

Capstone Physics 4300

Graduating with Honors from the Physics Department Capstone Portion

Typically students graduating with a physics or astronomy degree are required by the Department of Physics and Astronomy to enroll in 4 hours of Capstone (PHYS 4300) over two separate semesters, whereas the College of Arts and Science only requires 3 hours of Capstone for graduation. Typically students enrolled in the Honors Program (College), are also required to take at least three hours of Honors Reading and two of Honors Research PHYS 3980 (Honors Research).

The Department and Honors College have methods for combining these related requirements.

For All Majors: The honors reading requirement should be waived for those participating in a research oriented physics capstone. This is done by the Honors College.

For Physics and Astronomy Majors: You must enroll in 3 hours of Honors Research PHYS 3980 and 3 hours of Capstone PHYS 4300. The Department will waive the one additional hour of Capstone required of non-honors graduates. Honors students should enroll in 3 hours of PHYS 3980, Honors Research and 1 hour of PHYS 4300 in one semester and 2 hours of PHYS 4300 in a second semester. They will be required to attend all the Capstone seminars for both semesters and present an oral report. Their honors thesis would replace the senior thesis.” The steps that need to be taken are outlined below:

For Engineering Physics Majors: You must enroll in 3 hours of Honors Research PHYS 3980 and 1 hour of Capstone PHYS 4300. The Department will accept Honors Research in exchange for the 3 additional hours of Capstone required of non-honors graduates. Honors students should enroll in 3 hours of PHYS 3980, Honors Research in one semester and 1 hours of PHYS 4300 in a second semester. They will be required to attend all the Capstone seminars for both semesters (regardless of enrollment status) and present an oral report. Their honors thesis would replace the senior thesis.” The steps that need to be taken are outlined below:

THE SEMESTER BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR CAPSTONE

- Choose the area of physics in which you would like to do your capstone. Talk to professors in this area to get an idea of the research that they are doing and whether they will have any openings for you in the semester you plan to begin your capstone. Talk to several professors to get good feel of what is available to you. It would be good to firm things up as much as possible towards the end of the semester so you don't need to worry about finding a capstone advisor in the first semester of your capstone.

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- Set up an appointment with the Honors College to be advised on the Honors Reading and Research process. (They plan reading and research as a one-year sequence). They should explain all the steps you must go through as well as providing you with all of the paperwork you will need. They will tell you that the Honors Reading is a 2 hour requirement and the Honors Research is a 3 hour requirement, to be completed in separate semesters. However, the reading requirement should be waived for those participating in a research oriented physics capstone, leaving you with only 3 hours of Honors Research to fulfill your requirements.
- Go to the physics office and ask an information sheet entitled “The Capstone Experience”. This has almost all of the information you will need on the physics end of things, including the explanation of the way the capstone can be handled for honors students (cited above).

IN THE FIRST SEMESTER OF YOUR CAPSTONE

- As soon into the semester as possible, secure your faculty advisor and choose your capstone subject. Then, fill out the “Application and Program for Honors Research” (remember, your Reading requirement is waived) form that you received from the Honors College in your advisement session. This needs signatures from your advisor, the Chair or Honors College liaison in the physics department, and the Dean of the Honors College. This needs to be completed before the add/drop deadline of the semester. You need to attend Capstone seminars and participate fully this first semester regardless of whether you are registered in the course.

IN THE SECOND SEMESTER OF YOUR CAPSTONE

- Your completed paper will be your thesis for both the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the Honors College, so be sure to submit it to both. If you are graduating, be sure to fill out the appropriate form for the Honors College.