

CJ 480 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

As the final stop in your journey toward your Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice, you will complete a capstone that integrates the knowledge and skills you have developed in previous coursework by conducting an agency needs assessment that will ultimately inform the creation of a comprehensive criminal justice findings and recommendations report designed to meet a specific need in your selected agency. You will also reflect on your journey through the criminal justice program and how you plan to position yourself professionally through a third component, which takes the form of a personal and professional reflection.

Consisting of **three components**, the capstone project is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure quality final submissions. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules One, Three, and Six**. The final product will be submitted in **Module Seven**. Use the [Capstone Project Template](#) to help guide the development of each section.

Evaluation of Capstone

This capstone will be assessed somewhat differently than other courses you have taken online at SNHU. There are three major components—(1) agency needs assessment, (2) criminal justice findings and recommendations report, and (3) professional and personal reflection paper. Think of the agency needs assessment and criminal justice findings and recommendations report as two components that will comprise one final assessment. Your personal and professional reflection will be a separate document attached to your final submission as the concluding piece. The components will be submitted at different times during the course; however, they operate together to comprise the whole capstone experience. They are not assessed separately.

This assessment will address the following outcomes:

- Apply various criminological theories of human behavior to the analysis of crime causation, including biological, sociological, and psychological factors and influences
- Apply principles of criminal law to promote ethical policing strategies and protect the rights and freedoms of citizens
- Apply criminological scientific methods of inquiry to arrive at reasoned decisions regarding professional practice, problem-solving, sound operational decisions, and critical evaluation
- Analyze how organizational culture, behavioral theory, planning and community relations impact and inform criminal justice leadership strategies and practice
- Evaluate the impact of emerging technologies on the investigation of crime, as a tool for criminal enterprise, investigation, and on the operations of criminal justice agencies
- Evaluate transnational criminal enterprises and the impact globalization of crime has upon policing in the United States

Prompt

Working individually and with your instructor, you will select, research, and analyze a criminal justice need in a specific agency as the foundation for developing a findings and recommendations report. You will be provided with a list of agencies to contact, and the agency you select will provide you with a need in its organization to research. Please look in the Assignment Guidelines and Rubrics folder to find the list of agencies. If you have an agency with which you work or have a connection, you may use this agency, as long as you have a specific contact within the agency, so it can articulate a need and provide information around the need. This option will require instructor approval. If you have a concentration, you must choose an agency that has a need as closely related to your concentration as possible. In the reflection piece of the project, you will then reflect on how your topic relates to your concentration, if you have one, and their desired career path.

Generally speaking, you will conduct research on your agency's need, which will inform the creation of criminal justice-related recommendations that attempt to address the identified need or problem. These recommendations will also include the development of appropriate tools and supporting materials that would be used to implement the recommendations and measure outcomes.

Your completed capstone project will be a final paper with several sections and follow this outline:

1. Cover Page
2. Table of Contents
3. Abstract
4. Agency Needs Assessment (Capstone Component 1)
5. Findings and Recommendations Report (Capstone Component 2)
6. Appendices
7. References
8. Personal and Professional Reflection (Capstone Component 3)

Capstone Component 1: Agency Needs Assessment

For the first of three components, you will select an agency from a provided list, or use an agency with which you have a connection, and conduct an assessment of the agency's specified need. You will contact the agency for a need or issue it would like addressed, and base your study on this topic. Your assessment should seek to uncover how and why the issue is happening by conducting a review of the literature and collecting and analyzing data on your chosen agency need, while also identifying existing resources designed to meet this need.

You will base your research on a preliminary review of literature or primary-source documents provided by the agency and talking with the agency. Your instructor is available to review sources and identify ways to obtain information and navigate the system. This comprehensive evaluation also presents the opportunity for you to engage with the agency. In your evaluation, you will try to contact appropriate individuals in the agency, either directly or using the internet or telephone, to interview them about the need they have specified. If you are not able to get in contact with an agency, you may use the agency's website and the agency's mission and vision for the foundation of your project.

