



**NYU**

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

## Capstone: CAP-GP 3401.004 (section 4)

### Management & Leadership

Fall 2021 – Spring 2022

#### **Instructor Information**

- Patricia (Tricia) Davies
- [pd390@nyu.edu](mailto:pd390@nyu.edu)
- Office hours: Mondays before/after class by appointment
- <https://www.linkedin.com/in/triciadavies/>

#### **Course Information**

- Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 6:45 pm - 8:25 pm
- Via Zoom – find link in Brightspace

#### **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.

Capstone requires students to apply their learning in research & analysis, communication, team and project management and nonprofit/public sector administration 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 their projects with actual clients. It is experiential learning as consulting teams.

## Capstone Learning Objectives

Individual grades will be based on the extent to which each student and their respective team demonstrates competency in meeting each objective.

### A. 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.

### B. 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 work plan;
- meet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and work plan;
- revise contract and work plan 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 feedback 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.

### *C. Research & Analysis*

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 (beyond Google, Wikipedia and other online search engines);
- identify and implement appropriate data analysis procedures;
- determine findings;
- develop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings.

### *D. 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.

## **Course Requirements**

The class will involve lessons 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.

## **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; team members may receive different grades if I feel that is warranted. I will make this judgment based both on my assessment of students' contributions 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 and evidence of progressive learning throughout the course, based on the Learning Objectives. *Seventy percent (70%) of final grade*

*is based on work products identified in the milestones as well as any interim deliverables to the client or assigned by the faculty member and 30% of final grade 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.*

The following are suggested standards for participation and engagement in a remote environment during class time and meetings with the Professor. It serves as a reference in grading and for students' participation goals.

100-90 (A)	89-80 (B)	79-70 (C)	Below 70 (D)
You are nearly always present, attentive, actively engaged, and demonstrating your effort/thoughtfulness with your comments/questions/work. GREAT JOB! I appreciate your problem solving in this difficult time.	You are generally meeting the expectations for how a student should engage in remote learning. See the ← elements for ways to improve. Most likely, this is just an issue of consistency.	There are some issues with your participation in remote learning and/or the submission of work.  If you're having tech or health issues, please reach out to me to let me know so that I can assist and support you.	Failing to meet the ← expectations. We need to schedule a time to meet and discuss ways to better demonstrate your engagement in our remote classroom.
For example: Your camera is on and your attention is clearly focused on the class activity. Your comments show that you have come to class prepared with an understanding of the HW or with thoughtful questions. You help develop the discussion by building on, not merely repeating, classmates' ideas. You are active in both small groups and full class discussion. Your comments are constructive and respectful, even when you don't agree with others.	For example: See the ← and work on demonstrating them more consistently. You generally have something to say so work on synthesizing your ideas with the class discussion. You might be a little on the shy side but I can see you working/thinking in groups. It's sometimes a question to me whether you're following along with the class. Push yourself to contribute just a little more often.	For example: See the → and work on showing me a little more actively that you're following along with what we're doing. You're so quiet in both class and small group discussion. It's hard for me to gauge the level of your understanding. Sometimes I have to call on you several times before you're prepared to respond.	For example: Your camera is off frequently. Or you are non-responsive when teacher/ classmates call on you to participate in discussion. Or you appear to be actively engaged in something other than class. Or you don't participate in breakout room tasks. Etc.

*If you expect to miss a class with me or a meeting with your team, you must notify us in advance. If it's an unexpected absence, (illness, family emergency) please let us know as soon as you can!*

## Required Readings and Other Resources

### Group dynamics, teambuilding, inclusion

- Making Dumb Groups Smarter <https://hbr.org/2014/12/making-dumb-groups-smarter>
- Seeing and Naming Racism in Nonprofit and Public Organizations <http://www.mayenoconsulting.com/wordpress/seeing-and-naming-racism-in-nonprofit-and-public-organizations/>
- Teamwork on the Fly <https://hbr.org/2012/04/teamwork-on-the-fly-2>

### Managing meetings and projects

- 8 Ground Rules for Great Meetings <https://hbr.org/2016/06/8-ground-rules-for-great-meetings>
- The PMO Imperative <https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/pulse/strategic-initiative-management-the-pmo-imperative>
- Block, Peter. 2011. Flawless Consulting, 3rd edition. Pfeiffer. also available [online](#) (and downloadable) through NYU's Bobst Library.

