

Capstone: CAP-GP 3301.002 – SI3

Fall 2022 – Spring 2023

# Instructor Information

* Rebecca Duane (Becky)
* [rebecca.duane@nyu.edu](mailto:rebecca.duane@nyu.edu)
* Office hours by appointment

# Course Information

* Class Meeting Time: Mondays, 6:45pm - 8:25pm
* Class Location: Rubin, Room 103 Loc: Washington Square

# 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. It also can provide students with a credential as they seek post-graduation employment. 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.

We will be following the accelerated Capstone schedule with the goal of completing the Capstone process by mid-March 2023. Potential projects have been identified and reviewed by the Capstone faculty. I will assign students to project teams based on several factors, including student preference and expertise as well as team size and the needs of a particular project. Teams usually comprise 3- 5 students who bring a mix of skills and experience and have expressed an interest in the project.

# Course and Learning Objectives

## 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.

## 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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.

## 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.

## 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

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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 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 |

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| **Course Learning Objective** | **Corresponding Assignment** |
| 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 client applications on Brightspace. Client presentations will be available during the first week of September before class. **You should submit questions you have about the specific projects by Friday, September 9 before class.** During our first class, we will have a chance to discuss the projects. Students will be asked for project preferences immediately following our first class.

You will fill out a form which gives me your project rankings and other information. This form is **due on Tuesday, September 13.** I will take your preferences into account along with the needs of the project, students’ previous coursework, work and life experience, other expertise, 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 each.

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;**
* timely responses to instructor, teammates, and clients;
* completion of assignments on time;
* participation in project work;
* participation in meetings with clients;
* **equitable** participation (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; and
* completion of all evaluations.

Though Capstone is in-person this year, your team and client meetings do not have to be. Teams can work this out with each other and their client.

# Capstone Expenses

Each capstone team is entitled to reimbursement of up to $500 of Capstone related expenses, such as photocopying, supplies, etc. None of these funds can be spent hiring others to do work that you are expected to do, like 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 Brightspace course website.

# 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.

**Grading Criteria:** Students will be graded on both the products they deliver to their clients and faculty and evidence of progressive learning throughout the course, based on the Learning Objectives (see above).

* 60% **is based on teamwork products and activities** identified in the milestones as well as any interim deliverables to the client or assigned by the faculty member.
* 40% **is based on evidence of the individual student’s learning and performance** during the course through active participation in the team’s work (including as indicated by team- member evaluations), class activities, meetings with faculty, and the ability to act on peer and faculty feedback, accessibility and responsiveness to the team and instructor, individual and team preparation for and performance at client meetings; and end-of-semester faculty, peer and self-evaluations.

**Note on written submissions:** All written assignments for Capstone are professional documents. As such, they are to use clear, concise language and correct grammar. They are also to use data and well-documented and indexed 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. They must all be properly cited with all sources references noted as applicable. 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 content.) **Please submit all draft documents to your Professor as a Google doc**, as they can be easily shared and edited amongst a group of people.

# Required Readings and Other Resources

Course readings will be available on the Brightspace website for this course. Additional readings may be added as the course progresses.

# Course Milestones

The course has a series of milestones—both activities and products—that will serve as interim work products. Suggested time frames are in parentheses, though actual timing during the course of the year may vary depending on the specific situation of each team and client.

We are running on an accelerated schedule and our class will target finishing the Capstone process by mid-March 2023.

These milestones include:

* Client applicant presentations (recorded) (September);
* Team formation (September);
* Kickoff meeting 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 (early October);
* Preliminary client-team contract or work agreement (October);
* Negotiations with client to finalize contract (October);
* Final, signed client-team contract (October);
* Team charter (October)
* Detailed team workplan (October);
* 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);
* Second draft of final project report to faculty (February/early March);
* Rehearsal of client presentation before class/faculty for feedback before presentation to client (early March);
* Final report and presentation to client (early to mid-March);
* End-of-second semester reflection and celebration (mid-March);
* End-of-course self, team /peer, client and course evaluations (mid-March); and
* Presentation for Capstone Expo (May).

# Class Schedule Overview

The tentative fall class schedule is provided below. **The class meeting schedule is subject to change, as Capstone remains a fluid learning experience**. Students should expect to meet weekly as a class or team unless otherwise 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.**

Note that all interim and final deliverables must come to me first before they go to the client. We may go through several rounds of revision before I feel the products are ready to be shared with the client.

