The Value of Capstone Projects to Participating Client Agencies

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ABSTRACT

Many schools have experiential learning projects, often termed "capstones," where students combine theory and practice for the benefit of an outside agency. New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service (NYU Wagner) has devoted a great deal of thought and effort to strengthening and sustaining its Capstone program from the students' perspective, and it has seen significant improvement. But we knew less about whether the project work our students performed was helpful to participating Capstone client organizations, as well as what factors made certain projects more successful from the clients' point of view. In an effort to assess and understand this perspective, we undertook a post-project survey of recent Capstone clients. The results indicate very strongly that the services offered and tools created by our Capstone teams are useful to these outside agencies, and the feedback offers indications of how to increase the value of these projects going forward.

THE VALUE OF CAPSTONE PROJECTS TO PARTICIPATING CLIENT AGENCIES

Many National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) and Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) schools — such as those at Carnegie Mellon University's Heinz School, Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs, George Washington University's Trachtenberg School, New York University's Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School, Syracuse University's Maxwell School, and Texas A&M's Bush School — build experiential learning opportunities into their curriculum through capstone programs, where students work on projects for

governmental or nonprofit agencies. The format of these projects varies from four-week, intensive workshops to year-long courses, but a common theme is their emphasis on the opportunity for students to complete work in a "real-world" environment.

The benefit of experiential learning opportunities to graduate students in public administration and public policy programs has been the focus of much research. Whitaker and Berner (2004) discuss the value of Master of Public Administration (MPA) public service team projects for helping students develop research and management skills. Bernstein, Ohren and Shue (2003) cite greater civic engagement as one benefit of the service-learning program at Eastern Michigan University, and conclude that the benefits of service learning outweigh the costs. Smith (2005) notes that in addition to providing NYU Wagner students with the opportunity to integrate the knowledge, understanding, and skills they've developed at school, Capstone students also "experience the value of professional networks and get an early introduction to many value conflicts and ethical dilemmas similar to those they will face in their careers" (Smith, 2005, p.195). Many other articles emphasize the general value of enabling students to bridge theory and practice through work with the wider community (Jelier & Clarke, 1999; Allard & Straussman, 2003; Denhardt, Lewis, Raffel, & Rich, 1997; Cohen, Eimicke, & Ukeles, 1995).

Most research on experiential learning programs focuses on their benefits to students, not to the client organizations. Yet, implicit in the development of these programs is the assumption that students are providing a valuable public service. Input from organizations that participate in such programs supports this assumption. For example, the Congressional Research Service (CRS), a frequent client of capstone projects, states that their "involvement in such programs can benefit the students, the school, the Congress, and CRS in multiple ways" (CRS, 2007, p.5). The client comments included in Whitaker and Berner's (2004) article, as well as Bernstein et al.'s (2003) discussion of the benefits to the City of Ypsilanti, offer more evidence for the use of such projects to the client organization.

And, NASPAA has deemed the public service component of experiential learning programs as important, too. NASPAA's Data Task Force (McFarland, 2007) — whose charge is to identify "appropriate, relevant and verifiable measures of the educational quality and characteristics of public affairs programs" and to "counter the federal government's pressure for public accountability with their own voluntary data efforts" (p.1) — has identified "discernable impacts on community well-being and advancement" (p.3) as a desired data-collection effort.

NYU Wagner sought to find out more formally and definitively if capstone projects indeed "address challenges and identify opportunities for a client organization" and "contribute not only to the students' education, but also to the

public good," as written in the description of our Capstone program (NYU Wagner, n.d., overview). We also wanted to identify any consensus about which projects were most and least beneficial to our client organizations, and examine whether certain project characteristics were associated with better outcomes for our clients. And, finally, we thought that the size of our program might give us perspective that would be useful not only to us, but to our peer schools as well, as we evaluate and strengthen this type of experiential learning academic program. We did so via a survey of recent Capstone clients, inquiring as to the long-term usefulness the work done by our students may have had to their agencies.

