CAPSTONE SEMINAR

Fall 2018

Course: PPPA 6608 Public Administration and Public Policy Capstone Seminar

Time: 6:10-8:00 p.m. Tuesday

Location: Tompkins room 362, 725 23rd Street, N. W.

Prerequisite: You must be in your final semester of the MPA or MPP program and have completed all core courses. If you do not meet these criteria, permission of the instructor is required to take this course.

Instructor*: Joan Dadak-Gayo
Office: TBD Mailbox MPA 6th Floor copy room
Tel.: CALL if needed; land line host 703-917-0842; cell 571-277-6865
Office Hours: by appointment (Please request Wed. and Thurs. appointments through the TSPPPA career website, TS Career Central (TSCC) so that you are not kept waiting and I can give you my fullest attention). Tuesdays after class by appointment.

Research Advisors*: Yaein Park Shannon Kenny
Office: TBD Office: TBD Tel: 202-491-4505
Office hours: by appointment Office Hours: by appointment
Email: ypark@gwu.edu Email: shannokenny@gwu.edu

*Each Capstone team will have a primary research advisor/supervisor – Dadak-Gayo, Park, a Ph.D. candidate, or Kenny a Visiting Research Scholar, and a secondary advisor from among the three. Both will read your work. Please copy both the primary and secondary advisor on all emails, to assure that you receive timely advice.

Key Pages in this Syllabus:
Course Components: p. 5
Summary of Assignments, Deliverables and Due Dates: p. 5
Assignment Details: pp. 7-14
Class Schedule: p. 6
Grading: pp. 4, 15-16, and 22-23
University and Trachtenberg Policies: p. 19-20
List of MPA and MPP Core Courses: p. 20
Peer Review Instructions: p. 21
Template for Team Prospectus: Attachment A
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Congratulations! You have reached your final semester in the MPA and MPP Program.

The MPA and MPP programs begin fairly broadly with required courses and then narrow to more specialized fields of concentration. Now, at the conclusion of the program, the capstone provides you a real-world framework in which to integrate, apply and demonstrate mastery of the foundational material, ideas and methods that have been the core of your MPA or MPP program. In lieu of comprehensive exams or a thesis, the Capstone class is a team-based professional experience, capping off your professional degree – producing a pro bono project for an external client and including other complementary assignments. The Capstone semester will culminate with public presentations of your team’s work.

Capstone projects are complex, demanding and often unpredictable. They require flexibility, creativity, reliability, intense communication and coordination among team members, diligent management of your relationship with your external client, careful planning, readjustments and efficient time management. There are interim deliverables throughout the semester (see page 5).

Capstones have generally required on average at least 10 hours a week of team members’ time in addition to the 150 minutes of in-class time. Time demands vary depending on the phase of the project. Workload in November/December can be heavier than the 10 hours per week, as you complete your analysis and draft your final paper and recommendations.

Please reserve those class times when no formal class is scheduled for team consultations and/or consultations with your team’s research advisor. Also, read the syllabus completely (and often) and plan your time accordingly (see the class schedule on page 6).

Student Learning Objectives:

At the end of this course, students will have:

- Scopred research to meet client needs, resolving analytic challenges in the face of ambiguity and dissonance;
- Identified and applied appropriate methods to execute and deliver a high quality, professional research-based product responsive to client needs;
- Increased their knowledge and experience in setting priorities and managing research and project processes effectively in a demanding timeframe;
- Integrated and applied the knowledge and skills gained through various aspects of the MPA and MPP curricula.
- Communicated complex research findings effectively to academic and client audiences.
Course Format and Policies:

- Recognizing students' different learning/working styles, this course uses a variety of learning/teaching formats: group and individual work, lectures, interactive lectures, in-class exercises, discussions and real examples from student consulting projects.

- Higher education works best when it becomes a vigorous and lively exchange of ideas in which all points of view are heard. Free expression in the classroom and in your group discussions is an integral part of this process.

- Higher education also works best when all of us approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, regardless of their ideology, political views, or identity. We value civility because that is the kind of community we want, and we care for it because civility permits intellectual exploration and growth.

- I strive to create an inclusive classroom and present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity including gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, and political affiliation. It is my intent that students from all backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed and serve as a resource, strength, and benefit. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated.

- Communication will be mainly via email to/from the professor, research advisors and capstone teams, also via announcements on Blackboard as appropriate. Teams may set up online mechanisms e.g., google docs. If the question is urgent or complicated, do not hesitate to use the telephone, or set up an in person consultation.

- Written assignments are due in TWO hard copies and an electronic copy to the instructor and the research advisor by the specified times. Most are due in class.

