**Honors Thesis/Capstone Proposal Template[[1]](#footnote-1)**

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| Working Title: **Me 3.0 – Creating A New Me: A How-To Build a Personal Brand for College Students**\_\_ |
| Objectives*:* *In two or three sentences, describe the focus and primary objective of your thesis/capstone project.* Personal branding, which has gained viability with the rise of the internet marketplace, helps people differentiate themselves from their competitors by teaching them to identify and articulate their “unique value proposition.” A Unique Value Proposition is the attributes particular to an individual that makes them uniquely valuable to an institution or organization. In summer and fall of 2010 I will develop a method of teaching personal branding strategies to two distinct student populations, Honors FYAC students and first year High Potential Students, in order to determine whether the method might have wider value in a collegiate atmosphere. In the spring 2011 in conjunction with my capstone business course I will analyze the results of my efforts with the goal of publishing and later marketing my methods. Outcomes: *Articulate a series of assessable outcomes (2-4) that will serve the final product.* 1. Using a series of possible templates, including Dan Schawbel’s Me 2.0: Build a Powerful Brand To Achieve Career Success, I will develop a lesson plan which teaches personal branding techniques to FYAC Honors and High Potential Students in the fall.
2. Create a series of three half hour classes to administer to personal inventories and to collect data, which might include a number of personal interviews with students from both populations.
3. Analyze data and evaluate best practices in thesis paper and/or marketing plan.

Methodology:*In two or three paragraphs articulate the methods you will utilize to complete your thesis. What will your scholarship consist of? What special qualifications, skills or clearances you will need (if any) in order to successfully complete the thesis?( i.e., CPR training certificates, an IRB clearance, etc.)* To be able to evaluate the multiple methods of personal branding, I will investigate multiple websites dedicated to the subject as well as books written by leaders in the field. Next I will compose a list of some of the best known ways to expand your personal brand and try them for myself to evaluate the results. After participating in multiple questionnaires and exercises to help me define my career goals, life goals, and build my portfolio, I will write a “how-to” manual for students interesting in using personal branding to discover their talents and explore their goals. Within the three, thirty minute sessions with the students, I will guide them through the career development program, which will help them hone in on what aspect of personal branding fits each of them best. Firstly, I will administer a preliminary survey, which will discover personality traits and what branding techniques would work best for them. Secondly, I will produce a list of personal branding techniques for them to choose from based on their interests. Thirdly, after all of the questionnaires have been collected, I will give a third survey to the students to see how well the personal branding techniques worked for them. After I have collected all of the material, I will analyze the results to determine whether specific kinds of personal branding worked for students. In addition, multiple interviews will be done with the students in the program to see what benefits, if any they received from the project. Overall, the how-to paper will be written in a packet format. A PowerPoint will be provided as supplemental material to the paper. The paper will consist of multiple examples and exercises that an interested student can complete to guide them in the process. Supplemental exercises, questionnaires, evaluations, and helpful guidelines will be included for students use. To aid the students, I will do a self-evaluation, by using myself as the example for the how-to paper.Books on personal branding and academic articles as well as current related articles in the field will be used as research for the how-to paper and for the supplemental material that the students will use. Access to the career center would also be beneficial for interviews and access to their material to supplement the paper.Books used to aid in research:1. Me 2.0: Build a Powerful Brand To Achieve Career Success / Dan Schawbel

Other Possible Supplemental Works:1. Personal marketing strategies : how to sell yourself, your ideas, and your services / Mike McCaffrey with Jerry Derloshon
2. Blogs and Wikipedia

Websites to be referenced:1. <http://mashable.com/2009/02/05/personal-branding-101/>
2. <http://www.personalbrandingblog.com/>
3. <http://www.stevepavlina.com/blog/2008/02/personal-branding/>
4. <http://www.williamarruda.com/>

Theoretical Framework: *Out of what theoretical framework are you operating? (e.g., are you viewing your topic through a lens of Marxist theory, Molecular Orbital Theory, Catholic Lasallian Theology?)* Personal branding is a sublet of Sirgy’s Self-Congruity Theory of Branding Theories within marketing. Self-congruity assumes that consumer’s behaviors are determined by the need for self-consistency and self-esteem, or self-image and brand-image. If there is a connection made, than the consumer will tend to repeat the purchase and prefer the brand.It is also associated within a Brand Personality Dimensions Framework. The framework describes five main personality traits: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Within each of the five core dimensions are facets which are described by traits. Most people and consumers and thus companies can be branding in one or a few of these main categories.Timeline:*Provide a timeline outlining the “plan of attack” and expected progress of the project.*Tentative Meeting Schedule with Professor Genin:

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| Date | Time | Meeting Place | Goals/Objectives |
| End of August | TBA | Galileo 321 | Review Academic Research done from the Summer |
| 2nd week in October | TBA | Galileo 321 | 1st Draft of Thesis |
| 2nd week in November | TBA | Galileo 321 | 2nd Draft of Thesis |
| 1st week in December | TBA | Galileo 321 | 3rd Draft of Thesis |
| 1st week in December | TBA | Galileo 321 | Final Honors Thesis submitted  |

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**Signature of Primary Reader \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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1. All creative thesis/capstone projects (e.g., novels, choreographed shows, play productions, fine art exhibitions) must also meet the academic demands of a traditional thesis. Therefore, the same template may be used for creative thesis/capstone projects. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)