PROGRAM BACKGROUND

NYU Wagner's Capstone program was started in 1995. Since then, more than 2,600 students have participated in more than 500 projects for approximately 400 organizations. Our Capstone program is the final event for all MPA and Master of Urban Planning (MUP) candidates. Covering an academic year (two full semesters), students enroll in a Capstone section, based on a combination of their academic programs (either Public and Nonprofit Management and Policy, Health, or Urban Planning) and their specializations (Management, Policy, Finance, or International). Each Capstone section consists of a class that is scheduled to meet once a week with a faculty member, as well as a team-based project that addresses a real concern for a local, national, or international government or nonprofit agency. Client-based projects are solicited through an open RFP process that begins in the month of March, prior to the academic year that the project work will take place. Faculty and students also can suggest potential Capstone clients. Prospective clients receive e-mail messages and postcards announcing that the school is accepting proposals, and are referred to a Web site that outlines proposal guidelines as well as the program's major components (www.wagner.nyu.edu/capstone). This Web site includes application and selection procedures, the suggested engagement fee structure, information on previous projects, and tips as to common themes among the best Capstone proposals — that they be important but not urgent; achievable within the academic timeframe and with the resources available; and provide a reasonably clear definition of the problem or issue to be addressed. All selected Capstone clients are invited to attend a group meeting in the beginning of the academic year. At this meeting, they explore ways to maximize the quality and effectiveness of their Capstone project by engaging with Capstone administration and faculty, as well as previous Capstone clients and former Capstone students. A memo summarizing the discussion of helpful tips is e-mailed to all clients, whether or not they attend this event.

Capstone clients are asked, but not required, to complete an evaluation of the team's work toward the end of the project cycle in April, in order to assess team performance and the quality of the product to date. All Capstone teams submit

a final written report to the Capstone client, and many also present their findings and recommendations in person.

Three-hundred-four students participated in NYU Wagner's Capstone program during the 2006-2007 academic year. The vast majority of students participated in client-based Capstone projects (278, or 91 percent, in the 2006-2007 academic year), while a much smaller number elected to conduct a team-based research project without a client organization (26 students in the 2006-2007 academic year). Capstone was taught by 20 faculty members in 2006-2007, and 62 projects were conducted throughout the year (57 client-based projects and five research-based projects). In the 2006-2007 academic year, NYU Wagner received 129 project proposals from prospective clients, of which 57, or 44 percent, were selected.

METHODOLOGY

In November 2007, approximately six months after the students completed their work with the Capstone program, we surveyed all 57 clients from the 2006-2007 academic year.[1] A request to fill out an on-line survey *(see Appendix A)* was sent to the client project liaisons who worked with Capstone teams, and an accompanying e-mail was sent to explain the purpose of the survey. *(See Appendix B.)*

After two rounds of reminders and direct contacts, 42 out of 55 client agencies responded, with a total survey response rate of 74 percent. Two agencies had multiple responses; for the purposes of this analysis, their quantitative responses were averaged and counted as one response.

The survey required respondents to give their name, indicate their own role in relation to the Capstone project (e.g., wrote the original project proposal, served as the primary liaison to the NYU Wagner Capstone team, worked with the team during the project year, etc.), and also the content of the project (e.g., conducting organizational assessments, evaluating programs, reviewing or examining financial viability of projects or endeavors, conducting neighborhood or community assessments, assisting with strategic planning, evaluating client satisfaction, etc.).

The survey also had respondents indicate whether the Capstone team had provided the client with specific tools or resources, and separately asked whether the team had made specific recommendations as part of the project. Additional questions addressed whether the client organization was using those tools and/or resources or following the teams' recommendations, and how useful the organization had found the tools and resources or recommendations to be.

The primary variables of interest were survey questions that asked whether Capstone had been helpful to the organization, whether the Capstone project had a lasting impact on the organization, and the respondents' overall satisfaction with the Capstone team. These items were assessed using a 5-point

Likert scale, with the top rating of 5 indicating the most positive assessment, 3 representing neutral or somewhat helpful appraisals, and the lowest rating of 1 representing the most negative assessment.[2]

In addition to numerical responses, the survey gave participants the opportunity to add comments, and asked participants several open-ended questions regarding the lasting impact of the Capstone project, overall satisfaction with the program, and suggestions for further improvement.

