NARRATIVE STUDIES CRITICAL COMPONENT

The capstone project for Narrative Studies (NARS) consists of two components: (1) a research component, and (2) a critical component. Both components are required for capstones executed as independent studies and capstones executed within the framework of a seminar.

1. The “critical component” focuses on a single question: “What did you learn about narrative as a result of your research?” That’s it. We have capstones that are ‘analytically’ oriented, and capstones that are ‘creatively’ oriented, but both kinds of capstone are simply different forms of individual ‘research.’ What did you learn about narrative as a result of your research?

2. The whole point of the capstone (remember our Stonehenge pictures?) is that it is both the culmination of your very individuated career in Narrative Studies, and an outgrowth of that individuated and self-selected career. So you cannot really address your capstone in a critical manner without thinking about all of your self-selected coursework in the major.

3. Research in itself is not graded. Just as in the sciences, you don’t get credit just for going to the laboratory, but you do get credit for the written results of your lab work. So your research in NARS can be analytical or creative, but finally we want to see what sense you made of your four years here, and how those years were “capped” by your chosen investigation into narrative.

4. Your “critical component” (plus research component) will be filed with the English Department.
   4a) If you are conducting your research within the context of a capstone seminar, your instructor will evaluate and grade your critical component.
   4b) If you are conducting your research independently, a faculty jury of NARS capstone seminar instructors will evaluate and grade your critical component.

5. I hope you are looking forward to your public presentation during “NARS Week.” You must be present for at least five (5) presentations by colleagues in your seminar and another five (5) presentations by other NARS students. There are four days of presentations, with nearly 50 colleagues presenting, so you have plenty of opportunity to find time. There will be a sign-up sheet, so be sure to sign in to get credit for each presentation you witness.

These presentations are a lot of fun, sort of like “show and tell” from fourth grade. You will meet colleagues who have been working on projects very different from your own, and you should learn much from your participation. If you know students who are still thinking about what they could do for their own NARS capstones in the year or two, please invite them; they will get a wonderful range of ideas.

April 2019