- Students will submit team peer reviews and other team information by email to the instructor and research advisor.

- The attached University and Trachtenberg School Policies apply (p. 19-20).

- Capstone course have also always followed these strict policies:
  *never extending due dates barring extreme circumstances
  *mandatory attendance with significant deductions for absences.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Pages</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Participation/Communication/Teamwork</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>70%</td>
<td>Capstone Project</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final written report (50%)</td>
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<td>Assignments -- core course lessons applied (15%)</td>
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<td>Final presentation (15%)</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>Presentation on core course lessons</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>NG</td>
<td>Final report presentation to client</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>NG</td>
<td>IRB Certification</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>NG</td>
<td>MPA/MPP program review</td>
<td>14</td>
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[NG = Not graded but necessary for course completion]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Team Composition</td>
<td>Submit list of team members via email</td>
<td>NLT Sept 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Prospectus (if applicable)</td>
<td>See Attachment A for instructions or submit via email if applicable</td>
<td>NLT Sept 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRB Certification</td>
<td>Submit Certificate HARD COPY in class to TA/Sharman-Henry</td>
<td>Sept 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Team Norms and Division of Labor</td>
<td>See handout for instructions to be distributed in class</td>
<td>NLT Sept 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Proposal/Statement of Work with Research Questions</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 10 for more information. This deliverable includes in-class presentation. Submit two hard copies in class &amp; electronic copy</td>
<td>Sept 4, 11, 18 (early bird presentations); Sept 25 last day to present &amp; submit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography and Literature Review</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11 for more information. Submit two hard copies in class &amp; electronic copy</td>
<td>Oct 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core Course Lessons &amp; Individual Presentations organized by team</td>
<td>Class may be extended to 8:00 p.m. If this is a graded, individual assignment, see syllabus p. 10. Note: Prepare 1 PowerPoint slide per team member. Oral update on project status</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Semester Peer Review</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11 for more information. Submit via email to primary &amp; secondary advisor</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status Report</td>
<td>Submit status report &amp; next steps via email to primary &amp; secondary advisor</td>
<td>Oct 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Status Report</td>
<td>Submit status report &amp; next steps via email to primary &amp; secondary advisor</td>
<td>Oct 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Check-in</td>
<td>Oral class update</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Outlining/Bite Structure Consultation (mandatory)</td>
<td>Meet with advisor</td>
<td>Nov 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft of review (optional) or status report</td>
<td>Submit draft via email to primary &amp; secondary research advisor for review (optional) OR 2 paragraph status report &amp; next steps</td>
<td>Dec 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites for review</td>
<td>Submit via email to primary &amp; secondary research advisor</td>
<td>Dec 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Summary Handout for review</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11 for more information. Submit two hard copies &amp; electronic copy to primary &amp; secondary research advisor</td>
<td>Dec 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11 for more information. Submit two hard copies &amp; electronic copy to primary &amp; secondary research advisor</td>
<td>Dec 6 (Thursday) 6:00 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Note: Wednesday, Friday, Monday 12:00 noon</td>
<td>Dec 6 (Thursday) 6:00 pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of Semester Peer Review</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11</td>
<td>Dec 15 (Saturday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPAP/MPP Program Review/Feedback</td>
<td>Online submission via Survey Monkey</td>
<td>Dec 15 (Saturday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission/Preparation to clients</td>
<td>See syllabus p. 11</td>
<td>Dec 15 (Saturday)</td>
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CLASS SESSIONS
(This is an outline as possible. Any changes will be announced in class or via email.)

Week 1 August 28
Introductions, syllabus and schedules
Forming teams/Team updates/Teamwork/Normal Division of labor
Beginning the class/review of presentations
Defining project objectives; First Research Questions to Recommendations
(Discussion; Intro to the Literature Review)

Week 2 September 4
Project Team formations
Student/Teaching Assistant Research
Due: Final list of team members
Due: WR Contributions - Hand copy to TA; Shannon Brier
Due: Sept. 4 - by email - Team Proposal, if applicable

Week 3 September 11
Client/Project update and update
Presentation and discussion - TOR/OWI basics, for Literature Review
Early draft TO/OWI presentations
Due: Sept. 11 - 2 hard copies & electronic copy - Team names and division of labor

Week 4 September 18
Draft - Oral update on client search and SOW/TO status
Discussion; SOW/TOs and managing client relationship
SOW/TO presentations

Week 5 September 25
Draft - Project Proposals/SOW/TO, 7-8 of 20 hand copies & electronic copy
Last day for SOW/TO presentations, Note: class could run to 9 pm