FINDINGS

Overall Satisfaction and Lasting Impact

Participants indicated high overall satisfaction with the Capstone program, with a mean rating of 4.2 (N = 41; all rating scales up to 5.0), and rated the helpfulness of the Capstone project to their organizations with a mean rating of 3.9 (N = 42). Clients commented that the work gave them a reference point from an outside perspective that was helpful, and that provided an understanding of "best practices" that enabled the client to feel, as one described, "secure in the knowledge we are on the right path." Another client said "having another organization be involved with the project has helped with the advancement of the project." Yet another client elaborated further, by saying:

> The Capstone evaluation [of our work] is the first objective, outside evaluation of the model and, as such, of key importance in providing a measure of "reality check." We are very reassured by the fact that the model appears to be objectively feasible and desirable. Most of the recommendations provided by the Capstone team corresponded with what we already suspected we need. This is very helpful and reassuring as it affirms that we are on the right track.

Many projects provided a needed foundation of knowledge or an approach for the client, as illustrated by one saying "we are changing practices to follow recommendations," and by another client who was appreciative that the work "provided the foundation for our Center's projected operating budget." Another satisfied client reported that the Capstone project had a "positive impact on our strategic planning and a positive impact on our donor messaging."

Though less strong in their opinions, clients also indicated that they believed the Capstone project would have a lasting impact, with a mean rating of 3.5 (N = 35), as indicated by this response:

> I think we will continue to draw on the recommendations for some time to come — both for our planning and our fundraising.

It is important to note that five respondents to the comments section indicated that the lasting impact may not be known for awhile, as exemplified by a

respondent saying, "It's too soon to determine whether the impact is lasting. In a few years, as other events unfold, we'll be better able to reply to that question."

The three primary variables of interest (respondents' ratings of the Capstone team project's helpfulness to their organization, their assessment of the Capstone project's lasting impact, and their overall satisfaction) all were significantly and positively correlated to one another.

Client Satisfaction with Capstone Team's Deliverables

Initial desired deliverables are requested of all prospective clients by NYU Wagner as part of the client's project proposal. Many proposals are dismissed during the vetting process, due to unrealistic or excessively far-reaching expectations of what is reasonable for a Capstone team to achieve. Once a project has been picked up by a student team, the team members meet with the client liaison to scope out the project and develop a project work plan. There usually are interim deliverables expected throughout the two semesters of Capstone, with the final product presented to the client agency at the end of the second semester.

Fifty percent of respondents said the Capstone team had developed or acquired specific tools or resources for the organization, such as evaluation tools, survey instruments, policy and procedure manuals, comprehensive community assessments, resource lists, logic models, databases, and reports on the analysis of large datasets. Eighty-three percent of respondents reported that the Capstone team made specific recommendations for the organization, including recommending expansion or reduction of programs, client outreach plans, communications improvements, technical assistance, strengthening management structures, and further research. Seven percent reported that the team neither developed or acquired tools, nor made recommendations for the organization, and instead created case studies for the client agency.

Tools and Resources as Deliverables

Of those agencies whose projects included developing or acquiring tools or resources, 85 percent rated them at or above a 4.0 (the other 15 percent of respondents rated them at 3.0). Responses included the following three comments:

- This compiled data and analysis performed by the team does not exist anywhere else. It is a unique asset.
- The tools provided will probably be a better measure of our program impact. It has helped us create a rationale and a plan for more formal program evaluation.
- We now have an updated manual which is critical for an organization our size.

Independent sample t-tests indicated that those respondents for whom the

Table 1.

Mean Ratings of Primary Outcome Variables Based on Respondents' Indication of Whether the Capstone Team Did or Did Not Develop or Acquire Tools or Resources

	Developed or Acquired Tools or Resources		Did Not Develop or Acquire Tools or Resources			
	n	Mean	n	Mean	t	p-value
Helpfullness	19	4.4	17	3.7	-2.93	0.006
Lasting Impact	16	3.8	14	3.5	-0.78	0.44
Overall Satisfaction	19	4.6	16	4.1	-2.09	0.04

Note. N may not equal 42 due to items skipped by respondents.

