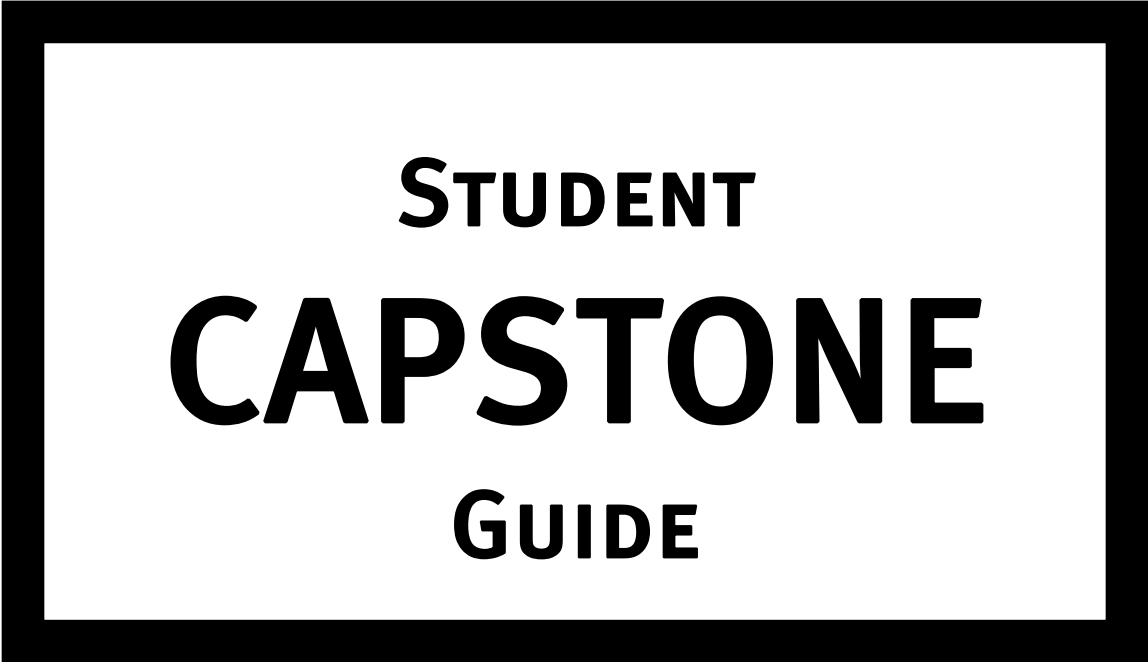




Robert F. Wagner **Graduate School of Public Service**



**STUDENT
CAPSTONE
GUIDE**

The Puck Building, 295 Lafayette Street, 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10012
212.998.7474 Fax 212.998.4165 wagner.nyu.edu/capstone

Welcome to Capstone.

Capstone is learning in action. Part of the core curriculum of the Masters program at the Wagner School, it provides students with both a critical learning experience and an opportunity to perform a public service. Over the course of an academic year, students work in teams – either to address challenges and identify opportunities for a client organization or to conduct research on a pressing social question. Ultimately, Capstone contributes not only to your education, but is a university resource for the public good.

In architecture, the capstone is the crowning piece of an arch, the center stone that holds the arch together, giving it shape and strength. Wagner’s Capstone program plays a similar role, by integrating and enhancing student learning in several different arenas: a content or issue area, key process skills including project management and teamwork, and methods for gathering, analyzing and reporting data. Capstone requires students to interweave their learning in all these areas, and to do so in real time, in an unpredictable, complex real world environment.

This **Student Capstone Guide** is an effort to provide all students with a shared base of expectations, information, and resources at the start of Capstone. This Guide includes:

- A list of important phone numbers and other resources
- A Description of Stakeholder Expectations
- Ethical Considerations
- Reimbursement Policies and Procedures
- Information on the Capstone Expo
- How to Include Capstone in your Resume

While we’ve tried to be thorough, but not overwhelming, this handbook is a work in progress and we welcome your feedback on its content and organization.

As always, the Capstone Program Directors are at your disposal during this process. Please feel free to contact us, or the administrators that we’ve listed in the important phone numbers section, should you have any questions.