Week 6 October 2
Check in - Oral update - Time for team consultations. Finalize SOW/TO or client
Due: Final SOW/TO to primary & secondary research advisors
Due: Bibliography and U.S. Review - 10 hand copies in class & electronic copy

Oct 9 FALL BREAK - NO CLASS

Week 7 October 16
Check in - Oral update
Core Course Literature Question - Note: class may be extended to 9:00 p.m.
Before you should have begun data collection
Due: Metacognitive peer review in primary & secondary research advisors by email October 10

Week 8 October 23
No class - Time available for team consultations
Due: Status Report - Update & next steps by email to primary & secondary research advisors

Week 9 October 30
No class - Time available for team consultations
Due: Status Report - Update & next steps by email to primary & secondary research advisors
By this time you should have reached tentative conclusions/recommendations and begun drafting.

Week 10 November 6
Check in - Oral update/conferences
Last day for mandatory consultation on paper outline and structure
By this time you should have reached tentative conclusions/recommendations and begun drafting.

Week 11 November 13
Check in - Oral update/conferences on consultation
Last day for optional submission of draft paper for review; 2 hard copies to primary and secondary research advisor and electronic copy - for review.

Week 12 November 20
No class - Time for team consultations
Due: if no draft submitted, update & next steps by email to primary & secondary research advisors

Week 13 November 27
Check in - Oral update/conferences on consultation

Week 14 December 4
No class - Time for team work on final paper & presentation day materials, see below
Last day to submit first paper drafts; Dec. 4 (mandatory)
Last day to submit on-page project summary - Dec. 5 (mandatory)
Due Dec. 6: Final Paper - 20 hand copies & electronic copy

TUESDAY DECEMBER 11 - 6:30-8:00 PM CAPSTONE PROJECT PRESENTATIONS
1. Participation, Communication and Teamwork

Due: Team Peer Review (page 21): Week 7-October 18 and December 15

Expectations:

- Regular, on-time class attendance;
- Helpful, meaningful remarks in class discussions, including feedback on proposals and presentations;
- Reliable, constructive contributions to a team capstone project;
- Consistently meeting all team and class deadlines; and
- Regular communication with a research advisor regarding project progress.

This final group project is an exhilarating and rewarding experience for Capstone teams. Given different working styles of team members and the intensity of Capstone work, however, it is only natural that frictions or misunderstandings occasionally arise within teams. Past experience indicates that addressing such issues promptly is the best way to assure effective teamwork and a quality Capstone outcome. Otherwise, problems tend to magnify as the work becomes more intense toward the end of the semester. In general, we expect teams will resolve any issues internal to the team without involving the instructor or research advisor. If issues arise that you cannot resolve, please bring them forward as early as possible. You will have two opportunities for peer review. Your comments will be taken into account in grading for participation, communication, and teamwork. See format and instructions on page 21.

2. Capstone Project

In this client-oriented group project, BOTH content and process are important. Student teams will design and implement a project involving the application of analytical skills, knowledge, management, and research tools acquired in previous courses to address a client’s specific objective or need(s). Choice of Capstone topics and projects is deliberately left open to your imagination and available opportunities. Teams are responsible for identifying their topic and project. Your project should address a significant public administration or policy issue or need, or a need/issue confronting an organization in the public administration/public policy arena. Look for a project that will give you genuine satisfaction, build on what you know, but stretch you beyond the familiar. Think carefully as individuals and as a team about what you want to achieve.

Managing your client relationship - helping the client to define the objective or need, reaching mutual understanding about how your work should contribute to that objective, knowing when to take the initiative, when to say “no,” finding creative solutions to issues that arise in your work - are all important parts of this process.

In collaboration with your client, you will develop a scope of work to achieve your client’s objective. You can conduct a variety of data collection and analysis activities—surveys, interviews, secondary data analysis, SWOT analysis, policy analysis, policy or program
evaluations or assessments. This week must draw on the skills and methods you have learned and demonstrably meet the client’s needs. Project results will be 1) a final research paper including a description of how your core courses informed your approach to your project, 2) products tailored to the client, and 3) presentations.

Interim deliverables are due throughout the semester (see below and p. 5), to help you stay on track. In weeks the class does not meet and no other assignments are due, teams should email a one-two paragraph status report and list of next steps. The final paper is due December 6.

You will make presentations of your project in two settings. First, at a special workshop for the Capstone class and invited faculty and guests on December 11, and second, to your client approximately 2-3 weeks after submitting your project and receiving feedback from your instructors. This second presentation should be tailored to your client’s needs and expectations.

