

Department: Elective

Course Name: Senior Capstone

Course Description:

This first- semester, graded course is designed exclusively for rising seniors and serves to help students prepare for future academic or career pursuits by developing a diverse set of essential skills and providing opportunities to apply their learning in meaningful, real-world contexts. Built on the foundational pillars of **Think, Explore, and Discover**, the course challenges students to engage deeply with their areas of interest.

To begin, students are required to submit a research proposal in the spring prior to their senior year, outlining their intended project. This allows for ample preparation time to ensure success in the fall. There are two paths to successfully completing the capstone course: Students will work independently on their research project, culminating in a final work that includes a scholarly research paper on their project topic. Or students can write a stand-alone research paper. The final product should meet "publishable quality" standards and length, suitable for submission to prestigious student journals such as *The Concord Review* in history, *The Journal of Emerging Investigators* in science, or as a presentation at a regional or state-wide conference like the Virginia Junior Academy of Sciences. Submission of the research paper is required but acceptance of the paper by the journal is not.

The course culminates with students preparing and delivering a public presentation. This presentation is an opportunity for students to showcase the work they have done and demonstrate their growth as scholars.

A concept proposal is due with course registration.

Methods of Evaluation:

Progress Checks

Project Presentation