ATEC Capstone Project Frequently Asked Questions

What is the capstone project?
The capstone project is a culmination project under a faculty member’s supervision in Arts and Technology. Students will engage in the creation of an advanced creative and/or research project of their own choosing exploring the interaction of the arts with digital technology. Registering for the capstone project is restricted to students majoring in Arts and Technology who are within 30 credit hours of graduation.

There are two separate tracks for completing the capstone project:

1. **ATCM 4397: Senior Seminar** –
   - More common option for ATEC students.
   - Meets weekly during the semester and provides a structured, workshop setting.
   - Opportunity to receive regular faculty and peer feedback.
   - Discuss and confirm project idea with faculty member during first week of the course.
   - Three sections of Senior Seminar will be offered based on interest areas within ATEC: animation, gaming, general ATEC (sound design, user experience design, etc.)

2. **ATCM 4398: Capstone** –
   - Faculty member supervision and critique on a one-on-one basis.
   - No set weekly class time; faculty supervisor determines when you meet and how often during the semester.

Is a capstone project required to graduate?
Yes. It is a major upper-level requirement for the ATEC degree plan.

When should I take my capstone project?
You must register for the capstone project within the last 30 hours of your degree program. It is most common for students to enroll in the capstone project in their final semester. If you are adequately prepared for your project, you may enroll in capstone the semester before you plan to graduate.

How do I decide on a capstone project idea?
Consider the following questions:

- What is my focus area within ATEC?
- What type of job would I like to pursue?
- What have I learned to do well?
- What courses have I completed successfully?
- What is missing from my portfolio?
- What do I want to show potential employers?

While you may learn new skills while working on your capstone project, this is not an appropriate time to try to learn a new technical skill. Your capstone project should incorporate skills, techniques, or programs that you are already familiar with. Treat this project as the jewel of your portfolio. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas with fellow students and faculty. However, it is best to avoid approaching faculty and asking the dreaded question, “What should I do for my capstone project?”

How do I register for the capstone project?
The two tracks for completing the capstone project require different methods of registration:

1. **ATCM 4397: Senior Seminar** –
   a. Email your academic advisor to request registration into Senior Seminar.
      i. Be sure to include the interest area your project falls under: animation, gaming, general ATEC (sound design, user experience design, etc.).

2. **ATCM 4398: Capstone** –
a. You must ask your intended faculty supervisor if they would be willing to supervise your project. It is recommended to reach out to faculty by the middle of the semester before you intend to complete your capstone project. (Example: If you plan to complete your capstone project in a spring semester, you should contact potential faculty supervisors no later than end of October.)

b. Visit the ATEC website to print off the ATCM 4398 – Capstone Application. Complete application with faculty supervisor.

c. Turn in the completed application to your academic advisor to be registered.

**Can I start working on my capstone project before I enroll in it?**
Yes. You can begin work on your capstone project prior to your enrollment semester. In fact, some projects may require the completion of pre-production work, research, and/or other preparatory deliverables prior to enrollment. However, you must have enough unfinished work so that you are continuing to work on your project throughout the semester you are enrolled. You cannot complete your capstone project prior to registering for the course.

**May I work with a partner or a group?**
Yes, but this must be approved by your faculty supervisor:
- *Senior Seminar* – Discuss partner/group interest with the instructor during the first week of the course. The faculty supervisor reserves the right to decline your partner/group request.
- *Capstone* track – Discuss this with your faculty supervisor prior to enrollment.

You must enroll in the same *Senior Seminar* section or with the same faculty supervisor for *Capstone* as your partner/group members.

**What are the responsibilities of my Faculty Supervisor?**
Your faculty supervisor is responsible for submitting your final grade for your capstone project. They will provide guidance throughout your project and serve as your support and critic. It is not your faculty supervisor’s responsibility to:
- Determine your project idea, goals, objectives, or timeline.
- Remind you of deadlines or meetings.
- Check in with you to see how your project is progressing.

It is your responsibility to clarify all questions with your faculty supervisor.

**Can I fail the capstone project?**
Yes – and since it is a degree requirement, you would have to retake it in order to graduate.

**I am interested in pursuing School of ATEC Major Honors. How do I do so?**
Please check the ATEC website (http://www.utdallas.edu/atec/artstechnology/academics/resources/) or contact your academic advisor for the *Major Honors Information* handout. You will want to discuss your eligibility with your academic advisor as soon as possible. Do not wait until your graduating semester to look into Major Honors eligibility.

*If you have any further questions, please contact your academic advisor.*