Winthrop University
LART 604: Capstone
Dr. Clara Paulino
Fall 2013
Bancroft G14  803-323-3016
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Office Hours:
Tuesdays: 10:00-12:00
Thursdays: 10:00-12:00
and by appointment

REQUIRED TEXT
(Note: There are plenty of inexpensive used copies of this book on amazon.com. I suggest you look for the Hardcover 2002 edition, but any edition will do.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
This course is designed to provide all Master of Liberal Arts degree-seeking students with a culminating capstone experience. In the course, students will select, design and write an original research project/paper in consultation with the program director.
This course has two primary objectives. The first is to provide a cumulating experience through engaging in a comprehensive project or writing a lengthy research paper.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Meeting: You will meet regularly with the Capstone supervisor and together as a group with your fellow Capstone students. These meetings must be treated the same as class attendance in a traditional graduate course. The calendar of group meetings will be provided during the first session. Individual meetings will be determined by each student in consultation with the instructor.

Writing/Creating/Doing: The central work product students will generate in this course is a lengthy or comprehensive scholarly or creative project. A scholarly paper will be of sufficient length (35 pages) to fully investigate a topic or question. It will be designed and written as a traditional research paper in which you will choose a topic and methodology, and seek to generate new knowledge about the topic.

Presentation: In lieu of a final examination, each student will present her/his paper or project to the group during a final meeting. Students may present the paper using PowerPoint, posters, or other means. Further detail on presentations and an evaluation rubric will be provided in class.

EVALUATION
Your Capstone project will be evaluated in four areas,
1) Conceptual knowledge of the subject. You will provide evidence of significant research, which will include a listing or works consulted and cited. For creative projects, you will demonstrate a clear understanding of the project’s context through explanations, illustrations, and examples.
2) Clear and effective arguments, or clear communication of the creative process. You will
demonstrate a mastery of your subject matter by an appropriate use of language appropriate to your discipline.

3) Mastery of the mechanics of standard written English. Your writing will have well-developed paragraphs and good sentence structure.

4) Appropriate research methods, whether by fulfilling the major steps of a scholarly project or by a clear examination of the role of an artist or practitioner with a particular field or endeavor.

**CALCULATING COURSE GRADES:**

Group and Individual meetings: 30%

Research Paper 60%

Paper Presentation 10%

Total 100%

**Dropping the Course: Winthrop’s “N” Grade Policy**

Friday, October 18th is the last day that you can withdraw from a graduate Fall semester course with an automatic “N” grade. Per university policy, students may not withdraw from a course after this date without documented extenuating circumstances.

**Classroom Decorum**

The classroom—especially at the graduate seminar level— is an arena for discussion and free exchange of ideas. All students are expected to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner toward their fellow students, even when you disagree with them. In addition, all students are expected to refrain from any behaviors that disrupt the learning environment for others. Inappropriate activities include, but are not limited to, chronic tardiness, engaging in idle chitchat during presentations and discussions, using cell phones, IPODS, Blackberries and other personal electronic devices in class, or using laptop computers for activities such as checking e-mail, that are unrelated to what is happening in the classroom.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Winthrop University takes an extremely serious view of violations of academic integrity. My in-class policy is one of zero tolerance for any form of academic dishonesty. In short, this means that a proven instance of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course, and not solely for the assignment in question. I will discuss this in detail during the first two weeks of class. However, it is your responsibility to talk with me if you have any questions about research, citations, internet use, or paper composition. Such a discussion must take place before you submit a paper.

**Students with Disabilities**

Winthrop University is dedicated to providing access to education. If you have a disability and require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 323-3290 and make an appointment to see a professional staff member. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from Services for Students with Disabilities, please inform me as early as possible in the semester.

**Syllabus Change Policy**

I intend to adhere to the schedule of assignments and deadlines laid out in this syllabus. However, I may need to make minor changes in the schedule to accommodate special events, inclement weather, the instructor’s unplanned absence or other unforeseen circumstance. I will announce any changes to the syllabus in a timely manner in class and/or by e-mail. You are responsible for this information.
SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

The following meeting times and dates are subject to change, but we will meet on a regular basis to cover the mechanics of a research project and to provide updates and receive feedback on our projects from both the instructor and colleagues. Unless otherwise notified, all classes will take place on Mondays, from 5:00-7:30, in Bancroft G14.

August 26:
First class, Syllabus and Expectations, Introductions.
An introduction to graduate-level research and capstone projects.
An overall outline and guidelines for the research project. Identifying a thesis or question.
The project: thesis, rationale, and abstract.

September 9:
Thesis, rationale, and abstract DUE.
The “so what” of the Capstone research and writing.
Seeking clarity in your project. (Chapter 1 in Write Tight.)
Literature Reviews: What has been already said about your topic or question?

September 23:
Thesis or question focus and clarification.
Coherence of thesis and literature review: how each informs and supports the other. Annotated literature citations DUE.
On Writing: Proof reading for content; editing for mechanics and grammar.

October 7:
Introduction and Literature Review: 12 pages of writing DUE.
Methodology: Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods.
How to Identify and Discuss your methodology.

October 21:
Applying your methodology: the “doing” of the project.
Reporting on results: what has your research yielded?
On Writing: Sections, Topic Headings, and Paragraphs.
24 pages of writing DUE.

November 4:
The “so what” revisited: reporting on your project’s significance.
Discussion of progress and prospects: getting to the finish line.
32 pages of writing DUE.

November 18:
Full draft of your Capstone paper is DUE today.
Putting it all together: the finished project.
The supporting items: Title Page, Table of Contents, Charts, Graphs, Bibliography.

December 2 (Time TBA):
Final, Completed Projects DUE.
Presentation of Capstone projects. (See page 2.)
Course evaluations and class wrap-up.