Capstone team created or acquired new tools or resources reported a significantly higher level of satisfaction and a significantly higher rating for helpfulness of the project, as well as a higher rating of lasting impact (though not statistically significant) than those for whom the project did not. *(See Table 1.)*

Recommendations as Deliverables

Of those for whom the Capstone team made recommendations, 71 percent reported that the agency followed the recommendations at least somewhat, and 74 percent of these clients rated the recommendations at 4.0 or higher. Some responses were as follows:

- Policy recommendations were sensible and were well-connected to the research and analysis.
- The recommendations were sensible and in line with existing mission and intentions for growth.
- The recommendations reflected thoughtful analysis of the data and who we are as an organization.

However, 37 percent of respondents noted that they did not find the recommendations particularly helpful, with the majority of these responders claiming that if they followed the recommendations fully, it would have required them to provide additional resources or funding that they did not have. Six percent stated that they don't think the recommendations would be helpful at all, or that they were, as one person noted, "not appropriate in our judgment." There were no significant differences in satisfaction, impact, or helpfulness between those projects where the team made recommendations and those where they did not.

Content of the Project

Capstone projects can take a wide variety of approaches to assisting client agencies. The survey asked respondents to identify the nature of the project

Table 2.
*Mean Ratings of Primary Outcome Variables Based on Respondents'
Indication of Whether the Capstone Team's Project Did or Did Not
Encompass an Organizational Assessment.*

	Encompassed Organizational Assessment		Did Not Encompass Organizational Assessment			
	n	Mean	n	Mean	t	p-value
Helpfullness	18	4.4	18	3.8	-2.4	0.021
Lasting Impact	16	4.1	14	3.2	-2.3	0.031
Overall Satisfaction	18	4.8	17	3.9	-3.4	0.002

Note. N may not equal 42 due to items skipped by respondents.

(e.g., conducting organizational assessments, evaluating programs, reviewing or examining financial viability of projects or endeavors, conducting neighborhood or community assessments, assisting with strategic planning, evaluating client satisfaction, etc.) with the ability to choose all that apply.

Clients whose projects encompassed organizational assessments reported significantly higher scores for lasting impact, helpfulness and overall satisfaction. *(See Table 2.)*

There was a modest but significant positive correlation between the number of different types of work the projects encompassed (M = 4.2, N = 36) — for example, the work the Capstone team conducted combined organizational assessments, conducting external policy analysis, gathering and/or synthesizing empirical data, and assisting with strategic planning — and the clients' overall satisfaction with the Capstone experience (M = 4.4, N = 35), at a 5 percent confidence level. However, there was no significant correlation between number of different types of work the project encompassed and respondents' ratings of the lasting impact or helpfulness of the project.

Client Suggestions
Clients were asked in the survey for any suggestions about improving the Capstone program. We received 25 responses to this open-ended question (60 percent of respondents); five respondents wrote that they did not have any suggestions at all, and six replied by saying that their experience was a positive one and had no suggestions for enhancement, as shown by the following:
- If all Wagner teams were to be as flexible and resourceful as ours, every project would be a success.
- We found the program to be very well conceived and organized and we appreciated the opportunity to take part.

Fourteen respondents provided suggestions for enhancement, ranging from "it would be great if they could actually be on-site more — like a placement" to difficulties with travel expense reimbursement procedures. A few suggestions focused on how the client is prepared for the experience and introduced to the students:

> I think that a first "generic" step would be to work with the client to think through what would be the optimal resource/staff commitment from the organization. I think this could be part of a general orientation to new clients. In hindsight, I wish I would have been more proactive in getting some other staff and board members involved in the project early on. Obviously, that is my responsibility, but I think some very specific discussion/training at the beginning of the process would have helped me think more about this.

> Perhaps it would be nice to ask soliciting organizations to come to class to make preliminary pitches about project purpose.

Additional enhancement suggestions focused on clarifying expectations, better communication, and clear project scoping once the project was selected:

- There needs to be a commitment to stick with the agreed-upon scope. If the team is unable to deliver, then that should be made clear in advance of concluding the study.
- Our one issue was that our project was too broad in scope. While we designed the project, perhaps a little feedback on it would have helped us narrow it a bit.
- In retrospect, it would have been good to have pressed the team on the initial goal [of the project].

