

CAP-GP 3801.001

**Capstone: Advanced Projects in Health Finance,**

**Management, and Policy I, Section 001**

Fall 2023-Spring 2024

# Instructor Information

1. Rain Henderson
2. Email: rlh9403[@nyu.edu](mailto:rna1@nyu.edu)
3. Office Hours: By appointment
4. Cell: 646-822-2980 (For emergencies and when invited by the instructor)

# Course Information

1. Class Meeting Times: Monday: **6:45 pm to 8:25 pm**
2. All classes in person unless otherwise noted by Professor Henderson:

**60 Fifth Avenue, Room 202 Loc: Washington Square60 Fifth Avenue, Room 202 Loc: Washington Square**

1. Class Via Zoom when indicated

# 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 and Program Competencies

## Capstone Course Learning Objectives Table

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| --- | --- |
| LEARNING OBJECTIVES | COMPETENCY *(Students should demonstrate the ability to)* |
| **Content** | Understand the policy and/or management context for their projectBe familiar with relevant specialized vocabularies,Draw on critical research related to their content areaConnect their project with previous coursework in their broader program and specialization. |
| **Process** | 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 | Frame and refine the problem presented by the clientDevelop a contract with the client including scope, timeline and deliverablesDevelop an internal project workplanMeet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and workplanRevise contract and workplan as necessary |
| Client Management | Negotiate a contract with their clientDevelop and sustain a relationship with their clientMaintain regular and productive communication with the clientSolicit and integrate feedback from the client on design and deliverableSSubmit deliverables on time |
| Team Management \* | Diagnose and attend to interpersonal dynamicsDefine roles and useful division of laborManage assignments and accountabilityAdvocate points of view and negotiate differences of opinionSolicit and offer feedbackAppreciate and learn from cultural and other differences |
| **Research** | Identify and synthesize existing research relevant to the projectIdentify and implement appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative data gathering methodsIdentify and implement appropriate data analysis proceduresDetermine findingsDevelop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings |
| **Communication** | Synthesize and summarize large amounts of data and informationPrepare clear and well-argued written deliverables tailored to the client’s needsPrepare clear and well-argued verbal presentations tailored to the client’s needs |

\* *As stated for students in the Capstone Student Guide (page 13): i.* *Students may not switch teams or undertake an independent project in lieu of a team project for the reason that they are not interested in their current project or feel it will not serve their career goals. ii.* *Students who want to switch teams or undertake an independent project because of concerns regarding interpersonal relationships on the team must have their request evaluated by the Capstone Co-Directors. iii.* *In making their decision, the Co-Directors will take all relevant factors into account, including input from the Capstone faculty member and any academic accommodations advised by the Moses Center. The final decision about whether a student is allowed to switch teams or do their own project rests entirely with the Capstone Co-Directors.*

## Health Program-related Competencies

The assignments and participation in class discussion and Capstone team meetings will be used to assess progress against the competencies listed below. No student will receive a B or higher without demonstrating satisfactory progress toward mastery of each competency listed below.

The level of competency expected to be achieved is denoted in brackets according to the following key:

[1] = Basic: Foundational understanding of knowledge/skill/competency

[2] = Intermediate: Student demonstrates greater depth of understanding of this knowledge/skill/competency and can use this ability to analyze a problem

[3] = Advanced: Student demonstrates expertise in this knowledge/skill/competency and can use this ability to evaluate, judge, and synthesize information

1. The ability to manage teams, projects and people; to work in change-oriented health care organizations; and mentor a diverse and changing workforce
2. The ability to draw implications and conclusions to develop an evolving vision that results in organizational viability
3. The ability to communicate and interact productively (via listening, speaking, and writing) on matters of healthcare with a diverse and changing industry, work force and citizenry
4. The ability to present convincingly to individuals and groups the evidence to support a point of view, position or recommendation
5. The ability to measure, monitor and improve safety, quality, access and system/care delivery processes in health care organizations
6. The ability to use information systems and evidence-based management principles for problem-solving, strategic planning and decision-making and implementing and measuring change
7. The ability to synthesize evidence, and apply statistical, financial, economic and cost- effectiveness tools/techniques in organizational analysis
8. The ability to engage in continuous learning; to reflect on and assess one’s strengths and developmental needs; to seek feedback from others; and establish and sustain a professional development network.

