Capstone and Professional Paper

Spring 2024

Capstone vs. Professional Paper

MDP, MPA, & MURP students must complete the Capstone Workshop as part of their degree.

MPP, MHR, & MS-STEP students have the option to choose the Capstone Workshop or an Individual Paper.

Capstone vs. Professional Paper, cont'd

Most students complete their capstone in the spring semester when there is the largest variety of sections and projects. There is one section of capstone offered in summer semester.

Professional papers can be completed in fall, spring or summer semester. During the spring, PA 8082 Professional Paper Writing Seminar is a requirement to support students in completing their paper.

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Professional Paper Timeline

- Over the summer and before October 6, develop your paper topic and confirm your paper supervisor and committee member(s).

- **September 19, 2023**: Professional Paper Information Session

- **October 6, 2023**: Paper topic approval form is due

  – [MPP/MHR/MS-STEP Professional Paper Topic Approval Form](#)

- **November 14, 2023**: Spring semester registration begins.

  – Register for PA 8082 Professional Paper Writing Seminar.

  – Scheduled on Wednesdays from 8:15-11:00 am (spring 2024).

Questions about Professional Paper?

The information covered here and additional details are available on the Humphrey [Individual Professional Paper Options](#) web page.

Your DGS or degree program coordinator are good resources as well. Deborah Levison (dlevison@umn.edu) can answer questions about the Professional Paper Writing Seminar (PA 8082).

Spring 2024 capstone sections

- **Development Practice** (MDP 5200) with Dave Wilsey
- **Global Policy** with Eric Schwartz
- **Human Rights** with Amelia Shindelar
- **Leadership and Management** with Tia Sherèe Gaynor
- **Science, Technology, and Environmental Policy** with Steve Kelley
- **Social Policy,** instructor TBD
- **Section Name TBD** with Nichola Lowe
- **Urban and Regional Planning** with Peter Brown

Capstone Timeline

- Over the summer and before August 15, there is the OPTION to initiate your own capstone by partnering with an organization and creating your own project.

- If you don't want to create your own capstone project, there will be many options organized by the capstone faculty and introduced at the September Capstone Project Session.

- **August 15, 2023**: Deadline for the [Student-Initiated Capstone Feedback Form](#)

  - This deadline is only for students who want to create their own project.

  - The feedback form will gather information on the proposed project, allow for feedback for development of the project, and assist with the capstone being paired with a capstone faculty sponsor. A student-initiated capstone MUST be placed within a capstone section with the agreement of that faculty member.

Capstone Timeline, cont'd

- **September 22, 2023**: Capstone Project Session

  – The spring 2024 capstone projects & partners will be announced in this session.

- **October 6, 2023**: Deadline to submit the Capstone Project Ranking Form

  – This form allows you to rank your top 3 preferred capstone projects for spring 2024.

- **October 27, 2023**: Announcement of the spring capstone teams.

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Capstone Timeline, cont'd 2

- **October 30, 2023**: Last day to register for fall PA 5080/MDP 5100.

  – This course is a requirement to complete a spring 2024 capstone.

- **November 3, 2023**: PA 5080/MDP 5100 Capstone Prep Workshop

  – This is the first synchronous class session to kick off team activities.

  – There will be ongoing asynchronous work through the end of the semester.

- **November 14, 2023**: Spring 2024 registration begins

  – Register for your assigned PA 8081/MDP 5200 capstone section.

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Questions about Capstone?

There is a [capstone FAQ](#) and [capstone timeline](#) available on the Humphrey website with this information and additional details.

Your degree program coordinator is a good resource as well.

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Recap

To do over the summer:

1. If you have the option, decide between capstone or professional paper.

2. For professional paper, start developing your paper topic and confirm your paper supervisor and committee member(s).

3. For capstone, start developing your student-initiated project **OR** wait until faculty-organized projects are announced on September 22, 2023.

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