



Southern New Hampshire University

OL 421 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

You will complete a capstone that integrates the knowledge and skills you have developed in the business core coursework and over the duration of the term by creating an executive summary that highlights the performance of your company from the Capsim simulation. The executive summary is your opportunity to show your knowledge of the organization, products, and business functions—skills that professionals in this field must possess. You will also reflect on your journey through the business core and how you plan to position yourself both professionally and in your upcoming program of study. This personal and professional reflection will specifically focus on business communication skills, professional etiquette, and peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration.

Evaluation of Capstones

This capstone will be assessed somewhat differently than other courses you have taken online at SNHU. There are two separate components, which will be evaluated as a unit in determining whether you have demonstrated proficiency in each outcome. Your instructor will guide you through this process, keeping a running narrative of your strengths and weaknesses in relation to the outcomes as you progress through the class. Your work is expected to meet the highest professional standards.

This assessment will evaluate your mastery with respect to the following outcomes:

- OL-421-01: Demonstrate business communication skills and etiquette for constructing personal and professional reflections in a variety of business environments
- OL-421-02: Analyze strategic problem-solving skills for enhancing business success
- OL-421-03: Analyze the use of quantitative and qualitative tools for informing strategic decision-making
- OL-421-04: Assess ethical, legal, and social challenges for suggesting improvement and enhancement strategies
- OL-421-05: Assess peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration for improving performance and decision making
- OL-421-06: Analyze global business markets for informing future business expansion choices
- OL-421-07: Analyze entrepreneurial and innovative approaches for solving authentic business problems

Prompt

Since you just finished the Capsim simulation, compiled your results, and are now looking to the future of your company, the first component of your capstone requires you to compose a company performance summary. Imagine that this summary is for new members of the topic of directors of your company. It is imperative that the topic understand your company, its value, and its development cycle over the last eight years. This is your opportunity to exhibit your knowledge of your organization, your products, and how your business functions.

High-level business executives are often short on time, so it is important that your summary is concisely written and rich in content. As has been emphasized in previous classes in the business core, effective business communication, peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration, and professional etiquette are mandatory skills to have when entering today's business world. Because this is the last course in the business core, the second component of your capstone



requires you to reflect on your use of business communication skills, professional etiquette, and collaboration skills throughout the Capsim simulation, this course, and the previous courses you have taken in the business core.

Capstone Component 1: Executive Summary

For the first of two capstone components, you will develop a comprehensive, professional executive summary by analyzing quantitative and qualitative tools, analyzing strategic problem-solving skills, assessing any ethical, legal, or social challenges that may be encountered, analyzing global markets, and analyzing entrepreneurial approaches. This executive summary will be used to inform new members of the topic of directors who must become familiar with your company.

The following sections should be included:

- I. **Progress of the Company.** You should briefly bring the new topic members up to speed about the progress of your company over the past eight years. While it is not important to describe every change, be sure to give an executive-level overview of the various products, strategies, and performances.
- II. **Current Situation.** Here, discuss the current situation of your company by performing and analyzing a full SWOT analysis.
 - a) Strengths: Identify the strengths of the organization.
 - b) Weaknesses: Identify the weaknesses of the organization.
 - c) Opportunities: Identify potential opportunities the organization should explore in order to expand.
 - d) Threats: Identify external factors that could negatively affect the organization.
- III. **Future of the Company.** Consider the results of your SWOT analysis, and detail an approach you plan to take regarding your top priority at the company. Be sure to include any innovative or sustainable approaches in your plan.
- IV. **Ethical, Legal, and Social Challenges.** Discuss any ethical, legal, or social challenges the company may have faced or could face in the future, and suggest strategies for how the company could overcome these challenges.
- V. **Global Considerations.** In this section, discuss what necessary factors would need to be considered if the company were to expand into the global market. Consider the opportunities and threats outlined in the SWOT analysis previously in order to analyze the greatest advantages and disadvantages to expanding this company into the global market.

Capstone Component 2: Professional Reflection

For the second and final component of your capstone, you will compose a reflection in which you discuss the process and outcomes of this project, as well as how your coursework culminated in the capstone project. This may include discussions of unforeseen problems or obstacles, and any unexpected surprises. The reflection should also discuss your identified strengths and problems that you encountered while completing the capstone. Finally, the reflection will examine how the capstone project will be useful in the job market or in furthering your education.



