

MBA Capstone Project Description

Throughout your MBA program, you have worked to develop as a business professional and prepare to meet future challenges as a business leader. Your program culminates in the capstone project, which forms the primary focus of MBA-FPX5910, the final course you will take in the program. The capstone project is intended to provide you the opportunity to demonstrate your MBA program outcomes by:

- Planning and executing the strategic and tactical elements of a comprehensive project.
- Integrating and demonstrating the business leadership skills and techniques you have learned throughout the MBA program.
- Communicating your analysis and recommendations for a real organization both in written form and in a formal presentation.
- Completing your MBA program with an experience that reinforces and integrates what you have learned throughout your MBA program.

The following information outlines the requirements and work associated with the capstone project for MBA-FPX5910.

Capstone Project Examples

You have a wide variety of choice when it comes to choosing a capstone project that is personally interesting and rewarding to you. It is your responsibility to propose a capstone topic and scope that will allow you to demonstrate all of the MBA program outcomes.

Examples of project types that might be proposed to meet these requirements include, but are not limited to:

- A *strategic plan* developed for an organization to use that helps them solve a problem or take advantage of an opportunity.
- A *strategic analysis* conducted on a selected part or area of an organization.
- A *case study* developed on a selected part of or situation within an organization.
- An *intervention* developed to address an organizational issue; for example, a workshop or training activity. The intervention should be broad-based enough to demonstrate the program-level outcomes.
- A *consulting report* developed to analyze a problematic issue within an organization; the issue and analysis should be broad-based enough to demonstrate program-level outcomes.

You may propose other project types for the capstone project so long as you are able to identify how the proposed project satisfies the requirement of demonstrating the program-level outcomes. When choosing your project type and/or topic, keep in mind that it must result in recommendations, next steps, or some other type of actionable, evidence-based takeaways for your intended audience, user, or subject of the project.

Capstone Project Selection and Proposal Guidelines

The organization must be real, not fictitious. This may be an organization to which you have direct access for data gathering or one for which you will gather data via published sources. In either case, it must be an organization for which you can gather the data needed to complete the project. If need be, you may be allowed to use a disguised name for the organization in the project report, but you must disclose to faculty what actual organization is being used as the setting for the project.

There are certain organizations that we want you to avoid using for your capstone. These organizations have been overly covered in the various business courses and might not be “fresh” enough for you to showcase your MBA outcomes. For that reason, we encourage you to select more low-profile organizations, or ones you can easily access for researching and analyzing. Do **not** select these organizations for your capstone project:

- Proctor & Gamble.
- Johnson & Johnson.
- Harley-Davidson Motor Company.
- PepsiCo.
- The Coca-Cola Company.
- Amazon.com.
- Apple Inc.
- Starbucks Coffee Company.
- Toyota Motor Corporation.
- Walmart.
- Google.
- Kellogg’s.
- Target Corporation.
- McDonald’s Corp.
- Burger King.
- Ford Motor Company.

When proposing a capstone project, you will be required to briefly identify how the proposed project ensures the demonstration of all seven program outcomes.

The scope of effort required should be such that it is doable in a 15–20 page paper, which is to be submitted in Assessment 4.

Capstone Project Requirements

The capstone course project must demonstrate your achievement of the MBA program outcomes. The following table is taken from the Capstone Project Scoring Guide, at the Proficient level. It outlines the expectations, at a minimum, for demonstrating each program outcome. (For the best grade possible, strive to meet the grading criteria at the Distinguished level.)

MBA Program Outcome	Grading Criteria (at the Proficient Level)
1. Apply foundational knowledge and an understanding of business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines.	Applies foundational knowledge (theories, models, practices) and an understanding of business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines.
2. Integrate information across disciplines and from differing perspectives.	Integrates most relevant supportive and conflicting information (data, insights, best practices) across disciplines from differing primary functional perspectives individually and holistically.
3. Think critically and analytically to provide evidence-based solutions to business challenges and opportunities.	Develops logical, well-supported, solutions based on relevant, sound, logical, and credible evidence (data, insights, analyses, best practices) to solve business challenges and opportunities.
4. Apply innovative, strategic, and sustainable approaches to business practice and planning.	Applies innovative, strategic, and sustainable (long-term) approaches to business practice and planning.
5. Lead and collaborate in virtual, global, and culturally diverse environments.	Applies leadership and collaboration principles and strategies for virtual, global, and culturally diverse environments.
6. Integrate principles of ethics and integrity into business decisions.	Integrates principles of ethics and integrity into business decisions by assessing ethical implications and resolving ethical conflicts and dilemmas.