### Discovery, research & analysis

- Block, Peter. 2011. Flawless Consulting, 3rd edition. Pfeiffer. also available [online](#) (and downloadable) through NYU's Bobst Library. Chapter 10 From Diagnosis to Discovery

Course readings will be available on the NYU Brightspace website for this course and /or through emails from the Professor

## Course Schedule, Milestones & Assignments

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.

Any changes to the class schedule or assignments will be posted to Brightspace and/or emailed to you with enough lead time to prepare.

*Be sure to read all notices and emails for any adjustments to the schedule or assignments!*

The course has a series of milestone activities and products that guide and track your work over the course of the year. The following due dates should be used as estimates for planning and time management though actual timing may vary depending on the specific situation of each team and client.

Date	Class topic	Tasks & assignments	Related readings and materials
Class 1	Introductions	Class:	

<p>9/13/21</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Students, Professor introductions</li> <li>● Class norms</li> <li>● Review syllabus</li> <li>● Professor's expectations for teams and individuals</li> </ul> <p><b>DUE 9/10</b> Survey, resume, LinkedIn</p> <p><b>DUE 9/20</b> set up shared folders, contacts, calendars</p> <p><b>DUE 9/20</b> Confirm client kick-off date/time (must include Prof.)</p>	<p>Read the syllabus</p> <p>Read the Student Capstone Guide</p> <p>Read client project proposals and watch client video presentations</p>
<p><b>Class 2</b> 9/20/21</p>	<p><b>Client management: engaging with a client</b></p>	<p><b>Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicating with the client (strategies and tactics)</li> <li>● Client discovery</li> <li>● Defining the client's needs</li> <li>● Managing expectations</li> </ul> <p><b>DUE 3 days prior to kick off meeting:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Agenda</b> for client kick-off: Set of questions and agenda Submit to Prof for comments</li> <li>● Client discovery: background</li> </ul> <p>Submit to professor for comments</p> <p><b>DUE 9/30</b> <b>Hold Client Kick Off mtg</b> - establish relationships, assess the client organization, and gather data to clarify the client's need or problem and client's initial vision of a successful project.</p> <p>Students to prepare, schedule, lead and document Zoom kick off</p> <p>Professor must be included in the kick-off meeting</p>	<p>Block, Peter. 2011. Flawless Consulting, 3rd edition. Pfeiffer. also available <a href="#">online</a> (and downloadable) through NYU's Bobst Library.</p> <p>Chapters 4-5:</p> <p>The Contracting Meeting</p> <p>Watch: Capstone consulting videos: Intro – what consulting is and isn't and the role of technical and interpersonal skills.</p>
<p><b>Class 3</b> 9/27/21</p>	<p><b>Project and Team management:</b></p>	<p><b>Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Identify project tasks (one-time vs. on going)</li> </ul>	<p>Teamwork on the Fly <a href="https://hbr.org/2012/04/teamwork-on-the-fly-2">https://hbr.org/2012/04/teamwork-on-the-fly-2</a></p>