All Our Best,

David Schachter John Donnellan
Capstone Co-Directors

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

While your Capstone Faculty Member will be your front-line resource for help in navigating the Capstone process, we've included the names and contact information of individuals that you can go to for specific needs.

Capstone website: <http://www.wagner.nyu.edu/capstone/students.php>

Academic Program Progress and Graduation Requirement Questions:

Contact:	Program	Phone #	Email
Diana Beck	Health	212-998-7441	diana.beck@nyu.edu
Debra Cabrera	Urban Planning	212-998-7476	debra.cabrera@nyu.edu
Katty Jones	Int'l Specialization (all programs)	212-998-7411	katty.jones@nyu.edu
Pamela Kavalam	PNP	212-992-9862	pamela.kavalam@nyu.edu
Katty Jones	EMPA Nurse Leaders	212-992-7411	katty.jones@nyu.edu

Capstone Reimbursements:

Contact:	Dept.	Phone #	Email
Pat Eaton	Office of Career Services	212-998-7474	pat.eaton@nyu.edu

Capstone Team Dynamics Intervention:

Contact:	Email
John Donnellan	john.donnellan@nyu.edu

Other Resources

Student Project Room Reservations

For information and instructions on how to make room reservations at Kimmel or at Puck, as well as the Puck project room reservation policies and procedures, please visit: wagner.nyu.edu/current/resources/roomReservations.php.

Research and Literature Review

NYU's Bobst Library has a Data Services Librarian for Public Administration and Government Information who is available to assist Wagner students in gathering background information on public administration, public policy, and urban planning. Contact: Samantha Guss at: samantha.guss@nyu.edu

Data Management/Data Analysis/GIS Assistance

Students who need help with data management (reformatting files, changing files from one software package to another), data analysis (SPSS, SAS, Stata), and GIS mapping should contact or visit the new NYU Data Service Studio located on the 6th floor of the Bobst library. This ITS/Libraries service conveniently locates staff, software, statistical computing, and data collection resources to support quantitative research at NYU. Consultation is available via email (data.service@nyu.edu), telephone (212-998-3434), by appointment, or on a walk-in basis. Information on workshops and other events

is available by subscribing to the ITS/FTS Statistics and GIS Group Listserv at: statistics@forums.nyu.edu. Studio hours are listed on the library's hours and access page <http://www.library.nyu.edu/about/access.html>]

Videoconferencing/Long Distance Technical Assistance (for International Capstones):

Videoconferencing facilities are available at NYU with at least 72 hour advanced notice needed. To make use of this resource, go to the righthand column of:

<http://wagner.nyu.edu/current/resources/roomReservations.php>

Mini Tape Recorders

Mini tape recorders are available to borrow from the Office of Career Services on a first-come, first-served basis. Call 212-998-7474 for more information.

MUTUAL EXPECTATIONS FOR CAPSTONE

Capstone grows out of, and contributes to, a set of interlocking communities. Communities are sustained by mutual ties of responsibility and obligation, gift and receipt. So is Capstone. Capstone has four stakeholder groups, groups that come together to make Capstone work: clients, students, faculty and Wagner itself, as represented by its administration and the Capstone program staff. Each of these groups has interwoven responsibilities to the others; each group gives to the other groups and receives in return.

Students Offer

- Energy, time and engagement
- A range of experience and expertise
- A stance of curiosity and openness to their client, their faculty and each other
- A willingness to re-negotiate and revise the project as necessary
- A finished work product which advances the mission of the organization

Faculty Offer

- A learning environment, both challenging and supportive, in which students can build on earlier experiences, while trying out new ways of thinking and acting
- A set of class meetings, activities and assignments which gives students an overall framework within which to work, but is adaptable to the particular needs of their projects
- Support to the client and its Capstone team, as necessary, to ensure that the project is moving forward to a successful conclusion
- A willingness to act as liaison, as necessary, between Wagner, the client and the students
- An opportunity, towards the end of the course, for students to reflect on the bigger picture within which their project is located
- Useful feedback during and at the end of the project in addition to a final grade