Learning Assessment Table

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Health Program Competency** | **Corresponding Course Learning Objective** | **Corresponding Assignment Title** | **Level of Competency Expected** |
| 2 | Understand the policy and/or management context for their project | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 3 | Be familiar with relevant specialized vocabularies | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 2, 7 | Draw on critical research related to their content area | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 1, 6 | Frame and refine the problem presented by the client | Signed contract with client | 3 |
| 1 | Develop a contract with the client including scope, timeline and deliverables | Signed contract with client | 3 |
| 1 | Develop an internal project workplan | Team workplan | 3 |
| 1 | Meet deadlines and monitor their progress against the contract and workplan | Signed contract and team workplan | 3 |
| 1, 3 | Negotiate a contract with their client | Signed contract with client | 3 |
| 1, 8 | Advocate points of view and negotiate differences of opinion | Self and team peer evaluations | 3 |
| 3, 8 | Appreciate and learn from cultural and other differences | Self and team peer evaluations | 3 |
| 6 | Identify and synthesize existing research relevant to the project | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 6 | Identify and implement appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative data gathering methods | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 6 | Identify and implement appropriate data analysis procedures | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 6 | Determine findings | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 7 | Develop useful recommendations and/or tools and resources based on findings | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 7 | Synthesize and summarize large amounts of data and information | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 3 | Prepare clear and well-argued written deliverables tailored to the client’s needs | Interim and final products | 3 |
| 4 | Prepare clear and well-argued verbal presentations tailored to the client’s needs | Interim and final presentations | 3 |

# Course Requirements

Along with the Capstone directors, I have identified an array of potential projects. Potential clients will present their projects to you in person or via Zoom or video and during class at the start of the fall semester. I will ask you for your preferences, but I will create the teams based not only on your preferences, but on your previous coursework, work and life experience, other expertise, and team size. Teams are comprised of 3-5 students.

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 classes are in-person, your team and client meetings do not have to be. Teams can work this out with each other and their client.\* We do encourage the first and last meetings with the client to be in person if at all possible.\*

Some client organizations may not be New York City based. This will necessitate use of video conferencing for client meetings, depending on the facilities available to the client. Depending on school policy some client meetings may be in person if agreed upon by the client and the students. Some projects may require travel for field work which will take place during Winter break. The school will cover financial support for the airfare if such work is necessary, but will not cover the full costs of travel. It may not be required or possible for all students to travel.

**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.

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 (see above), including an ability to incorporate and bring a health policy and management perspective to the project.

**60% of final grade is based on work products** identified in the milestones as well as any interim deliverables to the client or assigned by the faculty member.

**40% of final grade is based on evidence of the individual student’s learning** during the course through participation in the team’s work and class activities, his/her ability to act on peer and faculty feedback; individual and team preparation for and performance at client meetings; and end-of-semester faculty, peer and self-evaluations.

# Suggested Text and Learning Resources

I will suggest books, case studies and other readings that are applicable to specific team projects as well as web sites that are relevant to the class, in general, during the course of the year.

# Course Milestones

The course has a series of milestones – both activities and products -- that will serve as interim work products. I’ve suggested time frames in parentheses, though actual timing during the course of the year 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);
* 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 (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);

**Use of AI and Chat GPT**

The [policies of Wagner](https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html) require that you complete and submit your own work. If you use ChatGPT, Bard, and other generative AI tools in your work, you must cite them. If you don’t this violates the school’s norms, and you will be held to [Wagner’s Academic Integrity Policy](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/policies/code#sec-B1).

# Class Schedule Overview

The Fall Semester has more class instruction and the Spring Semester has more project tracking. We will meet weekly as a class or in teams. Schedule changes may happen with sufficient notice.

The sequence of classes, and due dates for assignments, could change depending in part on your meetings with clients and the substance of your projects. Specific requirements for each class will be posted on Brightspace and emailed to you with enough lead time to prepare.

**★ Note**: **Brightspace updates take precedence over what is written here**. **★**

# Fall Semester

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| **PHASE: Creating Teams** | | |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Assignment***✰ All assignments are due in advance of class unless otherwise noted ✰* |
| 9/11/23 | * Introductions * Capstone overview * Proposal presentations and discussion 1 of 2 * Project selection process | * Review Syllabus * Watch “What is Capstone?” video:<https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone> * Read client proposals and prepare questions for clients * Research/Google clients * Read past HPAM student’s feedback re Capstone |
| 9/18/23 | * Project selection process closed / Teams Announced * Team Dynamics * Preparation for initial meeting with client | * Due Saturday 9/16/23: Student information and Project Preference Form (Google Survey in Brightspace) * Provide writing sample & formal resume * Teams will be posted on Brightspace by 9/18 so long as all students respond to the selection form on time * Review background on why norm setting is important<https://www.educationalleadership-digital.com/educationalleadership/2019summerfree/MobilePagedArticle.action?articleId=1504501#articleId1504501> |
| 9/25/23 | * Review team charters * Faculty team consultations * What is a consultant? * Initial meetings with client underway   **\* ZOOM Link available upon request for those observing Yom Kippur\*** | **Individual**   * Read Flawless Consulting, chapters 19, 1, 2, 3 (in this order) * Watch: Capstone consulting videos: Intro, What Consulting Is and Isn’t and The Role of Technical and Interpersonal Skills     **Team**   * Schedule one get-together purely about getting to know each other. * Teams meet and start putting together team standards/norms and charter. * Working on list of 3-5 Norms to be included with team charter * Teams are scheduling and preparing for client meetings. * Schedule initial meeting between 9/26/23 and 10/6/23. * Clear date with the Professor who will attend the meeting. |
| **PHASE: Launch and Planning** | | |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Assignment** |
| 10/2/23 | * Initial meetings with client underway * Discuss Letters of agreement | **Individual**   * Readings related to team dynamics * Read Leadership Compass overview   **Team**   * Prepare for client meeting * **Team Charters and Norms - Finish for 10/6 Due Date** * Draft Client Letters of Agreement |
| **PHASE: Contract Negotiation and Skill Building** | | |
| 10/9/23 –NO CLASS | **NO CLASS - moved to Tuesday the 10th** |  |
| **10/10/23 - TUESDAY** | * 1st Client Meetings Completed/Recap in class * Leadership Compass Exercise | **Individual**   * Reading: Flawless Consulting, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9. * View: Consulting videos: The Project Management Triangle, Client Expectations Mgmt, Risk Mgmt, Client Mtg Mgmt. * Read Ethics Memo for students   **Team**   * Review sample letters of agreement and work plans, be ready to draft after 1st client meeting * Team Charters Done |
| 10/16/23 | * Professor meets with teams to review draft letter of agreement and work plan progress. * Team Meeting | * Teams report out to class on initial meeting * **Initial Letters of Agreement Due by COB**. |
| 10/23/23 | * Professor meets with teams to review final letter of agreement and work plans. * Team Meeting | * Teams present to class on project/client progress and insights to date * **Work plans due by COB** |
| **PHASE: Begin project work, Continue with skill-building** | | |
| 10/30/23 | * Project Management Techniques * Organizational dynamics * Team Meeting/Faculty Consultation |  |
| 11/6/23 **TEAMS MEET INDEPENDENTLY** | * Overview: Literature reviews, surveys, data collection/analysis and focus groups * Monitoring/tracking project using the work plan * Team Meeting |  |
| 11/13/23 | * Overview: Literature reviews, surveys, data collection/analysis and focus groups * Monitoring/tracking project using the work plan * Team Meeting * In-Class Equity/Anti-Racism Exercise Discussion | IDBEA Training in Class (Identity) + Short Team Time Check-ins **Non-Client Assignment:** Awareness of current events, federal health policy and implications for HPAM projects.  Individual students to answer 1 of the 2 questions (your choice)   1. What does a potential government shutdown mean for your clients’ mission/their ecosystem? 2. What is the greatest federal policy issue or threat affecting the primary mission of your clients/the client project?   (PROMPT MAY CHANGE DEPENDING UPON CURRENT EVENTS) **One paragraph synopsis from each student submitted in Brightspace. Due 11/29.** |
| 11/20/23 **CLASS VIA ZOOM** | * Overview: Literature reviews, surveys, data collection/analysis and focus groups * Monitoring/tracking project using the work plan * Team Meetings * CATME Evaluation overview and start | **Non-Client Assignment:** Review CATME use video  CATME open to students on 11/20 |
| **PHASE: End of Semester Wrap-Up** | | |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Assignment** |
| 11/27/23 | * Fall Semester team progress report guidelines. * Team meeting time | **Every student submits the CATME evaluations - due EOD 11/27** |
| 12/4/23 | * Teams present fall semester team progress report and discussion of approaches/modifications for semester break and spring semester. * Individual team meetings to discuss CATME evaluations | * Teams review/set winter “break” plan - review roles and deliverables to be completed by 1/23 |
| 12/11/23 | * Team Meetings * Winter Break Plans Shared | * Professor Henderson conducts one-on-one meetings with all students re first semester progress, Capstone and career goals |
| **12/18/23****NO FORMAL CLASS** | **NO CLASS** | **✰ Students are expected to continue all project work/advance all client deliverables over winter break with the exception of working on recognized holiday days. Noted in Wagner’s Capstone guidance. ✰** |

# 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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| **PHASE: Project Work** | | |
| **Date** | **Topics** | **Assignment** |
| 1/22/24 | * Team updates; * Discuss spring schedule * Review and revise team charters * Update work plans * Team meetings/faculty consultations |  |
| 1/29/24 | * How to structure and write the final report. * Faculty works with teams to develop a draft outline. |  |
| 2/5/24 | * Faculty reviews draft outline * Two Capstone teams meet to compare respective outlines | * Draft report outline. |
| 2/12/24 (not a full class meeting) | * Team Meetings * Faculty Consultation on Standby | * Outline of report due. |
| **2/19/24 – NO CLASS PRESIDENT’S DAY** | **NO CLASS** |  |
| **PHASE: Report Writing** | | |
| 2/26/24 | * Teams start working on the first draft of the final report. | * Teams schedule final presentations for client during the last two weeks of April. * Clear date with the Professor who will attend the meeting. |
| 3/1/24***(not a class - deliverable date only)*** | Capstone Abstracts + Capstone Photos Due | **Capstone Project Abstract Form** Each year we prepare a "Capstone Booklet" comprising abstracts that describe the year’s projects. Each team will need to submit a project abstract, approximately **150 words in length**, that briefly states the project’s goals, methods used, and preliminary results and recommendations made to the client or issue studied (if that information is available by the date that the abstract is due). *For reference, please refer to the attached guidelines; you can view abstracts of last year's projects in the Capstone Booklet available*[here](https://wagner.nyu.edu/files/capstone/Capstone%20Booket%202020-2021.pdf). **To submit your team's abstract (required of only one team member), please complete this** [**form**](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdC7g0JoIEZBOOnWEOfckU8pew-m9D-5UfQm-JHbhM323I9Ow/viewform?usp=sf_link)**.****Capstone Photos**: We are once again hoping to collect photographs that illustrate the impact of your Capstone work. While we know that many of your Capstone meetings are taking place by Zoom, please email any project photos to wagner.capstone@nyu.edu*Please use the client name and project title used in your project abstract as the subject line. Please do not include photos of minors without having received express written consent to do so. By submitting your photos, you are agreeing that NYU Wagner may use them for internal administrative purposes and external marketing purposes (the latter including email, web, and social media use).* |
| 3/4/24 | * Team Meetings/Faculty Consultations |  |
| **3/11/2024****NO CLASS SPRING RECESS** | NO CLASS |  |
| **PHASE: Report Writing and Presentation** | | |
| 3/18/24 | * Presentation Skills | * First draft of final report due. |
| 3/25/24**No Formal Class Meeting** | * Project time/no formal class | * Second draft of final report. |
| 4/1/24**No Formal Class Meeting** | * Team Meetings/Faculty Consultations | * **Second draft of final report due on April 7th now** |
| *4/8/24* **May Hold Via Zoom - TBD** | * Team Meetings/Faculty Consultations |  |
| **PHASE: Conclusion! Evaluation and Feedback, Reflection and Celebration** | | |
| 4/15/24 **May Hold Brief Check-in Via Zoom - TBD** | * Final Project Presentations due | * First run of final project presentations due to Rain - edits received in time to present to the class on 4/24 and 5/1 * Dates for release of final peer, self, class and client evaluations will be available in April. * Dates for team presentations to class vary depending on the dates scheduled by the team for their client presentations. |
| 4/22/24 | * Final Project Presentations to class | * Dates for team presentations to class vary depending on the dates scheduled by the team for their client presentations. |
| 4/29/24 | * Final Project Presentation to class | * Dates for team presentations to class vary depending on the dates scheduled by the team for their client presentations. |
| 5/6/24 | * Last class: Reflect and celebrate | * **Final Report & Associated Materials due by 5/3/23 @ 5:00 PM** |
| *TBD* | FYI Only: Wagner Graduation | TBD |

# 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](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) [Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) website](https://www.nyu.edu/students/communities-and-groups/students-with-disabilities.html) and click “Get Started.” You can also call or email CSD (232-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are strongly advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

# NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays

[NYU’s Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](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.