



## **CERTIFICATE IN ADVOCACY AND PROBLEM-SOLVING (CAPS) CAPStone RESEARCH PAPER**

As a culminating activity of their certificate program, CAPS students are required to complete a not-for-credit thesis-quality CAPStone research paper in the fall or spring semester of their final academic year at HUSL. The following information provides general guidance for planning, gaining approval, and completing this requirement.

### **Topics**

Students may choose their own research topic, subject to the approval of the CAPS academic advisor. While students are encouraged to explore topics that are of particular personal interest, topics should relate to the core focus of the CAPS program, which is to help students “fully integrate ADR and the day-to-day work of lawyers.” In approving proposed topics, students will be asked to articulate how their proposed topic relates to the core academic focus of the CAPS program.

### **Research Paper Requirements**

CAPStone research papers must be a minimum 20 pages in length (excluding bibliography and any appendices). Students must use either ALWD or Bluebook citation format and carefully edit and proofread the papers for writing quality and accuracy, as well as for content. Students may elect to do a CAPStone paper that focuses primarily on a review and analysis of current literature, or a CAPStone paper that also includes original field research.

While the organization of each research paper may vary, all research papers must include at least the following sections:

- Introductory section
- Substantial literature review
- Methodology and findings (in the case of original field research)
- Analysis and, where appropriate, recommendations
- Conclusion
- Appropriate citation

### **Use of Prior Research and Coursework**

Because the CAPStone research paper is designed to help students synthesize what they have learned about advocacy and problem-solving, the CAPS program encourages students to build upon prior learning, which may include learning from previous coursework. However, the CAPStone research paper must be original writing and must primarily represent new research.

Students may not re-use previously submitted work. An exception may be made for prior original written work that the student produced when:

- The prior work is entirely the student's own work-product;
- The prior work otherwise completely satisfies the requirements for a CAPStone research paper;
- The student did not receive compensation in exchange for production of the prior work (such as a summer associate research memo); and
- The student did not receive academic credit for production of the prior work (such as an independent study paper or a law review article for which the student received academic credit).

### **CAPStone Process**

CAPS students must register to complete the CAPStone research paper requirement during either fall or spring semester of their final academic year in law school.<sup>1</sup> The CAPStone is a non-credit, pass/no-pass requirement for which students receive a transcript notation.

The CAPS program seeks to maintain a rough balance in registration numbers between the fall and spring semesters. For the 2009/2010 academic year, registration will be limited to no more than 14 students in fall and 14 students in spring semesters.

1. Students complete a CAPStone Registration Form which can be found online. Completed forms should be turned in to the Office of the Registrar during the regular class registration period for the semester in which the CAPStone is to be completed. Students will be enrolled on a first-come-first-served basis.
2. During the second (2<sup>nd</sup>) week of the CAPStone semester (fall and spring), CAPStone students meet with the CAPS staff to discuss topic selection. Topics must be selected and approved by the end of the third week of the CAPStone semester.
3. Students turn in a substantially completed research bibliography to the Office of the Registrar by 4:30 p.m., Friday of the fourth (4<sup>th</sup>) week of the CAPStone semester. CAPS staff will review student bibliographies and either approve or recommend additional literature review.
4. Students turn in an initial CAPStone outline to the Office of the Registrar by 4:30 p.m., Friday of the seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) week of the CAPStone semester. CAPS staff will review the outline and either approve or recommend changes or additional material for the CAPStone paper.

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<sup>1</sup> "Final academic year in law school" includes students who will graduate after fall, winter, spring or summer term of the academic year in which the CAPStone is to be completed.

5. Students turn in a completed first draft of the CAPStone research paper to the Office of the Registrar by 4:30 p.m., Friday of the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) week of the CAPStone semester. The CAPS advisor will review all first draft papers. Where appropriate, the CAPS advisor may schedule individual meetings to review and recommend changes to the CAPStone paper.
6. Students turn in their final paper to the Office of the Registrar by 4:30 p.m., Friday of the last week of classes of the CAPStone semester. The CAPS advisor will review all papers and either grant a pass or no pass in completion of the writing requirement for the CAPS program.

Each semester, the top CAPStone research papers will be awarded “honors” designation and published to the Dispute Resolution Institute website. An “honors” designation will also be entered on the student’s transcript. All students will be encouraged to prepare their CAPStone papers with publication in mind.