Each team will be assigned a consultant/advisor for the duration of the project, either Professor Dodik-Goyvso, Research Advisor Yaein Park, Ph.D. candidate teaching assistant, or Research Advisor Shannon Kornin, Visiting Research Scholar. They will be available to provide guidance on your project — from developing the scope of work and data collection instruments to working with the client. However, the consultant/advisor will only provide guidance; it’s up to your group in consultation with the client to select and implement the best course of action for your project.

a. Teams
   Due: Team composition: Week 1-2 – NLT Sept. 4, submitted by email
   Team norms and division of labor: week 2-3 – NLT September 11 - Two hard copies and an electronic copy.

Teams should generally consist of 3-4 members, with similar interests as to the focus of the Capstone project. You will want to build a team of complementary knowledge, experience and skills. Teams may include either MPA or MPP students or a mix of both. The key is to bring a variety of strengths to the team’s work. Past capstone teams have found it useful to have at least one member with strong quantitative skills and one with experience in program evaluation. Teams should agree on a tentative division of labor and team norms. See handout. Capstone instructor will approve the final team composition.

b. Literature Review
   Due: Draft Bibliography and literature review: Week 6 - October 2

Once you identify your general topic, and parallel to your client search and drafting the SOW/TOR, you should begin your literature review. It will be the foundation for the project work, define the boundaries of your research, help define/refine your research questions, and give you credibility in discussions with potential clients. Relevant findings of the lit review will be woven into the final paper, they will not necessarily be a separate section.
c. Finding a client

Due: Team Prospectus: Week 2 – NLT September 4 if applicable

The initiative for finding a client lies with your team. The client search is similar to a job search. The team’s “prospectus” (attached A) serves as your collective resume. We encourage you to seek a client that is not your current employer. Use your Capstone to gain exposure to people and places where you might like to find a position post-graduation. Use your personal networks, but do not hesitate to make “cold calls” to organizations in an area of special interest. Your faculty advisors will also help you with leads and contacts to the extent they know people and organizations in your field of interest. Cast a wide net. Capstone teams often survey as many as 20 potential clients before they find a good match.

A few restrictions apply to client selection: The instructor will give final approval of the client and project idea. You may not do a project for the supervisor of any team member or their family. A client might be disapproved, for example, if the project is too close to a group member’s job, if there is a potential conflict of interest for at least one group member, or if the project does not meet Capstone requirements (see p. 3 and Evaluation Criteria in d. below).

It is preferable to work on a project that is NOT closely associated with your current place of work. If your employer has already identified a capstone project for you, please contact the instructor as soon as possible before making any commitments. Experience shows that these sorts of situations make it difficult to fulfill the capstone requirements, limit the teams’ flexibility, and ultimately the value of the capstone experience.

d. Project Proposal – Statement of Work/Terms of Reference and Presentation

Due: Written Proposals and Presentations: Week 3 and 4 (early bids), and week 5 – September 11, 18 and 25.
Reminder: Submit final negotiated SOW/TOR to primary and secondary research advisors.

Once you have found a client, you will formalize your project and draft a preliminary “Statement of Work” (SW) or “Terms of Reference” (TOR). You will present the draft proposal and SOW/TOR in class and receive feedback from your instructors and classmates prior to finalizing your agreement with your client. Note: As your project progresses the SOW/TOR may change.

You are responsible for informing your instructors of changes, providing them a copy of any updated SOW/TOR, and negotiating “mission creep” issues if they arise.

See next page (page 10) for format, content and evaluation criteria for the statement of work or terms of reference.
Project Proposal Statement of Work/Terms of Reference

**Format**

**Paper:** 10 pages double-spaced, maximum: 12 pt font.
Presentation: 10 minutes, plus 10 minutes of Q and A/diskussion. Each team member should have a speaking role. Slides are optional. One page handouts can be helpful.

**Content Checking:**
1. The client organization, name and contact info for the client's primary liaison with your team.
2. The purpose/objective of your project in relation to the client's needs; nature of the final product for the client.
3. Your research question(s).
4. Relevant highlights from the preliminary literature review.
5. The specifics—what you will do, methodology, tentative timeline with benchmarks for completing all major steps (e.g., constructing surveys, data collection, completing analysis, writing report(s)).
6. Key issues or obstacles (often but not solely methodological) that you or your client anticipate.
7. An addendum indicating the core courses that will be most relevant to your project work.

**Evaluation Criteria**
(a) the project must address a public administration or public policy question/goal, and call on core course lessons;
(b) the project must involve field work in addition to traditional research (e.g., literature research);
(c) the proposal must specify your plan of work (research methods and timeline);
(d) you must specify the final product that you will submit for a grade (e.g. a formal paper, a consulting report, etc.);
(e) the final product you specify must be appropriate to the project you are undertaking;
(f) The scope of the project must be commensurate with the timeframe and size of the group undertaking it, according to the instructor’s discretion.

