



## PREFACE

The Capstone Project represents the culmination of the Masters of Arts in Education program at Otterbein University. The purpose of this manual is to help orient and guide you through the Capstone experience. However, it is not a “How to” manual. Capstone projects are all individual and therefore exhibit considerable variance. Ultimately, you will have to blaze your own path. The purpose of this manual is to provide you with information about the Capstone process, the Capstone types, departmental policy, and expectations.

In the Capstone Project, you will conduct an original piece of research. If you have never conducted original research, then you should know that this experience will be unlike any other academic experience you’ve had to this point. For those who are unacquainted with research, the Capstone may sound like a glorified term paper. I want to assure you that original research is nothing like a term paper—it is far more challenging and, more importantly, far more rewarding.

When you do research, you are not simply following an assignment. There is no professor who hands you a prompt with some instructions. *You* are the leader of your project. That means *you* must ask the questions, create the method for your investigation, and ultimately deliver the answers. You will have an advisor, a committee, and instructors along the way to help support you, but ultimately, the Capstone is *your* project, not theirs. And that is why research is so challenging (and so rewarding): it is self-directed.

Through the Capstone Project, you will not simply complete an assignment. You will also (and more importantly) undergo a transformation of identity

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Students in good standing with a 3.0 cumulative GPA will apply for degree candidacy during the semester that 18 semester hours of graduate work will be completed. The following documents must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Programs in Education by the deadlines on the application form.

A degree candidacy application form available in the Education Department, signed by the student as well as the student's Capstone advisor and second reader.

The Capstone Project Prospectus, approved and signed by the student's Capstone advisor and second reader.

Documentation indicating approval to do research by the Institutional Review Board (if required). Please work with your advisor to complete the IRB form.

A completed Diversity Form, indicating that diversity requirements have been met.

A completed degree audit, indicating reasonable progress toward the completion of degree and successful completion of 18 hours of coursework.

After the applications are filed, the Graduate Education Committee will examine the record of the candidate, admit the student to degree candidacy status, deny candidacy, and/or advise the student to revise his/her program.

**You are strongly advised to work closely with your advisor as you complete your candidacy application.**

#### **NOTE**

It may be the case that you have:

- a) reached your 18 hour mark and are not yet ready to work on your capstone. This would be most likely to happen when students start their program with either the Reading endorsement sequence or the TESOL endorsement sequence. If you are in this situation, meet with your advisor and/or the Graduate Director to discuss a feasible candidacy timeline.
- b) not reached your 18 hour mark but are ready to work on your capstone. This would be most likely to happen when students take EDUC 6400, Foundations for Education Research, early on in their program. If you are in this situation, meet with your advisor and/or the Graduate Director to discuss a feasible candidacy timeline.

## II. Overview of Capstone







the discussion of your project is complete (i.e. the question and answer), the committee will deliberate privately to score your project and defense (the evaluation criteria for each capstone type can be found under the respective Capstone descriptions below). After the deliberation, the committee will notify you of whether or not you have successfully completed the Capstone. Successful completion will be indicated by your committee submitting a signed Capstone Completion form to the Registrar on your behalf.

It is not unusual for the committee to request revisions and to make completion (i.e. submission of the Capstone Completion form) contingent upon the execution of those revisions. Sometimes revisions can be minor (e.g. spelling and grammar, organization, or formatting), but sometimes revisions can be significant (e.g. more literature review, changes to the argument, more data analysis). Again, revisions are not unusual. Even successful projects require revisions. Thus do not view requests for revisions negatively. All requests for revisions are your committee's attempt to improve the quality of your research.

All Capstone must be completed within the semester after the semester in which you have taken Capstone Seminar (EDUC 7001) or Capstone Project (EDUC 7000). For example, if you take Capstone Seminar in spring 2010, you have until the end of summer semester 2010 to successfully complete your Capstone. Another example: if you take Capstone Project in fall 2010, you have until the end of spring 2011 to successfully complete your Capstone. The exact deadlines for successful completion (i.e. deadlines for submitting the signed Capstone Completion form to the Registrar) are listed on your Degree Audit under the Capstone requirement line item. If you do not complete the Capstone within that timeframe, you will be required to enroll in another Capstone course (either the Seminar or Capstone Project) for at least 1 semester hour, at which point you will have another two semesters (i.e. the semester in which the Capstone course is taken and the semester after) to successfully complete the Capstone.

