

CAPSTONE: ADVANCED PROJECTS

IN INTERNATIONAL POLICY & MANAGEMENT (Section 002)

 Fall 2023 & Spring 2024

## **Instructor information**

Instructor: Anna Levy

Email: al4753@nyu.edu

**Course information**

Class meeting times: Monday, 6:45-8:25pm

Location: 181 Mercer St (Paulson Center) Room 232 Loc: Washington Square. Occasionally classes will also meet online (Please use the below Zoom link). Authentication will be required.

Office hours: Thursdays, 5-6 pm or by appointment via Zoom

Class & Office Hours Zoom meeting ID:

Zoom link: https://nyu.zoom.us/j/95783740461?pwd=WUNFZVI3MFM4c3ZxZHVId0hJTUpZQT09

Meeting ID: 957 8374 0461

Passcode: 653684

Capstone Class Drive: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1LSAUGIaUYFUAL-WuI0k1f7w\_F9Yejsu2

**Course Description**

Capstone is learning in action. Part of Wagner’s core curriculum, 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 to address challenges, solve problems and identify opportunities for a client organization. Students will design the approach, conduct the data collection and analysis, and present findings, both orally and in writing, to the client.

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 building on students’ previous coursework and expertise, while also enhancing student learning on policy and management issues, key process skills and research skills. 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.

Although divided into teams, the class will work as a learning community dedicated to the success of all the projects.

**Course and Learning Objectives**

Capstone integrates and enhances learning in several domains: a specific content or issue area; process skills, including project, client and team management; and research methods for gathering, analyzing and reporting data. The specific learning objectives are these:

**A. CONTENT**

Students will:

* learn the policy, institutional and infrastructure context for their project;
* become familiar with any specialized vocabularies of the organizations and domains of their project;
* draw on critical research related to their content area;
* connect their project with previous coursework in their broader program and specialization.

**B. PROCESS**

Overall, students build capacity for flexibility and resilience, which is shown by adapting to changing and complex circumstances, balancing competing demands, accepting uncertainty and lack of clarity, and knowing when to consult with their Capstone instructor. Process learning objectives fall into the following three domains:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Project Management**
 | **Students will:** |
|  | * Assess the client organization and its environment;
* Frame and refine the problem presented by the client;
* Develop a contract with the client that defines the specifics of the project, including scope, timeline and deliverables;
* Develop an internal project work plan with specific task assignments, timelines and deliverables;
* Monitor the team’s progress and compliance with the team charter, client contract and team work plan;
* Revise the contract and work plan as necessary;
* Develop well-supported and realistic recommendations for the client organization.
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| 1. **Client Management**
 | **Students will:** |
|  | * Negotiate a contract that includes timelines and deliverables as well as communication protocols;
* Develop and sustain a relationship with the client, learning the organization’s culture and authority structure (which may sometimes have idiosyncratic, challenging characteristics);
* Communicate regularly with the client in a meaningful way – to make specific reports on progress, to solicit feedback and further direction, to ask clarifying questions, etc.;
* Solicit and integrate feedback from the client on project design and deliverables, identifying possible roadblocks and modifying the work plan as necessary;
* Deliver a final product on time and that satisfies client’s expectations.
 |
| 1. **Team smanagement**
 | **Students will:** |
|  | * Understand the process of forming and developing a team and implement (apply) what is learned;
* Define roles and useful division of labor, completing all assigned tasks on time and with high quality work;
* Diagnose and attend to interpersonal dynamics, respecting the norms established by the team for interpersonal communication and behavior;
* Manage assignments and accountability;
* Develop an accountability structure for behaviors and for task assignments and manage compliance;
* Advocate points of view respectfully and with evidence, listen to the evidence and perspective of their teammates, and negotiate a result that is positive for all members;
* Solicit and offer feedback among the team;
* Respect, draw on and learn from cultural and personal difference;
* Resolve any conflict constructively and quickly.
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**C. RESEARCH**

Students will:

* identify and synthesize existing research relevant to the project;
* identify and implement appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative data gathering methods;
* identify and implement appropriate data analysis procedures;
* determine findings, situating these into the broader context as identified through their research and in related literature;
* develop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings.

**D. COMMUNICATION**

Students will:

* synthesize and summarize large amounts of data and information;
* prepare clear and well-argued written deliverables tailored to the client’s needs;
* prepare clear and well-argued verbal presentations tailored to the client’s needs.

**Table: Learning Assessment**

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| **Course Learning Objective** | **Corresponding Assignment** |
| Understand the policy and/or management context for their project | Interim and final products |
| Be familiar with relevant specialized vocabularies | Interim and final products |
| Draw on critical research related to their content area | Interim and final products |
| Frame and refine the problem presented by the client | Signed contract with client |
| Develop a contract with the client including scope, timeline and deliverables | Signed contract with client |
| Develop an internal project work plan | Team work plan |
| Meet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and work plan | Signed contract and team work plan |
| Negotiate a contract with their client | Signed contract with client |
| Advocate points of view and negotiate differences of opinion | Self and team peer evaluations |
| Appreciate and learn from cultural and other differences | Self and team peer evaluations |
| Identify and synthesize existing research relevant to the project | Interim and final products |
| Identify and implement appropriate quantitative/qualitative data gathering methods | Interim and final products |
| Identify and implement appropriate data analysis procedures | Interim and final products |
| Determine findings | Interim and final products |
| Develop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings | Interim and final products |
| Synthesize and summarize large amounts of data and information | Interim and final products |
| Prepare clear and well-argued written deliverables tailored to the client’s needs | Interim and final products |
| Prepare clear and well-argued verbal presentations tailored to the client’s needs | Interim and final presentations |

**Course Requirements**

An array of potential projects has been identified for our section. If not there already, project descriptions will be posted to BrightSpace under the “Client Proposals” tab, and we will meet with the clients as a group before teams are assigned. Teams are created based on the needs of the project – balancing client needs with students’ previous coursework, work and life experience, other expertise, student preferences, student availability, team size, and the balance of skills among the team. Teams are 3-5 students each.

The class meeting times will include presentations from the instructor, possible guest speakers, class discussion and team meetings. Course requirements include:

* Enroll in both semesters.
* **Attend all scheduled classroom sessions** on time and in-person or on Zoom, in accordance with the provided syllabus and schedule below.
* Actively participate in classroom session activities, online sessions, and in team meetings.
* Complete all assignments on time. This includes self and peer evaluations, team and client contracts, project deliverables (interim and final), and project presentations.
* Participate equitably (contribute your full share) in all team activities:
	+ team meetings;
	+ meetings with the client and with the faculty advisor;
	+ planning and executing background research and any fieldwork;
	+ preparing deliverables; and
	+ presenting your findings.

**Online/Zoom Meetings:**

Although most class sessions will be in person, since some of our Capstone sessions remain online, and we presume that many client and team meetings will be online as well, we’ll have a dedicated Zoom link for the class. As NYU students, Zoom technology is available through the school, and if you don’t have an account already and the instructions on the BrightSpace site don’t get there, I’ll show you how to set it up. If you prefer, you are welcome to use other technologies when meeting as teams and with your clients.

**Travel for Capstone:**

Some of the capstone teams are slated for fieldwork travel this year. We will assume that travel is possible until otherwise notified and will monitor any changes throughout the semester.

**Wagner does not cover the full costs of travel. Roundtrip airfare IS covered.** Some travel costs beyond airfare may be negotiated with the client (e.g., ground transportation, lodging, translators, or the like), but not all clients are able to offer this. All costs not covered by the school or the client are the students’ responsibility to pay.

In the event that travel for those projects which require fieldwork outside the U.S. is unaffected, instructions on how to apply for funding for airfare can be found in the 2023 Fall Capstone Student Guide posted to BrightSpace under the “Intro, Syllabus, and Calendar” tab.

**Students who travel internationally for Capstone must follow all NYU regulations and procedures.**

The [2019 Global Travel Handbook](https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/about/%282%29%20Global%20Travel%20Handbook%20-%202018-19.pdf) may be found on the NYU-Wagner Capstone website: [https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/about/(2)%20Global%20Travel%20Handbook%20-%202018-19.pdf](https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/about/%282%29%20Global%20Travel%20Handbook%20-%202018-19.pdf). When a more recent version is ready, we’ll make sure it is available. More information will be provided to teams who can travel. This includes a briefing by Capstone administrative staff before teams travel (date, time and place to be announced).