Clients Offer

- A concrete, feasible project
- An identified staff liaison with the Capstone team
- Communication with and support of its Capstone team; an openness to mentoring team members, as well as treating them as work partners
- A willingness to re-negotiate and revise the project as necessary
- Useful feedback during the project and evaluation at the end of the project that can inform the faculty member's grading decision
- An engagement fee, where possible

Wagner and Capstone Program Staff Offer

- An academic environment with a set of supports, including specialization requirements and related courses, which contribute to Capstone's success
- Smooth-running program administration
- A clear and transparent Capstone process
- A variety of resources and support to clients, faculty and student teams
- Openness of feedback from other stakeholders on what's working and not working.

We offer this list of mutual expectations in order to give all stakeholders a general sense of their obligations to others as well as others' obligations to them. Once teams have been matched with clients, we suggest that more specific work agreements be drawn up so that mutual responsibilities are made transparent and explicit.

Ethics Considerations in Capstone: A Brief Overview for Students

A number of ethical issues can arise in Capstone projects. This memo lays out the most common issues and suggests ways to address them. If you have any questions, either now or as your Capstone project develops, please don't hesitate to talk with your professor or with Erica Foldy, a management faculty member and one of the Capstone co-directors. Her contact information is below. These issues are important and they can also be confusing, so err on the safe side and get more information if you need to.

We use the term "ethics considerations" to refer to a variety of concerns that can arise in the course of doing data gathering and working with an outside organization. These issues generally fall into two categories:

- Informant-related issues (Informants are the people you speak with to gather information related to your project);
- Client-related issues (Your Capstone client organization)

Informant-related issues

- ❖ Data gathering, whether done as part of an academic research project or on behalf of a client organization, has the potential to exploit or mistreat the individual informants from whom you are gathering data. For this reason, universities and research institutions generally have strict guidelines for any data gathering from people (as opposed to, for example, using archival information like government records or newspapers). These guidelines are most important when dealing with more vulnerable populations, such as children, prisoners, the recipients of social welfare services, etc. They can be less important when collecting data from organizational employees, though that is not always the case. For example, if you are asking employees to give you information that might be critical about their employer and could jeopardize their employment, then of course you need to be very careful.
- ❖ Here are examples of projects with different levels of risk to informants:
 - Virtually no risk: Projects involving surveys with fully anonymous data collection: This could include some kinds of web-based surveys or surveys conducted on a street corner that do not ask for name or other identifying information.
 - Low risk: Projects involving interviews about non-sensitive or non-stigmatizing information, but in which readers of the final report may be able to identify who made particular statements. For example, team members might interview the Executive Directors of six nonprofit organizations and provide the client with a list of who was interviewed. Even if the report does not link a statement or quote or opinion with a particular interviewee, it still might be possible to guess his/her identity.

- Some risk:
 - Projects involving interviews in which participants might be under some pressure or coercion to answer in a particular way: For example, employees of the client organization who are being asked to assess an organizational program or policy (which could include assessment of other employees including their supervisor).
 - Projects including vulnerable populations, such as children, prisoners, or families involved in some sort of social services such as the child welfare system.
- ❖ Here are the three most important concerns and how to address them.
 - Do potential informants understand the project and the data collection process?
 - Develop a clear, simple description of the data gathering which will be consistently provided to each informant, either with a written or verbal statement. The explanation should include the purpose of the project, who is conducting the data collection, the specific activities that the informant will be asked to do, and how much time will be involved.
 - If, based on the examples and guidelines above, you think your project does pose some risk to potential informants, this statement should be written, rather than verbal. Work with your professor on this.
 - Do potential informants understand that their participation is truly voluntary and should be undertaken only with informed consent?
 - Make sure your description of the project includes the stipulation that participation is voluntary and make sure you get at least verbal consent to continue.
 - If, based on the examples and guidelines above, you think your project does pose some risk to potential informants, you should get written consent. Work with your professor on this.
 - Will informants' confidentiality be safeguarded?
 - In most projects involving data collection from people, confidentiality is critical. This is how you can safeguard confidentiality:
 - Make sure you conduct interviews on sensitive topics in places where others will not know who is participating.
 - Give participants a code number and put this number on any of their materials (completed questionnaires, interview transcripts) so their name is not associated with these materials.
 - Never attribute quotes or other data to a named individual (that is, saying, "one informant said..." rather than, "Molly Jones said...")
 - Do not disclose any informant characteristics if those characteristics could identify a given individual (for example, if you only had one or two informants from Fort Greene, you wouldn't say, "A Fort Greene resident said...").
 - Keep your data and any materials that could lead to the identification of an informant in a secure place. (So, for example, you might choose to keep all your materials in your own home or office, rather than at the client organization, if someone there might have an incentive to look at the data and identify informants.)
- ❖ Some students may be working with a client organization (usually in the health care field) that requires them to go through a formal review process (sometimes called the Institutional Review Board or Human Subjects Review) to safeguard potential informants. If so, you will need to work with the client and your faculty member on this.
- ❖ HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)
 - HIPAA is a federal law passed in 1996 specifically to ensure privacy of patient health information. If you are working in a health-care organization, HIPAA could apply to your work, especially if you have access to data about individual patients. If this is the case, confer with your client organization and faculty member about how to handle this.
- ❖ For students who think they might wish to publish their work:

- If you want to publish your work, and you are collecting data from people, then you will need to go through the Institutional Review Board at NYU. We **strongly discourage** you from doing this since it is labor- and time-intensive and could potentially set you back by months. However, if you still want to do this, then **please understand that it is up to you to learn how to submit an IRB application**, working with someone at the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects. Your faculty member is not expected to support you on this, nor is the Capstone program.

Client-related issues

A different set of issues arise related to the client organization and your relationship with your client. Here are several significant issues and some thoughts about how to address them.

- ❖ Who owns the work produced by the Capstone team?
 - The final work product is owned by your client organization. However, Wagner reserves the right to publicly list the organization as a client, to keep copies of all Capstone teams' final reports for review by the Wagner community, and to include a brief project description in Capstone promotional materials.
 - Given this, you may want to work with the client to answer these questions:
 - ◆ Will you have the right to disclose or disseminate the report?
 - ◆ Can you participate in the decision about how the report will be disseminated and to whom?
 - Furthermore, you are allowed to use your work in pursuit of your educational or professional careers.
- ❖ Will Capstone teams have access to confidential and/or proprietary client information or materials?
 - Clarify with your client if they have concerns about any of the information or materials you are working with. Discuss with them how to ensure that confidentiality is maintained and that no proprietary information is inadvertently leaked. If in any doubt, err on the side of caution.
 - This will be particularly important if someone on the team is an employee of an organization that could be considered a competitor of the client organization. This could pose a conflict of interest for that team member. Any potential conflicts of interest should be disclosed to the client organization, so that you can jointly figure out how to address any concerns.
 - Make sure you determine with the client what should happen to these materials after the project is completed.

These are not the only issues, just the most common ones. If other issues arise in your work and you think they should be included in future versions of this memo, please let Prof. Erica Foldy know. Her contact information is on the first page of the memo.

CAPSTONE TEAM REIMBURSEMENT INSTRUCTIONS AND FORM

Reimbursement Policies and Procedures

Each Capstone team can be reimbursed **up to \$500** for expenses.

Please read these Important Notes First:

- **Gift cards for clients can only be reimbursed if they are under \$25.**
- NYU will only reimburse a student for a charge made on their **own** credit card (if multiple team members buy items on their credit cards, each person will have to complete their own reimbursement request). For this reason, it can be easiest if one team member makes all purchases, if possible.
- Receipts must show **proof of payment!** An invoice that doesn't show that it has been paid is not acceptable.
- **Students can not directly pay a consultant (ex: translator, copy editor) for services. Also the consultant MUST be a US Citizen or Permanent Resident.** To pay a consultant, the student must get an invoice and Social Security # / ITIN from them and submit these to Pat Eaton who can arrange for NYU to pay the consultant directly.
- Reimbursement for certain expenses will require the surrendering of the purchased item to the Office of Career Services at the project's conclusion (i.e. small electronic devices). All reimbursement requests are subject to the discretion of the Assistant Dean, Student Affairs.