**Reminder:** Submit final SOW/TOR as negotiated to primary and secondary research advisors: hard copy and electronic copy.
8. Final written paper
Due: Mandatory consultation on structure/content of paper NLT Week 10 - November 6
Last date for optional submission of draft paper for review Week 11 - November 13
Final Paper: December 6

Format: Body of final written paper should not exceed 30 pages, double spaced 12 pt. font,
one inch margins. Papers should include citations (name, year, page) in the text, using standard
APA format, and complete alphabetized bibliography. Grammar and punctuation should follow
"Edited Standard Written English." Note: Other sections and page limits are listed below.

Content checklist for final report (the order is up to you):
• Title page
• Table of Contents
• Acknowledgements (thanks to client, key sources, others)
• Executive Summary (two pages max.); should include summary of recommendations
• Body (30 pages maximum, double spaced)
  1. INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND
     - Statement of the problem (why important and to whom)
     - Objectives of the project
     - Specific research question (may also be stated after literature review)
     - Literature review (need not be a separate section, if it is more appropriate to
       integrate it, e.g., into background section)
     - Summary of relevant findings from the literature review
     - Discussion of how prior research informed the research plan
  2. METHODOLOGY
     Explanation of how the study was conducted (including how key concepts were
     actualized; data collection; the response rates; methodological
     issues/obstacles/solutions, etc.) In some cases it may be more appropriate to summarize
     the methodology and then put the details into an annex.
  4. ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS/DISCUSSION
  5. CONCLUSIONS / RECOMMENDATIONS
     Recommendations should flow logically from the analysis/discussion. Do not raise
     new ideas in this section. This section or section 4 should also include
     acknowledgements of limits on the internal and external validity of the research.
• Bibliography/References/ Sources cited – as many pages as needed.
• Annex or Appendices - up to 10 pages max., including name and contact information of the
  client liaison, and, e.g., full text of any questionnaires
• Addendum summarizing the core course lessons that you applied to the project -3-5 pages.

Evaluation criteria: Clarity, logic and organization, level of complexity, responsiveness to client
needs, creativity in solving methodological problems, soundness of conclusions and
recommendations. See p. 22-23.
Final Presentation
Due: Last day to submit slides/visual aids for review (mandatory): Week 14 Dec. 4
Last day to submit project summary handout (mandatory): Week 14 – Dec. 5

Before giving a written report and oral summary to the client, each team will make a brief formal oral presentation to the Capstone class along with invited faculty and other guests on TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11. Final slides and presentation summary handouts are due NOON noon, December 4 and 5 respectively for review by project advisors. They will be turned back to you to be finalized by NOON December 7. We will assemble the handouts into a program for you. Attendance at the December 11 presentations and active participation in the discussions of other teams’ capstone presentations is mandatory.

Summary handout: The presentation should be accompanied by a one page summary of the project, to be distributed to the audience. It should include names of team members, the name of the client, the project’s objective, key research questions, the basic methodology/obstacles, major findings and recommendations.

Format: Plan a 15 minute presentation followed by up to 10 minutes of questions, answers and discussion. All team members should have some presentation role.

Content: Condensing an extensive project requires carefully focusing on the most important elements and findings, rather than attempting to communicate every detail.

Presentations should include the following:
(1) The identity of the client
(2) Project objectives, central research questions; importance to client
(3) Any relevant insights and highlights from the literature review
(4) A brief explanation of the methodology
(5) A short summary of any challenges and how you addressed them
(6) Findings and lessons learned, expected and unexpected
(7) Next steps and recommendations to the client
(8) A summary of lessons from core courses that you applied in your project.

Evaluation criteria: Clarity, logic and organization, focus/selection of key points to emphasize, professionalism, effectiveness of delivery, effectiveness of visual aids, quality of responses to questions.

g. Client deliverables
The full formal report is not ideal for most clients, so it will need to be edited and usually condensed into a more appropriate format. Likewise, the oral presentation ought to be specially tailored for the client presentation. Budget time to revise both for the client, after receiving feedback on the final oral and written reports submitted to your instructor.

