Welcome, School of ATEC students, to Capstone 101! During this presentation, you’ll learn more about the Capstone degree requirement.

Capstone

• What is it?
• How do I register for it?
• What should the project topic be?

Specifically, we’ll be going into detail about what Capstone is, how to register for it, and what to consider when planning ahead for your Capstone topic.
Capstone

• What is it?
• How do I register for it?
• What should the project topic be?

First, what actually is Capstone?

What is Capstone?

*Culmination course taken in graduating semester. The course is available in Fall and Spring semesters at UT Dallas.*

• Create a project of your own choosing with faculty supervision
• Opportunity to create a final portfolio piece
• Apply knowledge and skills from the courses you’ve completed
• Project related to area of interest within the program

Capstone is an upper-level major requirement for all School of ATEC students. It is a culminating course you will take in your final semester at UT Dallas that provides you the opportunity to create a project of your own choosing demonstrating the knowledge and skills you’ve developed in the program. Your Capstone project topic should apply the skills you’ve cultivated in ATEC, rather than learning something new.
Planning for Capstone

Select an area of interest:
• What have you been focusing on within the School of ATEC?
• May be related to a future career pathway

Explore:
• What can I do successfully?
• What is missing from my portfolio?
• What do I want to show potential employers to demonstrate knowledge?
• What would be representative of my studies?

If you’re a junior or senior in ATEC, now is the time to really narrow down your project topic. You may want to consider a few of the following questions:
• What have the majority of your ATEC courses revolved around? A good place to start is the Prescribed Elective section of your degree plan.
• Additionally, consider what is missing from your portfolio or what you would want to want to show future employers. Talking to faculty about your portfolio materials and looking at job descriptions may help you determine additional items you may want to include. While Capstone is not focused on future employment, it is a great opportunity to consider your plans following graduation.

Course Options for Capstone

ATCM 4397
Senior Seminar

ATCM 4398
Capstone Project

There are two options for completion of the Capstone degree requirement: ATCM 4397 (Senior Seminar) and ATCM 4398 (Capstone Project).
The first course option, Senior Seminar, is also the most common course students will take to complete the Capstone requirement. The course is set up as a weekly workshop, in which students receive both faculty supervisor and peer feedback on their project progress. If you tend to procrastinate or just prefer having a weekly time when you’re required to think about your Capstone, Senior Seminar is a great option for you.

The second option, Capstone Project, is closer to an independent study, in which students are assigned a specific faculty supervisor but not a set class time. Students are expected to communicate consistently with their faculty supervisor over the course of the semester to receive feedback on their project progress. Students enrolled in Capstone Project are also required to attend two critique sessions throughout the semester to receive feedback from other faculty and their peers. If you consider yourself a disciplined worker, Capstone Project may be a good option for you.
If you are close to your graduating semester, you may now be wondering, how do I register for either Capstone Project or Senior Seminar?
All School of ATEC students are required to submit a Capstone Proposal in order to be enrolled in Capstone Project or Senior Seminar. You will submit your Capstone Proposal in the semester prior to your graduating semester for faculty review. In your proposal, you will be asked to describe your project topic, explain how it demonstrates the knowledge you’ve gained through ATEC and uniquely contributes to your field of study, and answer a few additional questions. Students should review the Capstone Proposal document on the ATEC website for exact questions and deadlines. The proposal may be updated each semester, but you are welcome to begin looking at the proposal questions to plan ahead for your project.

Students may request on their proposal to be assigned to Senior Seminar; otherwise, each student will be reviewed for assignment to either Capstone Project or Senior Seminar. Additionally, while group projects are allowed, the majority of students complete individual projects for Capstone. If you are considering a group project, you should review the Capstone FAQ document on the ATEC website for guidelines. Finally, while you cannot request a specific faculty member as your faculty supervisor on the Capstone Proposal, you are encouraged to reach out to faculty in an earlier semester if you are interested in having a particular faculty supervise your project.
School of ATEC Major Honors

Your proposal will be reviewed for Major Honors eligibility during faculty review.

- Eligibility Requirements:
  - UT Dallas Cumulative GPA of at least 3.5
  - School of ATEC Major GPA of at least 3.75

The Capstone Proposal faculty review also includes student eligibility for Major Honors. Major Honors is an additional academic honor awarded through the School of ATEC to students of the highest academic caliber. Eligible students must have a UTD cumulative GPA of at least 3.5 and Major GPA of at least 3.75. If you are interested in pursuing Major Honors, your first course of action is to review the Major Honors Information on the ATEC website. An additional ATEC Major Honors application is required if you are eligible and approved to pursue Major Honors.

Capstone

- What is it?
- How do I register for it?
- What should the project topic be?

As you’re nearing closer to completing your Capstone Proposal, you may have questions regarding what topics are appropriate for Capstone.
We highly recommend attending a Capstone Workshop at least once prior to completing your Capstone Proposal. Workshops are offered each Fall and Spring semester and allow students an opportunity to ask faculty questions about project topics and expectations, as well as learn what to do and what not to do for Capstone. Separate workshops are held for each interest area within the School of ATEC and may include review of prior Capstones and discussion of students’ tentative project ideas. Faculty are your best resource when determining project feasibility.

You also have the opportunity to see other students’ finished Capstones at the Capstone Celebration. Capstone Celebration is a conference-style poster session involving all students enrolled in Capstone Project or Senior Seminar that semester. Faculty and industry professionals will be in attendance, allowing for both a learning experience and networking opportunity. In addition to seeing what other students have done for their Capstone, attending this event allows you to better understand expectations for presenting at the celebration yourself in your graduating semester.
If you have questions moving forward, please check out the Capstone FAQ and Proposal documents on the ATEC website. Additionally, you are welcome to contact the ATEC Undergraduate Advising Office (located in ATC 3.605) or by emailing us at ATEC_UG_SA@utdallas.edu.