Honors College
Senior Teaching Handbook
Updated 11-2020

Honors Senior Teaching is one of the three types of capstone projects that Honors majors may choose to complete their B.A. in Honors Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts (HILA). This capstone provides the opportunity for Honors majors to co-teach an Honors seminar alongside an Honors College (HC) faculty member. Non-majors may also choose to engage in Senior Teaching as part of their Honors commitment.

Senior teaching is especially appropriate for students who anticipate teaching significantly after they graduate from Honors. This could include students who are going to graduate school and expect to be a teaching assistant, students who anticipate teaching in the primary or secondary education system, or students who plan to pursue a career in higher education.

Overview
The student and intended HC faculty member work together to create, propose, prepare, and then co-teach an Honors seminar together. This process usually fills three consecutive semesters and 7 CH, and requires at least a year and 6 CH.

0. Discuss Senior Teaching with potential faculty co-teacher, agree to collaboration.
1. Anticipatory planning and proposal, UHON 499 Individual Study (recommended)
2. For the preparation semester, UHON 492: Honors Senior Teaching Prep. (required)
3. For the teaching semester, students register for UHON 493: Honors Senior Teaching (required)

First, the student identifies and engages with an Honors faculty member with whom they would like to teach, and suggests a possible course to them. Almost always, this faculty member is someone whose course the student has taken previously. For HILA majors, this is usually their faculty advisor.

If an agreement between the faculty member and student is reached, the next step is to make a basic plan for the course. If time permits, the HC strongly recommends the student register for UHON 499 (1 CR) in this first semester, to carry out this first planning stage—particularly if they must fill out a course proposal or course revision form for the Honors College Curriculum Committee.

Whether or not the student registers for UHON 499, they need to receive permission from their faculty co-teacher to begin the process of Senior Teaching, and to be able to register for any of the associated courses.

To prepare for the teaching semester, the student registers for UHON 492. Throughout this semester, they spend one semester collaborating with the co-teaching faculty member to review the course topic in depth, learn pedagogy related to the topic of the course, and further develop course materials and activities for the teaching semester. During the teaching semester, the student co-teaches an Honors class alongside a faculty member, and registers for UHON 493.

Considerations
Significant planning
Senior teaching entails a long lead time and lots of coordination and collaboration. Thinking backwards from the semester in which the teaching would take place, the previous semester is spent preparing the course and learning pedagogy with your faculty instructor. Prior to that, the student and faculty member need to agree on a plan and submit any necessary course proposals to the Honors College Curriculum Committee (HCCC) and have the course approved prior to the prep semester. Regardless of whether
Honors College Senior Teaching Handbook, page 2

UHON 499 is taken, decisions and approvals need to be made and given more than a year in advance.

Communication and risk
The student needs to find and explicitly plan with a willing and available Honors faculty member, well in advance of the actual credit-bearing semesters. There is additional risk in the HCCC course review process, and that the course may not fill and be canceled at essentially the last minute. The Honors College will try their best to help things work out for students who are engaged in planning earnestly and in a timely fashion, but due to the possibility of late cancellation contingency plans should be made along the way, particularly for HILA majors who may be depending on Senior teaching as their required capstone.

Being Proactive
The student teacher will be expected to be highly active in everything about the course: from design and planning, to leading class discussions, to evaluating student work. The student will also act as the lead teacher for at least one unit of the course, comprising at least one full class session. If a student has concerns about their willingness or ability to perform any of these roles, they need to work these issues out with their faculty co-teacher before signing up for any credits.

Senior Teaching Process

Semester 0 – Anticipatory Planning
Before anything is official, the student approaches, discusses, and agrees with the faculty member in question. An overall course, timeline, and division of responsibilities is agreed to. Only then should a student start registering for coursework related to Senior Teaching.

Semester 1 – Basic planning – UHON 499 (1 CH) – Recommended
If the time can be found, it is highly advisable to sign up for UHON 499 to handle some of the preparatory work that has to be done before the Senior Teaching option can begin in earnest. The overall design of the course, selection of materials, writing, potential outside review, and the general collaborative planning between student and faculty member must be carried out before a student can take the Teaching Prep course (UHON 492). A quick glance at the many requirements below for UHON 492 might also be a good reason to allow for more lead time and take an additional semester of prep.