The instructor will contact clients for their critiques of teams’ performances in developing, conducting, and communicating the results of their work.
3. IRB Certification Requirement:
Due: Week 2 – September 4 submit hard copy, in class to Teaching Assistant, Shannon Kenny

Federal regulations require researchers to undergo ethics training and certification for research projects they undertake. Because projects for this course are considered professional training (as opposed to generalizable research) and they are not going to be published, the requirement does not cover these projects (although if you do decide to publish your project you may need to seek IRB approval). Nonetheless, these federal IRB requirements are relevant to your careers as public service professionals so it is important to be familiar with these regulations. To that effect:

- Students are required to complete the CITI Training Program (available at www.citiprogram.org) with a score of 80% or higher and provide certification of such to the Teaching Assistant, Shannon Kenny by Week 2 or earlier. (Please note: When you are given a choice of area of interest, you are to select social and behavioral sciences.)
- Additionally, we will be discussing IRB and more general research ethics and implementation of field research during Week 2. Students are required to attend in order to receive credit for the IRB requirement.

4. Core Course Presentation
Due: Presentations: Week 7 – October 16. Note: Class time may be extended to 9:00 pm

Purpose: To reflect on the impact of the MPA/MPP curriculum on your professional development; to integrate, synthesize and apply the concepts and skills of your program’s core courses (see list p. 20); and to share important lessons with your classmates. Note: This is the ONLY individual assignment for this class.

Students will select one reading, one concept, or one class that had an outsized impact on their view of public policy, public administration or their professional role in public policy or as a public administrator. They will prepare a brief summary that includes: 1) an overview of the topic/idea; 2) why that topic/idea had special significance for them. Examples would be discussing the impact of economic course materials, the role of the concepts of negative exteremalities or social costs in public policy decisions, or the role of “street level bureaucrats” in policy or program implementation. Students will make their presentations with their team, with each student taking no more than 3 minutes to summarize his or her individual element.

Each team will prepare one PowerPoint slide per team member that lists the selected readings/topics and a very brief (one or two lines) summary of the readings/topic. If more than one student within a team selects the same reading/topic, then one of those students will need to select an alternative reading/topic to avoid repetition. Additionally, teams will indicate how each of the readings/topics selected by their team members might inform their approach to the team’s project.
5. MPA/MPP Program Review Assignment

Dear: NLT December 15

One of the requirements of your Fall 2018 capstone course is that you provide feedback about your experience here at the Trachtenberg School. The information will be used to improve the educational experience for future students.

We are collecting feedback with an online survey that should take about fifteen minutes to complete. All students enrolled in the Fall 2018 sections of the MPP and MPA capstones must complete this survey by December 15, as a course requirement.

Survey responses will be aggregated before being shared with TSPPPA faculty, and will not be shared with faculty until after Fall 2018 grades have been submitted.

Your specific responses will not be associated with your name. The survey software will, however, track whether you’ve completed the survey and satisfied the requirements of your capstone course.

Teaching Assistant Yaenn Park will provide further instructions. Denise Bottoms will be administering the survey and compiling the results.

Thanks for your time in completing the survey.
GRADING

Your grades include grades on group work, individual work and participation/communication/teammwork. They will be determined on the following basis:

- Participation/Communication/Teammwork ........................................ 20%
- Core Course Presentation ................................................................. 10%
- Capstone Project* ........................................................................ 70%
- IRB Requirement ........................................................................ NG1
- MPA Program Feedback ................................................................. NG

*Submission of all Capstone project deliverables – due both during the semester and at the presentation (see assignments, p. 5 and class schedule p. 6) – are required to receive full credit for the project. To provide you with feedback on your project throughout the semester, we will return your interim project deliverables (project proposal/statement of work/research questions, bibliography and literature review, paper outline) with an “indicator” of your success in completing these tasks. The indicator will be in the form of:

□ - Excellent job – no changes needed!
□ - On track for this task – minor changes needed.
□ - Needs improvement – major changes needed.

Should you receive a □ – on any of your interim deliverables, we strongly suggest that you and your group speak with your research advisor/consultant on how to improve that component of the project. While we will only give you letter grades on your final written paper and project presentation, for the final letter grade we will take into account whether and how your group addressed issues identified in the interim deliverables.

Explanation of Letter Grades:

A (entered as numerical score 95-100)
Excellent: Thorough, well reasoned, creative, sophisticated, well written (with no errors), exceptional scholarly or practical quality.

A- (entered as numerical score 90-94)
Very good. Very strong work for a master’s level student. Shows signs of creativity and a strong understanding of the material, analytical approaches, etc. It is thorough and well reasoned and meets professional standards.

B+ (entered as numerical score 85-89)
Good: Sound work for a master’s level student; well reasoned and thorough, without serious analytical shortcomings. This grade indicates the student has fully accomplished the basic objectives for the assignment for this course.

1 Assignments marked with NG are not graded for they are important for the reasons stated above. Therefore, you will not receive a grade for the course unless you complete these items.
B (entered as numerical score 84-86)
Adequate: Competent work with some evident weaknesses. Demonstrates competency in the key course objectives but the understanding or application of some important concepts (or the like) is less than complete.