**Capstone Expenses Not Related to Travel**

Each capstone team (whether the team travels or not) is entitled to reimbursement of up to $500 of Capstone related expenses, such as photocopying, phone calls, and supplies, etc. None of these funds can be spent hiring others to do work that you are expected to do, e.g., writers, editors, graphic designers, etc. The forms and procedures needed to claim reimbursement for these expenses and a detailed explanation of eligible expenses are found in the Capstone Student Guide, available on the NYU Brightspace website under “Intro, Syllabus, and Calendar” tab. The reimbursement form is available on the [Wagner website](https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/capstone/Reimbursement%20Form%20for%20Capstone%20Team%20Expenses%202020-2021.pdf) (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/capstone/Reimbursement%20Form%20for%20Capstone%20Team%20Expenses%202020-2021.pdf>) and the BrightSpace website under, “Resources for Capstone, Logistical support.”

**School policies**

 **Academic Integrity |** Academic integrity is a vital component of Wagner and NYU. All students enrolled in this class are required to read and abide by [Wagner’s Academic Code](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code) (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code>). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner Academic Oath](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/academic-oath) (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/academic-oath>). Plagiarism of any form will not be tolerated and students in this class are expected to report violations to me. If any student in this class is unsure about what is expected of you and how to abide by the academic code, please consult with me.

**Grading |** [Wagner’s grading policy](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/grading): https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/grading

**NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays |** [NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, be absent from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations (<https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html>). Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might interfere with course requirements. Together we will develop mutually acceptable alternatives.

**Henry and Lucy Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at NYU |** Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please visit the [Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html>) or call or email CSD at (212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

**Evaluation and Grading Criteria Specific to this Course**

Students receive 1.5 credits for the fall semester and 1.5 credits for the spring semester. At the end of each semester, students will be receiving a grade for their work reflective of that semester.

Grades are specific to you as individuals, not to the team as a whole. In other words, team members may receive different grades if it is warranted. Grading decisions are based on an assessment of students’ contribution and learning and on the assessments you give each other as part of the evaluation process at the end of the first and second semesters. Therefore, preparing yourself and peer evaluations are required elements if you are to be considered as having completed Capstone. The client’s evaluation of your work is also considered in your score.

Students are graded on both the products they deliver to their clients and evidence of progressive learning throughout the course, as identified the Learning Objectives listed above. Therefore, final grades are based on the following criteria:

**Work products (60%):**

*Work products include all project deliverables for the client and all internal team deliverables.*All team members will be given the same grade for the results of the work accomplished by the team. This means that if one team member falls behind, others will be forced to step in to cover. Criteria include did the team achieve the course learning objectives for content, process and research? What is the quality of their products? Are all documents clearly written in cogent, easy to understand language; well-argued using evidence; and with feasible, appropriate and clear recommendations? Were deadlines met? Is the client satisfied with the team’s work and products?

The scoring criteria and expectations for your final report and client presentations will be posted to the BrightSpace site as soon as they are finished. They will be posted in early Spring 2023. Additional discussion on expectations for course deliverables and work will be part of course content.

**Individual performance, attendance, growth, and demonstrated learning (40%):**

Your individual grades will be determined based on participation (both in class and in your group meetings, planning, etc), timeliness (of submission of assignments for the class and internal deadlines for your time), the depth or quality of individual submissions in the Fall semester (as clarified in each assignment listed below, the degree to which you shared the workload of completing and revising different tasks related to the group consulting project, and your overall contributions over the course of the year to team success.

**Scoring criteria for final deliverables:**

* **Evidence that data synthesis used for final deliverable / report comes from several phases of research.** Different segments of final deliverables should reflect synthesis from layered stages of research, data collection and analysis, rounds of feedback and adaptive analysis. Beyond data collected during deep dives, this will include contextual references and/or incorporated consideration of debates that are central to the specific analysis or recommendations being produced.
* **Demonstration that several revisions have been made which responds to or acknowledges group (internal), client, and faculty feedback.** While feedback is only intended to strengthen the final deliverable or product, each team will Open and proactive communication with respect to adaptation or emerging challenges before they escalate into operational paralysis.
* **Clarity of analysis and communication of it in final deliverable (whether written or visual).** The form of presentation, whether written or visual, should communicate in clear, concise, language or visuals. Additionally, on team projects with multiple writers, the coherence of voice across the full deliverable
* **Adherence to shared deadlines.** Deadlines for Spring 2023 will be adjusted slightly for each group to maximize overlap of course deadlines with client/project deadlines. Adherence to these deadlines (which are also subject to change with sufficient advanced notice given client conditions or specific project needs) will be taken into account in the group’s final deliverable grade.
* **Demonstration of communication systems that allow for ongoing adaptation and ability to deal with emerging questions or challenges in early stages.**

**Individual performance and learning (40%)** For this portion of the grade, students will be assessed and graded not on the results of the whole team but on their individual contribution in class and to the team process.

* **Shared quality contribution and carrying your fair share in the team |** Was your work high quality? Does your work show evidence of learning as outlined in “Learning Objectives”? Did you contribute to the team process in a productive manner, or was your presence a burden and disruption to your teammates?

* **Attendance, participation, timeliness** | For example, did you attend all classroom and team sessions? Were you on time to meetings? Did you respond to questions in a timely manner? Did you meet internal team deadlines? Did you show initiative, or did the accountability person have to prod you? Did you do your fair share? Did you pitch in when others were struggling?

* **Leveraging strengths and acknowledging areas for improvement with support and respect |** Were you respectful of others, their ideas and their work? Did you work to draw out the best of your teammates, or did you denigrate their work or ideas? Were others glad to be working with you, or did you regularly try their patience? Did you work to resolve conflict in a respectful, equitable manner, reaching a conclusion that brought more to all involved?How do you respond to feedback from peers and your faculty? Do you seek help when the team struggles, or retribution? Do you make progress and demonstrate learning as the year progresses? How are you and your work described by your teammates in their reviews?
* **Communication, responsiveness and engagement with the client and the professor (with me) are part of this score.**
* **Timeliness and quality of individual assignment submissions**

**Lateness and absences** are no more acceptable in this class than they would be in a work environment. There must be an extraordinary reason, sent to *me and your teammates in advance* of the absence, for missing even a single class or team meeting. (Religious holidays are acceptable reasons but you must give advance notice, [NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html).) Failure to attend classroom and team sessions consistently may result in failing Capstone.

Part of the coursework for this Capstone section will include readings and presentations/discussions on team and work processes. These provide additional information on expectations and criteria for assessment.

**Note on written submissions:** Expect when a document is described in the syllabus as a “working document,” all written assignments for Capstone are professional documents. They are also to use data and evidence to craft a cogent argument. Although you will be preparing sections and elements as individuals, the final document is to be one, cohesive document with transitions leading the reader from one section into the next.

**Deliverables are to be designed:** formatted and laid out in a visually appealing manner using color, images and data visualization. (Visual appeal attracts the reader to the content and enhances the reader’s ability to absorb what is said.) Working drafts may use google docs, or similar.

**Communication Policy | Professor Levy should be copied on all correspondence with the client until the contract is signed.** Questions not covered during class time may be sent to me via email at al4753@nyu.edu. Within your groups, time limits for replies to your teammates will be set as a team, but consider this: a prompt reply is critical to success when working as a group. You can expect replies from Professor Levy within three business days unless a subject line is labeled as an urgent request.

Course information will be delivered using NYU email addresses and/or the NYU BrightSpace messaging system. While participating in this course, it is critical to check your NYU inbox regularly.

**Required and Recommended Texts**

*Required texts will be shared on the first day of class, and most required texts that come from books (unavailable in searchable websites or databases) will be uploaded by the professor.. My aim is to minimize the need for purchasing textbooks for this class, however, it may be inevitable.*

**Required texts & sites**

1. The “Capstone Student Guide,” posted to the course site on NYU BrightSpace, under “Getting started” and on the Wagner website (URL:<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student>)
2. “[A List of templates for international development and aid professionals](https://tools4dev.org/blog/a-list-of-templates-for-international-development-and-aid-professionals/),” Tools4Dev

**Suggested/Optional texts**

1. *Stroh*, D. P. (2015). *Systems thinking for social change*: a practical guide to solving complex problems, avoiding unintended consequences, and achieving lasting results.
2. Hill, Janine. *Embracing Equity: Best Practices for Developing and Keeping a Winning Multi-Racial Leadership Team*, June 2022.
3. [Costanza-Chock](https://mitpress.mit.edu/contributors/sasha-costanza-chock), Sasha. *Design Justice: Community Led Practices to Build the World We Need.* MIT Press, March 2020.
4. Feedback Labs, [Feedback Tools & Training Toolkit](https://feedbacklabs.org/tools-and-training/)
5. **LinkedIn Accounts to Follow:** Alba Villamil, Mara Tissera Luna, Systems Innovation, Adam Grant, Tom Aston

**Course Format & Milestones**

The course meets weekly. It uses a varied and flexible set of learning approaches:

1. Experiential learning and simulation-based decision-making
2. Presentations given by faculty or visiting experts (as needed)
3. Facilitated class discussions
4. Selected readings from textbooks/reference sources/journal articles
5. Team meetings (during and outside of class time)
6. Faculty/team consultations (during and outside of class time as needed)
7. Self-reflection and self-evaluation

Once teams are formed and basic material is covered (including instruction in team and work processes), much of the weekly class period will be devoted to team meetings and team consultations with the faculty advisor.

