CAPSTONE PROJECT
Fall 2008
ODYN 5183-Section 981

Instructors: Jennifer Kisamore, Ph.D.
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Prerequisites: Instructor permission and prerequisites required to enroll in this course

Location: 3J23 unless otherwise noted

Time: 6:00-8:00 PM on dates listed in course schedule

Office Hours: By appointment

Required Reading:
Books: (Available through Matthews Bookstore on OU-Tulsa Campus)

Articles: (Available on Library Reserve or Desire 2 Learn)

Recommended Resource:

Suggested Software: EndNote (optional)

Purpose:
The seminar this semester is designed to aid you in the preparation of your Capstone. There are three traditional options for completion of the Capstone, project, proposal, or study. See “The ODYN Capstone Project: An Overview of its Purpose and Procedures” for more details. The purpose of the Capstone Project is to help you apply or extend the knowledge that you acquired through coursework in the Organizational Dynamics program. The focus of your Capstone Project will be unique, based on your interests and abilities. During this course, you will learn to do a literature review including summarizing and critiquing research articles relevant to your project, develop research questions, make formal and informal oral presentations, and write and defend your Capstone.
Requirements:
You must take and complete this course during your last semester in the ODYN program (exceptions to this must be approved and must still fit within university enrollment regulations). You should **not** be taking any other courses while enrolled in this course unless you have the consent of your advisor and/or the program director. You cannot be granted an “incomplete” for this course. Failure to complete your capstone project during the semester for which you are enrolled will require that you re-enroll in the Capstone class during the subsequent semester and pay relevant tuition and fees again. Ask your instructor and/or the Graduate College for more information about this university policy.

The capstone course is designed to help you develop a unique Capstone to address an organizational issue of your choosing. You are, however, encouraged to interact with and seek feedback from your peers in the program regarding your Capstone. Also, you are expected to devote considerable time to your Capstone and seminar activities including but not limited to attending and participating in all sessions of the seminar and to complete all assignments and any exams satisfactorily. Finally, when you complete your Capstone and the final version is approved (which happens after you have made the necessary changes discussed in your committee meeting), you must submit a final electronic copy and 3 hard copies (bound and printed on acid-free paper) of your Capstone to the Chair of your capstone committee.

Learning Objectives:
By the conclusion of the course, the student will:
1. have extensive knowledge of the specific project subject’s fundamental components
2. be able to apply knowledge in developing related projects for organizations
3. be exposed to the process of research – developing, testing, analyzing/interpreting, and analyzing in organizations
4. understand how conducting specific and continuous research within an organization is fundamental for continuous organizational development/improvement
5. learn practical environments for implementation of change efforts in an organization

Attendance:
Attendance and participation in group meetings is essential to motivate and direct your work on your Capstone. Thus, attendance for the Capstone course is **mandatory** while enrolled in capstone hours and any semester thereafter until the capstone is complete. Failure to attend capstone meetings will necessitate your withdrawal from the course for that particular semester. You will be responsible for any resulting financial and academic penalties. Extenuating circumstances will be considered in terms of absences, however, more than 2 missed meetings, even with excused absences will require course withdrawal. Those who are registered for Directed Readings (PSY 5960-section 981) who are attending capstone sessions to help prepare for the Capstone class are also expected to attend and participate in meetings. Irregular attendance is disruptive to the group’s cohesion and the capstone process, is discourteous to your fellow students and is unprofessional.
Peer Review:
Each student in the capstone class will be responsible for doing his/her own capstone project as well as serving as a peer reviewer for other students. As a peer reviewer, you will be responsible for reviewing your peers’ assignments prior to the class in which they are responsible for presenting the project or assignment. As a peer reviewer, your role is to review and provide constructive feedback regarding how your colleagues can improve their Capstones. Delineation of peer review assignments will be made during each class session based on the number and comprehensiveness of Capstones that are ready for peer-review.

Goal Sheets:
At the end of each class session, I will hand out goal sheets for you to set goals for progress on your Capstone by the next course meeting. I will review the goals you set in the days following our Capstone meeting to determine whether the goals you set are appropriate for your stage of the Capstone and whether they are adequate to ensure completion of the Capstone by the end of the semester.

Capstone Revisions:
I will read drafts of your capstone as you turn them in. You can expect that you will receive my feedback within two weeks of when you turn in a draft of a capstone. My time is valuable. As there are likely at least 5 other students waiting for me to provide feedback on their projects, please only turn in work that has already been proofed by yourself and your peer reviewers. If I make recommendations or edits on your paper, be sure to make those changes for the next time you turn in a draft. I will stop reading your paper if you have not made changes I noted on previous drafts. If you do not agree with a recommendation I made, please indicate why not using the “insert comments” function in Microsoft Word. I will make minor edits according to APA format. You are responsible, however, for knowing APA format. Papers with major formatting issues will be returned unread.