Specific requirements for each class will be posted on NYU Brightspace and emailed to you with enough lead time to prepare. **Instructions in email or NYU Brightspace takes precedence over what is written here**.

Please take note of the NYU Academic Calendar for 2022-23.

# Classroom Norms

When we are in the classroom, I request that you do not use laptops, tablets or phones unless you are working in your project teams. Please bring notebooks for taking notes. Any slides used will also be made available in Brightspace. It is rare we get a break from our screens. My hope is that you are fully present and will actively participate during class discussions.

When we meet on Zoom, you are expected to participate in each class with your Zoom audio and video on. Please review Wagner’s Zoom in the Classroom series about classroom etiquette, participation, and more.

# Technology Support

You have 24/7 support via NYU’s IT services. Explore the NYU servicelink knowledgebase for troubleshooting and student guides for all NYU-supported tools (NYU Brightspace, Zoom, etc). Contact [askIT@nyu.edu](mailto:askIT@nyu.edu) or 1-212-998-3333 (24/7) for technology assistance, or contact Zoom’s 24/7 technical support (includes a chat function), or review Zoom’s support resources. Your peers are another source of support, so you could ask a friend or classmate for help or tips.

If you do not have the appropriate hardware technology nor financial resources to purchase the technology, consider applying for the NYU Emergency Relief Grant.

# 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.

## FALL 2022 SEMESTER

The schedule and topics below may vary 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.

Capstone Expo is the final, celebratory event of the course, where teams present summaries of their projects to a broad audience. Please hold the evening of Tuesday, May 9, 2023 for this year's Capstone Expo event. More information will be forthcoming in the spring semester

**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.

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| **PHASE and DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE**  (all assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted) |
| **Phase 1: CREATING TEAMS**  Class 1  9/12/22 | Introductions  Overview of Syllabus & Capstone Student Guide  Discussion of potential Client Project | **Individual**   * Read: Syllabus and [Student Capstone Guide](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student) * Read: Capstone proposals; come to class prepared with questions * Watch: Client presentations * Watch: [“What is Capstone?” video](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student)   **Due 9/13 by 5pm:** Student Info and Project Preferences Form |
| **Phase 2: TEAM LAUNCH AND PLANNING**  Class 2  9/19/22 | Introduction to Consulting  Preparation for kickoff meeting with client; Knowing the Client  Teams Formed   * Team activity * Establish weekly meeting time * Set up shared Google Drive folder | **Individual**   * Read: Read: Flawless Consulting, Ch. 19, 1, 2, 3 (in this order) * Read: Capstone Reflections – Advice Letters * Watch: Capstone consulting videos: Intro, What Consulting Is and Isn’t and The Role of Technical and Interpersonal Skills   **Team**   * Exchange contact information * Schedule one get-together purely about getting know each other. See handout under “Activities” on Brightspace for sample questions and topics * **Due Thu 9/22 by 3pm:** In preparation for your client meeting, please email me the following:   + A draft of first client email   + Multiple date/time options, to which I will provide my availability   + Kickoff meeting objectives |

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| **PHASE and DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE**  (all assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted) |
| Class 3  9/26/22 | Team Dynamics 1: Leadership Styles  Group Activity: Leadership Compass debrief | **Individual**   * Read: The Culture Code * Activity: Leadership Compass, complete in advance of class and bring your results to share   **Team**   * Send out first client email by 9/26 to schedule kickoff meeting between Wed 9/28 & Fri 10/7. Send draft to me before sending to client.   *Note: I must be present at kickoff meeting.*  **\*I must be copied on every client communication for the duration of Capstone.**   * **Due Tue 9/27 by 3pm:** In preparation for your client meeting, please email me the following:   + Kickoff meeting agenda (tied to meeting objectives)   + 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 |
| Class 4  10/03/22 | Contracting (Scope Agreement), Project Management, Timelines  Internal Workplan | **Individual**   * Read: Flawless Consulting, Ch. 4, 5, 6, 8 9 * Watch: Capstone consulting videos: The Project Management Triangle, Client Expectations Mgmt, Risk Mgmt, Client Mtg Mgmt * Read: Ethics Memo for students * Review three (3) sample Client Contracts under “Student Resources” on Brightspace * Choose one of the following Project Management tutorials:   + Project Management Foundations (~3 hours)   + Project Management Simplified (~1.5 hours)   + Additional resources can be found on Brightspace in “Student Resources – Workplans”   **Team**   * Begin drafting contract (if have conducted client kickoff meeting) * Begin drafting workplan * Be prepared to report on client kickoff meeting |

