

Mutual Expectations for Capstone

Capstone grows out of, and contributes to, a set of interlocking communities. Communities are sustained by mutual ties of responsibility and obligation, gift, and receipt. So is Capstone. Capstone has four stakeholder groups, groups that come together to make Capstone work: clients, students, faculty, and Wagner itself, as represented by its administration and the Capstone program staff. Each of these groups has interwoven responsibilities to the others; each group gives to the other groups and receives in return.

Students Offer

- Energy, time and engagement
- A range of experience and expertise
- A stance of curiosity and openness to their client, their faculty and each other
- A willingness to re-negotiate and revise the project as necessary
- A finished work product which advances the mission of the organization

Faculty Offer

- A learning environment, both challenging and supportive, in which students can build on earlier experiences, while trying out new ways of thinking and acting
- A set of class meetings, activities and assignments which gives students an overall framework within which to work, but is adaptable to the particular needs of their projects
- Support to the client and its Capstone team, as necessary, to ensure that the project is moving forward to a successful conclusion
- A willingness to act as liaison, as necessary, between Wagner, the client and the students
- An opportunity, towards the end of the course, for students to reflect on the bigger picture within which their project is located
- Useful feedback during and at the end of the project in addition to a final grade

Clients Offer

- A concrete, feasible project
- An identified staff liaison with the Capstone team
- Communication with and support of its Capstone team; an openness to mentoring team members, as well as treating them as work partners
- A willingness to re-negotiate and revise the project as necessary
- Useful feedback during the project and evaluation at the end of the project that can inform the faculty member's grading decision
- An engagement fee, where possible

Wagner and Capstone Program Staff Offer

- An academic environment with a set of supports, including specialization requirements and related courses, which contribute to Capstone's success
- Smooth-running program administration
- A clear and transparent Capstone process
- A variety of resources and support to clients, faculty and student teams
- Openness of feedback from other stakeholders on what's working and not working.

We offer this list of mutual expectations in order to give all stakeholders a general sense of their obligations to others as well as others' obligations to them. Once teams have been matched with clients, we suggest that more specific work agreements be drawn up so that mutual responsibilities are made transparent and explicit.