#### **D. Publication and Dissemination**

The most important step in the Capstone process is publication and dissemination because research is intended to advance the collective knowledge of the research community. By publically disseminating your work, you add your findings to that knowledge. The Capstone is disseminated in two primary ways.

The *first* method of dissemination is the **oral defense**. When you defend your project, whether in a poster or committee defense, you are publically presenting your research, and in so doing, disseminating your research to the research community. In addition to your oral defense, you should consider presenting your work at a conference.

The *second* method of dissemination is **publication**. Capstones are published electronically through the Digital Commons. The Digital Commons is an online repository for Otterbein faculty and student research. It is a publicly searchable repository, which means that researchers from around the world can find and cite your work. After you have successfully defended your project and have executed any and all revisions, you will submit your finalized Capstone to the Digital Commons. The instructions as well as contact information for librarian support can be found by following

this link: <https://digitalcommons.otterbein.edu/policies.html>.

Aside from the oral defense and publication in the Digital Commons, there is the possibility of publishing your Capstone in **The Journal of Teacher Initiated Research (JTIR)**. JTIR is the Education Department's in-house online journal. Every year, one Capstone, which distinguishes itself from its peers, is selected by faculty nomination and Director's selection to be published in JTIR. Publication in JTIR is considered an honor. If your Capstone is chosen to be published in JTIR, you should consider also publishing it in the Digital Commons to increase its visibility and accessibility. If you aspire to JTIR publication, you are encouraged to express your interest to your advisor and committee. More information on JTIR can be found by following this link: <https://www.otterbein.edu/education/journal-teacher-initiated-research/>.

There is one other possible option for publication. One other possible option is to publish your work in the *Journal of Teacher Education* (JTE). This journal is published by the National Council on Teacher Education (NCTE) and is a peer-reviewed journal. For more information on JTE, visit the NCTE website at <http://www.ncte.org/jte>.

### III. Types of Capstones

There are three primary types of Capstone projects.

Instructional Inquiry  
Curriculum Analysis  
Curriculum Development

### A. Instructional Inquiry

The Instructional Inquiry project is for students interested in examining classroom practice. There are a range of questions that can fall under the rubric of Instructional Inquiry. But generally speaking, Instructional Inquiry covers questions regarding **classroom practice**, such as, the examination of the effectiveness of particular instructional methods or impacts on student-learning. Instructional Inquiry projects may use qualitative data (such as, observations and interviews) to answer research questions, but typically quantitative data plays a large role in Instructional Inquiry projects. Approaches that mix both qualitative and quantitative techniques are also frequently used. Instructional Inquiry projects almost always gather data on human subjects and therefore require approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The structure of Instructional Inquiry projects may vary, and therefore you should work closely with your advisor, committee, and Capstone instructor to determine the best organization for your project. But typically, Instructional Inquiry projects have the following general structure:

- An *introduction* that identifies the research question and states its significance as well as the purpose of the study
- A *literature review* that frames the project within a body of scholarly (i.e. peer reviewed) research
- A section that details the *research design* and *method* for data collection
- A presentation of the *findings* from the data collection
- A discussion that *analyzes* and *interprets* the findings
- A *conclusion* that makes sense of the entire project and considers its implications for classroom practice

Typically, Instructional Inquiry projects involve human subjects (i.e. collecting student performance data, observing students, interviewing parents, etc.). All research that involves human subjects *must* receive **IRB approval** *before data collection can begin* to ensure that all human subjects will be treated ethically. You can find the application form for IRB approval by following this link:

[http://www.otterbein.edu/public/Academics/AcademicAffairsDivision/sponsored\\_programs/Student\\_research/SRF\\_Forms.aspx](http://www.otterbein.edu/public/Academics/AcademicAffairsDivision/sponsored_programs/Student_research/SRF_Forms.aspx).