While the team-developed course should stick to the faculty member’s existing repertoire, it is encouraged for Senior Teachers to be active in course design, not simply to enact an existing course as is. If the course is less than 30% different from an existing course, it can be taught under the same name and number without further external review. Some courses go farther in this regard and will need to be reviewed and approved by the HCCC before the student takes UHON 492. If needed, this needs to be done by the halfway point of this semester (prior to taking UHON 492, March 15, or October 15). The forms to submit new or revised courses are available at https://unmhonorscollege.submittable.com/submit.

The professor will be asked for their teaching preferences for the “teaching semester” at the end of this semester (near November 15 or April 15). The student and faculty member will need to indicate this course as part of that teaching assignment as well as some potential days and times to hold the course.

Semester 2 – Background and Preparatory Work – UHON 492 (3 CH) – Required
The teaching preparation semester involves two major foci – 1) learning the topic to be taught in-depth and 2) learning about pedagogical methods and preparing teaching materials and activities for the
following semester. It is recommended that the faculty member and student teacher meet once a week for an hour or more.

Early in this semester, (Feb. 1 or September 1 depending on semester), the student and faculty teachers will need to submit final times/days for their course. This can be especially difficult for the student, as they will generally not know when their required courses for the following semester will be offered. They should make active efforts to contact relevant departments to discover course timetables in as much advance as is possible.

**UHON 492 Student Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course the student will:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with relevant research on teaching and learning;
2. Research active learning techniques;
3. Design teaching activities which apply the above research to the specific content to be taught;
4. Design at least one entire class session lesson plan.

**Detail of activities**

**Studying the topic:** The student and faculty will develop together a syllabus for this portion of the capstone. During this semester, the student needs to read/re-read all works that will be taught in the second semester syllabus, along with any additional materials the faculty member may require to ensure the student is quite familiar with the topic to be taught.

**Learning the pedagogy:** Since it is expected that student teachers will lead at least a portion of most class sessions during the teaching semester, they need to learn a variety of active teaching strategies to decide how they will apply them in class. We suggest students prepare for this portion of the course by reading some of the resources on the list below, doing additional reading about pedagogy, particularly resources devoted to active learning strategies, e.g. organizing think, pair, shares; small group discussions; having students act; debate; present YouTube or film clips, Ted Talks, and podcasts that help illustrate course materials. The faculty member should lead discussions of pedagogy and may suggest that the student attend classes they are teaching to provide examples of pedagogical techniques.

**Planning the outcomes:** Students need to be cognizant of the student learning objectives (SLOs) for the particular course they will co-teach as well as the Honors College program student learning outcomes (PSLOs) and levels at which each will be taught. Students and advisors should ensure that the teaching they plan will meet the stated SLOs and PSLOs.

**FERPA training:** Students should review UNM’s published FERPA materials with their faculty co-teacher and ensure they have no outstanding questions about the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act before their teaching semester begins.

**Requirements**

Assignments that are required of students to complete the preparation semester are largely up to the faculty member but reflect the kind of workload and expectations for any other 400-level Honors course. Generally, most faculty require at minimum:

- **Weekly meetings** between student teacher and faculty member.

- **Teaching Portfolio** that includes:
  - Annotated bibliography based on the reading of book(s), articles, and websites during the preparation semester.
Honors College Senior Teaching Handbook, page 4

- Synthesis or research paper on the course content in which students demonstrate their understanding of the subject they will teach, and the course’s interdisciplinary components (usually 10-15 pages).
- Teaching activities (usually 3-5) for the class and one or two complete plans for classes that the student plans to teach. Each activity/class should be accompanied by a detailed description reflecting what learning outcome they are aiming to teach and how the activity will achieve that goal.

Faculty members may require alternative or additional assignments that their own teaching practices and experiences suggest would provide stronger preparation for student teachers.

Semester 3 – Teaching and reflection – UHON 493 (3 CH) – Required
During the teaching semester, the Senior Teacher serves as a full collaborator in the teaching experience. Rather than serving as a teaching assistant, the Senior Teacher is expected to participate in all aspects of the teaching workload including preparing class materials, grading, meeting with students, and classroom teaching.

