



NYU

**ROBERT F. WAGNER GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SERVICE**

Advocacy and Political Action Capstone: CAP-GP

3401-002

Fall 2021 – Spring 2022

Instructor Information

- Matthew J. Camp, MPP, PhD
- Email: mjc9113@nyu.edu
- Virtual office hours: by appointment

Course Information

- Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 6:45 pm - 8:25 pm ET
- Class Location: via Zoom. See the links on the Zoom tab in the Brightspace site
<https://nyu.zoom.us/j/99076213455>

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

1. Content

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- understand the policy and/or management context for their project;
- be familiar with relevant specialized vocabularies;
- draw on critical research related to their content area;
- connect their project with previous coursework in their broader program and specialization.

2. Process

Overall, students should demonstrate a capacity for flexibility and resilience, as shown by adapting to changing and complex circumstances, balancing competing demands, accepting uncertainty and ambiguity, and knowing when to consult with their Capstone instructor.

a. Project Management

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- frame and refine the problem presented by the client;
- develop a contract with the client including scope, timeline and deliverables;
- develop an internal project workplan;
- meet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and workplan;
- revise contract and workplan as necessary.

b. Client Management

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- negotiate a contract with their client;
- develop and sustain a relationship with their client;
- maintain regular and productive communication with the client;
- solicit and integrate
- from the client on design and deliverables;
- submit deliverables on time.

c. Team Management

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- diagnose and attend to interpersonal dynamics;
- define roles and useful division of labor;
- manage assignments and accountability;
- advocate points of view and negotiate differences of opinion;
- solicit and offer feedback;
- appreciate and learn from cultural and other differences.

3. Research

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 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;
- develop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings.

4. Communication

Students should demonstrate the ability to:

- 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.

Learning Assessment Table

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 workplan	Team workplan
Meet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and workplan	Signed contract and team workplan
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 and/or 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. You will see the applications and, in most cases, will be able to interact with prospective clients via Zoom, before marking your preferences. I will take your preferences into account along with the needs of the project, students' previous coursework, work and life experience, student schedules, team size, and the balance of skills among the team. Ultimately, it's my job to create teams that can do the work for the client. Teams are comprised of 3-5 students.

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

- enrollment in both semesters;
- attendance and participation in class activities and team meetings;
- completion of assignments on time;
- participation in project work;
- participation in meetings with clients;
- participation in preparation and presentation of findings.

Since Capstone is on-line this year, we presume client and team meetings will be as well. Travel for fieldwork is very unlikely. If it turns out to be possible in January or the spring, the school will provide financial support for the airfare if such work is necessary, but will not cover the full costs of travel. It may not be required or possible for all students on a team to travel.

Capstone Expenses:

Each capstone team is entitled to reimbursement of up to \$500 of Capstone related expenses, such as photocopying, phone calls, 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 Brightspace.

Evaluation and Grading

Students will receive 1.5 credits for the fall semester and 1.5 for the spring semester. At the end of the first semester, students will receive a grade of "IP" (Incomplete Pass) to reflect the "work in progress" nature of the yearlong project. I will assign final grades at the end of the second semester.

Grades will be allotted to individuals, not to the team as a whole. That is, team members may receive different grades if I feel that is warranted. I will make this judgment based both on my 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. If the client's evaluation of your work is available, I will also take that into account.

Students will be graded on both the products they deliver to their clients and evidence of progressive learning throughout the course, based on the Learning Objectives. **50% is based on work products** identified in the milestones as well as any interim deliverables to the client or assigned by the faculty member. **50% is based on evidence of the individual student's learning** during the course through participation in the team's work and class activities, his/her ability to act on peer and faculty feedback; individual and team preparation for and performance at client meetings; and end-of-semester faculty, peer and self-evaluations.

Required Readings and Other Resources

- **Block, Peter. 2011. Flawless Consulting, 3rd edition. Pfeiffer.** *Flawless Consulting* is also available [online](#) (and downloadable) through NYU's Bobst Library.
- Additional readings/materials as indicated each week as indicated below
- Reflection papers as indicated below (usually ½ page)

Course readings will be available on Brightspace for this course.

Course Milestones

The course has a series of milestones – both activities and products -- that guide and track your work over the course of the year. I've suggested time frames in parentheses, though actual timing may vary depending on the specific situation of each team and client.

These milestones include:

- Potential client presentations (September);
- Team formation (September);
- “Entry conference” with client and faculty to explain the process of the course, establish relationship, assess the client organization, and gather data in order to clarify the presenting problem or issue and client’s initial vision of a successful project (September/October);
- Preliminary client-team contract or work agreement (October);
- Negotiations with client to finalize contract (October/November);
- Final, signed client-team contract and detailed team workplan (October/November);
- Team charter (October/November)
- End-of-first semester self, team/peer, and course evaluations; discussion of team process and progress (December);
- January term: Continue project work (January)
- First draft of final project report to faculty (February/March);
- Second draft of final project report to faculty (March/April);
- Rehearsal of client presentation before class/faculty for feedback before presentation to client (March/April);
- Final report and presentation to client (April);
- End-of-second semester reflection and celebration (April/May);
- End-of-course self, team /peer, client and course evaluations (April/May);
- Presentation for Capstone Expo (May).