Though Instructional Inquiry projects may differ, they are all **evaluated** on the following criteria: Independence, Introduction/Significance, Literature Review, Research Design and Method, Findings/Analysis/Conclusion, Writing Mechanics and Formatting, and Presentation. The **rubric** containing all indicators for these criteria can be found below.



AND

the literature review  
demonstrates a **critical**

**viewpoints and/or  
commitments**

AND

the literature review **makes a**

interpretations are **connected to**  
the data.

**aligned**

**AND**

interpretations are **warranted**  
by the data.

interpretations are warranted by  
the data

**AND**

**findings integrate multiple  
sources of data,  
citing specific examples to  
il**







			sources.	interprets, and explains the sources <b>AND</b> the literature review demonstrates a <b>critical viewpoints and/or commitments</b> <b>AND</b> the literature review <b>makes a strong case for the importance of the project.</b>
	<b>Unacceptable (1)</b>	<b>Acceptable (2)</b>	<b>Meets Expectations (3)</b>	<b>Exemplary (4)</b>

**Materials Selection and Analytic Framework**

Materials to be analyzed are **not identified**  
**OR**  
A theoretical perspective is **not identified**  
**OR**  
A theoretical perspective is **not cited**  
**OR**  
The criteria for analysis are **not identified**

Materials to be analyzed are **identified**  
**AND**  
A **rationale** for the selection of materials is **provided**  
**AND**  
A theoretical perspective is **identified, described, and cited**  
**AND**  
The criteria for analysis are **identified**

Materials to be analyzed are identified  
**AND**  
A rationale for the selection of materials is provided  
**AND**  
A theoretical perspective is identified, described, and cited  
**AND**  
The criteria for analysis are identified, **each criterion is clearly defined, and within each criterion analytic descriptors are provided**  
**AND**  
The criteria for analysis could **elicit an answer to the research question**

Materials to be analyzed are identified  
**AND**  
A rationale for the selection of materials is provided  
**AND**  
A theoretical perspective is identified, described, **and situated within the literature**  
**AND**  
**The theoretical perspective is**



**Presentation**

The presentation (poster or slides) **lacks important information** or is of **unprofessional quality**

**OR**

the candidate **does not answer** audience questions

**OR**

the candidate **does not address limitations** to the project.

The presentation (poster or slides) is **thorough** and of **professional quality**.

**AND**

the candidate **answers** audience questions. The answers are **not informed** by the research project (or reference to the research project is **not relevant** to the question.)

**AND**

The candidate **addresses limitations** to the project, but **does not outline remedies**.

The presentation (poster or slides) is thorough and of professional quality.

**AND**

the candidate answers audience questions. The answers are **informed** by the research project and reference to the research project is **relevant** to the question

**AND**

the candidate addresses limitations to the project and **outlines remedies**.

The presentation (poster or slides) is thorough and of professional quality.

**AND**

the candidate answers audience questions. The answers are informed m( )-2 (m( )-218BT48 5

### **C. Curriculum Development**

The Curriculum Development project is for students interested in developing curriculum.



				sources <b>AND</b> the literature review demonstrates a <b>critical</b>  <b>viewpoints and/or commitments</b> <b>AND</b> the literature review <b>makes a strong case for the importance of the project.</b>
	<b>Unacceptable (1)</b>	<b>Acceptable (2)</b>	<b>Meets Expectations (3)</b>	<b>Exemplary (4)</b>

**Curriculum Development  
Framework: Theoretical**





		<b>limitations</b> to the project, but <b>does not outline remedies.</b>	limitations to the project and <b>outlines remedies.</b>	limitations to the project and outlines remedies <b>AND</b> the candidate communicates a <b>professional and/or intellectual transformation</b> resulting from the project.
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## IV. Less Common Project Types

Aside from the three main capstone project types, there are two less common project types.