UHON 493 Student Learning Outcomes
Upon completion of this course the student will:
1. Demonstrate teaching and learning practices researched the previous semester;
2. Apply active learning techniques in a classroom setting;
3. Develop strategies for teaching interdisciplinary content material;
4. Teach at least one whole class lesson plan.

Requirements
Assignments required of students during the teaching semester up to the faculty member and reflect the kind of workload and expectations for any other 400-level Honors course. Generally, most faculty require at minimum:

Teaching plan: A calendar of the semester’s work needs to be designed by the student teacher and faculty teacher based on the activities proposed in the prior semester. This must be a detailed plan of the student teacher’s responsibility in each class period. It is expected that the student will teach a portion of most class periods in the second semester and lead at least one whole class.

Office hours: The student must hold one office hour a week.

Grading: The student teacher should evaluate student work in collaboration with their faculty co-teacher.

Teaching Portfolio: At the end of this semester, student teachers should add the following products to the portfolio they began in the preparation semester:
- Short reflections: After leading a teaching activity, students should write brief reflections discussing the activity, its success and any potential alterations they would make if using the activity again. Usually 5-8.
- Teaching activities: New teaching activities the student has developed during the teaching semester, with detailed descriptions reflecting the learning outcomes and how the activity will achieve that goal. Usually 2-3.
- Final reflection paper: Paper that synthesizes the teaching experience of the last two semesters, with special emphasis on describing and reflecting on the work accomplished in the teaching semester. Students might reflect on these questions: what did you do, what did you learn, what surprised you, how will this journey influence your future teaching plans?
Faculty members may require alternative or additional assignments that their own teaching practices and experiences suggest would provide stronger preparation for student teachers.

**Important Dates**

**Formal agreement between student and faculty co-teacher to pursue Student Teaching:** By the end of the semester prior to the Teaching Prep semester (UHON 492). Ideally though, a semester before this, allowing for UHON 499 to do basic planning.

**Significantly (>30%) new course proposals to the HCCC:** Halfway through the semester prior to Teaching Prep. October 15 or March 15.

**Day and time for the co-taught course:**
Initial: ¾ through the semester prior to UHON 492 (i.e. during UHON 499 if taken). Nov 15 or April 15. Final: 2-3 weeks through the semester prior to UHON 493 (i.e. during UHON 492). Sept 1 or Feb 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decide to teach with a professor</td>
<td>Semester 0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create basic plan - UHON 499 (recommended)</td>
<td>Semester 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submit any new materials to HCCC</td>
<td>Halfway through semester 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Propose likely day/time for the course</td>
<td>¾ through semester 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course prep - UHON 493</td>
<td>Semester 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set a final day/time for your course</td>
<td>2-3 weeks into semester 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teach your class! - UHON 493</td>
<td>Semester 3</td>
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**Resources for Student Teaching**

**Characteristics of UNM Honors Courses**
https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XuB_SsT24RUuVNTbZsbX8V377W4ulArTmx9UQkics/edit

**Online Resources**
Active Learning Resource Center (UNM STEM gateway, but has useful resources for Honors)  
http://stemgateway.unm.edu/peer-learning-facilitators/active-learning-resource-center.html

Cal State: Active and Cooperative Learning  
https://www.calstatela.edu/dept/chem/chem2/Active/index.html

UNC short pdf discussing active learning  
http://cfe.unc.edu/files/2014/08/FYC2.pdf
101 Interactive Techniques

Western Washington University
https://www.wwu.edu/teachinghandbook/student_engagement/active_approaches.shtml

**Useful books**
*Why Don't Students Like School? A Cognitive Scientist Answers Questions about how the Mind Works and What It Means for the Classroom*, by Daniel T. Willingham

*Small Teaching: Everyday Lessons from the Science of Learning*, by James Lang

*Engaging Imagination: Helping Students Become Creative and Reflective Thinkers*, by Alison James and Stephen Brookfield

*Teaching for Critical Thinking: Tools and Techniques to Help Students Question Their Assumptions*, by Stephen Brookfield