	<b>Scoping and accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team roles &amp; responsibilities</li> <li>• Subject or tech. Leads</li> <li>• Liaisons to client and professor</li> </ul>	<p>Go to Brightspace -&gt;Student Resources -&gt; Team Charters</p> <p>Review examples, read the article “Cut Me Some Slack” and be prepared to discuss. What resonates for you and why?</p>
<b>Class 4</b> <b>10/4/21</b>	<b>Equity &amp; Inclusion in Capstone</b>	<p><b>Class</b> DEI - what it means to your project team?</p> <p>What it means for the client’s work</p> <p>DUE: Oct 18, 2021 Personal reflection: DEI - how does it relate to your client?</p> <p><b>DUE: Oct 7, 2021</b> <b>Team Charter:</b> 1) Norms and rules for working together 2) roles, 3) statement of equity, diversity and inclusion (each team)</p>	<p>Read the following brief articles from Readings/Additional Resources folder:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Top ten tips for happy Capstone teams</li> <li>2) Belonging in the Workplace - short article under</li> </ol> <p>READ: <a href="https://www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/faculty-research/diversity-what-you-see-inclusion-what-you-do">https://www.stern.nyu.edu/experience-stern/faculty-research/diversity-what-you-see-inclusion-what-you-do</a></p>
<b>Class 5</b> <b>10/12/21</b> <b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Project scoping and work planning</b>	<p><b>Class</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statement of need</li> <li>• Goals/objectives</li> <li>• Tasks</li> <li>• Timeline</li> <li>• Accountability</li> <li>• Deliverables</li> </ul> <p><b>Due Oct 15, 2021</b> <b>Preliminary client-team contract</b> including <i>Statement of Need, scope, deliverables and work plan (tasks, timeline, accountability)</i></p> <p>Teams submit to Prof. for and feedback and grade</p>	<p>Read: “Scoping the Project” Wysocki (Readings/additional Resources folder)</p> <p>Read: Chapters 12 and 13 in Flawless Consulting</p>
<b>Class 6</b>	<b>Literature Review &amp;</b>	<b>Class goal:</b>	

10/18/21	Library Resources	<p>Understanding the purpose and content of a literature review</p> <p><b>DUE Nov 22, 2021</b> Draft Literature review Teams submit to Professor for feedback and grading</p>	Review examples of literature reviews
Class 7 10/25	Research and data collection	<p><b>Class goal:</b> How to plan and implement a successful discovery process, leading to valuable insights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research and data collection</li> <li>- Primary vs. secondary</li> <li>- Sources and methods</li> </ul> <p><b>DUE Nov 1, 2021</b> Final, signed client-team contract Teams submit to Professor for grading</p>	<p>Read: The PMO Imperative <a href="https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/pulse/strategic-initiative-management-the-pmo-imperative">https://www.pmi.org/learning/thought-leadership/pulse/strategic-initiative-management-the-pmo-imperative</a></p> <p>Block, Peter. 2011. Flawless Consulting, 3rd edition. Pfeiffer. also available <a href="#">online</a> (and downloadable) through NYU's Bobst Library. Chapters 10, 12</p> <p>See also examples</p>
Class 8 11/1/21	Environmental scans	<p><b>Class goal:</b> How to tailor a scan or review that meets the consultant team's and client's needs.</p> <p>Learn and discuss: environmental scans and literature searches - what to include? If you don't have time or resources to explore *everything* , what how to prioritize</p>	
Class 9 11/08/21	Group project work	<p>Everyone is expected to log into class at the regular time. We will spend the first half of class together.</p> <p>Afterwards, we will split into project teams and work on upcoming deliverables. You will also have an opportunity to ask for advice or feedback from the professor.</p>	
Class 10	Evals & feedback	Introduce CATME peer eval and faculty evaluations coming up	

11/15/21	<b>Work planning</b>	Review updates to project work plans	Read: Flawless Consulting - chapters 14 and 15
<b>Class 11</b> 11/22/21	<b>Report writing lab</b>	Writing Workshop with Emily Austin - Wagner writing coach  Zoom link will be provided separately!  <b>DUE November 26:</b> CATME peer reviews	Bring questions for Emily
<b>Class 12</b> 11/29/21	<b>Research &amp; analysis related skills</b>	Sharing & presenting information Planning for final deliverables	Complete CATME (or other form) of course and peer reviews
<b>Class 13</b> 12/6/21	<b>Group Feedback</b>	Discuss peer and faculty evals with each team  Team meets with the professor to discuss course and peer reviews. - What went/is going well? - What could be better?	Read and reflect on CATME evaluations
<b>Class 14</b> 12/13/21	<b>Individual Feedback</b>	<b>Individual meetings with professor</b> End-of-first semester evaluations including: self, team/peer, and course, discussion of team progress	
<b>January Week of January 2</b>	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 Year's).  <i>Team progress meetings with the professor – date/time to be confirmed.</i>		
<b>Spring term</b>	During this semester, much of the time will be set aside for teams to meet on their own or with me. As needed, we will schedule problem-solving or skill-building sessions, so you must be available every Monday night during class time.		
	<b>Team meetings with professor during 2nd semester</b>  To ensure that each team has equal opportunity for feedback and guidance from me during the project work cycles, we will be scheduling team project meetings with me		

during the regularly scheduled class time to discuss project updates, challenges, next steps, client management, team management and any area requiring more support.

