarded *Pass with Honors* rather than *Pass with Distinction*. Between the distinguished top 10% and the merely acceptable, *Pass with Honors* is the evaluation earned by the majority of MHC scholars.

Pass: This designation is granted to those CE/Ts projects that are *adequate*, but not up to the standards of *Pass with Honors*. This includes CE/Ts that may be good/superior in a few of the areas but only acceptable/adequate in the others. Those earning the *Pass* designation may be

Last Revised: July 2020

## Evaluation Criteria (2)

characterized by:

- A weak, but acceptable, oral presentation;
- Acceptable research, but poor or weak written presentation of materials;
- Acceptable presentation of CE/T, but significant (and correctable) problems in argumentation or research;
- Content and presentation that are adequate for graduation, but that lack depth or originality; and
- A need for significant revision, which must be approved by the CE/T Advisor.

Poor/Fail is for work that is *unacceptable* in most or all of the five areas. Very few CE/Ts are failed because CE/T committee members should discourage students from standing for oral examination if they are not fully prepared and the committee members have not read and approved of the CE/T, at least conditionally.

Last Revised: July 2020



# TopScholar Copyright Form (1)



## Authorization for Use of the Capstone Experience/Thesis (CE/T) Project

This form will be filed when the CE/T is completed. Signed forms may be submitted to [cet.advisor@wku.edu](mailto:cet.advisor@wku.edu).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ WKU ID: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Major(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Title of CE/T:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list 2-4 disciplines and 5-6 keywords that best describe your project in order to help others in your discipline find your work in TopSCHOLAR®.

Disciplines:			
1.		3.	
2.		4.	
Keywords:			
1.		4.	
2.		5.	
3.		6.	

Name of Committee Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Committee Member: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Revised: July 2020

## TopScholar Copyright Form (2)

### Copyright Permission for TopSCHOLAR® research repository (digitalcommons.wku.edu)

- I hereby warrant that I am the sole copyright owner of the original work.
- I also represent that I have obtained permission from third party copyright owners of any material incorporated in part or in whole in the above described material, and I have, as such identified and acknowledged such third-party owned materials clearly. I hereby grant Western Kentucky University the permission to copy, display, perform, distribute for preservation or archiving in any form necessary, this work in TopSCHOLAR® digital repository for worldwide unrestricted access in perpetuity.
- I hereby affirm that this submission to TopSCHOLAR® is in compliance with Western Kentucky University policies and the U.S. copyright laws and that the material does not contain any libelous matter, nor does it violate third-party privacy. I also understand that the University retains the right to remove or deny the right to deposit materials in TopSCHOLAR® digital repository.

### Select only one of the following:

I grant permission to post my CE/T in TopSCHOLAR® for *immediate* unrestricted access.

I want to embargo access to my CE/T for (check one):

1 year     18 months     2 years     3 years

*After this time, my thesis will be openly accessible.*

I *do not* grant permission to post my CE/T in TopSCHOLAR® at any time.

Reason: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Revised: July 2020