**Course Milestones**

The course has a series of milestones – both activities and products – that serve as interim work products for the course or for the client.

Some of the due dates listed below are negotiable. Ability to meet the dates will depend in part on your client’s articulation of the problem and on client availability. All consulting work requires discussion on scope and content of a project. Some projects and clients require more discussion than others. As work progresses, additional clarification may be required. That said, the dates below are reasonable targets for successful completion of your project. **Please contact Professor Levy** as soon as possible if it looks like you will need to negotiate a different due date for any of these, based on client needs or other exceptional circumstances. We will proceed to adjust accordingly.

This list of milestones is just an overview of key events in the year-long project that is Capstone. **Specific assignments and deadlines are listed week by week in the syllabus, and accompanying announcements on BrightSpace will flag them in advance.** Along with these assignments is the day-to-day, direct work on your project: ongoing research and content work among teams and with clients.

**Note**: Dates on drafts and client contracts are tied to deliverables, and may differ from the dates here. As needed, the professor and the capstone teams will finalize dates based on project needs and my availability.

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| **Fall 2023 Capstone Milestones**  |
| **Sept** |  | * Potential client presentations
* Team formation and client-project-team assignments;
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| **Oct** |  | * **Initial meeting with client and faculty to explain the Capstone process, establish a relationship with the client, assess the client organization, and begin data gathering for clarifying** the problem, question, or issue that the client wishes the Capstone team to address as well as the client’s initial vision of a successful project
* **Summary report of decisions made during the first client meeting**
* **Initial team charter developed with and signed by all team members**
* **Draft work plan with tasks identified and assigned, including due dates.** Along with guiding your work throughout the year, the work plan feeds into the client contract.
 |
| **Nov** |  | * **Final work plan**
* **Final, signed client-team contract**
* **Individually submitted literature reviews focused on sub-components of project lit review**
* **End-of-first semester self, team/peer, and course evaluations;** discussion of team process and progress (November, specific dates to be announced).
 |
| **Dec-****Jan** |  | * **Final group literature review**
* **Adjusted work plan for project deep dives**
* **Client project deep dives & data gathering** (with or without travel), individual check-ins with Professor Levy, and one team debrief & Spring synthesis and final deliverable plan due**.**
 |
| **Spring 2024 Capstone Milestones (*Final dates, milestones & deliverables TBC in Dec ‘23/Jan ‘24)*** |
| **Jan**  |  | * **Revised work plan submitted for Spring.** Adjusting your work plans post-field work or deep dives might account for the volume of material, adjusted deliverables or deadlines in coordination with the client, or other team considerations.
* **Initial, informal discussions on most appropriate structure or format for data analysis**
 |
| **Feb** |  | * **Interim report, (working document) with results and observations from fieldwork** (for teams with international travel) or initial summary of findings thus far (for teams without a fieldwork component), including work over winter break.
* **Outline of final project report (or deliverable if a visualization or analysis) to faculty.** This is to be a real, working draft of your final deliverable with your draft thesis and a complete layout of the final argument. Many components are to be well fleshed out.
 |
| **March** |  | * **First and second drafts final report or deliverable to faculty**
* **Submission of at least one draft to writing support faculty Emily Austin**
 |
| **April** |  | * **Final draft of Capstone written deliverables.**
* **Client presentation rehearsal before class/faculty for feedback** before client presentation.
* **End-of-course self, team/peer, client and course evaluations**.
 |
| **May** |  | * **Presentation of findings and recommendations to client;**
* **End-of-second semester reflection;**
* **NO CAPSTONE EXPO THIS YEAR**
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These “milestones” are tools to help teams complete their projects successfully. Your primary targets are your client and the ongoing research and content work to complete your project. The activities here are supplementary to your primary work of completing the client’s request.

**Students are expected to meet weekly as a team outside of the designated class time.** Most weeks, the work will necessitate additional meetings outside of class time. Some work, e.g., planning, brainstorming, rehearsing and editing, will require longer sessions outside of class time.

Capstone is a fluid, ever-changing process. There are also Capstone-wide mandated activities that have only tentative dates at this point. This means that **this syllabus will be changing throughout the year**. The list of weeks and topics in the syllabus is preliminary. Required readings will be augmented and revised. Content sessions will be shifted, added and dropped based on your needs and learning goals. Whenever possible, we will discuss any changes to the syllabus during class time. Regardless, any changes to the original syllabus regarding session content, required readings or assignment descriptions will be posted to NYU BrightSpace, with email notice sent to you at their posting.

Please carefully review the syllabus each week for assignments due that week and soon thereafter. Again, most assignments are not your end goals. They are tools to help you achieve project goals successfully and on time.

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Fall 2023 Syllabus and Schedule

There is more material and guidance on our BrightSpace site than would fit onto a syllabus. **Please check weekly BrightSpace announcements, and the syllabus (posted to BrightSpace) every week,** when preparing for content sessions. Accompany materials may be added to Additional Course Materials on BrightSpace.

**Fall Semester Syllabus**

In this section you’ll find an overview of the Fall 2023 class schedule, client and team coordination timelines, as well as individual and team assignments. Slight changes may be made to the syllabus over the course of the semester to incorporate relevant topics, team or methodological needs, or readings released throughout the semester. The dates for deadlines, core assignments, and presentations will remain the same throughout the semester. All communications, announcements, and updates will be posted through the BrightSpace page.

For most of our early Fall 2023 class sessions, class meetings will be organized into two components:

1. **Class Discussions** will delve into readings, guided group discussions, and experiential training on designated weekly themes and skills. These discussions will be held by the whole class as a group.
2. **Team Practice** will be focused exercises, planning, coordination, and reflection within, and led by, each separate capstone teams, as part of that week’s class.