You should envision this component as a personal reflection on the capstone and your experience in the business core program as a whole. For instance, relative to the capstone, you could discuss what you did (or intended to do), and then consider what worked well, what challenges you faced, and what you would change or do differently to make your experience better. In reflecting on your time in the business core program, you might discuss where you started, where you are, and where you see yourself going. Note that this component is not about evaluating the capstone itself but rather your experience within the capstone project.

Some of the issues that you could address in this final component of this capstone include the following:

- Overall, what was your capstone experience like?
- Reflect on your experience performing the Capsim simulation.
- Reflect on the significance of the capstone in relation to your own experience at SNHU.
- What connections do you see between your capstone and your academic program?
- How will you apply what you have learned to your future academic and/or professional life?
- How did you demonstrate effective business communication in both this capstone course and throughout the business core program?
- How will you utilize these business communication skills in your future classes here at SNHU and in the working world after graduation?
- Reflect on your experiences with peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration in this capstone course.
- How has peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration influenced your performance and decision making in this class?
- Reflect on establishing and maintaining a professional business etiquette in both this capstone course and throughout the business program.

Final Project Rubric

This rubric will be applied to both components as a whole, and no component will be assessed on its own.

The “Possible Indicators of Success” are examples for you and the instructor of the types of concepts to look for to demonstrate proficiency. They are neither exhaustive nor proscriptive and should be used as guides for illustrating how your capstone embodies the outcome. All outcomes are weighted equally.

Guidelines for Submission: The submitted executive summary should be comprehensive and adhere to best practices for business writing. Be sure that your writing is concise and appropriate for your target audience. Any quoted, paraphrased, or borrowed information should be cited according to the guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (APA).

OL-421-01: Demonstrate business communication skills and etiquette for constructing personal and professional reflections in a variety of business environments	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to reflect on the importance of utilizing proper business communication skills to be successful in the profession?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to reflect on various business skills that support effective communication?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to integrate prior business knowledge into reflections?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to demonstrate professional etiquette in written communication in various business settings?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to reflect on the importance of establishing and maintaining professional etiquette in the business world?		
OL-421-02: Analyze strategic problem-solving skills for enhancing business success	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the strengths of a company for enhancing business success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the weaknesses of a company for enhancing strategic problem-solving and developing an approach to achieving success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the opportunities of a company for enhancing business success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the threats to a company for enhancing strategic problem-solving and developing an approach to achieving success?		
OL-421-03: Analyze the use of quantitative and qualitative tools for informing strategic decision-making	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze qualitative tools, such as the progress of the product over time, for developing sustainable approaches to success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze qualitative data, such as the analysis of the production process for developing sustainable approaches to success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze market segmentation strategies for informing strategic decision-making and developing an approach to achieving success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze financial components for informing strategic decision-making and developing an approach to achieving success?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze total quality management (TQM) methods in human resources?		
OL-421-04: Assess ethical, legal, and social challenges for suggesting improvement and enhancement strategies	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%

<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to formulate approaches to overcoming ethical challenges of a company?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to formulate approaches to overcoming legal challenges of a company?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to suggest approaches to overcoming social challenges of a company?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to suggest appropriate and feasible improvement plans that consider various ethical, legal, and social challenges?		
OL-421-05: Assess peer-to-peer and peer-to-leader collaboration for improving performance and decision making	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to collaborate with peers for improving performance and establishing effective decision-making in business environments?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to assess how effective collaboration with peers may improve performance and establish sound decision-making in business environments?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to collaborate with leaders for improving performance and establishing sound decision-making?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to assess how collaboration with leaders may improve performance and decision making in various business environments?		
OL-421-06: Analyze global business markets for informing future business expansion choices	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify considerations for expanding the company into the global market?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to consider the advantages and disadvantages of expanding globally?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to draw conclusions from a SWOT analysis when considering expanding into the global market?		
OL-421-07: Analyze entrepreneurial and innovative approaches for solving authentic business problems	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify a top priority of a company and detail an innovative approach for effectively solving various problems?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze innovative approaches in solving business problems of a company?		