Defenses:
Defenses will occur in mid-November through early December for Fall or in mid-April through early May for Spring. Defenses may be public and several defenses may be held on the same day, depending on schedule availability. December 12th is the last possible day for my students to hold a defense meeting for Spring. December 19th is the last possible day to turn in the finalized copy of the capstone project (that has been corrected per discussion at the Capstone defense and approved by me) for ODYN records.

Graduation:
You are responsible for completing necessary paperwork in order to graduate. You must complete a form with the Graduate College to be admitted to candidacy in the semester BEFORE you plan to graduate. That is, Spring graduates must term the appropriate forms in by the deadline the previous Fall. A blue card is also required to be completed during the semester in which you plan to graduate. Check for the appropriate deadlines on the Graduate College’s website.
Basics of the Capstone Project

The Capstone Committee
Students must form a committee to oversee the capstone project. The committee will be composed of at least 4 members including a chair from the ODYN program, two OU faculty members, and an outside organizational member. The chair of the committee will serve as the student’s primary advisor for the capstone project. The chair must be a member of the ODYN faculty. One of the two members of the committee must also be ODYN or Psychology faculty member. The third member of the committee must be an OU, but non-ODYN/Psychology faculty member. The fourth member of the committee should be a representative of the organization that is involved in the capstone project, proposal or study. The organization member must be at a level in the organization to oversee the implementation of the student’s capstone project if the student were to carry out the study. Students should discuss with me who an appropriate fourth committee member is if they have questions. I am available to help students choose appropriate committee members as needed.

Length of the Capstone Paper
The length of the Capstone paper will vary based on the topic of study and whether the student does a proposal, project or study. Proposals and studies must include a comprehensive literature review thus Capstone proposals and studies will generally be longer than Capstone project write-ups. Capstone projects may include lengthy appendices such as when the student has developed some sort of manual or business plan.

Writing the Capstone Paper
The Capstone paper is likely the most comprehensive paper that you have ever written. Writing for the Capstone is also likely a different type of writing that the type that you do at work. The style of the Capstone paper should mirror that of scholarly research articles. This type of writing is unfamiliar to many students, which sometimes leads students to experience anxiety and then they are reluctant to write anything. Sometimes students avoid writing by trying to layout their entire paper in their head before starting the writing. Please do not do this. At the end of the Capstone process, you will need to have a written document to show for your project. The writing will NOT get done unless you write. I cannot provide feedback on your writing unless you write. Writing is a process. Your Capstone will start taking shape only after you start writing. New ideas will come to you as you start writing. You will not be able to lay out every detail before you start writing. Start with a basic outline and then write the parts of the paper with which you feel most comfortable (e.g., the method you plan to use, the background of the company involved, who will be participants in your study). You do NOT need to start with page 1 to get started. Students have also reported that meeting with Patty Murray in the OU-Tulsa Writing Center can be very helpful for improving writing style during the capstone process. Again, Patty will only be able to help you improve your writing if you already have written something for her to review.
The Capstone Proposal
The Capstone proposal will be a comprehensive proposal, generally at least 5000 words (body only), and include at least 15 (peer-reviewed) references. The committee will determine whether the proposal passes or fails.

The proposal MUST contain:
- A review of relevant literature
- A statement of the goal(s) of the proposed study
- A description of the proposed procedures for the study including a description of the organization, participants to be involved, and measures to be used.
- An explanation of the research design and anticipated results.
- Discussion of anticipated implications of the study.

The Capstone Study
The Capstone study will be a comprehensive exploration of a topic and generally is at least 5000 words (body only) and includes at least 15 (peer-reviewed) references. The committee will determine whether the study passes or fails.

The proposal MUST contain:
- A statement of the goal(s) of the study
- A comprehensive review of relevant literature
- Specific recommendations (along with literature support) for the organization of interest regarding the topic of study.

The Capstone Project
The Capstone project will be an applied ODYN-relevant project conducted in an organization. The write-up of the Capstone Project will vary from that of a proposal in a number of ways including verb tense (past rather than future-oriented); headings; and length and integration of literature review. A write-up for a capstone project generally around 4000 words (body only), and include at least 10 peer-reviewed references. References from trade journals are also likely to be included given the applied nature of the project. The committee will determine whether the project passes or fails.

The project MUST contain:
- A review of relevant literature
- A statement of the goal(s) of the project
- A description of the procedures used in the study including a description of the company, participants involved, and measures used. Projects may include reliance on SME reviews of measures used, materials developed, or processes implemented.
- An explanation of the research design used and actual or anticipated results.