The default day/times will be Mondays from 7-8pm. However, if your date falls on a NYU holiday, we can vote to keep the time or find an alternative as close to that time as possible.

Meetings should include all team members. I will expect to see progress made on work tasks and deliverables based on written or verbal feedback I've provided as well as comments provided by Client in between our meetings.

Please make use of these scheduled sessions by planning in advance and being prepared to discuss progress to date, any challenges and comments I've shared. If urgent issues come up in between our meetings that you would like to discuss, we can schedule ad-hoc meetings but given our busy schedules, I'd like to try and stick to scheduled times as much as possible.

*Teams not scheduled to meet with me during the semester should use the weekly class time for group project work.*

*Faculty advisor will check in with clients in January*

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**Class 15**      **Team progress presentations to class**

**1/24**      FULL CLASS MEETS

Review syllabus, review norms, expectations, key dates and assignment deadlines

presentations to class for feedback include:  
Statement of need and objectives  
Highlights accomplished so far

Solicit ideas, suggestions from peers (sources or strategies for research, analysis, presentation)

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**Class 16**      **Working with Qualitative Data**

**1/31**      **Full class meets**

Guest lecture - Prof. Rachel Swaner:

Working with qualitative data

<b>Class 17</b> <b>2/7</b>	<b>Project group work</b>	Project teams to use the class time for group work	
<b>Class 18</b> <b>2/14</b>	<b>Team advisory ExpandedED</b>	Project team ExpandedED meets with professor during class time to discuss progress	Be prepared to discuss: Status update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Milestones reached</li> <li>- Progress toward deliverables</li> <li>- Challenges or reconsiderations</li> </ul>
<b>2/21</b>	<b>NO CLASS Presidents' Day</b>		
<b>Class 19</b> <b>2/28</b>	<b>Team advisory JEN</b>	Project team JEN meets with professor during class time to discuss progress	Be prepared to discuss: Status update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Milestones reached</li> <li>- Progress toward deliverables</li> <li>- Challenges or reconsiderations</li> </ul>
<b>Class 20</b> <b>3/7</b>	<b>Team advisory ExpandedED</b>	Project team ExpandedED meets with professor during class time to discuss progress	Be prepared to discuss: Status update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Milestones reached</li> <li>- Progress toward deliverables</li> <li>- Challenges or reconsiderations</li> </ul>
<b>3/14</b>	<b>No CLASS</b>	<b>NYU Spring break</b>	
<b>Class 21</b> <b>3/21</b>	<b>Team advisory JEN</b>	Project team JEN meets with professor during class time to discuss work so far	Be prepared to discuss: Status update: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Milestones reached</li> <li>- Progress toward deliverables</li> <li>- Challenges or reconsiderations</li> </ul>
<b>Class 22</b> <b>3/28</b>	<b>Open office hours</b>	Revisions / project work	

<b>Class 23 4/4</b>	<b>Open office hours</b>	Each team to present to class (rehearsal for peer feedback)	
<b>Class 24 4/11</b>	<b>Open office hours</b>	Revisions / project work	
<b>Class 25 4/18</b>	<b>Open office hours</b>	Passover week - Up to students to decide dates/times for meetings and project work.	
<b>4/25</b>	<b>Group presentations - Rehearsal in class</b>  <b>Final deliverables due for grading</b>	Project work	
<b>5/2-5/9</b>	<b>Capstone Expo Date/times TBD</b>	Capstone Expo- All capstone groups present projects	
<b>5/9</b>	<b>Final class</b>	Team presentations to clients this week (must be scheduled with professor)	

#### **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 the NYU Classes website.

#### **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](mailto: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.