AFM 8200 Capstone: Human Rights Framework

AFM 8200 Capstone

This course is offered as an alternative to the Practicum for students who have extensive workplace experience in a family life education. Consideration will be given to students who can demonstrate, through a portfolio of accomplishments, that they have five years of supervised, professional, full-time work experience in a human service agency or similar setting. Students will complete a capstone project that will be designed to meet a need of either the student’s current workplace or a selected human service agency and may include program development, evaluation or other research need to be identified by the agency. The student’s project will have a practical application and benefit to the host organization.

Prerequisite(s): Faculty Approval

Human Rights Framework

Several Universities such as Columbia, Stanford, San Jose State, Yale and online Universities such as Walden have all discovered the viability of applying science to vulnerable populations to increase the quality of life, at a macro level. This Translational Research and Application impacts the quality of family relationships on a micro level. Any Family Science topic can be developed within the Framework of the Human Rights framework in this course, e.g., the distinguished Jane Goodall’s Roots & Shoots Program hosts a Human Rights and Sustainability Capstone.

This course will provide the opportunity to apply existing theories and knowledge to address real-world issues. The Project Chair will guide the student in identifying a research question or questions that exist in the real world. Students will formulate a statement of the problem, a brief review of the literature, methods to be used, anticipated results, and potential implications of the project. Students will be prepared to verbally present their proposal to the Project Chair and project committee member(s) before approval is granted to enroll in the course.

1 Topics:

Any Family Science topic already identified and developed through the AFM courses, including environmental sustainability is appropriate for a Human Rights or Social Justice Initiative.
Utilizing evidence-based findings and practice inquiry skills, the student will synthesize and integrate newly acquired knowledge and skills in the implementation of their Human Rights/Social Justice project. Students continue to implement their project, prepare a scholarly paper for submission, create public awareness strategies through social media and the utilization of technological supports such as Infogram, and disseminate results. Students must present their work in a scholarly manner to colleagues and faculty. The completed project, presentation, and scholarly paper (ready for publication) are required for completion of this course and subsequent graduation. This project is valid as a submission for the portfolio to apply to the Prevention Science Doctoral Program in the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences at Wilmington University.2

Approval process: At the completion of 70% of the AFM courses, a student may submit a prospectus that delineates the topic of interest and demonstrates a graduate level

What is a capstone?

Family Science Scholars undertake a capstone project that is informed by their coursework and extracurricular experience and developed in consultation with the Program Director. Students work on their project in a weekly seminar: throughout the semester, they receive guidance from the Program Director, share progress reports, and provide one another with feedback. Students' capstone projects cover a range of topics, geographic areas of focus, and methods. Many students apply what they have learned in the Human Rights Program to their surroundings by working with organizations or populations in the local community.

Under the supervision of an Academic Council member, students will propose and complete a capstone project, includes a 25-page (including references) research paper on a topic of Family Science issue and human rights topic approved in advance by the supervising faculty.

Requirements

The capstone project is designed to meet the unique needs and interests of students from a broad range of undergraduate majors. A capstone requirement for the student to propose and complete a 10-page prospectus on a Family Science topic that merits a human rights initiative. The paper may be an extension of a previous paper written for a related course, so long as the supervising faculty approves it.

2 https://www.wilmu.edu/admission/dss_admission.aspx
**What are the requirements for a Capstone?**

**Requirements**

1. The student must demonstrate, through a portfolio of accomplishments, that they have five years of supervised, professional, full-time work experience in a human service agency or similar setting for review and approval.
2. The student must have completed seven of nine AFM courses with a minimum of a B in each course and include the AFM 6680 as one of the seven courses completed, before applying for the Capstone Project.
3. Minimum of a B in each AFM course completed with an overall GPA 3.0 and above.
4. Identify a Family Science topic area (concentration), i.e., topics affecting a particular population of people, policy development, social justice issues, etc.
5. Submit a Prospectus (as described above) for approval no less than one semester before enrolling into the Capstone experience.
6. Student self-identification of professional ethics, behaviors, and personal responsibility traits to best represent Wilmington University, the Graduate applied Family Science program and the student’s professional reputation.
7. Complete the Human Subjects review and approval before approval to enroll into the Capstone course AFM 8200. Form 5- Exempt Human Subjects Form.
8. Request a meeting seven weeks before enrollment with the Chair to present all requirements and receive a review of the prospectus. The prospectus must be approved before approval for enrollment into the course.