Students should generally be able to complete the Capstone in one semester although a number of students find that allowing the process to take up to two full semesters is more realistic. Students should not (except under exceptional circumstances) take longer than one calendar year to complete the Capstone. Students who plan to conduct a Capstone Project should take into consideration time delays they may experience due to IRB training and the IRB approval process as well as delays that are likely in applied research settings (e.g., obtaining requisite organizational permissions, collecting data, etc.). IRB approval may also be required for Capstone proposals and projects that involve any collection of data.
Meeting Schedule

Pre-course

**Assignment:** Readings for first meeting including syllabus, the ODYN Capstone Project Overview, *How to write a lot* as well as reviewing the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* regarding APA format. Pick a topic area and start looking for relevant articles on topic. Be prepared to discuss your proposed topic at the first class meeting. If you plan to collect or use ANY human-based data (including archival data) for your capstone project, proposal, study, you will need to complete IRB training as soon as possible so that you can submit an IRB application to collect/use the data. You should also meet with Jennifer at least once before the course starts to discuss your Capstone in more detail. The IRB training can be accessed at [http://www.ouhsc.edu/irb-norman/](http://www.ouhsc.edu/irb-norman/) (it is called CITI training). The whole training can be done online and may take up to 6 hours to complete. Training can be completed in sections.

**In-class:** Bring topic idea(s) to class. Students will write their research question in the form of a sentence during class and receive feedback on their topic. Cover how to conduct a literature search.

**Quiz:** Capstone guidelines, APA format, writing

**Assignment:** Continue working on your literature review and write an outline of your paper. Bring to next class. Bring enough copies for the rest of the class to critique. Find a minimum of 7 peer-reviewed references relevant to your topic.

**September 9, 2008**

**In-class:** Student updates of progress. Student presentations of outlines and feedback from participants. Presentations will be limited to 5 minutes maximum.

**Assignment:** Write introduction of proposal/project and distribute to peer reviewers at least 3 days before the next class. Make a short (3 or 4 slide) presentation for introduction to present at the next meeting. Review relevant assignments by other students before the next meeting.

**September 23, 2008**

**In-class:** Students present introduction of proposal/project to group and receive feedback. Presentations are limited to 5 minutes.

**Assignment:** Complete draft of introduction section to be distributed to peer reviewers by 4 days before the next class.

**October 7, 2008**

**In-class:** More student presentations. Discuss methods sections for projects and proposals; discuss recommendations section for studies.

**Assignment:** Prepare a good draft of your methods or recommendations section. Draft to be distributed to peer reviewers by 4 days before the next class.

**October 21, 2008**

**In-class:** Student presentations including methods.

**Assignment:** Finalize intro and methods sections if project or proposal; continue working on recommendations if study. Distribute to peer reviewers by 3/14.
November 4, 2008

**In-class:** Student presentations of complete capstone committee presentation.

**Assignment:** Write draft of Results and Discussion sections if project or proposal; finalize recommendations if study. Distribute to peer reviewers by 3/30. NOTE: You will need to give copies to all your committee members by 4/15 in order to meet deadlines for final defense dates. Only distribute copies of your Capstone after you receive approval by me.

November 18, 2008

**In-class:** Remaining student presentations of complete capstone committee presentation and feedback from other students.

**Assignment:** Complete capstone including committee meeting and final draft for ODYN archives.

***Capstone papers are to be distributed to committee members at least 10 days prior to the capstone defense. Students should plan to have their capstones completed and ready to distribute to their committee by November 26th.***

December 2, 2008

**In-class:** Full rehearsal of capstone defense for those completing capstones this semester. Other students serve as reviewers and mock committee members to provide feedback.

**Assignment:** Practice and finalize presentation for defense. Wrap-up loose ends. Ensure that room is reserved, committee members are scheduled, and that any outside members have direction to the campus.

Week of December 8th

Defenses (Be sure to check graduation requirements and important dates yourself. Once you have defended, submit appropriate copies to Jennifer.)

**Grading:**
For the Capstone course, you will only receive a grade of “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory” (S or U). Your grade for the course will be based upon your professionalism and performance in the class as well as the quality of your on the final Capstone proposal itself. Grades will be determined by the voting members of your Capstone committee with consideration of feedback provided by additional Capstone committee members (See “Overview of the Capstone Project” for more information about voting and non-voting committee members).

**Presentation of Capstones (after completing program):**
Students who complete a project or study are strongly encouraged to present their capstone at a local (Tulsa or OKC are possibilities), regional, or national conference and/or submit it to a relevant journal for publication. Students who complete a proposal are encouraged to conduct the proposed study and submit the results of the study to a relevant journal. Please note that any Capstone that involves any data needs to receive IRB approval in order to be eligible for presentation/publication. If you are interested in presenting your work at a conference, please contact me for more information and possible assistance with the submission.