Reimbursable expenses include:

- Reproduction, binding, and/or preparation of Capstone documents (including costs to produce display materials for the Capstone Expo)
- Calling cards purchased to make long-distance telephone calls on behalf of the client
- Software programs purchased for data analysis
- Travel expenses incurred for project-related work (train or plane fare to visit clients located outside of the NYC area are handled through a separate travel reimbursement process)
- Other small, project-related expenses (i.e. blank videotapes, cassettes, or CDs).
- Refreshments for project-related meetings involving external participants, i.e. focus groups or client meetings. (Food/beverage expenditures for Team project meetings are not reimbursable).

The reimbursement process is as follows:

1. If possible, each team may want to identify **one person** to make all purchases. If multiple team members buy items on their credit cards, each person will have to complete their own reimbursement request. All reimbursements will be made by check and mailed to the designated recipient - no cash reimbursements can be given.
2. Tape all **original** receipts (photocopies not acceptable) to an 8 1/2 x 11 piece of paper and attach it to the completed Reimbursement Form.
3. Submit the Reimbursement Form with complete receipts to Pat Eaton at the Office of Career Services at 295 Lafayette Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10012. Fall reimbursement request submission will **begin Monday, November 28, 2011** and **end Friday, December 16, 2011**. Spring reimbursement request submission will **begin Monday, April 23, 2012** and **end Friday, May 11, 2012**.
4. Once your reimbursement request has been processed, you will need to sign it before it is sent to Accounts Payable for payment. The Office of Career Services will send you an email letting you know when the form is ready for you to sign.
5. It can take up to 6-8 weeks for NYU Accounts Payable to issue the check.

CAPSTONE PROJECT REIMBURSEMENT FORM

1. Please print all information clearly:

Name of Capstone student to be reimbursed: _____

Home Address (where check will be mailed): _____

Telephone: _____ NYU email: _____

NYU University ID #: N _____

Capstone Team/Client: _____

Capstone Professor(s): _____

Names of all members of Capstone Team: _____

Are you a U.S. citizen or permanent resident? _____ Yes _____ No*

* If "No," you must also submit a copy of your **passport** and **I-94 card** with your original receipts.

2. Tape all **original** receipts to additional sheet(s) of white 8 1/2" x 11" paper. Receipts must be readable in order to qualify for reimbursement and must indicate **proof of payment** (invoices that don't indicate payment or "balance due" statements will not be accepted).
3. Submit both pages of this form (this page plus the Itemized Expenses page) along with **receipts** as described above to: Pat Eaton, NYU Wagner OCS, 295 Lafayette Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10012

ITEMIZED EXPENSES

Explanation of submitted expense(s)	Amount (US \$)
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
Total amount of reimbursement (in words): _____	Total amount \$ _____

REQUEST FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF PRE-APPROVED CAPSTONE TRAVEL EXPENSES

1. Each Capstone team member who travels and seeks reimbursement should follow the instructions below. Note that you will only be reimbursed for **pre-approved** travel-related expenses.
2. Individual team members must complete and submit **this form** along with the following information:
 - All **original receipts** attached to sheets of 8 ½ x 11 white paper using **clear** tape only (**no staples, please**)
 - All **boarding passes** and/or **train ticket stubs** attached to sheets of 8 ½ x 11 white paper using **clear** tape only (**no staples, please**)
 - **Proofs of payment** (i.e. credit card statements, cancelled checks, or stamped cash receipts) for all expenses
 - A copy of your **itinerary** showing flight locations and dates
 - For all reimbursements that pertain to **foreign currency**, include a printout from a web-based currency conversion program or copy of newspaper with date of paper and exchange rate table, to substantiate the **rate of exchange** used for the conversion from foreign currency to US dollars. A web-based currency conversion program you may use is: <http://fxconverter.com/>
3. If you have any questions or need help with your submission, please contact Pat Eaton by email at pe357@nyu.edu or phone at 212.998.7474. You may also set up an appointment to review your submission **before** it goes to NYU Accounts Payable.
4. Return this form along with the required receipts and documentation to Pat Eaton at the Office of Career Services at 295 Lafayette Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10012. Please be sure to include **valid** proofs of payment and travel records (i.e., original boarding passes and ticket stubs, cancelled checks, credit card statements, and stamped cash receipts). Any missing documents or receipts will impede the reimbursement process -- please check to ensure you have included all necessary information.
5. Once your reimbursement request has been processed, you will need to sign it before it is sent to Accounts Payable for payment. The Office of Career Services will send you an email letting you know when the form is ready for you to sign.
6. It can take up to 6-8 weeks for NYU Accounts Payable to issue the payment.

