

Capstone Project Rubric

A Capstone Course is an advanced-level project course that requires students to apply and demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained in their academic coursework. Capstone projects provide breadth and integration of knowledge that students gain through applying what has been learned through the course of their degree program. At completion of the project for this course, students will have demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively through various media. They will also have demonstrated an ability to use the skills, techniques, and tools necessary for digital storytelling and/or story promotion or campaign. Students will be prepared to practice their profession.

Expected Outcomes for the Capstone Project:

Students will be able to identify a project problem and describe the high-level goals of the project.

Students will be able to describe the target audience and market.

Students will be able to identify the unique objectives and features of their project.

The students' Capstone project will meet the aesthetic expectations and the needs and desires of the target audience.

Students will demonstrate mastery of the software/tools necessary to create, complete, and publish the project.

Students will demonstrate mastery of the software/tools necessary to adequately promote the project to the target audience and market.

Students will present the Capstone project to their committee in a professional manner that would be acceptable in an industry setting.

Students will work with their teammates in a professional manner, communicate effectively within the group and complete their assigned work in a professional and timely manner.

Students will complete peer evaluations that will be considered when determining each student's final assessment/success in the program.

Measured/Evaluated Deliverables:

Length/amount of content

Details and features of content

Aesthetic quality

Mechanical quality of interactive elements

Graphic design

Audio design and best practices

Video design and best practices
Spelling/grammar/syntax
Logical organization/coherent presentation
Effectiveness of design and presentation
Breadth and depth of research
Clearly-defined strategy, tactics and key messages
Demonstration of original thinking and creativity

Students will choose a Storytelling or Strategic Communication option for their project:

Storytelling Option: Students who choose the storytelling option will work as part of a team to produce a multi-platform reporting project that will include text, photographs, audio elements and video elements. The project must be approved by supervisors before work can begin. The project will focus on a social issue, environmental issue or other multi-faceted challenge or problem. The project must have a significant local focus. National or global issues must have several local facets/solutions/elements. The project must also include a robust plan for marketing to/reaching the target audience. **Some members of the team will be assigned to focus on the reporting demands of the project while others will be assigned to focus on the strategic communication/advertising demands of the project.** Students will be allowed to determine if they will work on the reporting side or strategic communication side of the project.

Minimum Requirements for Storytelling Option (for the Reporters on the team):

The project must consist of at least **six stories** that address separate facets, challenges and/or solutions to the problem at hand.

The project must include **at least two significant audio elements**, such as long-form interviews, that can be consumed as a whole or in well-organized sections.

The project must include **at least three significant video elements**, such as reporters' packages or long-form interviews that can be consumed as a whole or in well-organized sections.

The project must include **at least ten photographs** that support the facts of the stories or help bring to life the central characters and their experiences.

The project must include interviews with **at least ten sources**. The interviews can be purposed as quotes, audio elements, video soundbites or otherwise presented, as long as the interviews are appropriate to the reporting of the story.

The project must include a list of **at least 30 references**. The list is **due in Week 2** of the Capstone research semester.

Minimum Requirements for Storytelling Option (for the Strategic Communicators on the team):

Identify key stakeholders and influencers to target for key messaging.

The project must include **at least a fifteen robust social media messages as part of the marketing plan.**

Each message will be created/designed for at least three social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Google+, etc.

The Storytelling Option project must include a creative strategy report detailing:

Client research

Project background and research

The goals/desired outcomes of the project

The target audience and the rationale for its selection

The rationale for the overall social media plan

Details of all research conducted for the strategic communication plan

Campaign Option: Students who choose the campaign option will work as part of a team to produce a multi-platform advertising campaign or strategic communication plan for a business, non-profit organization or worthy cause. The campaign project will include text, photographs, audio elements and video elements or other approved digital/multimedia storytelling assets. The project must be approved by supervisors before work can begin. The project must have some local focus. National or global causes must have some local facets/solutions/elements. The project must include a robust plan for marketing to/reaching the target audience. Students will be required to work directly with a client who represents the business, non-profit or worthy cause for which they are creating the campaign.

Minimum Requirements for Campaign Option:

The project must **offer a clear call to action** and create conversation and dialogue about your work.

The project must include interviews with **at least ten stakeholders for preliminary research.**

Project must include text, photographs, audio, video elements or other approved multimedia storytelling elements: minimum requirements to be determined in consult with project committee.

The project must include **at least six blogposts/press releases/stories** that convey the purpose, focus, benefits or goals of the business, non-profit organization or worthy cause.

The project **must include a list of the top-ten social media influencers** for your chosen client.

The Campaign Option project must include a creative strategy report detailing:

Client research

Project background and research

The goals/desired outcomes of the project

The target audience and the rationale for its selection

The rationale for the overall social media plan

Details of all research conducted for the strategic communication plan

Grading:

A: All deliverables are professional quality and media-ready.

A-: All deliverables are professional quality and most are media-ready.

A-: Some deliverables are not quite professional quality.

B+: All deliverables are portfolio quality and media-ready.

B: All deliverables are portfolio quality.

B-: Some deliverables are not quite portfolio quality.

C+: Average quality work; many deliverables are not quite portfolio quality.

C: Passable work. Basic project requirements have been completed.

C-: One or more deliverables were submitted late or re-submitted late, notwithstanding the overall quality of the project.

E: Not passable; requirements not completed satisfactorily.

E: Not passable because of apparent unethical behavior such as cheating, plagiarism, etc.

Portfolio-quality work: This work reflects the acquisition of skills that demonstrate competence in effective communication. Portfolio-quality work demonstrates the student's ability to apply relevant knowledge and skills and meet established learning standards, as delineated in the capstone specifications set forth above. This work meets the academic requirements for graduation.

Professional quality work: This work will rise above the level of portfolio-quality work. Professional-quality work does not just show proof of meeting learning standards, but reflects a mastery of those standards in a way that is presentable in a professional working environment. In other words, the work is industry quality and would be accepted without need for revision or improvement. It rises above the level of student work expectations to meet industry standard expectations.