Capstone Deliverables

You will plan, execute, and deliver your capstone project; it should include the components and requirements listed in this table.

Assessment	Brief Assessment Description	Submission Requirements
Assessment 1: Capstone Project Summary	You will develop a brief summary of your capstone project so that faculty can approve your organization choice and scope and provide appropriate guidance. The project summary will also list out each program outcome and how the topic allows you to demonstrate mastery of each.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double spaced, academic style. • Use at least one resource from the Capella library and one from the <i>Wall Street Journal</i>. • Length is 2–3 pages.

<p>Assessment 2: Capstone Proposal</p>	<p>Once your topic and scope are approved, you will submit a formal proposal that includes a concise analysis of your business topic. You will also explain how you will leverage your leadership strengths assessment results and coaching experience (provided by BetterUp), as well as your knowledge and experience as a leader, to support your capstone work.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single spaced, professional style. • Use at least two resources from the Capella library. • Reference your BetterUp leadership strengths assessment results and coaching experience. • Length is 2–3 pages.
<p>Assessment 3: Annotated Outline</p>	<p>To help you stay on track and receive faculty feedback, you will create an annotated outline of your paper. This document will list all of the major sections and sub-sections of your paper and include some resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Double spaced, academic style. • Use at least four resources from the Capella library, in addition to Internet resources. • Length is 2–5 pages.
<p>Assessment 4: Capstone Project</p>	<p>The final written project report will be a formal document prepared for the key stakeholders of your project. The structure and length of the document will vary according to the type of project being undertaken, but the report is expected to be substantial.</p> <p>In Appendix A, you can view the Capstone Project Scoring Guide. Be sure to review these criteria often throughout your project to ensure you are fulfilling the expectations of the MBA program outcomes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single spaced, professional style. • Use at least six resources from the Capella library, in addition to Internet resources. • Length is 15–20 pages.
<p>Assessment 5: Reflection and Goal Setting</p> <p>(Note: this assessment is not part of the Capstone paper)</p>	<p>This paper will summarize how your strengths—as identified in the BetterUp leadership assessment and improved through your coaching—helped you to create an effective capstone project. Your paper will include a reflection of your growth, how you have applied your strengths, & how you would apply those strengths further to enact the recommendations you made in your Capstone paper.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single spaced, professional style. • Reference your BetterUp strength assessment results and coaching • Length is 2-4 pages

Assessment 6: Capstone Presentation	This formal oral presentation will be supported by a PowerPoint presentation including slides with notes. You will record the oral presentation and upload it to the courseroom for formal review by faculty. Your presentation should present all facets of the capstone project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation slides with audio recording of you presenting to your audience.• Length is 10–20 slides.• Not to exceed 8 minutes of run time.
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Credible Resources

The majority of your resources should be from credible sources such as peer-reviewed, scholarly journals and articles found in the Capella library. Other resources/databases, also available from the Capella library, are the *Wall Street Journal*, *Harvard Business Review*, Lexis Nexis, IBIS, et cetera. By now you should have solid skills in navigating the Capella library, but just in case you need a refresher, remember that we have a custom library guide, [Research Guide – MBA](#), which is an excellent place to start your research.

You may also use additional Internet resources (such as blogs, websites, white papers, et cetera), but evaluate and vet these sites/resources diligently to ensure you are using information that is credible and evidence based. Use this information to determine whether or not the resource is credible: [Sources: What Can You Use for Your Research?](#); make sure you explore the source types listed on the left.

