

HED 590C

Capstone in Higher Education (4 credits) Spring 2015

Time: Wednesdays 6:00-9:50pm
Place: O'Reilly 103
Instructors: Paul Brown, brownp@merrimack.edu
Office Hours: Sign up at www.paulgordonbrown.com/officehours

Course Description

The purpose of the Capstone course is two-fold: to provide structure and pacing for graduate students in higher education who are completing the Capstone project in Spring term, and to create a 'learning community' in which students will share their capstone work with others to gain constructive feedback and to generate ideas about the best ways to approach data collection, analysis, and meaning-making. The seminar format of this class means that students should come prepared to discuss their own work, as well as to carefully consider their peers' work, and offer insights relating to how projects can be improved.

During the weeks when class does not meet, we will have individual Goggle Hangout meetings. Each student will be required to "meet" with me twice during these off weeks in preparation for completion of the project in late April. Students may, of course, meet with me more frequently if desired or needed. A schedule of signups is available at www.paulgordonbrown.com/officehours. Students should be prepared to brief me on the status of their projects and develop any questions specific to the completion of their project.

Expectations

Attendance and participation

Each student is expected to come to class prepared, having read the readings, completed class assignments, and ready to share his or her experiences, perspectives, questions, and insights. Students are expected to discuss and debate issues and participate in class exercises.

APA style

All formal work should utilize APA style as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*, 6th edition.

Ethical practices

Abide by the university's academic honesty policy when completing any and all class assignments. "Academic misconduct includes all forms of cheating, lying and plagiarism; it includes the providing or receiving of assistance in a manner not authorized by the professor in material to be submitted for academic evaluation, or presenting as one's own the words or ideas of another person or persons for academic evaluation without proper acknowledgement."

Timeliness of work

Students are expected to complete all required readings and assignments as scheduled. Late assignments will most likely result in the lowering of a student's grade.

Accommodations

If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact Elaine DiVincenzo, ADA Academic Coordinator, via email at Elaine.DiVincenzo@merrimack.edu or by telephone at 978-837-5140. The ADA Office is located on the 3rd floor of the McQuade Library in the Center for Academic Enrichment. The ADA Office is responsible for coordinating disability related accommodations and will issue Accommodation Letters & Plans to students with documented disabilities.

Instructor responsibilities

Students should expect that the instructor for this course will:

- Be prepared for class, read and return students' work in a timely manner, and be interested and engaged in students' work;
- Remember that each student brings a different background, experience, and perspective to the course;
- Learn from the students;
- Help students identify additional resources as needed;
- Meet with students individually or in groups upon request and be available in person, by telephone, and by e-mail; and
- Work hard, and empower students to produce high-quality work.

Course Evaluation and Assignments

Following the first week of the course on January 21st, where the focus will be on developing a plan for pacing of the project, we will use the next weeks to attend to important issues such as data analysis and collection and synthesis/recommendation formation. The last two weeks of the course are devoted to sharing your project results with your classmates in a brief presentation format. This will also help you feel prepared for the Capstone Colloquium on May 6th.

Each week, some time in each class session will be devoted to group discussion of individual progress, obstacles encountered in the execution of projects, preparation of your poster for the Capstone colloquium, and ways to effectively discuss and promote your capstone project in your job search.

Attendance and participation (15%). Because this course is designed to keep you on track with completion of your culminating project, and because we will endeavor to create a mutually sustaining learning community, attendance in class and preparation for the seminar-style nature of this class is essential to your success. Because we will only meet (roughly) every other week, absence will mean nearly a month's interruption to participation in the process. Each week, students should come prepared to speak with others in the class about their project, although there will be only one formal presentation (during the final three weeks of class). Coming prepared to two required 'off-week' meetings with Paul during the course of the term will also be part of this assessment. Please note, and do your best to protect, all meeting dates for this course.