Other Comments

The final question of the survey asked for any other comments that the client would like to share. Many responses focused on the student teams, calling them "interested and engaged," "excellent," "dedicated, attentive, competent, and sensitive to the uniqueness of the organization and its programs," "extremely professional," and "five enthusiastic and intelligent team members who were a pleasure to work with." One client encompassed several of the comments by saying:

> We had a great team: very professional, well-organized and flexible. Also, they conveyed a respect for our organization which was appreciated and also helped us approach the work enthusiastically and made us open to the recommendations forwarded. Smart group who I bet have since gone on to great things.

Some clients referred to elements of the experience that were problematic. One client said "The effort was fair. Not enough fieldwork was done and was a shortcoming in the final analysis," and another acknowledged that "the faculty member in charge of the team disappeared during the term of their engagement. Though I'm sure this is very unusual, it appeared to be disruptive and the group was not as focused as it perhaps could have been."

Additional comments emphasized the positive experience they had through Capstone, with clients saying "I enjoyed the experience," "thanks for allowing us the chance to participate," "it is a great program!!" and "I enjoyed the project from soup to nuts." One client summed it up by saying:

> Please keep it up. It's such a great service to the nonprofit community and a great learning opportunity for the students. A win-win arrangement.

DISCUSSION

Overall, our clients reported that participation in NYU Wagner's Capstone program was very helpful to their organizations, and that the Capstone projects have had a lasting impact on them. Our study shows some trends worth noting, as well as some opportunities to continue enhancing this kind of program experience, not only for NYU Wagner, but also for our peer schools.

Encourage Concrete Deliverables

Projects for which teams developed or acquired specific tools and resources had significantly higher ratings compared to those that did not. This implies that Capstone teams provide value to their clients with concrete deliverables. This finding should guide the outreach during the RFP and selection processes, so that prospective clients think about the kinds of projects that might engender usable resources. In addition, students and faculty can encourage and push for tangible results as part of their deliverables.

Recommendations Should be Scaled to the Agency's Reality

Any recommendations made to clients need to take into account the unique realities of the participating agencies. When devising recommendations, students should be encouraged to look at the entire organizational system — its resources, culture, politics, opportunities, constraints — and not just their own discrete project. The ability to look at organizational challenges through a variety of lenses and perspectives only will enhance the likelihood of sophisticated problem solving. Incorporating a thorough and nuanced understanding of the complex environments in which their clients work should enhance the receptivity to the recommendations that students make. Student teams need not abandon their bold recommendations if they provide a tiered set of suggestions to the client that include:

- a set of recommendations that provide relatively quick wins and easy enhancements for the agency;
- a set of recommendations that require a bit more energy and resources but are do-able with the right amount of attention; and
- a set that stretches the agency and might be viable in the long-term.

Administrative Communication with Clients

There is no reason to assume that Capstone client agencies will have had previous experience with graduate students, let alone with a process as complex as Capstone. While we have spent a lot of time and energy devising programmatic support to Capstone students and faculty, we could increase the level of communication between administration and clients throughout the year. While we encourage faculty to invite prospective clients into their classrooms to present their projects to students, not all faculty do so. We can encourage this even more, by explaining that its benefits are not only to the students in making their project choices, but that it also helps the clients — by forcing them to think about their projects in a way that puts this work into the context and process of an educational environment. And, while we invite all clients to attend an initial Capstone client meeting in October, not all of them attend. We can emphasize the value of attending this event, as it covers a lot of information that will be helpful for them as they think about their role in this partnership, and we can use on-line resources for liaisons who are unable to attend this event in person, so that they still can benefit from the discussion. In addition, checking on the projects' interim deliverable status, monitoring how the process is going, and providing tips for successful engagement also can be integrated into the program design.