- National Board Certification
- Thesis Project

#### **A. National Board Certification**

The National Board Certification option is available for students who a) are teaching full-time, and b) meet regularly with a district-based support network that agrees to work with the student toward the goal of obtaining National Board Certification. It is important to note that Otterbein University is not a National Board Certification provider. If you choose to pursue National Board Certification as your capstone option, your Otterbein-designated capstone rating will not be connected to your National Board Rating. National Board Capstone Submissions have the following components:

- Letter of support from NBPTS Support Network
- Submission of all NBPTS portfolio requirements, including reflective descriptions and evidence
- Annotated list of references, including research articles and theoretical frameworks, explaining and supporting the practice described in the portfolio.

First and foremost, you need to obtain a **letter** from a district administrator or NBPTS

National Board projects are **evaluated** through the oral defense process. These projects are evaluated on the following criteria: Students and Student Learning, Content Knowledge, Managing and Monitoring Learning, Critical Reflection, and Learning Communities. The **rubric** containing all indicators for these criteria can be found below.

**Capstone Scoring Rubric: National Board Professional Teaching Certification (MAE C&I)**

<b>National Board Proposition</b>	<b>Exceeds Expectations</b>	<b>Meets Expectations</b>	<b>Developing</b>	<b>Does not meet Expectations</b>
Students and Student Learning	Candidate submits evidence of highly effective research-based instruction, including videotapes, student work samples, and reflective commentary.	Candidate submits evidence of effective research-based instruction, including videotapes, student work samples, and reflective commentary.	Candidate submits evidence of effective research-based instruction, including at least two of the following: videotapes, student work samples, and reflective commentary.	Candidate does not submit at least two forms of evidence of effective research-based instruction.



**B. Thesis**

The Thesis project is for students who wish to pursue a line of inquiry that does not fit neatly within the three main project types. Projects that might fall under the Thesis rubric are: historical or philosophical inquiries. Thesis projects are subject to all the same requirements as the main project types. Thus Thesis projects require a prospectus (with all associated approvals), an oral defense, IRB approval (if appropriate), as well as publication/dissemination.

If you are interested in pursuing a Thesis project, you should consult with your advisor, your Research and Capstone instructors, and/or the Director of Graduate Programs.

## V. Formatting the Project



**A. For Submission to Digital Commons**

The use of correcting fluid or correcting tape is *not* acceptable on the *submitted copy*.

- c. Spacing
  - i. Use double spacing with a single double space between paragraphs.
  - ii. Single-space long tables, long quotations, footnotes, multi-line captions and bibliographic entries.
  
- d. Margins
  - i. Margins
    - Top edge 1 inch
    - Right side 1 inch
    - Left side 1.5 inches
    - Bottom edge 1 inch
  - ii. *All* page numbering, tables and figures including captions must conform to margin requirements.
  - iii. On pages carrying a major heading, such as the preliminaries, the first page of a chapter, etc., leave a two-inch margin at the top of the page. The page number is placed center bottom on major heading pages.
  - iv. A new paragraph at the bottom of a page must have at least two full lines of type or it should begin the next page. The page may be short to allow this. If your word processor does not automatically do this, then set your properties to control widows and orphans (single lines of a paragraph at the end or beginning of a page).

**Directions for controlling widows and orphans (WORDXP):**

Select the paragraphs in which you want to control widows and orphans.



*Format of Document Sections*

- a. Title Page
  - i. The title page shows the candidate's full legal name and degrees earned. Since abbreviations of degrees vary among academic institutions, careful attention should be given to this matter.
  - ii. This page is not numbered but is counted as the first page (i) of the Preliminaries.
  - iii. See Appendix A for a sample.
  
- b. Copyright Page
  - i. A blank page or copyright notice to be centered as follows:

Copyright  
By  
Kendra Johnson  
1996
  - ii. This page is neither counted nor numbered.
  
- c. Dedication (Optional)
  - i. If used, make it brief. Center it on the page. No heading is necessary.
  - ii. The Dedication page is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
  
- d. Acknowledgements (Optional)
  - i. The heading ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS is centered without punctuation 2 inches from the top of the page; the text begins four spaces below.
  - ii. The Acknowledgements page(s) is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
  
- e. Vita
  - i. The heading VITA is centered without punctuation 1.5 inches from the top of the page; the text begins four spaces below. Publications are included as part of the Vita.
  - ii. The Vita is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
  - iii. The Vita is a required part of the preliminaries.
  