CAPSTONE PRE-APPROVED TRAVEL REIMBURSEMENT FORM

1. Please print all information clearly:

Name of Capstone student to be reimbursed: _____

Home Address (where check will be mailed): _____

Telephone: _____ NYU email: _____

NYU University ID #: N _____

Capstone Team/Client: _____

Capstone Professor(s): _____

Names of all members of Capstone Team: _____

Are you a U.S. citizen or permanent resident? _____ Yes _____ No*

* If "No," you must also submit a copy of your **passport** and **I-94 card** along with your original receipts.

2. Tape all **original** receipts and all **original hard copy** boarding passes or train ticket stubs to additional sheet(s) of white 8 1/2" x 11" paper (no staples, please). Also, you must include valid **proofs of payment** for travel reimbursement (i.e. credit card statements, cancelled checks, or stamped cash receipts) and your **itinerary** showing flight locations and dates.
3. **Submit both pages of this form (this page plus the Itemized Expenses page) along with** receipts, boarding passes, proofs of payment, and itinerary as described above to: **Pat Eaton, NYU Wagner OCS, 295 Lafayette Street, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10012**

ITEMIZED EXPENSES for pre-approved Capstone related travel

<i>Receipt</i>	<i>Date</i>	Amount (US \$)	Cash/Charge	Description
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
Cell phone expenses				
Cell phone expenses				

Total Amount: \$ _____

Total amount of reimbursement (in words):

Note: Reimbursements will only be made for expenses pre-approved by OCS and not to exceed pre-approved allowance. Cell phone expenses can be reimbursed up to \$50 per person and are not counted as part of the pre-approved travel amount.

CAPSTONE EXPO

The Capstone Expo is an opportunity for all Capstone teams to come together and share process and findings with clients, faculty, administration, and other students. This is a great opportunity for teams to show off the fruit of their hard work, see what other Capstone teams have been working on, and publicly acknowledge their Capstone Clients.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

**The 2011 – 2012 Capstone Expo will be held on May 8, 2012
from 5:00 to 6:30 pm**

For the Capstone Expo, each team writes an abstract and creates a poster board that describes the project's purpose, methodology, key insights, and recommendations.

We encourage you to inform your Clients of the date and time of the Expo at the start of your project, so that they can plan to attend. More event details and RSVP information will become available in mid-Spring.

HOW TO INCLUDE CAPSTONE PROJECTS IN YOUR RESUME

Be sure to acknowledge the experience as part of an NYU team-based project. For most Capstones, your title should be *Project Associate*:

9/11 – Present	NEW YORK CITIZENS HOUSING AND PLANNING COUNCIL Project Associate, NYU Advanced Project in Urban Planning	New York, NY
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve on 4-person team consisting of NYU Wagner graduate candidates to identify recommendations for commercial development of Woodside, Queens in response to citywide and regional needs.• Analyze current urban design elements, land use, and housing conditions.• Conduct demographic analysis, including review of population and employment trends in order to determine present and future needs of area and forecast economic growth.	

If you are in a Research Capstone, use the following as a guide:

9/11 – Present	NYU ADVANCED PROJECT IN APPLIED RESEARCH IN PUBLIC FINANCE AND POLICY Researcher	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serve on five-person team consisting of NYU Wagner graduate candidates to analyze the effect of cost and quality of college education on individual's success upon graduation using panel data• Develop regression models from restricted use data and conduct statistical analysis using SPSS• Produce written reports of findings	