

Capstone Project Guidelines

The *Capstone Project* provides an opportunity for students to engage in high-level inquiry focusing on an area of specialization within the profession. Capstone projects will be inquiry and practice-centered, and will draw upon areas of interest to the student, connecting with their professional interest. All capstones aim to bridge theory and practice and are aimed to have an impact on the professional life of students.

Students may identify the topics for their *Capstone Project* during their course work at any point in their graduate music education degree program. Capstone projects often take their inspiration from projects, papers, and experiences related to course work in the degree program. However, to ascertain students' abilities for independent work and their capacity for self-directed inquiry, capstone projects must demonstrate in what ways individual graduate student have researched, developed, extended, or applied the ideas and strategies under investigation.

Capstone Projects encourage the application of knowledge gained on teaching and learning throughout the Masters of Music Education program. Additionally, the *Capstone Project* should demonstrate the depth and extent of knowledge of students. Capstone projects may integrate a variety of formats (e.g., video, web, traditional text, media) of scholarly work. These may be, but are not limited to, the investigation of practices and educational ideas, the development of curricular materials, or teaching approaches.

A successful *Capstone Project* shall:

- 1) Illuminate and bring new insight to an area of the music education field;
- 2) Demonstrate a depth and breadth of knowledge and the application of this knowledge to scholarship and/or practice;
- 3) Present a clearly articulated investigative framework, while situating projects within established academic practices and/ or ideas;
- 4) Offer inquiry-based argumentation for educational/curricular change and adaptation where conceptual propositions are tied to in-the-world realities.

General Guidelines

Capstone Projects are developed during a Capstone Course, offered every Fall and Winter terms. In consultation with the faculty leading said course, students will select and develop a topic. Upon acceptance, students may proceed with their *Capstone Project*.

Format of Capstone Projects

A *Capstone Project* should encompass the following *minimum* parameters:

- Each capstone project must show: (a) depth and breadth of scholarly understanding, and (b) the application of this understanding to practice.
- All Capstones shall be guided by an Inquiry-Based Learning Framework and model.
- A capstone project may take several forms and often yields the production of materials for teaching, learning, research or for a variety of applications within the field.
- A condition of the capstone project is that students demonstrate the ability to gather materials, review current literature, and to examine sufficient background material to inform the development of original work.
- To this end, the capstone projects should be thought in two parts:
 1. A narrative-focused segment that describes and reflects upon the process, as well as a literature review sufficient to provide a scholarly contextualization of the project.
 - a. Length will vary but a good expectation for this section would be 20 to 25 pages; inclusive of references
 2. A practice-oriented segment where original and collected materials will be collected.
 - a. Multimedia and web-based formats are highly encouraged in this segment of the capstone.
 - b. Materials should be ‘sharable’ and aimed at impacting an area of work within music education