

**Capstone: CAP-GP Management Capstone Section 005 Fall 2021 – Spring 2022**

Instructor Information

* Sonia Balaram
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* Office Hours: By appointment

Course Information

* Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 6:45 pm - 8:25 pm
* Classroom: 194 Mercer, Room 210

# **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 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.

### 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 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.

## 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 |
| 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**

Once you are familiar with the projects, you will fill out a form which gives me your project rankings and other information. 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. You should expect to work approximately 5-10 hours a week, including class time, team meetings and project work. 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.

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 “I” (Incomplete) 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. **60 %** **is based on work products** 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** 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**

Course readings will be available on the Brightspace website 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 (August/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/May);
* 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).

# **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, 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.

Class Schedule Overview

Capstone Expo is the final, celebratory event of the course, held the second week in May, 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.

# **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). All Wagner students have already read and signed the [Wagner 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, 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](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) 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.

# **Part II:**

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

The list of weeks and topics that follows is preliminary and subject to change. Students should expect to meet weekly as a class or team unless agreed beforehand. 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 Brightspace and emailed to you with enough lead time to prepare. **Instructions in email or Brightspace take precedence over what is written here**.

Important note about assignments: Assignments are due **Sundays at 6:00 PM** prior to class unless otherwise noted.

## **Fall Semester**

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| **PHASE and DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE** |
| **Phase 1: CREATING TEAMS**  Class 1  9/12/22 | Welcome & Introductions | * Review capstone proposals and client presentations * **Due 9/15 at 6:00 PM**: Student Project Preference Form * Watch video: [What is capstone](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone)? This an overview of what to expect in Capstone |
| Class 2  9/19/22 | Team Formation  What are best practices for capstone projects? | What makes teams successful? What do teams need from each other in order to solve their client’s problem?  **Individual**   * What do YOU expect or need in order to be successful in this class? Come to the next class with ideas on what we can add to our class community norms. * Watch: [Capstone consulting video](https://cdnapisec.kaltura.com/html5/html5lib/v2.61.1/mwEmbedFrame.php/p/1674401/uiconf_id/37666341?wid=1_2nspd17d&iframeembed=true&playerId=kaltura_player_5d6439dd62758&flashvars%5BplaylistAPI.kpl0Id%5D=0_kvppacga&flashvars%5BplaylistAPI.autoContinue%5D=true&flashvars%5BplaylistAPI.autoInsert%5D=true&flashvars%5Bks%5D=&flashvars%5BakamaiHD.loadingPolicy%5D=preInitialize&flashvars%5BakamaiHD.asyncInit%5D=true&flashvars%5BtwoPhaseManifest%5D=true&flashvars%5BlocalizationCode%5D=en&flashvars%5BimageDefaultDuration%5D=30&flashvars%5BleadWithHTML5%5D=true&flashvars%5BLeadWithHLSOnFlash%5D=true&flashvars%5BforceMobileHTML5%5D=true&flashvars%5BnextPrevBtn.plugin%5D=true&flashvars%5BsideBarContainer.plugin%5D=true&flashvars%5BsideBarContainer.position%5D=left&flashvars%5BsideBarContainer.clickToClose%5D=true&flashvars%5Bchapters.plugin%5D=true&flashvars%5Bchapters.layout%5D=vertical&flashvars%5Bchapters.thumbnailRotator%5D=false&flashvars%5BstreamSelector.plugin%5D=true&flashvars%5BEmbedPlayer.SpinnerTarget%5D=videoHolder&flashvars%5BdualScreen.plugin%5D=true)s: Watch all of them; they are all short. Pay special attention to the last video which is about the Client Meeting. * Using what you have learned in previous teams and team building work, come up with a few team launch activities (Tools, links, Team agreements, ice breaker) to share with your team in class. * Review examples of team charters |
| Phase 2: TEAM PLANNING  Class 3  9/26/22 | Contracts  First Client Meeting | Individual   * Become an expert on your organization - Conduct background research to familiarize yourself with your client. * Review samples of client contracts and be prepared with questions you have about crafting your own. * **Reading:** [How to Define Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Work](https://www.cultureamp.com/blog/diversity-equity-inclusion-work) * **Reading:** White Supremacy Culture Characteristics   + Be prepared to discuss how White Supremacy Culture may show up in your teams or with your clients   + What are some of the antidotes to White Supremacy Culture that you can implement in your teams? |
| Class 4  10/3/22 | Backwards Planning from Final Report | **Team**   * **Due:** RoughDraft of Team Charter * Plan a team get together/fun outing with the purpose of just getting to know each other. Take a group picture during your outing and share as part of your weekly update. * Create group email following instructions here: <https://nyu.service-now.com/sp?sys_kb_id=183728200fae35c04d20348ce1050ef3&id=kb_article_view&sysparm_rank=2&sysparm_tsqueryId=db74525edbe2f0d0986d121d13961995>   *Expert Learning Groups:*   * We would like students to break up into teams focused on the work products. Each team assigns a representative to become an “expert” on one of the following areas:   + Team 1. Team Charter and Contracts   + Team 2: Literature Review   + Team 3. Environmental Scan   + Team 4. Designing and Creating Final Report and Final Presentation   **Individual**   * Review deck on Backwards Planning and Final Report * Review copies of the Final Report and be prepared to discuss strengths and weaknesses |