Class Schedule Overview

Students should expect to meet weekly as a class or team unless agreed in class. The sequence of classes, and due dates for assignments, could change depending on your meetings with clients and the substance of your projects. Specific requirements for each class will be posted on Brightspace and emailed to you with enough lead time to prepare.

Instructions via email or Brightspace take precedence over what is written here.

The schedule and topics below may vary slightly based on individual project needs. The intent is to use class time in a way that enables teams to produce the highest quality projects on a timely basis and achieve the learning objectives of the course. A greater number of class-based presentations and discussions are likely early on in the course in order for Capstone faculty to

provide guidance on project management and direction. The second semester schedule (to be distributed at a later date) allows for greater time for team working sessions.

Note: Though some class time is allotted for team meetings/work, it is anticipated that students and their teams will need to devote additional non-class time on a weekly basis to complete the work necessary on their Capstone projects.

Deliverable Expectations

- Allow time for edits on all deliverables. **All deliverables must be submitted to me for review at least one week before it is due to the client.** This should be incorporated in your workplan timelines.
- For major deliverables, like the final report, expect at least **two to three rounds of revisions** from me before it goes to the client.
- When submitting drafts of deliverables for my review, I expect that they have been proofread and that the team feels it is ready to go to the client.

Fall Semester

PHASE and DATE	TOPIC(S)	ASSIGNMENTS DUE (all assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted)
Phase 1: CREATING TEAMS Class 1 9/13/21	Introductions Capstone Student Guide Client Q&A	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review capstone proposals and come to class prepared with questions• Watch video & review website: What is Capstone? https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone

Class 2 9/20/21	Overview of Syllabus & Discussion of projects	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Due 9/15 at 12pm ET: Student Info and Preference Form. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attach resume, writing sample and Wagner transcript. Make this one document. Post to Brightspace. ○ When you send in your homework, please label the file "Lastname Firstname Assignment" ○ Teams will be announced before 9/20 class. ● Carefully review the syllabus ● Watch: <u>Capstone consulting videos</u>: Intro, What Consulting Is and Isn't and The Role of Technical and Interpersonal Skills ● Read Flawless Consulting, chapters 19, 1, 2, 3 (in this order) <p>Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Schedule one get-together this week purely about getting to know each other. See handout for sample questions and topics (or feel free to ignore). ● Figure out your team availability to meet with client over next two weeks. I just be present, so ask me for my availability.
--------------------	---	--

<p>Phase 2: TEAM LAUNCH AND PLANNING</p> <p>Class 3 9/27/21</p>	<p>Introduction to consulting; Preparation for entry meeting with client</p>	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue reading Read Flawless Consulting, chapters 19, 1, 2, 3 (in this order) <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In preparation of your client meeting, please share with me by 9/24/21 at 12pm ET: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A draft email to your client introducing yourselves and suggesting times to meet (I must be at this meeting) An agenda for this meeting A set of questions for the client Suggestions for project scope Be prepared to report on your background research on your client (I don't need to see anything written) Times when you want to meet with me each month for office hours.
<p>Class 4 10/4/21</p>	<p>Team dynamics 1: Leadership styles</p>	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <u>Deep listening:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.edutopia.org/discussion/deep-listening-activities-academic-discussions CivicList interview with Chris Nickell: https://anchor.fm/civiclist/episodes/CivicList-April-2020-with-Chris-Nickell-ecoait/a-a1u72ft <u>Reflection paper</u> Readings related to team dynamics Leadership Compass <p>Team</p>
<p>Class 5 10/12/21 (TUESDAY)</p>	<p>Contracting and project management 1 Hear from previous Capstone students</p>	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading: Flawless Consulting, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 Remainder of readings in Teams folder. View: Consulting videos: The Project Management Triangle, Client Expectations Mgmt, Risk Mgmt, Client Mtg Mgmt. Read Ethics Memo for students <u>Reflection paper- inquiry vs advocacy</u>

Class 6 10/18/21	Team Dynamics 2: Creating team cultures that honor everyone's backgrounds and workstyles; Discussion of team charter assignment	<p>Individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings related to team dynamics • Readings on how to give feedback • Asset Accounting exercise (in class) <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft contract (if have conducted client entry meeting) • Be prepared to report on client entry meeting
Class 7 10/25/21	Contracting and project management 2	<p>Individual: View Project Management tutorials. You can choose between these options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Project Management Foundations (about 3 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://www.linkedin.com/learning/project-management-foundations-2016/welcome?u=2131553 ○ Project Management Simplified (about 1.5 hours) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ https://www.linkedin.com/learning/project-management-simplified/outlining-the-twelve-steps?u=2131553 ○ Read "Reflection-Advice Letters" from previous Capstone students <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft contract (if have conducted client entry meeting) • Draft team charter • Be prepared to report on client entry meeting
Phase 3: RESEARCH SKILLS AND PROJECT WORK Class 8 11/1/21	Literature reviews	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Wagner Capstone Library Guide • Experiment with using Bobst Library databases to identify scholarly articles regarding your topic. Be ready to show results in class in class. • <u>Reflection paper</u>