**COURSE OVERVIEW FALL 2023**

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| **Overview, Team and client formation** |
| **Session 1 (9/11)** | **Course intro, overview, and client presentation** |
| **Session 2 (9/18)****Class on ZOOM**  | **Client presentations (Class and presentations on Zoom)***Teams announced by end of week of 9/18. Individual 1:1s with Prof throughout the week.* |
| **Session 3 (9/25)****NO CLASS - Yom Kippur** | Groups meet in person non-client specific preparation and introductions**Team Practice** | Framing team charter (values), team-building exercise, individual reflection on leadership self-assessment, roles, needs, contributions in group context. You’ll also begin a high-level conversation on ideas for how a literature review for this type of project is different from an academic literature review. |
| **Session 4 (10/2)** | **Class Discussion |** What is/n’t consulting? Expectations, goals, tools**Team Practice | Setting up your first client call.** Initial coordination, methodology, and planning considerations for consulting projects, balancing upward management & horizontal collaboration, ongoing problem and context analysis, and tools for navigating ambiguity while remaining focused on client-centered needs and deliverables. |
| **Session 5 (10/9)****(NO MONDAY CLASS - CLASS MEETS ON Zoom on TUESDAY, 10/10)** | **Class Discussion |** Client contract, project, and process plans**Team Practice |** Generating work plan with clear milestones and deliverables until January, with more loosely placed milestones through April. |
| **Project planning, client coordination, developing norms and skills as a consulting team**  |
| **Session 6 (10/16)** | **Class Discussion |** Systems & context planning for work plan and literature review development **Class practice | Deciphering approaches to grey literature review along with methods and considerations for setting up adaptable, responsive work plans in this context.** Time to work on work plans and to determine how to break down project area lit reviews into 3-5 sub-areas for individual research. |
| **Session 7 (10/23)****Class on Zoom with guest lecturer** | **Skills & Methods Focus |** Navigating Ambiguity / Work Plan Design & Project Management **Class practice |** Work plan design & Project Management **Team Practice |** Clarifying between progress management, project management, and strategy management. Skills exercises on navigating and managing ambiguity, revising consulting roadmaps and communicating plans accordingly. |
| **Skills & Methodology Deep-Dive | Tools, Approaches, and Practice** |
| **Session 8 (10/30)** | Mandatory Travel and Security Training for all teams that are traveling (details forthcoming from Wagner) |
| **Session 9 (11/6)**  | **Skills & Methods Focus |** Methods & Tools for Research & Analysis | SWOT, Stakeholder map/analysis, Landscape analysis, adaptive planning. Intro to CATME (self- and peer evaluations) and then team time for the remainder of class **Class Practice |** Overview of three common analytical tools and methods used during capstone project research, making choices and right-sizing for your research. Mapping systemic and interpersonal power dynamics, assets, opportunities, and challenges of working in diverse teams and with clients, setting up related milestones, intentions & accountability. |
| **Session 10 (11/13)**  | **No readings/lecture - This whole class will be used for team time to work on several upcoming deadlines and general progress toward winter break planning. We will meet in our regularly designated classroom so the prof can meet with each group.** |
| **Session 11 (11/20)**(Class on Zoom) | **Skills & Methods Focus |** Consulting team emerging challenge (20 mins each), team time for the remainder of class**Class practice |** Team time for adjusting project plans, communication styles, etc based on group emerging challenges and feedback. |
| **Session 12 (11/27)**(Class on Zoom) | **Skills & Methods Focus |** In-class group work on Deep Dive organization, planning, and check-lists. Methods & Tools for Research & Analysis | Interviews & interviewing, panoramic listening, structuring data while researching for easier analysis.**Class practice |** Getting organized for fast past, narrow window, high stakes Dec-Jan deep dive.  |
| **Session 13 (12/4)** (In person) | **Skills & Methods Focus |** Travel Security Training (tailored per group) & Interview planning (tailored per group)**Class practice |** Interviewing teams & exercises, talk backs on ethics, technique, power, context. |
| **\*\*\*Class on Zoom | Session 14 (12/11) |** Research structure workshop & final class of the semester! (Class on Zoom)Research structure, writing & analysis workshop from Emily Austin. This will help teams structure approaches to data gathering and field note organization in a way that enables analysis to begin while research is underway.  |

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS - FALL 2023**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Assignment #** | **Graded Final Assignment or Draft/Update for Feedback?**  | **What is due & where**  | **Due date** |
| **Assignment #1** **(Individual Assignment)** | *For feedback, not graded other than deadline met* | * **Complete your “Student Information and Preference Form,”** and upload to BrightSpace. It is available in BrightSpace.
* **Schedule a 30 min 1:1 with me anytime from Sept 19-22, during working hours**.
 | Due by Sept 21 at 5 pm.  |
| **Assignment #2****(Group Assignment)** | *For feedback, not graded other than deadline met* | * **Schedule initial call with client, submit agenda for call to me**. It is okay if the call is up to 1-2 weeks past this due date. (see full assignment description in syllabus for details)
 | Due 10/3  |
| **Assignments****#3 & #4****(Group and individual assignment)** | *Graded for quality, and deadline met* | * **Group submission of document which lays out draft team charter, and team roles and responsibilities, including a brief 4-5 line description explaining why each person is designated the role they’ve been designated** (whether related to background experience, mode of decision-making such as taking a vote, or other methods used to determine these roles. (see full assignment description in syllabus for details). **Sample team charters can be found on BrightSpace under student resources.**
* In addition to a full team charter submitted as a group, each individual group member should upload a document up to 1 page on Brightspace, **sharing 3-5 bullets outlining both their strengths working in teams, areas for personal improvement, as well as one positive and one negative experience you’ve had giving & receiving feedback** in the past.
 | Due by 10/8 |
| **Assignment #5****(Group Assignment)** | *Graded for quality, organization, and timeliness* | * **Begin weekly updates.** Team faculty liaison is to send me an email every week by 7am Tuesday, copying the teammates, (one per team), with 5-10 bullets of questions/concerns, actions taken/next steps, balancing short- and long-term plans, group development.
* **Memo/Report of initial client meeting submitted to BrightSpace in PDF format no later Oct 14th.** Please include a clear statement of the problem to be addressed by your Capstone project. Please additionally include a summary of your team's action plan based on this initial call, including three questions you need to have answered, literature review considerations, three considerations regarding timeline and project management, and initial next steps. (See full assignment description in syllabus for details)
 | Start w/o 10/8Due by 10/15 |
| **In-class share-back and update** | *For feedback, not graded*  | * Begin to become familiar with your organization and project background. **You will be asked to share verbal reflections related to several aspects of the client and project context and background in class on (10/17).**
 | In-class on10/17 |
| **Assignments** **#6 & #7****(Group Assignment)** | *Primarily for feedback, graded for quality (as draft) and deadline met* | * **Draft project scope submitted to NYU BrightSpace as a PDF document**
* **First draft of client contract due to me in editable format (Google/Word**) via email.
 | Due by 10/27 |
| **Assignment #8****(Group Assignment)** | *Primarily for feedback, graded for quality (as draft) and deadline met* | * **Draft work plan due to me** via email in editable document/worksheet.
 | Due by 11/10 |
| **In-class informal update** | *For feedback, not graded*  | * **Informal class report back on status client contract negotiations**
 | **In-Class on 11/20** |
| **Assignment #9****(Individual Assignment)** | *Graded for depth of reflection and deadline met* | * As individuals, please **write and submit a one-page reflection (1.5 spacing, any standard font), for each of the following, which reflects on the ways that power, equity, and structural bias might show up** when working: (1) within/on *your* diverse teams, and; (2) within/on *your specific* North-South consulting projects. In this reflection, the goal is merely to name dynamics that may arise given the information you have at present. You may want to use a combination of class readings, your own experience and knowledge.

**Please feel free to reference a wide range of lenses for this reflective assignment–from personal lenses to** historical legacies of intersectional racism and/or colonialism as features of all working environments in development and humanitarian work. | Due by 11/19 |
| **Assignment****#10****(Group Assignment)** | *Graded for quality, responsiveness to feedback and deadline met* | * **Finalized and signed copy of your team charter uploaded to BrightSpace**
* As a team, please take time to adjust and adapt the team charter & work plan to include the previous weeks’ (these will mean different things for every group’s charter and work plan.) **Some additional areas to include, which may not have made it into the first drafts, include:**
	+ What is your collective approach to navigating ambiguity, while staying on track?
	+ What practices, communication norms, and workflows help to ensure that equity, power, and cultural humility are part of working team norms, plans, and design?
	+ What practices as a group do you want to enact to acknowledge related discomfort as a way to move forward as a team?
 | Due by 11/19 |
| **Assignment** **#11 & #12****(Group Assignments)** | *Graded for quality, responsiveness to feedback and deadline met* | * **Finalized client-team contract.** Barring any major changes, these versions can be used to send off to the client. Upload a pdf copy to BrightSpace
* **Final final work plan.** Barring any major changes, these versions can be used to send off to the client. Upload a pdf copy to BrightSpace.
 | Due by 11/22 |
| **Assignment #13****(Individual Assignment)** | *For feedback, graded for quality and deadline met.* | * **Individual 1-2 page literature review submissions. Each team member will submit a separate sub-category of the collective literature review. As a team, you can decide how to name and split these subcategories up.** *Literature reviews \*\*should\*\* include a combination of academic, gray, non-profit, and other literature that frames important context, content expertise, or debates related to your project, and the organization behind it.*

These lit reviews will be graded as individual assignments. The final group literature review (due 12/14), will be a synthesized version of the individual assignments, and will have a single, group, grade.  | Due by 11/30 |
| **Assignment #14****(Individual Assignment)** | *For feedback, not graded.* | * **Complete Capstone course, peer and self evaluations** (Peer and self evaluations. **What you say about your peers will be shared with them**. Be sure to use language that reflects what you would like to hear in this setting and that allows your colleagues to learn and grow. The specific dates for CATME completion are TBD
 | Due by 12/3 |
| **Assignments #15 & #16****(Group Assignment)** | *Graded for quality, responsiveness to feedback and deadline met* | * **Final applied project research literature review, 3-4 pages total for the whole group.** *Drawing on your individual lit reviews, please compile a synthesized literature review as a group that you’ll be using to launch research, make informed decisions about project needs and direction, as well as initially laying out context for findings.*
* **1-page memo of winter break research plan, including goals, dates & timeline, notable changes or priority areas of work plan, and remaining logistics**
 | Due by12/14 |
| **Ongoing Dec ‘22 - Jan ‘23** | This is a deep dive period, whether travel and field work or intensive sprints on data collection, interviewing, and analysis, for all groups. Continue to send me weekly updates throughout Winter term (with the exception of designated holiday or travel periods).  | Ongoing  |