Your agency needs assessment should include the following sections:

- I. **Overview of Community and Need:** This section should serve as the foundation for presenting your agency needs assessment; it is your opportunity to comprehensively describe the selected agency and its identified need. Overall, it is important to include any information that is pertinent for comprehending the agency and need. It is up to you to establish a robust context for understanding and responding to the agency's need.
- II. **Communication with the Agency:** This section should include a summary of your research in addition to any correspondence between you and your selected agency that has occurred up to this point in the term. This will include the agency's description of its need and why it is a need, as well as the research you conducted with the agency to obtain additional information about the need, such as why the need is present and what resources were previously used to attempt to address the need. While conducting interviews with the agency, use the [interview consent form](#) provided in the course materials. Remember: If you are not able to get in contact with an agency, you may use the agency's website and the agency's mission and vision for the foundation of your project.
- III. **Gathering Community Information (Methodology):** Your methodology for this project is a brief systematic literature review. In this section, discuss how you collected your information and provide justification for your chosen method(s). Describe step-by-step for the reader how you conducted your brief systematic literature review so that the reader could follow your methods if they wanted to replicate the study.
- IV. **Literature Review:** Using primary and secondary sources, provide a brief review of the literature and an evaluative review of the topic. What does the literature say about the topic, and how will you utilize this information? Through a review of the literature, your evaluation should include but not be limited to the relationship of the following to your topic:
 - A. The application of criminological theories
 - B. Ethical impact
 - C. The impact of the organizational culture
 - D. The impact of technologies
 - E. Previously attempted interventions in other agencies around this issue and their success (or lack thereof)
- V. **Need Analysis:** This section should include your analysis of the data you gathered on the agency need. This will provide your conclusions drawn from the raw data you described in the preceding section. Referring to your assessment of the agency and comprehensive analysis and evaluation of the problem, address the following:
 - What is the magnitude of the problem in the agency?
 - What resources and interventions currently exist in the agency?
 - Provide a description of the impact the current resources and interventions are having on the agency. Are they effective? Why or why not?
 - What obstacles exist in the agency that prevent impacting or addressing the problem?

Citations/Formatting:

Your agency needs assessment should be 5–8 pages in length and should include the necessary elements that one would find in a professional needs assessment. The information should be cited according to the rules of the latest publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). You may include illustrations, photographs, graphs and charts, and other nontextual materials as needed to support the needs assessment. These can be placed in an appendix at the end of the final paper, or if appropriate, incorporated in the body of your paper.

Capstone Component 2: Criminal Justice Findings and Recommendations Report

Using your assessment of your chosen agency's need, you will develop recommendations for addressing the need. The proposal should have the following elements:

- I. **Statement of Need:** This section serves as a summary of the agency needs assessment you created. This is where you should highlight the problem by describing key findings from the review of the literature, presenting a review of the data you gathered in the agency needs assessment and highlighting the needs analysis section.
- II. **Program Recommendations:** In this section, you will describe your overall evidence-based recommendations that adhere to ethical standards, also describing how and why these recommendations will make a positive difference in the agency, and how you considered the impact of globalization when making recommendations for addressing the agency need. Further, consider how technology may play a role in implementing your recommendations.
- III. **Goals and Objectives:** This section is an opportunity for you to offer a comprehensive description of what your recommendations aim to do and how they will address the agency need. Define potential measurable improvements in organizational culture and community relations.
- IV. **Staffing/Administration/Resource Needs:** This section should briefly cover the resources necessary to implement your recommendations, such as staffing and overall budget needs. It should include a short description of the number of staff members needed and their qualifications.
- V. **Evaluation Plan:** This section is a description of how the agency will know the recommendations are successful in meeting your established goals. What methods will be used to evaluate success? What types of measures will be used? Who will do the measurement? What data will need to be collected? What resources will be needed to collect the data?

Citations/Formatting:

Your program proposal should also be 5–8 pages in length and include the necessary elements that one would find in a professional program proposal. The information should be cited according to the rules of the latest publication manual of the American Psychological Association (APA). This report should be submitted in a professional and visually pleasing format. Consider the use of images, tables, charts, and other non-textual materials as needed. These can be placed as an appendix at the end of the final paper, or if appropriate, incorporated in the body of your paper.

Capstone Component 3: Personal and Professional Reflection

For the final component of this capstone, you have the opportunity to discuss your thoughts on the process, outcomes of this project, and your overall criminal justice degree journey and experiences. You will also speak more specifically about how the project relates to your concentration, if you have one, and desired career path. Writing reflectively allows you to think deeply and consciously about your experiences. Your ability to self-assess specific areas that are of particular importance to you and to articulate your goals and plans is invaluable to successful practice in the field of criminal justice.

