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## On Capstones: Jessica Sager, MAPW Alumna

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# Jessica Sager



Picture Credit: Ana Overton

**My graduation year is:** Spring 2017

**My MAPW concentration and support area are:** Applied writing and creative writing. My ideal writing career is either editing fiction professionally or being a full-time writer!

**My capstone project:** My capstone's title is "The 'Wizards' Guide and Chapters." It consists of the first few chapters of a fantasy novel, along with a guide to the characters and their world. The medium of delivery is Word document.

**My capstone committee is:** Dr. Margaret Walters and Dr. Sergio Figueiredo, who were both wonderful!

**On capstone planning:** I hadn't written a proposal for some time, so that part was actually pretty challenging and intimidating! Luckily, both of my mentors were super helpful throughout the process. My schedule was pretty loose, which turned out to be a good thing. I got quite sick in January and wasn't able to work on my capstone much. Later in the semester, though, it seemed like I did nothing but work on the capstone! My initial plan was to research then write but, after a little research, I realized that I would come up with much better research questions after I started the writing!

**On capstone research:** I'd never researched for fiction before. It's a very different process than researching a paper because there is a huge variety of subjects that need to be researched. Since I was working on an urban (modern-day) fantasy, I needed to know a little bit everything from mythology to criminal justice! I spent most of the semester surrounded by eclectic, looming piles of books, and I got some odd looks at the library checkout desk!

**My favorite part of creating my capstone was:** My goal, ever since I was very young, has been to be a fantasy writer. Using my writing and research training to start creating something publishable is the first step in transitioning from a writer-in-training to a working one!

**For those who are starting to think about capstone:** You can never start too early! But do wait for the right idea to come along. Your capstone should be something you are proud of, something that you really want to do. Don't be afraid to go a little outside of your concentration or try something funky.