- f. Table of Contents
  - i. The heading TABLE OF CONTENTS is centered without punctuation 2 inches from the top of the page; the listing begins at the left margin four spaces below.
  - ii. The titles of parts, sections, or chapters and their principal subdivisions are listed and must be worded exactly as they appear in the body of the document.

- iii. The Table of Contents is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
- g. List of Tables
- i. The heading LIST OF TABLES is centered without punctuation 2 inches from the top of the page; the listing begins at the left margin four spaces below.
  - ii. The List of Tables uses exactly the same numbers and captions that appear above the tables in the text or the appendices.
  - iii. The List of Tables is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
- h. List of Figures
- i. The heading LIST OF FIGURES is centered without punctuation 2 inches from the top of the page; the listing begins at the left margin four spaces below.
  - ii. The List of Figures uses exactly the same numbers that appear below the figures in the text and the appendices.
  - iii. The List of Figures is numbered in lower case Roman numerals center bottom.
- i. Abstract
- The heading ABSTRACT is centered without punctuation 1.5 inches from the top of the page; the text begins four spaces below.
- j. Main Body
- The chapters vary but in general include at least the following:
- i. Instructional Inquiry: Introduction/Significance, Literature Review, Methodology, Findings, and Conclusions
  - ii. Curriculum Development: Introduction/Significance/Needs, Literature Review, Presentation of Curriculum, and Professional Outreach Plan
  - iii. Curriculum Analysis: Introduction/Significance, Literature Review, Research Design/Methodology, Findings of Analysis, and Conclusion
- k. List of References
- i. The heading LIST OF REFERENCES is centered without punctuation 1.5 inches from the top of the page; the text begins four spaces below.
  - ii. The List of References is single spaced within each double spaced between entries.
  - iii. Every document *must* contain a List of References. The list of references includes those documents that are *cited* in the document. The list should not include documents you used as background information but did not cite.

1. **Headings**  
The document should follow the headings as described in the APA Manual (latest edition). The five levels of headings are illustrated by Figure 1.

*Figure 1.* Illustration of 5 levels of headings.

### ***General Information***

- a. **Use of Copyrighted Material**

Writers must assume full responsibility for their use of any copyrighted material in their manuscripts. Written permission of the copyright owner must be obtained when extensive use is planned. The phrase "Extensive use" signifies more than 150 words in direct quotation from a single source.

Candidates are advised that permission to quote extensively from copyrighted material should be obtained from the author or the publisher holding the copyright. Customarily, authorization is granted on condition that proper acknowledgement is made. In some instances, however, copyright owners require payment for quotations taken from their work. Please clear the use of all material before presenting your project.







## A. Graduation

**Two terms before the candidate intends to graduate**, the candidate should submit an Application for Degree to the registrar's office. The Application for Degree is available from the Registrar, 027 Towers Hall.

A graduation/capstone fee is charged at a per credit hour rate. Each hour of EDUC 7000 or 7001 MAE Capstone incurs an additional fee (fee amount available from Business Office). This fee is assessed beyond tuition fees and *is not covered by fee waivers*.

All capstone requirements, including the Oral Defense, must be completed by the appropriate deadline date. You will find all deadline dates listed in your Degree Audit under the Capstone line item.

A capstone score and a teaching portfolio score must be entered and signed by the advisor and submitted to registrar before the candidate is eligible to graduate. This form can be found in the Education Department.

### NOTE

Completion of the capstone project and graduation will sometimes occur in different terms. However, graduation cannot occur without completion of the capstone and teaching portfolio.

Running Head: ACQUISITION OF ACADEMIC LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

The Acquisition of Academic Language and Literacy for Generation 1.5 Students

Cheryl Ann Allaire, B.A.

Otterbein University

July 27, 2011

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Master of Arts in Education degree.