| Class 5  10/11/22  NOTE: This is a TUESDAY, not a Monday. Monday, October 11 is fall break. Classes on Tuesday, October 12 meet on a Monday schedule.  **We are not meeting in class. We will meet over zoom** | Panel - Past Capstone Students | * **Review case:**  You can see how the team moved from Project proposal --> contract--> findings --> final report/ presentation through these documents * Submit questions here for the previous capstone students (these questions will be forwarded to them in preparation of our meeting) * **Due:** Final Team Charter (though making revisions throughout this process is encouraged) * Complete debrief jamboard activity for the Expert Learning Teams Activity * Complete preliminary evaluation form sent out by Wagner |
| Class 6  10/17/22  **Teamwork time- Not meeting in person** | Project Management  Work Plans | Team   * Review examples of work plans * Due: Draft of Client Contract (suggested deadline- some teams may just have an outline at this point) * Schedule time to review contract and project scope with client (get this on the calendar) * **Review: Deck on Work Plans** * **Reading:** [What is PERT and how can we use it?](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-pert-how-can-we-use-dave-fourie-pmp-prince2-) * **Due:** Draft of work plan |
| Class 7  10/24/22 | Environmental Scans | * Review examples of environmental scans and make a list of any questions you have. Consider what are the strengths and weaknesses of the examples in the folder. What are some lessons/takeaways you can apply to your own environmental scan? * Come to class with your team’s preliminary plan for tackling the environmental scan. Specifically, try to plan out the work that you intend to do for the internal scan and external scan and be prepared to share that plan.   + For example, will you interview experts? Send out surveys to participants? |
| Phase 3: RESEARCH SKILLS AND PROJECT WORK  Class 8  10/31/22 | Team work time; no formal class! | * This week: Draft outline of environmental scan (or find another way to show progress in the environmental scan) * Readings:   + [Don't be nice; Be Helpful](https://hbr.org/2011/03/dont-be-nice-be-helpful.html)   + [How To Give Feedback People Can Actually Use](https://hbr.org/2017/10/how-to-give-feedback-people-can-actually-use)   + [You’ve Been Doing a Fantastic Job. Just This One Thing…](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/06/your-money/how-to-give-effective-feedback-both-positive-and-negative.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0&mtrref=undefined) * Optional lynda video: [Giving and Receiving Feedback](https://www.lynda.com/Leadership-Management-tutorials/Giving-Receiving-Feedback/622053-2.html?org=nyu.edu) * **Due:**  Final Signed Contract and Work Plan |
| Class 9  11/7/22 | Team Work | * In Class: Be prepared to present your draft contract and project scope (include a timeline with estimated due dates so you can start to think about deadlines). Teams can share their screens and walk us through their project scope then solicit comments and questions. * Set up an appointment with the Capstone Librarian to identify academic sources for your literature review by emailing them at [SCGP@nyu.edu](mailto:SCGP@nyu.edu). * Optional: Check in with Sonia -Feel free to set an appointment with me to discuss your growth and progress in the class so far. |
| Class 10  11/14/22 | Literature Review | * Review [Wagner Capstone Library Guide](https://guides.nyu.edu/wagner/capstone) * Use Bobst Library databases to find scholarly articles * Review examples of literature reviews and be prepared to discuss strengths and weaknesses * In class: Share results of research and discuss lit review examples * This week: Draft outline of literature review * Optional: Complete [Literature Review Chart](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1dWAFYoLwGVE-WREXQ-9wHwsBvSg5nxgP4oCYSHOajt0/edit?usp=sharing) * Review: [Writing Rubric](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11-XksSNz1FCYY33n-FPIH14Gyu43f5OJMOH4EZXpxOo/edit?usp=sharing) (know how your writing will be graded) * **Reading:** [Writing a Literature Review](https://ssrmc.wm.edu/literature-review-module/) * Weekly update: Report back on how team feedback went and overall team areas of improvement and strength |
| Phase 4: PROJECT WORK AND FEEDBACK  Class 11  11/21/22 | Writing Reports  7:00 - 7:30 PM  Presentation by Emily Austin | * Reading: [Why No One is Reading Your Reports](https://stephanieevergreen.com/why-no-one-is-reading-your-report/) * Bring questions you have about writing your reports   + Ex. How to organize your findings? How to condense all your research into manageable pieces? |
| Class 12  11/28/22 | Emily Austin - Writing Center will share tips and advice on Capstone writing and deliverables | **Individual**   * What questions do you have about the writing process? * **Feedback forms due 12/3** * **Feedback Reflection:** In preparation of team feedback discussions happening next week, students should complete the forms attached by copying and saving it as “Name\_Self”, “Name\_Peer-[name of team member].”Please save as a google doc and share with me.   + Mid Semester Feedback Forms for Self   + Mid Semester Feedback Form for Team members   + Mid Semester Feedback Form for Instructor * Watch: [The secret to giving great feedback](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wtl5UrrgU8c) * Sign up for individual check ins with Sonia (link coming)   \*\* December 1st - Course and Faculty Evaluation links sent out by Wagner. Goal =100% response rate! |
| Class 13  12/5/22 | Team and individual meetings to discuss evaluations | **Individual**   * Read and reflect on evaluations * Optional Reading: Difficult Conversations, ["The 'What Happened' Conversation"](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9OeVi8dXUWeLThSX3d6MHlFdFdHWTdGa0dMcTlHZnBFSTNR) (pp. 21-82) * Reading: [How to Handle Surprise Criticism](https://hbr.org/2010/09/how-to-handle-surprise-critici.html) * Difficult Conversations, ["The Feelings Conversation](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9OeVi8dXUWeR01UTDQ2ZWVTT1hmSEI5ZVFvUGF1UE5lQl9F)" (pp. 83-108) and ["The Identity Conversation”](https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B9OeVi8dXUWeMGdEVlplRlJ5M2xuWmRJZnF5RHU4LTEtR21Z) (pp. 109-128) |
| Class 14  12/12/22 | Present Findings from Research  Reflect  Team Culture & Feedback | * Optional**:** Slide Deck presenting findings to date * Optional: Set up time with Emily Austin (writing tutor) to review and offer feedback on the lit review and/or environmental scan. Email her at [ea86@nyu.edu](mailto:ea86@nyu.edu) and please be sure to CC Instructor. |