**Full Syllabus | Weekly Readings, Assignments & Skills Training**

PHASE 1: CREATING CLIENT & CAPSTONE TEAMS

**Session 1, Monday, September 11 |** Course intro, overview, and client presentation

* Brief introductions, why we are all here.
* Discussion: So just what can you expect from Capstone?!
* Overview of semester and Fall syllabus
* Review of client preference forms, submission processes

**Readings required before class:**

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| --- |
| * Client proposals. Please carefully read the client proposals before coming to class. Come prepared with questions for them. Q&A will be part of their presentations.
* Carefully read the [Capstone Student Guide](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student). This and other Capstone resources and instructions are available on the [Capstone student website](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student) (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student>). Most of those documents won’t be needed till later in the semester or year. The link is here for your reference.
* Review Wagner’s “[Capstone: Learning in Action](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone)” webpage (<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone>), including “What you’ll learn” and “What Capstone is not” and watch the video “Capstone in an Academic Context” with Prof Erica Foldy.
* This syllabus. I know it is long but it includes many details that you will need throughout your work in this course. Please become familiar with these details and come prepared with your questions on its content. Please also refer back to the syllabus for instruction and guidance throughout the course.
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**Session 2, Monday, September 18 |** Client presentations and project preference submission

* Quick check in on Syllabus
* Two to three client presentations and Q&A | People Powered, Uganda Village Project, TBD

Assignment 2 due Thursday, September 21, to NYU BrightSpace

* Complete and upload to BrightSpace your “Student Information and Preference Form.” The form is available in BrightSpace.
* Schedule a 30 min 1:1 with Professor Levy anytime from Sept 19-22 during working hours.

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**Your teams and client placements will be announced by Sunday, Sept 24th via email.**

**Session 3, Monday, September 25 | NO CLASS - Yom Kippur | Choose a time to meet with your teams this week |** Group introductions, Team Charter & Lit Review

**Team Practice** | You’ll schedule a time to meet together this week, and are welcomed to use the designated class time. The meeting will cover a few introductory topics, but mostly will be about getting to know your teammates as people and co-workers. With some guidance from me, you’ll also talk about framing a team charter (values), individual leadership and communication styles, emerging group roles, along with a high-level conversation on ideas for how a literature review for this type of project is different from an academic literature review.

**Readings to complete before group meeting:**

|  |
| --- |
| *Team charters** Sverdrup, Therese E. and Vidar Schei. “‘Cut Me Some Slack’: The Psychological Contracts as a Foundation for Understanding Team Charters.” The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science 51.4 (December 2015): 451–478.
* Template for Team Charters (see samples in Brightspace)

*Teamwork** Holton, Judith A. “Building trust and collaboration in a virtual team.” *Team Performance Management: An International Journal* vol. 7, no. 3/4, 2001. pp. 36-47. A skim of the layout of her research tools is probably sufficient (e.g., pp 40-42), but please pay attention to the specific tools that help remote teams connect and become cohesive.
* Dixon, Nancy. “Combining Virtual and Face-to-Face Work.” *HBR* 1 July 2015
* Please watch Harvard Business Review video [The Explainer: How to Collaborate Effectively If Your Team Is Remote](https://hbr.org/video/5812716214001/the-explainer-how-to-collaborate-effectively-if-your-team-is-remote) (2:24 minutes). (URL:<https://hbr.org/video/5812716214001/the-explainer-how-to-collaborate-effectively-if-your-team-is-remote>)
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PHASE 2: DEFINING THE PROJECT & TEAM

* Develop initial protocols for team roles, work and communication
* Begin research to become familiar with the client and the context of the project
* Define scope of project and initial plan for work
* Negotiate agreement with client on project shape (signed client contract)

 **Session 4, Monday, October 2 |** What is/n’t consulting? Expectations, goals, tools

**Class Discussion | What is/n’t consulting? Expectations, goals, tools**

* What is and isn’t consulting?
* Team roles and responsibilities in project management and client coordination
* Navigating ambiguity through strategic use of planning, ongoing problem analysis, and coordination frameworks
* When is it better to adapt? When is it better to manage up?
* How much or little communication should be had with the client as work is being completed?
* What does it mean to be deliverable-focused & adaptation-oriented as a consultant? How is this different from a full-time, integrated, or long-term role in an organization?

**Consulting Team Disc**

* Preparing for first client meetings
* Initial discussion of team member roles
* Plan for finalizing team charter

**Assigned readings or videos required before class:**

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| --- |
| * Jeroen Kraaijenbrink, “[What Type Of Strategist Are You? 5 Types And Their Pros And Cons](https://www.forbes.com/sites/jeroenkraaijenbrink/2023/08/01/what-type-of-strategist-are-you-5-types-and-their-pros-and-cons/?sh=5d114ec259d1),” Forbes, 1 Aug 2023
* Sample client contracts (read two of the three sample client contracts in BrightSpace, under Project Contracts, Preparation, Scoping, and Management)
* Anand, Nicole. “[‘Checkbox Diversity’ Must Be Left Behind for DEI Efforts to Succeed,](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/checkbox_diversity_must_be_left_behind_for_dei_efforts_to_succeed)” Stanford Social Innovation Review, 21 May 2019
* **RFP #1:** [Developing HealthRight Kenya's Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) System](https://reliefweb.int/job/3888749/consultancy-developing-healthright-kenyas-monitoring-evaluation-accountability-and-learning-meal-system)
 |

Assignment #2, due 10/3.Send emailto schedule initial call with client, submit agenda for call to me.

What to accomplish during your initial client meeting:

* Meet and greet
* Learn more about the project, project goals and how it fits into the organization’s wider goals – What problem is the project designed to address
* Identify any critical deadlines (other than end of Spring 2022 term)
* Identify who must approve or sign off on any projects and reports
* Identify preferred method of communication and reporting progress
* Identify how often and in what form, updates on progress and work are wanted
* Identify a process for client input and collaboration on project design and review of deliverables
* Explain the Capstone process, including that together you will finalize project scope, develop a work plan and finalize a client contract, which will be signed by the client and the team. Inform the client that the goal is to have this portion of the project finalized no later than November 22.

**\*\*\*At least one week before your initial client meeting, please send me an email with your agenda and list of initial questions.**  I will review your agenda and questions before you give them to your client. Please work with me on availability for this meeting. **I will be present with you on the first meeting with the client, so please remember to copy me on all correspondence with the client.**

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Assignment #3, due 10/8 (Group Assignment). **Group submission of document which lays out draft team charter, and team roles and responsibilities, including a brief 4-5 line description explaining why each person is designated the role they’ve been designated** (whether related to background experience, mode of decision-making such as taking a vote, or other methods used to determine these roles. (see full assignment description in syllabus for details). **Sample team charters can be found on BrightSpace under student resources.**

Key roles to include:

* Communications (with prof and with client)
* Process maven and/or project manager
* 360 accountability
* Team culture (bonding, teambuilding, problem-solving, communication, conflict)
* Drafting / writing / editing lead

Assignment #4, due 10/8 (Individual Assignment). In addition to a full team charter submitted as a group, each individual group member should upload a document up to 1 page on Brightspace, **sharing 3-5 bullets outlining both their strengths working in teams, areas for personal improvement, as well as one positive and one negative experience you’ve had giving & receiving feedback** in the past.

**NOTE ON EDITOR ROLE**: One of the required roles mentioned on the Template for Team Charter is editor. This note is to offer a bit more on the editor’s role. All documents prepared as part of Capstone are to use clear, concise language and correct grammar. They are also to use data and evidence to craft a cogent argument. Contributions from different writers must be transformed into a single voice and story. Achieving these goals requires advanced writing and communication skills.

**PROCESS NOTE**: Throughout the year, additional time with me is sometimes needed for conversations and instructions on matters such as preparing your team charter and work plans, preparing for fieldwork and producing project content.