Life Happens

Life doesn't always happen the way we want it to. And neither does Capstone. Data may not be readily available, the scope of a project may become unworkable, hidden agendas may arise that shift the nature and tone of the project, a key stakeholder may interrupt the progress of the work, or deeply considered recommendations may not be well-received. Dilemmas like these are to be expected. What the students choose to do with these challenges can influence not only their learning, but also their ability to deliver a viable end product to their client. We want to encourage our students to face these challenges among themselves and with the client, rather than avoid them. We want students to recognize that when these perplexing situations come along it doesn't mean that they did something wrong, or that the client did something wrong, or that the administration did something wrong — because this aspect of the learning process is exactly what we anticipate, and we actually want our students to go through. The benefit of this trial-and-error effect happening in Capstone is that it is

occurring in a relatively safe environment, where learning and reflection are purposefully built into the process. A key to managing this expected messiness is keeping the dialogue going. We need to teach our students to stay at the table, to manage the impasse, to be generous of spirit and exercise resiliency

Messaging the Value of these Programs to Various Audiences

Our survey research affirms for us that the work we're doing is of benefit to the community, and that we can and should use this information when we report community impact data to a variety of stakeholders. We can use this information when we reach out to prospective clients, and can let them know with confidence that participating in this program will bring value to them. We can present this information to our student body, who may struggle with the concept of whether or not all the work they put into Capstone has an impact on their client agencies. We can thank our Capstone faculty members who provide the valuable oversight and guidance to our Capstone students, knowing that they are contributing not only to the development of our students but also to the many clients we serve each year. We can inform our university government and community affairs staff that we are having a positive impact on a broad swath of communities. And NASPAA can help schools like ours in devising strategies for this type of data collection by using this survey as a data template.

CONCLUSION

Past research has led us to draw strong conclusions about the positive impact that experiential learning and Capstone projects can have on the student experience.[3] The foregoing, however, has focused on the impact to an equally important, though less-examined, player in the Capstone experience — the client organization. Many of our Capstone clients found comfort, through the Capstone teams' work, in knowing they were on the right track, and we, too, are reassured and energized by the findings of this evaluation.

While case studies and problem sets remain as integral elements to the learning process, experiential learning opportunities (whether Capstone projects, projects tied to program evaluation courses, assessments connected to management classes, or other similar endeavors) supplement these important methods by coupling students with a real-life project for a real agency in real time, and by providing opportunities to test theories as well as to create theory from practice.

Universities have a responsibility to give back to their communities in ways that enrich and deepen the relationship. Capstone programs provide a valuable way to do this. These findings give us more confidence that we are living up to New York University's motto as "a private university in the public service." Finding ways to measure, in a meaningful format, the impact that our types of

schools are having on the community-at-large can be daunting. Sharing and recommending data-collection methods is a role that NASPAA has rightly committed itself to, and we believe that measuring the impact Capstone projects have on participating agencies will add positively to the discourse.

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FOOTNOTES

[1] Of the 57 client-based Capstone projects completed during the 2006-2007 academic year, three clients had two separate Capstone projects that were selected by students. These projects involved different content and different client liaisons, and were overseen by different faculty members, so they were considered separate projects for this evaluation. One agency had two related projects with the same client liaison and same overseeing faculty member; these projects were considered as one for the purposes of this analysis.

[2] Language used for Ratings of 5 included "very," "fully," and "extremely"; ratings of 3 used the words "somewhat," "moderate," and "some"; and ratings of 1 were characterized as "not at all," "very poor," and "no."

[3] See references: Smith, 2005; Whitaker & Berner, 2004; and Bernstein, Ohren, & Shue, 2003.

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Appendix A.
Online Survey

1. Your Name: _____

2. Name of Organization:_____

3. Title:_____

4. What was your role with the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone Project? Check all that apply:

☐ I wrote the original project proposal
☐ I served as the primary liaison to the NYU Wagner Capstone team
☐ I was not the primary liaison to the NYU Wagner Capstone team, but I worked with the team during the project year
☐ I have worked on the NYU Wagner Capstone team's project in the time since the project was completed
☐ Other (please specify) _____

5. Which of the following did the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone Project encompass? Check all that apply:

☐ Conducting organizational assessments
☐ Evaluating programs
☐ Addressing resource development needs
☐ Developing impact statements
☐ Conducting external policy analysis
☐ Gathering and/or synthesizing empirical data
☐ Reviewing or examining financial viability of projects or endeavors
☐ Designing and planning new initiatives
☐ Designing and planning program expansion
☐ Conducting neighborhood or community assessments
☐ Assisting with strategic planning
☐ Reviewing internal procedures
☐ Evaluating client satisfaction
☐ Other (please specify) _____

