Information for those doing Honors

Preparations
This material is intended for those advanced undergraduate who have been accepted into the honors/capstone program. As you will be expected to complete a book-length creative manuscript before graduating, we wanted to give you some advice at the outset of this process.

Your advisor will play an important role in this process. You should approach that person as soon as you can, and begin to plan how you are going to complete your thesis/project. The advisor selected you as someone s/he is willing to advise; however, if you want to work with another member of the literary arts faculty, you may approach that person. It is up to the faculty members themselves to agree to take you on. It is the obligation of the instructor to say, "I'm sorry, but I cannot work with you" if s/he is already overloaded with advisees.

A graduate student may not serve as advisor.

Once you have settled on an advisor, you should complete the "Student Advisor Form" (a copy of which will be provided to you upon being accepted into the program).

You may want to begin work on the project as soon as possible. With your advisor's permission, you may sign up for an independent study for your seventh semester (LITR 1310) and/or for your final semester (LITR 1510). You may only use LITR 1510 in your final semester.

You may also be interested in taking one of the LITR 1410 honors/capstone workshop sections, to be offered in the spring semester. Entry into these sections is at the discretion of the instructors.

You should expect to meet with your advisor at regular intervals to discuss your progress. Different projects require different types of advising at different intervals. You should work with your advisor to work out what would be most appropriate. In most cases, writers have found that meeting with an advisor about twice a month is appropriate. Meetings may last as little as 15 minutes and as long as an hour—but usually not for a set length of time.

You may find that there are periods in the process where you need different types of help—where a suggested reading or exercise may be more necessary than a close reading. It will be up to both you and your advisor to be aware of what the project needs.

Some writers find it useful to set up a time line, working backwards from the date the project is due. Again, this is more useful for some writers (and some projects) than others. Not everyone thinks in terms of self-imposed deadlines, but you need to be reminded that the final deadline is for a finished work, not a draft. You submit two copies of your project to the program office on the date when projects are due no later than 4 p.m.
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Once you turn in your project, your advisor will have a limited amount of time to read your work and decide whether or not it meets the program’s standards for honors or capstone certification. Your advisor will write up a paragraph recommendation, which will be submitted to the program, and then, to the college. You will also get a copy of your advisor’s recommendation.

Once you’ve received your advisor’s comments, we encourage you to set up a meeting to discuss those comments. If you have specific questions, you should ask at that time.

To end each academic year, the program sponsors the Honors/Capstone reading series. You’ll be notified of the dates available for sign-up. This marks the primary celebration of your long and hard work. We hope that you find the event festive—and we encourage you to attend the readings of your colleagues.

If you have any questions along the way, please discuss them with your advisor or with Gale Nelson, room 109.

Second Readers

Many candidates find it useful to have a second reader. You should feel free to approach a member of the faculty to seek input in this capacity. This may be especially useful if you intend to cross the boundaries of genre in your project; or if you have worked closely with two different faculty members, and know that both would provide valuable insights into your project.

Four Ways to Complete Your Project

During your final semester at Brown, there are four ways for you to complete your project:

1. Take an advanced workshop (LITR 1010, LITR 1110 or LITR 1150, taught by the instructor advising your project).
2. Take one of the Honors/Capstone Workshops (LITR 1410); this option is available in spring only.
3. Undertake an independent study in Creative Writing (LITR 1510).
4. Work independently on your project, but receive no course credit for the project. To undertake this option, you must receive permission from your advisor. You must select one from among these choices; you may not get course credit for a workshop and an independent study for the same project in one semester. You may, however, complete an independent study in the fall and then undertake LITR 1410 in the spring (with permission of the instructors).

LITR 1010, LITR 1110 & LITR 1150 Advanced Level Workshops

If your advisor is teaching an advanced-level workshop, s/he may encourage you to take the workshop to provide a forum for you to undertake the completion of your project. Admission to the workshop is based on a writing sample, due on the first day of the semester.
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LITR 1410 Honors/Capstone Workshops
These workshops are intended as forums for students working on their theses and Capstone projects in creative writing. In consultation with your advisor and the respective workshop leader, you may select to take the workshop appropriate for the genre or an independent study, but cannot choose to do both during the same semester. Instructors of these spring semester workshops (unlike all other undergraduate workshops) will give permission to candidates during the fall semester.

LITR 1310 Independent Study in Creative Writing
Honors/Capstone candidates typically take this course in their penultimate semester. The instructor should meet with each student at regular intervals (at least every other week); the student should complete a substantial amount of reading and writing over the course of the semester.

LITR 1510 Honors/Capstone Ind. Study in Creative Writing
Honors/Capstone candidates typically take this course in their final semester. The instructor should meet with each student at regular intervals (at least every other week); the student should complete a substantial amount of reading and writing over the course of the semester.

Deadlines
Submit Advisor Form to main office at 68 1/2 Brown Street by the date noted on the form. On 13 April, present final copy of the project to advisor (if 13 April falls on a weekend or holiday, the thesis is due on the last business day before the 13th); so that we may submit the necessary report to the College on time, the program will expect reports from the faculty reviewers soon after the 13 April deadline. As such, there is little to no room for a deadline extension. Note: whether you finish your course work in the fall or spring semester, the thesis is due on or before 13 April. If you are graduating in the preceding fall semester and wish to submit your thesis in the fall semester, you need to make arrangements with your advisor directly.

Presenting the Final Copy
Students present the projects in final form. You should show your advisor a draft of the work well before the deadline to ensure s/he will have time to review it and give suggestions on a timely basis. You should make arrangements with your advisor as to how you will provide her/him with the final version. Submit two copies of your project to the program office by 4 pm on or before 13 April.

Manuscript Guidelines
Type and Spacing: 10, 11 or 12-point typeface (for typewriters, pica and elite are both accepted). Prose manuscripts are usually double-spaced. Poetry and plays are as often single-spaced as double-spaced. Margins: the left margin should be at least 1-1/2 inches wide (to accommodate the binding); the top, bottom and right margins are typically at least 1 inch wide. Page numbers: page numbers may be placed closer to the edge of the
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paper than the text itself. It is recommended that page numbers be placed in the same location throughout the manuscript. Length: most projects will be no less than 50 pages.

Binding: The archive copy of the manuscript must be bound: vello-binding and comb binding are typical (and available through most copy or office supply stores). A big staple, elastic or a paper clip are not appropriate; honors or capstone certification will not be awarded until the program has received an appropriately bound manuscript. Electronic manuscripts: along with a web site address or disk, the program requires that a paper version of the final project be submitted for archival purposes. Disks and web addresses may, some day, be replaced by new technologies-as such; the paper version may eventually be the only surviving document. Signature page and authorization to lend and reproduce the manuscript: This page should not be bound into the project, but is required. You may NOT re-word the material on this page (it should not be considered a part of the project itself; as such, it should not be thought of as a place to be "creative"). A sample of this page is found in this booklet. Title page: the title, your name and the date of submission must be included. We provide a sample title page, but as long as the information noted is included, you may format this in any way you like.

Sample Title Page

Deepstep Come Shining
[centered]

by C.D. Wright
[centered]

April 2007
[centered]

Sample Signature/Authorization Page

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(type name of author here)
This manuscript by (your name in full) is accepted in its present form by the Program in
Creative Writing as partial fulfillment of the Honors program.

Date . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .
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