Commencing w/o 10/8 (Group Assignment): **Begin weekly updates**

Team faculty liaison is to send me an email every week by 7am Monday, copying the teammates and including a brief answer to each of these questions:

o What did the team accomplish this week?

o What is on tap for next week?

o Describe a “learning moment,” something discovered (uncovered) that you plan to incorporate into your work or process going forward. (Feel free to mention things you are struggling with and haven’t yet solved. We can work on it together if you wish.)

o What are your questions for me?

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**NO MONDAY CLASS THIS WEEK**

**Session 5, Tuesday, October 10 (Zoom):** Client contract, project, and process plans

**Team Practice |** Class discussion and time designated mostly for Capstone teams to discuss charter, project scope. Specifically, you’ll focus on generating work plans with clear milestones and deliverables until January, with more loosely placed milestones through April. These work plans will be refined and adjusted multiple times throughout the semester. For this reason, we’ll focus this class on generating milestones, and goals for organizing time between them at a high level

**Readings required before class:**

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| * Block, Peter. *Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used.* Wiley, 2011., pgs 51-107 (Chapters 4-6) \*\*\*These readings are available in the course google drive, ‘[Class readings not available online](https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1Yd0IYWpvIHmfTrtYFChR9z4CHKbMcd_J)’.
* [Guidelines and Resources for Contracting Phase of Consulting](https://managementhelp.org/consulting/contracting.htm#meetiing)**,** Management Help Library, 18 January 22.
* Amy Jen Su, “How Managers Can Make Group Projects More Efficient.” *SSIR* 17 January 2017
* **RFP #2:** [Development Of Integrated Policy Paper and Strategic Action Plan On Green and Inclusive Economic Recovery Through Circular Economy in Food & Beverages Related Sector, Focusing on Palm Oil Processing Industry](https://procurement-notices.undp.org/view_file.cfm?doc_id=310014) (specifically pgs 12-17)

Bonus:* Karen A. Brown, Nancy Lea Hyer, and Richard Ettenson, “Protect Your Project from Escalating Doubts,” MIT Sloan Management Review Spring 2017
 |

Assignments #5, 10/15, Memo Summary of Client Intro Call.

Report of initial client meeting submitted to BrightSpace, Assignments in PDF format. Up to

* This memo is to summarize the team’s findings from their initial client meeting. Your memo is *not* meeting minutes. Rather, its purpose is to record and confirm client/team decisions on the elements described as the purpose for the initial meeting with the client.
* Please include a **clear statement of the problem** to be addressed by your Capstone project. Please additionally include a summary of your team's action plan based on this initial call, including:
	+ Three questions you need to have answered
	+ 3-4 literature review sub-categories on the project problem to consider, phrased as questions
	+ Three considerations regarding timeline and project management, and;
	+ Initial next steps.
* The initial conversation with the client and the conversation around this document serves as a start for your client contracts.

Come prepared informal thoughts for in-class report back, 10/16. **As a group, begin familiarizing yourselves with your organization and project background.** Start reading background documents from the client and beginning your literature review. Y**ou will be asked to share verbal reflections related to several aspects of the client and project context and background**

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**Session 6, Monday, October 16 |** Systems & context planning for work plan and literature review development

**Discussion:** Overview of methods and tools repository, making choices and right-sizing for your research, including types of work planning that most facilitate high-level adaptation while progressing with daily activities & coordination that contribute to overall goals

**Class practice | Deciphering contextual areas for initial literature review including project content area, ethical issues, organizational background, political economy, and broader field debates.** Time to work on work plans and to determine how to break down project area lit reviews into 3-5 sub-areas for individual research.

**Required Readings:**

|  |
| --- |
| * “[A List of templates for international development and aid professionals](https://tools4dev.org/blog/a-list-of-templates-for-international-development-and-aid-professionals/),” Tools4Dev
* Nayak, Preeta. “[Make Your Organization More Resilient with Adaptive Strategic Planning,](https://www.bridgespan.org/insights/nonprofit-strategy/make-your-organization-more-resilient-with-adaptive-strategic-planning)” Bridgespan Group, 24 March 2023.
* M. Candace Christensen, Jelena Todić, and Sheila M. McMahon, “[Bridging the Grey Gap: Conducting Grey Literature Reviews for Ethical Social Work Practice and Research](https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/full/10.1086/717731),” *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, Volume 13, Issue 3, Fall 2022.
* MaRS. “[Systems Mapping](https://mars-solutions-lab.gitbook.io/living-guide-to-social-innovation-labs/seeing/understanding-the-problem-systems-and-complexity/systems-mapping)” Live Guide to Social Innovation Labs.
* Søren Vester Haldrup. “[Rethinking monitoring and evaluation in complex systems — when learning is a result in itself](https://medium.com/%40undp.innovation/rethinking-monitoring-and-evaluation-in-complex-systems-when-learning-is-a-result-in-itself-3d1fc90d22fc),” UNDP Strategic Innovation Unit, 20 May 2022.

**Optional reading:*** Rittel, H. W., & Webber, M. M. (1973). "Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning." Policy sciences, 4(2), 155-169.
* Kerrie Holloway, Reem Al Masri, Afnan Abu Yahia. “[Digital identity, biometrics and inclusion in humanitarian responses to refugee crises](https://odi.org/en/publications/digital-identity-biometrics-and-inclusion-in-humanitarian-responses-to-refugee-crises/),” Overseas Development Institute. 6 Oct 21.
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PHASE 3: FINALIZE CONTRACT & PLAN; BEGIN SPECIFIC CONTENT WORK

* Finalize work plans and client contract
* Move from background research into direct work on project content

o Incorporating tools for specific research approaches

Tools and processes for adapting plans, and adapting to change

o Planning approach and developing tools for field research

* Work on logistics of field research or interviews

**(GUEST LECTURER, Class on Zoom)**

**Session 7, Monday, Oct 23 |** Navigating Ambiguity / Work plan & Project Management

**Discussion:**

* Developing work plans and monitoring work plans.
* Choosing a format that works for your team.
* Monitoring and adjusting work plans, monitoring and adjusting milestones, outcomes, or deliverables.
* Monitoring and adjusting process.
* Include both content tasks and logistical tasks, e.g., preparing and planning for fieldwork and development of documents for research and fieldwork.

**Team Practice** | Time for coordinated work on work plan / time for team contract.

**Readings**

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| --- |
| * Read all sample work plans listed in BrightSpace
* Sample [Scope of Work](https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/research/documents/Contracts/guidelinesforscopeofwork.pdf), NYU.
* “[Supporting adaptive management: Monitoring and evaluation tools and approaches](https://cdn.odi.org/media/documents/odi-ml-adaptivemanagement-wp569-jan20.pdf),” Overseas Development Institute, Working Paper 569, Dec 2019.
* Tyson R. Browning and Ranga V. Ramasesh. "Reducing Unwelcome Surprises in Project Management." MIT Sloan Management Review, Spring 2015
 |

Assignment #6, due by 10/27. **Project scope submitted to BrightSpace as a PDF document**. Your faculty contact will submit one document for the team.

* Lay out your draft of content, scope and limits of your Capstone project. This is a working document to help when preparing your work plan and your client contract. It is to include a statement of the problem (part of your report on initial client meeting), the output of the project, information needed to complete the project, boundaries of the project, a description of the final product along with any interim deliverables.
* Do not rely upon your client to define your project. Work with your client to identify what meets the client’s needs and is achievable with the resources you have. Your role as a consultant is to find clarity in obscurity and to guide your client toward what is both beneficial and achievable.

Assignment #7, First draft of client contract due to me in editable format, due by 10/27.

* This will be your promise to your client and their promise to you regarding your Capstone project. What do they supply? What do you produce? What is the review process? What is the communication process? Etc. Spell these out in simple, direct language.
* Sample contracts are posted to BrightSpace, under the “Client contracts & scope of work” tab.

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**Session 8, Monday, October 30: In -person Travel Security Workshop & Team-time in person (Faculty chats with each group about draft scopes and contracts)**

\*\*\*\*(One hour in person for traveling teams. The remainder of class time for traveling teams will be in person team time. For teams not traveling, the whole class session is team time (Zoom or in person at a location of your choosing).

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**Session 9, Monday, November 6 |** Methods & Tools | Continuous analysis & adjustment, lit review prep, work plan strategizing, internal and external equity and power dynamics.

**Class Discussion:** Overview of common questions that arise, and what tools or techniques you can reach for in stewarding processes toward finding answers or surfacing needed conversations. Establishing enabling systems to support shared norms, ways of working, naming power and equity imbalances, and individual/collective contextual awareness. We will also review the remaining assignments for the semester.