B- (entered as numerical score 80-83)
Borderline: Weak work for a master's level student but meets minimal expectations in this course. Understanding, analysis or application is incomplete.

C+, C, C- (entered as numerical scores 76-79)
Deficient: Inadequate work; Does not meet minimal expectations. Work is poorly developed and flawed by errors and misunderstandings of important issues.

F (entered as numerical score 0)
Unacceptable: Work fails to meet minimal expectations for credit. Weaknesses and limitations are pervasive.

Note: All work must be turned in on time. If a student turns in work late without previous permission of the instructor, a grade of F will be given for that assignment. Under extreme circumstances, the instructor may give prior permission for a student to turn in work late. In that circumstance, a 1/3 grade deduction per week late, will apply. Thus, for example, if a student were to have received a grade of A on the merits, a grade of A- will be given.

PLEASE SEE THE ATTACHED GRADING MATRIX THAT WILL BE USED IN ASSESSING YOUR CLIENT PROJECTS pp. 22-23

Course Materials:
As of the start of this class, there are no required readings. Generally, there are no required readings for this class.

Required readings, if any, will be available on Blackboard. These readings and would be designed to provide you with additional resources for successfully completing your project. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss any such readings. In addition, you may want to refer to materials you used for your previous courses that may support your project and the resources listed on pp. 17-18.
RESOURCES
The following resources may be useful.

Research Ethics

- Erica Gabrielle Foddy, “Ethics Considerations in Capstone: A Brief Overview for Students,” NYU Wagner School

Data Collection:

- Gelman Research Guides. If you haven’t already familiarized yourself with these resources, start here:
  - Public Administration: http://libguides.gwu.edu/pubadmin
  - Public Policy: http://libguides.gwu.edu/policy
  - There are some others that may be relevant to your project; explore other guides at http://libguides.gwu.edu/index.php

- Databases and Document Sources
  - Project abstract databases:
    - NIH REPORTER: Contains data and abstracts for projects funded by a range of NIH agencies, including NHInstitute.
      http://www.projectreporter.nih.gov/reporter.cfm
    - The Department of Education has a Grant Award database containing information on all of their discretionary and formula awards.
      http://www.ed.gov/IFAP/GrantsAward/start.cfm
    - Some foundations, like the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, also publish data on funded projects.
      http://www.rwjf.org/grants/search.jsp?name=GRANTS&status=548
Government document and policy database:

- EPA maintains a database of state-by-state environmental regulatory information.  
  [http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/state/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/state/index.html)
- The Maternal and Child Health Bureau releases states' Title V block grant executive through its website.  
  [http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/state/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/lawsregs/state/index.html)
- Many agencies publish the guidance they release about programs in a central website or repository, for example, the Department of Transportation lists all of the Federal Transit Administration's circulars on its website.  

Data tools:
- Census Bureau's Current Population Survey Table Creator: Lets you produce custom-built tables of data from the Bureau's ongoing CPS dataset.  
- The National Center for Education Statistics has a number of customizable data sources as well.  
- The Urban Institute's Center for Charitable Statistics has a data tool for its information on the U.S. non-profit sector.  
  [http://www.urban.org/tablesw/tw_bmf.sho](http://www.urban.org/tablesw/tw_bmf.sho)


Data Analysis Resources:

1. **Incomplete:** A student must consult with the instructor to obtain a grade of I (incomplete) no later than the last day of classes in a semester. At that time, the student and instructor will both sign the CCAS contract for incomplete and submit a copy to the School Director. Please consult the SOPPFA Student Handbook or visit [http://www.gwu.edu/vpsa/facultyaffairs/students/policies.html](http://www.gwu.edu/vpsa/facultyaffairs/students/policies.html) for the complete CCAS policy on incompletes.

   **Note:** Since a term project is the main focus of this class, the instructor will give an incomplete only in extreme circumstances.

2. **Submission of written work products outside of the classroom:** It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that an instructor receives each written assignment. Students can submit written work electronically only with the express permission of the instructor. **RELEVANT TO THIS COURSE:** See p. 5 for submission requirements. Written work is to be submitted at the beginning of class on the due date, or on those days when no class is scheduled, by 8 pm to Indege-Gaynor email box, copy room 6th floor MPA. An electronic copy of written work should also be transmitted to your primary and secondary research advisors.

3. **Submission of written work products after the due date/policy on late work:** All work must be turned in by the assigned due date in order to receive full credit for that assignment, unless an exception is expressly made by the instructor.

