

MMC 6960c

professional master's seminar

Fall 2024

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course description

This course introduces students to the college and Professional Master's Program. It serves four purposes: a.) It provides a structure to kick-off your individual Professional Master's Capstone project, b.) It helps you develop a personal brand for your professional life, c.) It aids in your career development, and d.) It helps you develop writing skills for professional settings. Thus, the course is a combination of lectures and guest speaker presentations. Students will complete a proposal and timeline for their projects, in addition to securing a chairperson to guide their project.

course objectives

Explore and examine project topics through a variety of creative processes

- Demonstrate writing ability for a variety of professional settings
- Analyze and implement a variety of techniques to improve writing ability
- Evaluate and critique project proposals of peers, provide constructive feedback
- Propose a well-crafted, viable proposal for a professional capstone project
- Formulate a professional level project proposal and choose a committee chair to guide your project
- Develop professional communication skills while presenting ideas, as well as providing
- constructive feedback to others

course requirements

Class attendance, participation, assignments, papers.

basis of course grade

Assignments	40%
Capstone project proposal	40%
Capstone project presentation	10%
Identification of the chair and signature on committee form	10%

grading scale

95-100	A
90-94.99	A -
87-89.99	B+
83-86.99	B
80-82.99	B-
78-79.99	C+
73-77.99	C
70-72.99	C-
68-69.99	D+
63-67.99	D
60-62.99	D-
Below a 60	E

professional master's capstone project overview

The Professional Master's capstone project is an advanced-level project that requires students to apply and demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained in their academic coursework. These projects are meant to be the culmination of your graduate studies showcasing a breadth of integrated knowledge and professional-level work in one or more areas within the field of communications.

Students will work individually and have the opportunity to explore a variety of topics and media for delivering their project. Through this process, each student will select and work with a committee of experts, including a Chair and one additional member that will guide the work over a minimum of two semesters (6 credit hours) of MMC 6910.

Developing a sufficiently focused project can be difficult, particularly when one is passionate about their chosen topic. Students often attempt to tackle too much, such as addressing a problem that is overly broad, complex, and time-consuming to resolve within a few months. The project might instead focus on a specific "segment" of the larger puzzle, perhaps completing the initial approach. The advantage of identifying a professional problem is that you can continue refining it even after graduation. Your completed project should be a source of pride when presenting to prospective employers.

course assignments

assignments

All assignments are posted to Canvas. These assignments are designed to support your professional writing, your career development, and your personal brand development. Assignments vary in points as indicated in Canvas.

capstone presentation

You will present your capstone project proposal to the class. This is a professional presentation.

capstone proposal

The Professional Master's capstone project is an advanced-level project that requires students to apply and demonstrate the knowledge and skills gained in their academic coursework. These projects are meant to be the culmination of your graduate work. For this class, you will write a project proposal. You will create a project timeline and create a list of mentors.

chair and supervisory committee form

By the end of the course, you will have secured a committee chair for your project. Your chair must sign the supervisory committee form.

course policies

class participation, attendance

Attendance is mandatory. If you are ill or have another excusable type of absence (court appearance, medical emergency, religious holiday, conference presentations), you need to notify me, preferably before class, in order for it to be excused. Things that aren't excused are holiday travel, meetings for other classes, social engagements and the like. More than one unexcused absence will result in the loss of a full letter grade from your final grade for each unexcused absence. Please see: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/> for a full list of policies related to attendance and excused absences.

Graduate school requires a lot of class preparation. Please don't waste your valuable time and money by not coming to class prepared. This is your opportunity to critically engage with the course material..

late paper policy: You will lose one letter grade for each day it is late. Note: you will be penalized a full letter grade if it is 10 minutes late.

AI policy

Use of AI Tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Claude, Bard, etc.) is permitted in this course—but only under clearly defined conditions to support your learning and ensure academic integrity.

Permitted Uses (Brainstorming, Ideation, Research Support, and Editing):

- You are welcome to use AI tools to help generate ideas, explore concepts, refine research questions, review/check work, or improve clarity and grammar in your writing.
- However, you must verify any factual information obtained from AI tools by consulting original or peer-reviewed sources to ensure accuracy and reliability.

Prohibited Uses (Authorship and Copy-Pasting):

- You may not use AI to write your assignment, including paragraphs or entire essays.
- You may not copy, paraphrase, or submit AI-generated text as your own work.

Transparency and Disclosure:

If you use AI tools, you must include a brief AI disclosure statement with your assignment submission, detailing:

- Which AI tool(s) you used (e.g., ChatGPT-4, Bard),
- The specific prompts you entered,
- What you used the tool for (e.g., brainstorming, editing, finding a specific fact).

academic integrity

Academic honesty and integrity are fundamental values of the University community. Students should be sure that they understand the UF Student Honor Code at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-codestudentconduct-code/> UF Plagiarism Policy Plagiarism Definition - A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another.

Plagiarism includes but is not limited to:

- Quoting oral or written materials including but not limited to those found on the internet, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.
- Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authorized by the student.
- Unauthorized use of materials or resources.
- Prohibited collaboration or consultation.
- Submission of paper or academic work purchased or obtained for an outside source.
- Violation of this course's AI policy

For UF's Plagiarism Policy visit <http://regulations.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf>

- If you have any questions or concerns if it qualifies for plagiarism, just ask!

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Click here to read the Conduct Code. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors in this class.

students with learning barriers

Students affected by such challenges and requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, Disability Resource Center. The Dean of Students will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the professor when requesting accommodation. Accommodations aren't made "after the fact."

course evaluations

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

academic resources

- E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at help-desk@ufl.edu.
- Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392- 1601. Career assistance and counseling services.
- Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources. Students will be required to use various databases found in the library and used by industry professionals, such as, AdSpender, Census Bureau, Demographics Now, Hoovers, IBISWorld, MarketResearch.com, Mintel, Simmons, Simply Analytics, Statista, etc.
- Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420.
- General study skills and tutoring. Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.
- Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.
- On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

health and wellness resources

- U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress so that a team member can reach out to the student.
- Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.
- University of Police Department: 352-392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.
- Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161 University Police Department
- at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or police.ufl.edu

the syllabus may change during the semester. you will be given notice of any changes.

Date	Assignments due
Aug 21	
Aug 28	Bio sheet (5 pts) DUE WEDNESDAY 8/27 What I find interesting (5 pts) DUE WEDNESDAY 8/27
Sep 4	Life event presentation (10 pts) Mindmaps (2) (10 pts) DUE WEDNESDAY 9/3
Sep 11	Capstone ideas Round 1 (10 pts) DUE WEDNESDAY 9/10
Sep 18	
Sep 25	Preliminary capstone presentation (20 pts) Feedback for presentations (10 pts). Will do live in class
Oct 2	Daily log/Accountability journal (10 pts)
Oct 9	Daily log/Accountability journal (10 pts)
Oct 16	Daily log/Accountability journal (10 pts) Interviews (20 pts)
Oct 23	Daily log/Accountability journal (10 pts)
Oct 30	Daily log/Accountability journal (10 pts)
Nov 6	Capstone proposal complete draft (25 pts)
Nov 13	Committee member list (10 pts)
Nov 20	Supervisory committee form due (20 pts) Capstone proposal presentation (100 pts)
Nov 27	HAPPY THANKSGIVING
Dec 4	Final capstone proposal and timeline (100 pt)