**Class Practice |** Overview of methods and tools repository, making choices and right-sizing for your research, incorporating analytical tools that support identifying, refining, and revising problem-analysis, solutions orientation, and ethical or strategic complexity of immediate or strategic ways forward. We will also spend some time mapping systemic and interpersonal power dynamics, assets, opportunities, and challenges of working in diverse teams and with clients, setting up related milestones, safeguards, intentions & accountability.

**Readings:**

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| --- |
| **Please choose 2-3 tools to read/focus on, and 2-3 equity and diversity readings to focus on, that you feel are most relevant to your group, client and project at this point.** —-Tools:* Kanchwala Fatehi, Yaquta. “[Theory of Change: My favourite multi-purpose tool of all time](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/theory-change-my-favourite-multi-purpose-tool-all-time-fatehi/?trackingId=jXVMeRjVSuy%2ByWLpRqbHWA%3D%3D)” Linkedin, 31 Oct 2022
* Jewlya Lynn, Sarah Stachowiak, Jennifer Beyers.“[How to Do Process Tracing: A Method for Testing How Change Happened in Complex/Dynamic Settings.](https://www.orsimpact.com/DirectoryAttachments/10312022_81035_154_PRO_TRA_FINAL_PAGES.pdf)” ORS Impact, 2020.
* [Better Evaluation | Rainbow Framework](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/rainbow_framework), BetterEvaluation.org
* “[SWOT Analysis](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/swotanalysis),” BetterEvaluation.org
* “[Stakeholder Analysis](https://www.thegrassrootscollective.org/stakeholder-analysis-nonprofit),” Grassroots Collective.org
* Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI). “[Conducting a Landscape Analysis](https://budgetadvocacy.org/modules/step1.pdf),” Example related to COVID budget advocacy, but categories and checklists are helpful as more general references. 2021.

Leveraging diversity & equity as assets, multi-dimensional awareness of power dynamics:* Chávez, Vivian. “[Cultural Humility in Community Based Participatory Research & Education,](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9cEXqNDOHqM)” part of Cultural Humility series based on 1998 seminal work by M. Tervalon, J. Murray-Garcia.
* Miranda-Wolff, Alida. “[This technique can help diverse teams deal with conflict effectively](https://www.fastcompany.com/90723139/this-technique-can-help-diverse-teams-deal-with-conflict-effectively),” Fast Company,” Fast Company, 21 Feb 22.
* Kathryn Nwajiaku-Dahou, Carmen Leon-Himmelstine “[How to confront race and racism in international development](https://odi.org/en/insights/how-to-confront-race-and-racism-in-international-development/),” Overseas Development Institute.
* Omakwu, Blessing. “[Opinion: On equity in the international development sector — we need more intravists,](https://www.devex.com/news/opinion-on-equity-in-the-international-development-sector-we-need-more-intravists-97404)” Devex. 5 June 2020.
* Ibarra, Herminia. “[The Authenticity Paradox: Why Feeling Like a Fake Can be Signs of Growth](https://hbr.org/2015/01/the-authenticity-paradox).” Harvard Business Review,” Jan-Feb 2015.
* Video: [Implicit Bias.](https://www.med.unc.edu/healthsciences/about-us/diversity/jeditoolkit/implicitbias/) UNC School of Medicine Health Sciences
* Video: [Microaggressions/Microaffirmations](https://www.med.unc.edu/healthsciences/about-us/diversity/jeditoolkit/microaggressions-microaffirmations/). UNC School of Medicine Health Sciences.
* Goodridge, Leah. “[Professionalism as a Racial Construct](https://www.uclalawreview.org/professionalism-as-a-racial-construct/),” *UCLA LAw Review*, 29 March 2022.
* Alexander, Jessica. “[Then and Now: 25 Years of Aid Accountability,](https://www.thenewhumanitarian.org/feature/2021/4/27/then-and-now-25-years-of-aid-accountability)” *The New Humanitarian*, 27 April 2021
 |

Assignment #8, due by 11/10. **Draft work plan (draft or final?)** via email (with Google Drive Link) in editable document/worksheet. Please additional submit a PDF of the existing draft into BrightSpace. One submission per team. Please copy your team members on the email or shared link.

*(Please grant me editing access, and I will make comments and/or edits in suggestion mode.)*

Your **work plan** includes tasks, start dates and deadlines, resources needed, and who is assigned to handle the tasks. (For guidance on developing a work plan the document “Work Plan Components” posted to NYU BrightSpace under Project management & Work plans. Additional resources and readings to help with your work plan are posted to Classes under Content sessions & resources, Project management.)

**\*\*\*Allocate time for your editor to edit documents before sending them to me. Allocate time for me to review documents**.

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**Session 10, Monday, November 13 | No readings or lecture - we will meet in class for a working team time in your respective groups as several 11/19 deadlines approach. This is time additionally to meet with and ask questions to the professor.**

Assignment #9, due 11/19, **Power, equity, assets, and bias within team and team-client-community**

As individuals Please **individually write and submit a one-page reflection (1.5 spacing, any standard font), for each of the following, which reflects on the ways that power, equity, and structural bias might show up** when working: (1) within/on *your* diverse teams, and; (2) within/on *your specific* North-South consulting projects. In this reflection, the goal is merely to name dynamics that may arise given the information you have at present. You may want to use a combination of class readings, your own experience and knowledge.

**Please feel free to reference a wide range of lenses for this reflective assignment–from personal lenses to** historical legacies of intersectional racism and/or colonialism as features of all working environments in development and humanitarian work.

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Assignment #10, due 11/19. **Finalized and signed copy of your team charter uploaded to BrightSpace**

As a team, please take time to adjust and adapt the team charter & work plan to include the previous weeks’ (these will mean different things for every group’s charter and work plan.) **Some additional areas to include, which may not have made it into the first drafts, include:**

* + What is your collective approach to navigating ambiguity, while staying on track will include…
	+ What practices, communication norms, and workflows help to ensure that equity, power, and cultural humility are part of working team norms, plans, and design?
	+ What practices as a group do you want to enact to acknowledge related discomfort as a way to move forward as a team?

Come prepared for class on 11/20, **ready to discuss the status of finalizing contracts and client relations, as well as one emerging challenge and how you are approaching it as a team.**

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**(CLASS ON ZOOM)**

**Session 11, Monday, November 20 |** Consulting team emerging challenge (20 mins), team time for the remainder of class

**Class practice |** Team time for adjusting project plans, communication styles, etc based on group emerging challenges and feedback.

Assignment #11, due 11/22. **Revised/final work plan.**

* Incorporate into your work plan what is learned from the session on project planning and my comments on your first draft
* As well as guiding your work, deadlines and accountability throughout the year, your work plan feeds into your client contract... What must you get done and by when in order to complete all pieces of your project?

Assignment #12, due 11/22. **Final client-team contract.** Upload a pdf copy to BrightSpace Assignments no later than **November 15**.

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**Session 12, Monday, November 27 | Methods & Tools |**Deep Dive organization, planning, and check-lists, final literature review submissions

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In-class group work on Deep Dive organization, planning, and check-lists. Methods & Tools for Research & Analysis | Interviews & interviewing, panoramic listening, structuring data while researching for easier analysis.

**Class practice |** Getting organized for fast past, narrow window, high stakes Dec-Jan deep dive.

Assignment #13, due 11/30. **Individual literature reviews.**

**Individual 1-2 page literature review submissions. Each team member will submit a separate sub-category of the collective literature review. As a team, you can decide how to name and split these subcategories up.** *Literature reviews \*\*should\*\* include a combination of academic, gray, non-profit, and other literature that frames important context, content expertise, or debates related to your project, and the organization behind it.*

These lit reviews will be graded as individual assignments. The final group literature review (due 12/14), will be a synthesized version of the individual assignments, and will have a single, group, grade.

Due 12/3**. Complete Capstone course, peer and self evaluations** (Peer and self evaluations due no later than November 28).

Self-evaluation: Link to be provided in late November

Peer evaluation: Link to be provided in late November

Course evaluation: Link will be sent to you through the regular course evaluation system.

**What you say about your peers will be shared with them**. Be sure to use language that reflects what you would like to hear, and that allows your colleagues to learn and grow.

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**Session 13, Monday, December 4 |** Tailored travel security workshops (by team) & emerging interview approach (by team). This class will involve two rotations by team. The Wagner travel security team will meet with individual groups while Professor Levy meets with other individual groups on interview approach, ethical interviewing & panoramic listening. Groups not engaged in either have team time.