You should envision this component as a personal reflection on the capstone and your experience in the criminal justice 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 here at SNHU, you might discuss where you started, where you are now, 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 may include:

- Overall, what was your capstone experience like?
- 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? If you have a concentration, specifically talk about the connections between the capstone and concentration.
- How will you apply what you have learned to your future academic and/or professional life?

How will you apply what you have learned to a global view? For instance, would transnational crime impact your role as a criminal justice professional?

Citations/Formatting

Your completed reflection must be a 2- to 3-page Microsoft Word document with double spacing, 12-point Times New Roman font, one-inch margins, and at least three sources cited in APA format.

Milestones

Milestone One: Agency Selection and Issue Statement

In **Module One**, you will select an agency from the list provided or an agency approved by the instructor for the recommendation report due in Module Seven. You will also submit an issue statement describing the issue with that particular agency. In this submission, you should also describe the community's demographics. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Agency Needs Assessment

In **Module Three**, you will submit a literature review that will include a brief synopsis of references and resources that will be used for the Recommendation Report. You will also submit an outline that will list major points to be addressed in the recommendation report. You should use both primary and secondary

sources, evaluate how these sources relate to your issue, develop criminological theories, discuss any ethical impact, describe any technological impact, and provide a review of the literature on the issue. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Findings and Recommendations Report

In **Module Six**, you will submit a findings and recommendations report developed from the literature review and outline you submitted in Milestone Two. This report should summarize the issue that affects the community; describe key issues from the literature review; develop goals; identify recommendations; and identify methods of success and identify strategies to be used by the agency. **This milestone will be graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Capstone Project

In **Module Seven**, you will submit your final capstone project. It should be a complete, polished artifact containing **all** of the critical elements of the final product and both capstone components. It should reflect the incorporation of feedback gained throughout the course. **This submission will be reviewed using the Final Project Rubric.**

Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Agency Selection and Issue Statement	One	Milestone One Rubric
Two	Literature Review and Outline & Reference List	Three	Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Findings and Recommendation Report	Six	Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Project Submission: Capstone Project	Seven	Final Project Rubric; the three capstone components will be reviewed simultaneously with this rubric

Final Project Rubric

This rubric will be applied to all three 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 outcomes.

CJ-480-01: Apply various criminological theories of human behavior to the analysis of crime causation, including biological, sociological, and psychological factors and influences	In Process 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to integrate theory of human behavior in the analysis of a community issue?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to evaluate the impact of human behavior on an identified problem?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student’s ability to understand potential biological, sociological, or psychological factors that impact the issue?		
CJ-480-02: Apply principles of criminal law to promote ethical policing strategies and protect the rights and	In Process	Not Proficient

freedoms of citizens	100%	0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to anticipate ethical dilemmas that could arise in addressing a community need?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to evaluate laws or regulations for their impact on a specific issue?		
CJ-480-03: Apply criminological scientific methods of inquiry to arrive at reasoned decisions regarding professional practice, problem-solving, sound operational decisions, and critical evaluation	In Process 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to apply scientific methods of inquiry to their decision-making process?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to utilize appropriate methodology for collecting data?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to critically evaluate an agency's need utilizing the scientific method?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to professionally communicate with stakeholders for the purposes of gathering information?		
CJ-480-04: Analyze how organizational culture, behavioral theory, planning and community relations impact and inform criminal justice leadership strategies and practice	In Process 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the impact of organizational culture and behavior when addressing a community issue?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to evaluate how steps taken by an agency to address a community issue impact relations with that community?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify appropriate leadership strategies for addressing a community issue?		
CJ-480-05: Evaluate the impact of emerging technologies on the investigation of crime, as a tool for criminal enterprise, investigation, and on the operations of criminal justice agencies	In Process 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to identify technologies that could be used in addressing a community issue?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to assess the impact of technologies on a community issue?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to evaluate the role of technology for the effective implementation of recommendations that address a community issue?		
CJ-480-06: Evaluate transnational criminal enterprises and the impact globalization of crime has upon policing in the United States	In Process 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to consider the impact of globalization when addressing a community issue?		
Does the capstone demonstrate the student's ability to analyze the relationship between community and national or international issues?		