6. Did the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team develop or acquire specific tools or resources (e.g. surveys, new protocols) for your organization to use?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

7. If yes, what tools did the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team develop or acquire?

8. How useful have you found the tools and resources developed by the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team to be?
☐ Not at all useful   ☐ Somewhat useful   ☐ Very useful   ☐ N/A

Please explain: _____

9. If you haven't used these tools or resources, which, if any, of the following apply?

☐ We're planning to use them, but haven't yet
☐ Using these tools or resources would require additional resources or funding that we do not currently have available
☐ There are individuals within the organization who have concerns about using these tools or resources
☐ There are internal structures in place that create challenges in using these tools or resources
☐ We don't think the tools and resources will be useful
☐ N/A
☐ Other (please explain) _____

10. Did the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team make specific recommendations for your organization?
☐ Yes   ☐ No

11. If yes, what were some of the recommendations the team made?

12. Were these recommendations appropriate and well reasoned?
    ☐ Not at all appropriate and well reasoned
    ☐ Somewhat appropriate and well reasoned
    ☐ Very appropriate and well reasoned
    ☐ N/A

13. How were the recommendations received by other members of your organization?
    ☐ Very poorly received   ☐ Moderate   ☐ Very well received   ☐ N/A

14. Have you implemented the team's recommendations?
    ☐ Did not implement the recommendations at all
    ☐ Implemented the recommendations somewhat
    ☐ Implemented all the recommendations fully
    ☐ N/A

15. If you have implemented the recommendations, have they been helpful?
    ☐ Not at all helpful   ☐ Somewhat helpful   ☐ Extremely helpful   ☐ N/A

16. If you haven't been able to follow the team's recommendations, which, if any, of the following apply?
    ☐ We're planning to follow the recommendations, but haven't yet
    ☐ Following through with these recommendations would require additional resources or funding that we do not currently have available
    ☐ There are individuals within the organization who have concerns about implementing these recommendations
    ☐ There are internal structures in place that create challenges in implementing these recommendations
    ☐ We don't think the recommendations will be helpful
    ☐ N/A
    ☐ Other (please explain)_____

17. Please indicate your overall satisfaction with the recommendations made by the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team.
    ☐ Not at all satisfied ☐ Somewhat satisfied   ☐ Very satisfied   ☐ N/A

18. Did you use any other internal or hired resources (i.e. consultants) to follow up on or complement the work done by the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team?
    ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Other
    If you answered yes or other, please explain:_____

19. Please indicate how helpful the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team's project was to your organization.
    ☐ Not at all helpful   ☐ Somewhat helpful   ☐ Extremely helpful

20. Has the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone project had a lasting impact on your organization?
    ☐ No lasting impact   ☐ Some lasting impact
    ☐ Very significant lasting impact   ☐ N/A

21. In what ways (if any) has the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone project had a lasting impact on your organization? What have been the outcomes from this 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone project?

22. How satisfied are you overall with your experience with the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone team??
    ☐ Not at all satisfied ☐ Somewhat satisfied   ☐ Extremely satisfied   ☐ N/A

23. Do you have any suggestions as for how to improve the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone program?

24. Do you have any other comments regarding the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone program?

Appendix B.
Online Survey – Explanation Letter.
Thank you for participating in the 2006-2007 NYU Wagner Capstone program.

In addition to being a critical part of our graduate school students' education, we envision Capstone as a university resource for the public good. We have received anecdotal evidence and feedback that hints to the benefit of the Capstone program to participating organizations, and in order to more formally measure any long-term impact the Capstone program has had on the greater community through our students' projects with participating agencies, we are now embarking on a more comprehensive survey.

Toward that end, we ask that you please answer a series of questions regarding your experience with last year's Capstone program. We understand that many people in your organization may have worked with the NYU Wagner Capstone team or have worked on the project since the end of the team's academic year, so please feel free to forward the link to this survey to any colleagues who are familiar with the project. We welcome responses from more than one individual at each organization.