Students are required to write their capstone project in the form of a traditional research paper, and complete the actionable activities in the course assignments. Family Science topics vary in context from the micro to the macro level of individuals, families, and culture. All prospectus are reviewed for integration of cultural competence.

**PROSPECTUS**

Here are the guidelines for writing a prospectus for a Capstone project. The Master’s candidate must have solid preliminary answers.

At a minimum the prospectus must include:

1. Thesis statement
   a. The topic or subject is clearly defined and supported in Family Science Research.
   b. The topic or subject is justified and applied to a Family Science Theory.
   c. The objective of the topic applied to a Human Rights Framework is clear and rigorous.
   d. The premises upon which the topic is the best fit.
2. Annotated Bibliography
   a. Primary Sources: clearly explain the selection of these sources.

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3 http://www.wilmu.edu/academics/humansubjects/index.aspx
b. Secondary Sources: clearly define the justification for these sources. See the AFM 8200 Library Guide to Find Articles\(^4\) in the Journals of Family Science.
c. Annotated abstracts for each article cited in the references.

3. Critical Review
   a. Score the articles by the AFM Guide to Conducting a Critical Review.
   b. Write the review of each article according to the criteria in the Guide.
   c. Effectively demonstrate and justify how the rigor of these articles is the best support for your topic.

NOTE: Think of your prospectus as a work-in-progress. As you work with the secondary literature on your subject, either broadly or narrowly conceived, you should think about how your study fits into the historiographical literature.

As you begin to analyze your primary sources, you may discover that you need additional sources, which you should add to the annotated bibliography. Also, as you analyze the evidence in both your primary and secondary sources, you may discover that your thesis premises have changed and that you need to revise or rethink your thesis question. As you begin to write your essay, your work-in-progress prospectus will become the foundation for your introduction.

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5 **Ideas to expand the Family Science topical translational research to practice.**

The student will go through a systematic Human Rights Course complete assignments and apply a topic of interest in developed in a Family Science Theory and applied to the Human Rights Framework synthesizing Family Science to support the integration and application. Students topics are to be selected from the Family Life Science program. If a student has developed a topic of interest in their graduate program, they are encouraged to apply that topic during Practicum I to develop the research plan further and execute it in the Capstone project.

Examples of Family Life Education topics: include background and a specific target population such as children, adolescents, emerging adults, elderly and aging, women and men’s issues, family and societal issues.

Children’s issues relate to Children’s Human Rights, Individuals, Families and Community, and Social Justice issues are relational to Human Rights. Students will develop an action plan to develop public awareness of the topic by developing a media campaign, policy statements, and presenting their results in a final thesis and professional presentation.

These are examples of projects conducted around the country in capstone projects;

The film, produce and screen an original short documentary about a local organization or student group’s advocacy efforts around a particular human rights topic (e.g., examining the work of

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\(^4\) Only peer-reviewed articles are acceptable.

\(^5\) [https://www.bowdoin.edu/faculty/s/smcmahon/courses/hist249/files/249prospectus.pdf](https://www.bowdoin.edu/faculty/s/smcmahon/courses/hist249/files/249prospectus.pdf)
local affordable housing advocates, and exploring how they invoke rights-based rhetoric in pursuit of their goals).

Develop an annotated digital database of materials related to the promotion or protection of human rights (e.g., a database of country reports and NGO “shadow report” on core human rights treaty compliance, with finding tools designed to help human rights scholars, students, and advocates discover trends or draw comparisons between these documents).

Develop a GIS mapping project that layers different types of data to discover and illustrate relationships between potentially related phenomena and/or change over time (e.g. environmental issues such as desertification, or public health issues such as disease incidence or infant mortality rates, mapped alongside data about reported instances of certain types of human rights violations).

Curate an art exhibit featuring works related to a particular human rights theme (e.g., artistic depictions of the refugee experience)

Produce a series of original podcasts exploring on a human rights topic in depth.

Compile and organize a literary anthology of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry that grapples with human rights themes.

Develop a software application designed to address a specific human rights challenge (e.g. a tool for aid workers in a conflict area to be able to record and store sensitive interview information or other data, even in the face of frequent loss of internet connectivity, and securely back up data to a cloud-based repository, whenever possible).

**Resources for Writing a Prospectus**

*Yale Center for Teaching and Learning.* (2018). Prospective Writing.

*Wichita State University.* [Writing a Research Prospectus.](#)

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