**Class practice |** Interviewing teams & exercises, talk backs on ethics, technique, power, context. We’ll conduct interviewing exercises and discuss how to prioritize interview/ees, how to consider the power dynamics and social psychology of interviewing from interviewees’ perspectives, and will cover techniques for semi-structured interviewing and listening sessions.

**Group-prof meetings to discuss CATME results.**

**Readings**

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| --- |
| * [Attributions](https://pressbooks.pub/scientificinquiryinsocialwork/front-matter/copyright-information-and-attributions-index/). “[Synthesizing Literature](https://pressbooks.pub/scientificinquiryinsocialwork/chapter/4-2-synthesizing-literature/)”Scientific Inquiry in Social Work.
* Natasha Mack, Cynthia Woodsong, Kathleen M. Macqueen, Greg Guest, Emily Namey. “[Qualitative research methods: A Data Collector’s Field Guide.](https://www.fhi360.org/resource/qualitative-research-methods-data-collectors-field-guide)” Family Health International, (1-49)
* Bisits, Piroska. “[How to do great semi-structured interviews](https://tools4dev.org/resources/how-to-do-great-semi-structured-interviews/),” Tools4Dev
* “[Some strategies for Developing Interview Guides](https://sociology.fas.harvard.edu/files/sociology/files/interview_strategies.pdf),” Harvard Sociology Department
* [Attributions](https://pressbooks.pub/scientificinquiryinsocialwork/front-matter/copyright-information-and-attributions-index/). “[Issues to Consider for All Interview Types](https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_principles-of-sociological-inquiry-qualitative-and-quantitative-methods/s12-04-issues-to-consider-for-all-int.html),” Scientific Inquiry in Social Work.
* [Attributions](https://pressbooks.pub/scientificinquiryinsocialwork/front-matter/copyright-information-and-attributions-index/). “[Qualitative Interview Techniques](https://pressbooks.pub/scientificinquiryinsocialwork/chapter/13-2-qualitative-interview-techniques/),” Scientific Inquiry in Social Work.
* Klykken, F. H. (2022). [Implementing continuous consent in qualitative research](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/14687941211014366). *Qualitative Research*, *22*(5), 795–810
 |

**Class on Zoom | Session 14, Monday, Dec 11** | Workshop on structuring research notes (in-progress) for streamlined and emergent analysis.

We will have a 45 minute research structure & writing workshop from Emily Austin, policy writing specialist with Wagner’s writing center. This workshop will provide helpful tips on organizing and structuring research notes (as you collect them daily or weekly) in ways that facilitate group analysis, intermediate decision-making on gaps and pivots, and final deliverable structuring.

The final class team time will be for you to work in groups and raise any final questions with me.

Assignment #14, due 12/14. **Final applied project research literature review, 3-4 pages total for the whole group.** Drawing on your individual lit reviews, please compile a synthesized literature review as a group that you’ll be using to launch research, make informed decisions about project needs and direction, as well as initially laying out context for findings.

Assignment #15, due 12/15. Winter break deep dive update and final planning memo.

1-page memo of winter break research plan, including goals, dates & timeline, notable changes or priority areas of work plan, and remaining logistics

 PHASE 4: FIELDWORK & WORK OVER WINTER TERM

**No classroom sessions from December 13 to January 28. Jan 29, 2024 will be our first class back together.** Whether fieldwork or remote work, Capstone teamwork continues–and is often most intensive—through Winter break. Continue to send me updates every other week throughout the Winter and Spring terms. (Please let me know ahead of time if there are any holiday or travel brackets in which you’ll all be off).

**Weekly updates (every other week) should include the following,** though please do share in whatever format or style of writing is most comfortable:

* High-level summary of progress / work completed
* One key observation from research/synthesis from that week
* Challenges or dilemmas arising
* What can I do to support you?

SPRING 2024

PHASE 5: FINAL ANALYSIS, DRAFTING & CLIENT DELIVERABLES

In this section you’ll find an overview of the Spring 2023 class meeting times, deliverable coordination and faculty check-in times. **Slight changes may be made to the syllabus over the course of the semester**  to adjust for relevant topics, conditions, or needs. Moving into Spring 2023, we will meet in person as a group monthly, along with separate monthly faculty-team check-ins.

**The monthly class meetings will focus on the following:**

(1) Debrief fieldwork and winter break;

(2) Organizing inductive/deductive outlines and continuous analysis and drafting across multiple goals;

(3) Editing, revising, refining in phases;

(4) Practice client presentations;

(5) Final capstone reflection and taking this experience forward.

The monthly team-faculty check-ins will be organized on a schedule that best serves the team’s needs (i.e. prior to submission of core deliverables in order to brainstorm, after submission of core deliverables to discuss feedback, etc). The dates will be selected by the team (in line with faculty availability) at the start of each month.

Spring 2024 Milestones (for full assignment description, see next page “Assignments”)

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| **Spring 2024 Capstone Milestones**  |
| **Jan**  |  | * **Revised work plan submitted for Spring.**
 |
| **Feb** |  | * **Interim report (working document) from deep dive or field work.**
* **Outline of final project report** (or deliverable if a visualization or analysis).
 |
| **March** |  | * **First and second drafts final report or deliverable to faculty**
 |
| **April** |  | * **Client presentation rehearsal before class/faculty for feedback** before client presentation.
* **Final draft of Capstone written deliverables.**
* **End-of-course self, team/peer, client and course evaluations**.
 |
| **May** |  | * **Presentation of findings and recommendations to client;**
* **End-of-second semester reflection;**
* **NO CAPSTONE EXPO THIS YEAR**
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**COURSE MEETINGS - SPRING 2024**

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| **Overview of Class Schedule (for whole class to meet together). Each team will additionally organize 1:1 monthly meetings with Professor Levy.**  |
| **Session 1 (1/29)** | Capstone team report back from field work and deep dives  |
| **Session 2 (2/5)** | Outlines for continuous analysis and drafting |
| **Session 3 (3/11)** | Building on strengths and overcoming key challenges in drafting, editing, and cycles of refinement |
| **Session 4 (4/8)** | Draft client presentations in class |
| **Special session** **(not class)** | Consulting team client presentations (not class) between April 16th & 23rd, 2024 (scheduled by consulting teams) |
| **Session 5 (5/6)** | We made it! Moving forward with project expertise and learning, capstone reflections |

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS - Spring 2024**

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| **\*\*\*\*All draft or final deliverables shared with the client should still be shared first with the capstone faculty. For deliverable timelines that begin significantly ahead of the following assignment schedule, we will work together to come up with a schedule that streamlines submissions for capstone with submissions for the client.** |
| **Assignment #** | **What is due (all due in Brightspace as a living google doc, and a singular PDF of the same google doc.)** | **Due date** |
| **Assignment #1**  | * **Revised work plan |** Adjusting your work plans post fieldwork (or deep dives) to take stock of and align tasks with timelines (with particular attention to adding in time for drafts, communication norms/speed of responsiveness) for Spring.
 | 2/4/24 |
| **Assignment #2** | * **Field work/deep dive interim report | This should include an overview of methods and activities undertaken during break, observations from fieldwork** (for teams with international travel) or deep dive process (for teams without international travel), **and a high-level summary of initial observations** (related to final project focus) so far (5-7 pages, Times New Roman, size 11, 1.5 spacing)
 | 2/4/24 |
| **Assignment #3** | * **Outline of project report/deliverable (whether an analysis, final report) |** This is to be a real, working draft outline of your final deliverable (albeit at a high level) including organization of report sections and high-level overview of key arguments or findings that will frame each section (bullets are fine). The outline in this case will leave many components in need of development and fleshing out and the final report will have been adjusted significantly from this initial outline. (2-3 pages, Times New Roman, size 11, single space).
 | 2/18/24 |
| **Assignment #4** | * **First draft of final report** *(this draft will not be graded, the second draft will be graded as a reflection of evolution from the first draft).* (Size, spacing, and length are to be co-determined by the group and client in consideration of time, content, and mutually agreed upon deliverables).
 | 3/17/24 |
| **Assignment #5** | * Client presentation prep in front of class Second draft of final report
 | 4/15/24 |
| **Assignment #6** | * Second draft of final report
 | 4/19/24 |
| **Assignment #7** | * Final report and all deliverables (exact date for final deadline to be co-determined with and tailored to each team based on their agreed upon timeline with the client)
 |  5/2/24 |