Appendix A – Capstone Project Scoring Guide

Criteria	Non-performance	Basic	Proficient	Distinguished
Apply foundational knowledge and an understanding of business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines.	References but does not apply fundamental, practical foundational knowledge (theories, models, practices) and a functional understanding of business systems, processes, and technology.	Applies fundamental, practical foundational knowledge (theories, models, practices) and a functional understanding of a limited set of business systems, processes, and technology within but not across core disciplines.	Applies foundational knowledge (theories, models, practices) and an understanding of business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines.	Applies a balance of theoretical and practical foundational knowledge (theories, models, practices) and an in-depth understanding of a full range of business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines. Justifies approach to integrating foundational knowledge, business systems, processes, and technology within and across core disciplines.
Integrate most relevant supportive and conflicting information (data, insights, best practices) across disciplines from differing primary functional perspectives individually and holistically.	Analyzes information from a singular discipline or perspective or poorly analyzes information across disciplines from few differing primary functional perspectives.	Analyzes but does not integrate limited information (data, insights, best practices) across disciplines from few differing primary functional perspectives individually but not holistically.	Integrates most relevant supportive and conflicting information (data, insights, best practices) across disciplines from differing primary functional perspectives individually and holistically.	Evaluates supportive and conflicting information (data, insights, best practices), integrating insights across disciplines from multiple diverse functional and strategic perspectives individually and holistically.
Develop logical, well-supported solutions based on relevant, sound, logical, and credible evidence (data, insights, analyses, best practices) to solve business challenges and opportunities.	Develops unsupported (that is, emotional testimonials, anecdotes, or lack of evidence) solutions and solutions that are not logically connected to business challenges and opportunities.	Develops unsupported (that is, emotional testimonials, anecdotes, or lack of evidence) solutions or solutions that are not logically connected to business challenges and opportunities.	Develops logical, well-supported solutions based on relevant, sound, logical, and credible evidence (that is, data, insights, analyses, or best practices) to solve business challenges and opportunities.	Develops logical, well-supported solutions based on relevant, sound, logical, and credible evidence (that is, data, insights, analyses, or best practices) to systematically solve business challenges and opportunities relevant to all applicable stakeholders and cross-functional departments.
Apply innovative, strategic, and sustainable (long-term) approaches to business practice and planning.	Does not apply or poorly applies elements of innovative, strategic, and sustainable approaches to business practice and planning.	Applies some elements of innovative, strategic, and sustainable approaches to business practice and planning.	Applies innovative, strategic, and sustainable approaches to business practice and planning.	Integrates and justifies innovative, strategic, and sustainable approaches to business practice and planning that appropriately challenge the status quo while recognizing change management implications.
Apply leadership and collaboration principles and strategies for virtual, global, and culturally diverse environments.	Does not describe or poorly describes leadership or collaboration strategies.	Describes leadership and collaboration principles and strategies that may or may not be appropriate to virtual,	Applies leadership and collaboration principles and strategies for virtual, global, and culturally diverse environments.	Assesses leadership and collaboration principles, strategies, and opportunities in virtual, global, and culturally

		global, and culturally diverse environments.		diverse environments and integrates flexible perspectives and collaborative approaches in business.
Integrate principles of ethics and integrity into business decisions by assessing ethical implications and resolving ethical conflicts and dilemmas.	Does not assess or poorly assesses principles of ethics and integrity.	Assesses principles of ethics and integrity by analyzing ethical implications but may overlook important ethical considerations.	Integrates principles of ethics and integrity into business decisions by assessing ethical implications and resolving ethical conflicts and dilemmas.	Integrates principles of ethics and integrity into business decisions by assessing ethical implications, resolving ethical conflicts and dilemmas, and making right and just decisions for the organization and the larger business community.
Write coherently to support a central idea with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics as expected of a business professional.	Does not write coherently nor use grammar and mechanics as expected of a business professional; writing has major errors.	Writes somewhat coherently to support ideas, but writing has some grammar, mechanics, or other errors that detract from credibility as a business professional.	Writes coherently with minimal or minor errors to support a central idea with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics as expected of a business professional.	Writes coherently to support a central idea with correct grammar, usage, and mechanics as expected of a business professional; writing is free from errors and formatted appropriately for the purpose or audience.