

Approval Process for fulfilling the NRC Capstone Core #8 Requirement with *Independent Study (4905) or Internship (4941)**

Students who wish to utilize Internship or Independent Study credits to meet their **Capstone Core #8 Requirement** must complete the **Capstone Experience Approval Request** form. Students choosing to take FNR4623C for Capstone Core #8 Requirement DO NOT need to complete an Approval Request.

*DO NOT USE THIS FORM if you're requesting to take Internship or Independent Study credits as PLANNED ELECTIVES. Instead, complete the [Special Course Registration Form](#) to register for planned electives.

- **Step 1:** Understand the Capstone Requirements
- **Step 2:** Understand the Capstone Experience Expectations
- **Step 3:** Talk with your Faculty Advisor
- **Step 4:** Talk with your Internship Supervisor or Independent Study Instructor
- **Step 5:** Prepare to complete the **Capstone Experience Approval Request** form
- **Step 6:** Fill out the [Capstone Experience Approval Request](#)

Step 1: Capstone Requirements

- Independent Study or Internship for 3 credits must be completed in the **FINAL ACADEMIC YEAR** (including summer) to qualify as the Capstone Experience.
- Students must secure a suitable opportunity with a SFRC or WEC faculty member or external internship on their own. The Capstone does not have to be with your Faculty Advisor, but must be approved by your Faculty Advisor.
- Final approval of the Capstone is granted by the NRC Undergraduate Coordinator, Dr. Tim Martin, prior to registration of the credits for the Capstone.
- **Prior to the Capstone**, students must demonstrate that it will meet the Capstone Experience Expectations (below) and have approval from the Faculty Advisor and the NRC Undergraduate Coordinator. Capstone must align with stated career/research goals and Capstone Requirements.

Step 2: Capstone Experience Expectations

Students will complete a project/experience that showcases an application of skills learned in courses from the NRC Core Categories (below) to address a novel applied problem in an integrated manner.

NRC Core Categories:

- [Professional Seminar](#) - professional networking, guidance on career options and success
- [Ecology](#) - interaction among organism, and between organisms and the environment in natural systems
- [Quantitative Analysis and Assessment](#) - making sound decisions based on gathered data, through improved critical thinking and basic mathematics and statistical skills to interpret data, draw conclusions, and solve problems within the natural resource context
- [Natural History](#) - use of skills associated with identification and study of specimens
- [Human Dimensions](#) - public engagement, communication, social levels of decision making in natural resources
- [Policy and Economics](#) - ethics, markets, social choices, theories, and policies of managing resources
- [Field Applications](#) - practical applications towards desired outcomes, professional application of skills
- [Spatial Analysis](#) - spatial data software, architecture, interpretation, and/or presentation

Step 2: Capstone Experience Expectations continued

Students will:

- Demonstrate capacity to identify and define a natural resource-related problem or issue
- Summarize existing literature/state of our knowledge
- Create a timeline and approach to solving the problem
- Collect relevant data or design a program to support developing a solution
- Analyze and summarize the data, or assess the program
- Discuss your analysis of and recommendations for tradeoffs associated with various solutions or programs
- Present results using an appropriate communication medium

Step 3: Talk with your Faculty Advisor about which option best fits your career goals and college experience.

Step 4: Talk with your Internship Supervisor or Independent Study Instructor about how you will meet the **Capstone Experience Expectations** for credit.

OPTIONS ARE:

- FAS4905 or FOR4905 Independent Study -- Supervised by [SFRC faculty](#)
- WIS4905 Independent Study -- Supervised by [WEC faculty](#) (Students must follow WEC registration guidelines and Capstone Experience guidelines)
- FOR4941 Internship in Natural Resources – Not supervised by SFRC/WEC faculty

INTERNSHIPS

Students must complete approximately **240 hours** (3 credits) of internship in order to meet the Capstone Experience Expectations in their area of career interest.

Internship Approval Process Steps:

1. Student discusses the internship opportunity with Faculty Advisor and Internship supervisor. Consider the 3 questions in **Step 5** below during the conversation.
2. Complete the **Capstone Experience Approval Request** form
3. Student will then complete the [SFRC Internship Contract](#) with SFRC Internship Coordinator, Scott Sager. Students will complete all internship requirements (5-10 page paper, positive supervisor evaluation, etc.).

Step 5: PREPARING to fill out your **CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE APPROVAL REQUEST** form:

Be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Which **NRC Core Categories** will be utilized in your Capstone Experience? (check boxes will be provided for all of the categories – Minimum of 4 required)
- What subject matter will you cover that utilizes knowledge from these NRC Core Categories?
- What will you do that meets the **Capstone Experience Expectations**?

You will need to know the email address of your Faculty Advisor and either your Independent Study Instructor -or- Internship Supervisor to complete the Approval Request.

Step 6: Fill out the [Capstone Experience Approval Request](#) form.

- The form routes to appropriate Faculty involved for approval by email.
- After your Capstone is approved, staff registers you for the approved credits.