Class 9 11/8/21	Surveys	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review examples of literature reviews and be prepared to discuss strengths and weaknesses • <u>Reflection paper</u> <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final contract (depending on team) • Draft workplan • Final team charter
Class 10 11/15/21	Interviews and focus groups; Prepare for self and team peer evaluations	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flawless Consulting, Ch 10 and 13 • <u>Reflection paper</u> <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final contract (depending on team)
Phase 4: PROJECT WORK AND FEEDBACK Class 11 11/22/21	Team reports Team check-ins	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self and team peer evaluations • <u>Reflection paper</u> <p>Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be prepared to give update to classmates • Final workplan
Class 12 11/29/21	NO CLASS	
Class 13 12/6/21	Team meetings to discuss evaluations	<p>Individual</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and reflect on evaluations • <u>Reflection paper</u>

Class 14 12/13/21	Team meetings to discuss evaluations	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read and reflect on evaluations• <u>Reflection paper</u>
----------------------	--------------------------------------	---

January Term

While classes don't meet, this is generally an important time for group work. Students and faculty are expected to be available and working during this time (except for the holiday week between Christmas and New Years).

Spring Semester

During this semester, much of the time will be set aside for teams to meet on their own or with me. We can be flexible about the need for formal class meeting times. However, as needed, we will schedule problem-solving or skill-building sessions, **so you must be available every Monday night during class time**. Also, for planning purposes, I've noted here some potential deadlines, **but these are preliminary and could change**.

DATE	TOPIC(S)	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Phase 4: PROJECT WORK Class 1 1/24/22	Team updates Discuss spring schedule	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Flawless Consulting, ch 14• Review syllabus Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Team updates• Revised work plan – Use track changes or highlight what's been significantly updated.• Team charter updates (if any).
1/31/22	NO CLASS	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review final report resources in Brightspace Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revised work plan – Use track changes or highlight what's been significantly updated.• Start drafting your report outlines- due 2/28. First draft due 3/13
Class 2 2/7/22	Data analysis	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review final report resources in Brightspace• Review Final Report Writing Tips (PowerPoint document, by Meredith Walters Seife) Team <ul style="list-style-type: none">• For teams that collected data: Review Data analysis and the final report (PowerPoint document)• Revised work plan – Use track changes or highlight what's been significantly updated.• Report outlines due 2/28. First draft due 3/13
2/14/22	NO CLASS	

Phase 5: PROJECT WORK AND REPORT WRITING	NO CLASS (Presidents Day)	Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on first draft of final report- due 3/13 • Schedule final presentation for client *Schedule this for mid to late April. • I must be present and will provide availability.
Class 3 2/21/22		
2/28/22	NO CLASS	
Class 4 3/7/22		Team: Work on first draft of final report- due 3/13
3/14/22	NO CLASS	Spring break Second draft of report due 4/11/22
Class 5 3/21/22	Guest speaker (possible) Team updates Discuss first drafts Discuss client presentation	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flawless Consulting, ch 15 Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from each team on key findings from your work and draft recommendations. • Include your “elevator pitch” on most important findings and what they mean to your project. • Second draft of report due 4/11/22
3/28/22	NO CLASS	Second draft of report due 4/11/22
Class 6 4/4/22		Team: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation from each team on key findings from your work and draft recommendations. • Include your “elevator pitch” on most important findings and what they mean to your project. • Second draft of report due 4/11/22
Phase 6: WRITING AND PRESENTING 4/11/21	NO CLASS	Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second report draft due today • Client presentations/rehearsals • Third and final draft of final report due 5/2/22
Class 7 4/18/22	Rehearsals of client presentations	Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client presentations/rehearsals • Third and final draft of final report due 5/2/22
4/25/22	NO CLASS	Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client presentations • Third and final draft of final report due 5/2/22

Class 8 5/2/22	Rehearsals of client presentations Prepare Capstone Expo	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self and team peer evaluations Team <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft/final powerpoint presentation • Third and final draft of final report due today
Phase 7: CONCLUSION! EVALUATION, REFLECTION, CELEBRATION 5/9/22	NO CLASS	Individual <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read and reflect on evaluations
5/10 & 5/11	Reflect and Celebrate CAPSTONE EXPO	Teams <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teams should send final version of final report to me and Wagner Capstone alias (wagner.capstone@nyu.edu) • Presentation (format TBD)

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](#). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner 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, you should consult with me.

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](#) and click on the Reasonable Accommodations and How to Register tab 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.

NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU's Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#) states that members of any religious group may, without penalty, absent themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations. Please notify me in advance of religious holidays that might coincide with exams to schedule mutually acceptable alternatives.