

## YOUR SUCCESSFUL CIS SENIOR PROJECT

### EXPECTATIONS

- ✦ The Senior Project serves as both the capstone for your individual major and evidence of the coherence and integration of the major. Even projects with multiple parts must be shown to have unity.
- ✦ The project is a coherent, sustained academic effort over two semesters of your senior year, with at least the equivalent of one course each semester (~ 9-12 hours/week) devoted to the work of the project.
- ✦ Students using another course or other academic experience in place of IS 391-Sr Proj I must explain in their senior project plan how they will carry forward and incorporate that work in the overall project.
- ✦ Your advisor evaluates your senior project. IS 391 is graded P/N, indicating satisfactory progress on your work plan and web portfolio, and readiness for the next semester. IS 392 receives a letter grade based on the assumption that the whole project as submitted represents two semesters of work. In your senior project plan, you and your advisor will agree on the criteria by which your project or its various parts will be evaluated.
- ✦ You must have a functioning web portfolio in order to register for Senior Project II. The good news – because the web portfolio is a presentation of your overall major and not just the senior project, you already have plenty of material to work with!
- ✦ Your April presentation presents some part of your project, possibly still in process, to an appropriate audience. Plan on one hour for the presentation, including brief summaries of your major and your senior project, and how they fit together, the main presentation, and time for Q&A. Plan ahead to identify and invite your audience, and to reserve the space that will best suit your presentation needs.
- ✦ An Important Clarification: Your project might include a web site, but that is not the same as the web portfolio that is required for the major. Your project might include a public presentation, which may be considered as fulfilling the public presentation requirement if you are able to incorporate the explanation of your major and the audience interaction discussed above.

### Characteristics of a successful CIS Senior Project

#### INTEGRATION

A successful Senior Project builds on the courses and other experiences of the individual major, and uses the knowledge, skills, and methodologies gained from studies and experiences in a variety of disciplines.

#### DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

A successful Senior Project is an expression of the student's most current understanding of the subject of the major, and of the significant questions or topics in that field.

#### COHERENCE AND FOCUS

A successful Senior Project is tightly focused to allow for in-depth work.  
It is an example of the kind of work that can be done in the field of the major.  
It is a coherent unit: even projects with more than one part or format have a unifying focus.

#### SIGNIFICANT ACADEMIC EFFORT

A successful Senior Project, no matter what its format, is at its core an academic undertaking, representing two semesters of sustained work in the senior year. This is manifested in both the level of sophistication and the scope of the completed project.

## PLANNING and PROCESS – OUR BEST ADVICE

### Fall Semester

- ⊗ In September meet with your advisor to agree on a detailed project description and plan for research, creation, and evaluation. Signed plans are due in the CIS office no later than September 30.
- ⊗⊗ Meet regularly (weekly/biweekly) with your advisor. Use these meetings to discuss your reading, research, and writing, to troubleshoot, to review your goals and agree on adjustments if necessary.
- ⊗ Students studying off-campus or using internships in place of IS 391 should arrange regular email contact with their advisors. Their plans, and those of students substituting other courses for IS 391, should be specific about how this alternative will be incorporated into the senior project.
- ⊗⊗ Make time for your work – reserve at least the amount of time each week that you would devote to a Level III course (preparation, reading, class time, research, writing, etc.).
- ⊗⊗ Stay in touch with your fellow majors and classmates! Attend CIS gatherings.
- ⊗ From the beginning, record your reading and research to add to the annotated bibliography that is a required part of your web portfolio. Start writing responses, outlines, etc., to carry forward and develop.
- ⊗ By November registration, have a working web portfolio that includes at least your original major proposal and some of your coursework, some interconnecting links, as well as the beginnings of the annotated bibliography for your major and project. Your portfolio should be ready to be uploaded to the CIS web site.
- ⊗ Use one of your last advisor meetings of the semester to review your year-long plan, reaffirm or revise your goals for the spring, and set up the week-to-week plan for spring semester. Submit your spring semester work plan to the CIS office by the end of exams; explain any substantial revisions in your project goals.

Have a productive Interim: update/upgrade your web portfolio, review your research, revise writing, organize resources, schedule interviews, etc.

### Spring Semester

- ⊗ Get going right away! See especially the double-starred points from above! Stay focused on your project plan – don't take on new obligations.
- ⊗ Present your project and portfolio to fellow majors at required sessions in February and March.
- ⊗ Keep your eventual audience in mind, both for your written work and your public presentation. Make arrangements early for your April presentation, especially if you'll need technological support, or special display, exhibit or performance space. Notify the CIS office of your time and location before spring break.
- ⊗ If your project includes a performance, exhibit, or other ephemeral achievement that can't be handed to your advisor, make appropriate arrangements for evaluation of that part of the project.

## DATES AND DEADLINES

- September 30 Senior project plans, signed by you and your advisor, due in the CIS office
- Thursday, November 3 Web portfolio in process linked to Web Community page
- Wednesday Dec 14 Send significant project revisions to the CIS office, or confirm no changes
- February/March Present project/portfolio progress to other majors at CIS sessions
- Before spring break RE-confirm April presentation date/time with advisor, reserve location, notify CIS office, plan how to invite audience
- April Senior public presentations finished (earlier is better...)
- Tuesday, May 1 Senior projects finished, submitted to advisors
- Friday, May 4 Web portfolios updated, ready for final upload before certification meetings