Capstone workflow plan (10%). Completing the Capstone project within one semester requires thoughtful planning and pacing, skills that are essential for all who wish to be effective leaders in higher education. To that end, all students will develop a personalized plan for completion of their capstone, including due dates for segments of the project and other self-designed milestones. **The workflow plan will be discussed in more detail on January 21st, and your self-selected**

deadlines will be used in part to determine the basis of your grade in this course for the semester.

As a part of this plan, set dates for turning in your two 7-10 page drafts. Also include your scheduled meetings with me.

Presentation of Capstone (25%). Students will conduct a 15-20 minute presentation (10 minutes of presentation and 5 minutes of discussion), using Prezi or Powerpoint, outlining the plan they followed for their Capstone project. Students should create an engaging presentation that involves their peers in thinking about their project, and provide their peers with a high quality, brief reading relevant to their capstone in the week prior to their presentation. In this powerpoint/prezi presentation, students should address the following:

- Overview of their Capstone project: what, when, where, and whom (was studied) and what was produced or created as a result of the project
- Brief summary of the issue(s) pertinent to understanding the Capstone project's origin and purposes: the *why* of your project, what you learned (**tying in the article selected**)
- Your research questions, a very brief review of your literature, an overview of your research method, your findings, and an overview of your 'implementation' aspect (which will be different for everyone).
- Open up for discussion and feedback (last five-seven minutes)

Presentations will take place on April 15 and 29 and will be assigned randomly.

Two weeks prior to the week they present, each student will select one brief (no more than 5-6 page) reading (such as a recent Chronicle article, an article from 'About Campus,' or another source) for the class to read which will help their peers understand the basis of their project. This will encourage greater familiarity with the topic so that the class can provide informed feedback to the student about their specific project. The article should be selected, and emailed to your classmates using BlackBoard (look for the "email" link under "tools), no later than two full weeks prior to the date of their presentation.

Completion of Capstone project (50%). Each student's project is unique to their interests, and will reflect the specific aspects of the area they have chosen. Projects will run the gamut from implementation of a workshop series to creation of a handbook to direction of a video and beyond. Students will work with Paul to create a manageable plan for researching, implementing, and evaluating their Capstone project, in order to best accomplish their personal learning goals. All Capstone projects will have a written report component which may be accompanied by other 'products' such as a video, handbook, or workshop curriculum. All students will be required to submit two 7-10 page drafts of work related to the Capstone during the term to Paul, on deadlines of their choosing. Additionally, all students will be required to prepare a poster for a presentation session of completed Capstone projects on May 5th (12-2 PM). Students should plan to submit their completed Capstone project report, including all supporting documentation related to completion, **no later than April 29, 2015 at 6 PM. Extensions will not be given without significant extenuating circumstances, and are at the discretion of the professor.**

Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
January 21	Introduction Workflow Planning	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None
Wednesday, January 28 – Meetings		
Assignment(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workflow plan emailed to me 		
February 4	Data Collection	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Mertens Chapter 6 * Bring a copy of your survey instrument
Wednesday, February 11 - Meetings		
February 18	Data Analysis 1	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education”
February 25	Data Analysis 2	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review “How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education” • Watch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JlfLnx8sh-o
Friday, February 27 - Meetings		
March 18	Designing Data Visualizations	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slide:ology (on Bb) and Presentation Zen Design (On Bb) Assignment(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring a laptop and some preliminary/final data
Friday, March 20 - Meetings		
April 1	Finishing your Paper and Colloquium Prep	Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foss – The Last Chapter Plus
Wednesday, April 8 - Meetings		
April 15	Group Presentations	Brian, Brown, Enters, Godin, Mumford, Priest, Vargas, and White Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Articles
Wednesday, April 22 - Meetings		
April 29	Group Presentations	Cook, Loughlin, Moquin, Senna, Smith, Williams, and Wu Reading(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Articles Assignment(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final paper emailed to Paul prior to class
May 5	Colloquium	12-2pm Sakowich MPR