## **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). If team members are planning to travel, just make sure to work things out among yourselves.

## **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**.

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| **DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE** |
| **Phase 5: PROJECT WORK**  Class 1  1/23/23 | Team updates  Discuss spring schedule | Team Updates   * Present Progress Updates * Review Final Report Guide Book and come to class with any questions   **Due:** Final draft of Literature Review and Environmental Scan |
| Class 2  1/30/23 | Final Reports | **Due:** Outline of Final Report  **Due:** Update Work Plan  Full Class time to work in your teams |
| Class 3  2/6/23 |  | **Due:** Schedule Final Presentation - instructor must be present and all members of team so ensure that you have everyone’s availability prior to submitting possible dates to client  **Due:** Complete Findings Portion of Final Report |
| Class 4  2/13/23 |  | **Due:** Complete Recommendations Portion of Final Report |
| **Phase 6: PROJECT WORK AND REPORT WRITING**  NO CLASS  PRESIDENTS DAY  2/20/23 |  | No Class - President’s Day  **Due:** 1st Draft of Final Report (Internal) |
| Class 5  2/27/23 |  |  |
| Class 6  3/6/23 |  | **Due:** 2nd Draft (internal)  Team Work Time (Check in with Instructor if needed) |
| NO CLASS  SPRING BREAK  3/13/23 |  | **Due:** 2nd Draft (external)  Discuss best practice for delivering presentations |
| Class 7  3/20/23 | Editing Reports | **Team**   * 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. |
| Class 8  3/27/23 |  | **Team**   * Reflection and Offering Feedback |
| Class 9  4/3/23 |  | **Due:** 3rd draft of Final Report |
| Class 10  4/10/23 |  | Work time for teams   * Check in with instructor if necessary |
| Class 11  4/17/23 |  | * Discuss CATME and Team Evaluations * CATME Evaluations open   **Due:** Final Draft of Final Report |
| Class 12  4/24/23 |  | * CATME Evaluations due 4/29 * CATME evaluations released to students 4/30 * Decide on process for debriefing evaluations |
| **Phase 8: CONCLUSION! EVALUATION, REFLECTION, CELEBRATION**  Class 13  5/1/23 | Self and peer evaluations | **Individual**   * **Feedback Reflection:** In preparation of team feedback discussions happening this week, students should complete the forms attached by copying and saving it as “Name\_Self”, “Name\_Peer-[name of team member].”Please save as a google doc and share with me.   + For the instructor feedback, please email it to Genesis so it will stay anonymous to me. Genesis will compile your feedback and email it to me as one document.   + It is important to frame the reflection in a way that you would want to receive feedback. Please discuss specific moments where your teammates helped move the project forward and areas/moments that they can work on or handle differently. Please read the resources below for more info on how to deliver meaningful and helpful feedback.   + Mid Semester Feedback Forms for Self   + Mid Semester Feedback Form for Team members   + Mid Semester Feedback Form for Instructor |
| Class 14  5/8/23 | Reflect and Celebrate | **Team:**   * Teams should send final version of final report to me and Wagner Capstone alias ([wagner.capstone@nyu.edu](mailto:wagner.capstone@nyu.edu)) * Submit google drive folder with Final drafts of the following to Instructor for final review prior:   + Work Plan   + Weekly check in   + Contract   + Team Charter   + Literature Review   + Environmental Scan   + Final Report   + Final Presentation   + Any additional documents created for the client * Instructor needs to sign off on the google folder above in order for you to submit to the client and Wagner * Reflection-Advice Letters to Future Capstone Students |
| 5/9 & 5/10/23 | CAPSTONE EXPO | **Team**   * Final poster board or slideshow |