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| **PHASE and DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE**  (all assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted) |
| Class 5  Tuesday, 10/11/22 (Legislative Monday) | Team Dynamics 2: Creating team cultures that honor everyone’s backgrounds and workstyles  Discussion of Team Charters; Teams will meet to draft  Scope questions | **Individual**   * Read: The Culture Code * Review two (2) sample Team Charters under “Student Resources” on Brightspace   **Team**   * Be prepared to report on client kickoff meeting * **Due Tue 10/11 by 3pm:** Draft contract; revisions due promptly as required; **to be sent to client by Fri 10/14**. *Note:* Scope may need to be revised after client feedback. * Continue drafting workplan (align to contract) |
| Class 6  10/17/22 | Project Management and discussion about Workplans; Begin drafting workplan with team during class  Review draft contracts | **Individual**   * Review sample workplans * Read: Flawless Consulting, Ch. 10   **Team**   * **Due Mon 10/17 by 3pm: Draft Team Charter**. Be prepared to talk about proposed team member roles in class * Incorporate client feedback into contract |
| **Phase 3: RESEARCH AND SKILLS, PROJECT WORK, AND FEEDBACK**  Class 7 | The art of feedback  Topics selected based on project needs (research design, literature reviews, environmental scans, etc.) | **Individual**   * Reading on feedback * Read: Flawless Consulting, Ch. 13, 14 * Skim: Capstone Cohort Research Guide * Activity: Experiment with using Bobst Library databases to identify scholarly articles regarding your topic. Be ready to show results in class in class.   **Team**   * **Due Fri 10/21 by 3pm:** Draft workplan * **Due Mon 10/24 by 3pm**: **Final Contract** signed by client and countersigned by team members. Post in Brightspace when finalized. |
| Class 8  10/31/22 | Team Meetings; No Formal Class.  I am available to meet with teams during week. | **Team**   * **Due Tue 11/1 by 3pm:**   1. **Final Team Charter**   2. **Final Workplan** |
| Class 9  11/07/22 | TBD – Based on individual team project needs |  |

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| **PHASE and DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE**  (all assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted) |
| Class 10  11/14/22 | TBD – Based on individual team project needs |  |
| Class 11  11/21/22 | TBD – Based on individual team project needs |  |
| Class 12  11/28/22 | Continued discussion on self and team evaluations and the art of feedback | **Individual & Team**   * Self and team evaluations |
| Class 13  12/05/22 | Team and individual meetings to discuss evaluations; Feedback review | **Individual**   * Read and reflect on evaluations |
| Class 14  12/12/22 | Semester reflection and goals setting for December/January | **Individual**   * Prepare goals and priorities for Dec/Jan |

Dates will be adjusted for the following deliverables given each team’s timeline and scope of work:

* Bulleted outline of final report – ***Due by Thursday, January 19***
* First draft of final report – ***Due by Wednesday, February 22***
* Final capstone abstract draft and photo for Wagner administration - TBD
* Mock final presentations – ***early March***
* Final report and deliverables to client – ***Due by Thursday, March 9***
* Final presentations to client – ***Due by Thursday, March 9***
* Wagner Capstone Expo – May; information forthcoming.

## January 2023 Term

Teams will meet weekly with me from early January until the spring semester begins, at a day/time of the team’s choosing. Students are expected to be available and working during this time (except for the holiday week between December 24 – January 1).

## Spring 2023 Semester

The class will meet weekly on Mondays beginning January 23 as needed during the spring semester. **You must continue to be available for our class time on Monday evenings through the end of March**. Much of the time will be set aside for teams to meet on their own or with me.

Projects successfully completed by the scheduled outlined above will have a final class on March 20 to debrief the capstone experience. Teams must participate in the Wagner Capstone Expo in late May; information forthcoming.