4. **Academic Integrity Code:** All examinations, papers, and other graded work products and assignments are to be completed in conformance with the George Washington University Code of Academic Integrity. The Code defines "academic dishonesty" as "cheating of any kind" including "submitting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information." Note especially the definition of plagiarism: "intentionally representing the words, ideas, or sequence of ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise; failure to attribute any of the following: quotations, paraphrases, or borrowed information." For details and the complete Code see [mainemcounl.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity](http://mainemcounl.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity).

5. **Changing grades after completion of course:** No changes can be made in grades after the conclusion of the semester, other than in cases of clerical error.

6. **The Syllabus:** This syllabus is a guide to the course for the student. Sound educational practice requires flexibility and the instructor may therefore, at his/her discretion, revise content, and requirements during the semester.

7. **Support and accommodation for students with disabilities:** Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services Office at 202-994-4260 in Rome Hall, Suite 102, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information see: disabilitiesupport.gwu.edu. To receive accommodations on the basis of disability, please provide documentation from the GW's Disability Support Services. Accommodations will be made based upon the recommendations of the DSP Office.

8. **Mental Health Services:** The University’s Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address student personal, social, career, and study skill problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations, confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. For additional information see: [psychcenter.gwu.edu](http://psychcenter.gwu.edu).
University policy on observance of religious holidays: In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy see: student.gsu.edu/accommodations-religious-holidays.

Safety and security: In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

MPA Core Courses

PPPA 6001 Introduction to Public Service and Administration
PPPA 6002 Research Methods and Applied Statistics
PPPA 6003 Economics in Public Decision-Making
PPPA 6004 Leadership in Public Administration and Public Policy
PPPA 6005 Public Budgeting, Revenue and Expenditure Analysis
PPPA 6006 Policy Analysis

MPP Core Courses

PPPA 6002 Research Methods and Applied Statistics
PPPA 6005 Public Budgeting, Revenue and Expenditure Analysis
PPPA 6013 Research Methods in Policy Analysis, Multivariate
PPPA 6014 Economics in Policy Analysis
PPPA 6015 Benefit-Cost Analysis
PPPA 6016 Public and Nonprofit Program Evaluation
TEAMWORK PEER REVIEW INSTRUCTIONS

Purpose
Each individual student will provide feedback to your instructor and the course research advisor on the work of your team members and yourself. The instructor will take this feedback into account in arriving at individual grades for “course participation/communication/teamwork.”

Due:
October 18
December 15

Format:

a. Electronic submission
Submit teamwork peer reviews by a simple EMAIL, without attachments to both the instructor and the Teaching Assistant.

b. Numerical teamwork rating
Please rate each of your team members AND yourself on a scale of 0-4, with 4 being excellent teamwork.

NOTE: You may rate a team member 2 or below, ONLY AFTER you have raised the specific issue(s) with them personally. Any rating of 2 or below must be accompanied by an explanation of the issue(s) and what you did to try to resolve it.

c. Identification of strengths
Please identify one particular strength of each team member INCLUDING yourself, that has significantly facilitated the team’s work.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Paper</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Very good</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Adequate</th>
<th>Workable</th>
<th>Difficult</th>
<th>Unacceptable</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Through, well researched, creative, organized, well-written (with no errors), exceptional scholarly or practical quality.</td>
<td>Very good; signs of creativity and a strong understanding of material, analytical approach, etc.</td>
<td>Good; Sound work, well researched and organized, without obvious analytical shortcomings. Report fully accomplishes basic objectives for the assignment for this quarter.</td>
<td>Adequate; Competent work with some weaknesses. Demonstrates competency, but understanding or application of major concepts (or the idea) is less than complete.</td>
<td>Workable; Inadequate work. Does not meet minimal expectations. Understanding, analysis, or application is incomplete.</td>
<td>Difficult; Inadequate work. Most ideas are unrelated or not developed. Work is poorly developed and flawed by errors and misunderstandings of important concepts.</td>
<td>Unacceptable: Work fails to meet minimal expectations.</td>
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Overall organization of report:
- Clarity of writing:
- Responsiveness to client needs/expectations:
- Complexity of the project:

Introduction:
- Literature review:
- Research questions/problem statement:
- Overall research design/methodology:

Data collection:
- Analysis:
- Conclusions/recommendation:

Tools, if any, for client.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interim Deliverables</th>
<th>3: Excellent job — no changes needed.</th>
<th>2: On track for this task — minor changes needed.</th>
<th>1: Needs improvement — major changes needed.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Statement of work with research questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Certification on human subjects protection</td>
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<td>Bibliography and literature review</td>
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<td>Paper outline</td>
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<td>Presentation</td>
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Additional Comments: