

**CAPSTONE: CAP-GP Advanced Lab in Social Innovation 1, Section 003 Fall 2023 – Spring 2024**

# Instructor Information

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* Please book via Calendly

# Course Information

* Class Meeting Times: Mondays, 6:45 pm - 8:25 pm
* Classroom: TBD. Please note we will occasionally meet via Zoom.

# 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

1. 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.

1. 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.

* 1. 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.
  1. 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.
  1. 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.

1. 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.

1. 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 |

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| 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

There are a number of client projects identified for our section. You will see the applications and a welcome introduction from clients before marking your preferences. I will take your preferences into account along with the needs of the project, students’ previous coursework, work and life experience, student schedules and time-zone locations, 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;
* timely responses to instructor, teammates, and clients;
* 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. We do encourage the first and last meetings with the client to be in person if at all possible.

# 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 group 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.

**Late Submission**: Late individual or group assignments will only be considered prior to the assignment deadline. If students seek an extension on any assignment, s/he must communicate this request, along with rationale, to me via email at least 24 hours prior to the deadline.

**Final Submissions:** All written assignments for Capstone are professional documents. As such, they are to use clear, concise language and grammar. They are also to use data and well-documented evidence to craft a cogent argument. Although you will be preparing sections and elements as individuals, the final document is to be one, cohesive document.

They must all be properly cited with all sources and references noted. Deliverables are to be designed: formatted and laid out in a visually appealing manner using color, images and data visualization. Please note that all interim and final deliverables must be shared and approved by me first before they are shared with the client.

# Required Readings and Other Resources

There is one required textbook for this course: Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used, Third Edition by Peter Block. Additional course readings will be available on the Brightspace website.

# 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 (September);
* Team formation (September);
* Kick-off meeting with client and faculty (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).

# Class Schedule Overview

Students should expect to meet weekly as a class or team unless agreed in class. The sequence of classes, and due dates for assignments, could change depending on team progress and guest speaker availability. Brightspace take precedence over what is written here.

## Fall Semester

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| **DATE** | **TOPIC(S)** | **ASSIGNMENTS DUE** |
| **INTRO TO CAPSTONE**  Week 1 9/11/23 | Intro to instructor, classmates, and course  Team activity  Early discussion of client projects | * Read: Syllabus and [Student Capstone Guide](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student) * [Read: Advice Letters to Capstone Students](https://brightspace.nyu.edu/content/enforced/81061-746-50768-7200-CapstoneFacult/Capstone%20Reflections%20-%20Advice%20Letters.pdf?ou=81061) * Watch: [“What is Capstone?” video](https://wagner.nyu.edu/portal/students/academics/capstone/student) |
| **REVIEW CLIENT PROJECTS**  Week 2 9/18/23 | Review client presentations  Discussion of projects | **Individual**   * Complete Student Info and Preference Form due by 9/22; Project teams will be assigned before 9/25 |
| **INTRO TO CONSULTING**  Week 3 9/25/23 | Introduction to consulting: people, process, problem-solving  Preparation for kick-off meeting with client | **Individual**   * Read Flawless Consulting, chapters 1, 2, 3   **Team**   * Exchange contact information and schedule one get- together purely about getting to know each other * Send out first client intro email by 9/27; I do **not** need to be cc’d on every client communication * Schedule initial client meeting by 10/6; I must be present and will provide my availability |
| **PROJECT CONTRACTS & TIMELINES**  Week 4 10/02/23 | Reviewing key terms: RFP, LOP, MSA, SOW  Project management, contracting, and workplan | **Individual**   * Read Flawless Consulting, chapters 4, 5, 6 * Read: Student Ethics Memo under Readings/Additional Resources * Read: Client Contracts under Student Resources * Read: Workplans under Student Resources   **Team**   * Complete Checklist #1 in Flawless Consulting, pg 36 * Begin to draft contract, clearly outlining the project objective, timeline, and deliverables * Begin to draft internal project workplan |

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|  |  | * In preparation of your client meeting, please share with me via e-mail:   + An agenda for the call   + A set of questions for the client   + Suggestions for project scope   + Suggestions for client/team check-ins   + … |
| **CLIENT MANAGEMENT**  Week 5 10/10/23  NOTE: This class is held on Tuesday | Review project contracts and plans  How to manage up: building rapport, negotiating, managing expectations  Becoming a trusted advisor | **Individual**   * Read: [Flawless Consulting, Chapters](https://drive.google.com/open?id=1q7Cr6M-X11qR3v-mHppSML48NBvPQog_) 8, 9, 15 * Watch: [Understanding The Trust Equation for](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEB0qIy0XVc&ab_channel=TrustedAdvisorAssociates) [Professional Relationships](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEB0qIy0XVc&ab_channel=TrustedAdvisorAssociates) * Optional: Read The Trusted Advisor by David H. Maister, Charles H. green, and Robert M. Galford   **Team**   * Be prepared to report on client kick-off meeting * Revise client contract, to be sent to client by 10/13 * Revise internal project workplan |
| **TEAM CULTURE & DYNAMICS**  Week 6 10/16/23 | Define roles & responsibilities  Personality / work style alignment | **Individual**   * Read: [Management Time: Who’s Got the Money by](https://hbr.org/1999/11/management-time-whos-got-the-monkey) [William Oncken Jr. and Donald L. Wass](https://hbr.org/1999/11/management-time-whos-got-the-monkey) * Read: Team Charter under Student Resources   **Team**   * Share personality test takeaways * Begin to draft team charter |
| **TEAM MANAGEMENT**  Week 7 10/23/23 | Giving and receiving feedback  Team and individual accountability | **Individual**   * Read: [A Complete List of Feedback Models by Saberr](https://blog.saberr.com/how-to-give-good-feedback) * Add readings   **Team**   * Client-signed contract due 10/23 * Final team charter and project timeline due 10/23 |

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| **NO CLASS**  Week 8 10/30/23 | Project work: desk research, literature review, surveys, interviews, etc. | **Individual**   * Read: Flawless Consulting, Chapters 10, 11, 12 * Read: [What is Intersectionality, and what does it have to](https://www.ywboston.org/2017/03/what-is-intersectionality-and-what-does-it-have-to-do-with-me/) [do with me?](https://www.ywboston.org/2017/03/what-is-intersectionality-and-what-does-it-have-to-do-with-me/) * Review [Wagner Capstone Library Guide](https://guides.nyu.edu/wagner/capstone) * Experiment with using Bobst Library databases to identify scholarly articles regarding your topic. |
| **NO CLASS**  Week 9 11/6/23 | Project work: desk research, literature review, surveys, interviews, etc. |  |
| **PROJECT UPDATES**  Week 10 11/13/23 | Share project process and discuss any challenges / roadblocks | **Team**   * Please prepare to share updates (e.g., wins, challenges, roadblocks) with the class |
| **TBD**  Week 11 11/20/23 | Project work: synthesis, analysis, key takeaways |  |
| **INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION**  Week 12 11/27/23 | End-of-first semester self, team/peer, and course evaluations | **Individual**   * Self and team peer evaluations due 12/1 5PM |

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| **TEAM EVALUATIONS**  Week 13 12/4/23 | Team and individual meetings to discuss evaluations | **Individual**   * Read and reflect on evaluations   **Team**   * Discussion of team process and progress |
| **LAST CLASS**  Week 14 12/11/23 | Semester reflection & goals setting for January & Spring semester | **Team**   * Please prepare to share updates (e.g., wins, challenges, roadblocks) with the class * Align on roles, responsibilities, and desired progress to make during January term |

**Key dates**

* Continued project work – all of January term
* Draft of the final report – due mid-February
* Second draft of final report – due early March
* Rehearsal presentation to class – due mid-March
* Final report and presentation to client – due mid-April
* Presentation for Capstone Expo – due early May

## January Term

While classes don’t meet, this is 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).

## 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.

# 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 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.

# 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.