CAPSTONE PROJECT ADVISOR INFORMATION SHEET | APRIL 2016

Thank you so much for your interest in or participation as a student's Advisor in the Capstone Scholarship and Discovery course (CSD)! Your role is imperative in guiding students through this Project.

The Capstone Scholarship and Discovery (CSD) course represents the key principles of the University of Massachusetts Medical School (UMMS) Learner-centered Integrated Curriculum (LInC). It is a four-year longitudinal curricular experience that is a graduation requirement for all classes beginning with students entering in 2012. Through this course, each student will complete an individualized scholarly project that puts into practice one or more of the UMMS core competencies (Physician as Professional, Scientist, Communicator, Clinical Problem Solver, Advocate, and Person), allowing students to build on a personal passion as it relates to medicine. Students earn four credits upon completion of the CSD course. The CSD course is required for graduation; "credit" or "no credit" is assigned for the course. Students must remediate any non-credit grade prior to graduation.

A primary goal of the CSD course is to give students the opportunity to define and complete a mentored scholarly project about which *the student* is passionate, while completing other required courses. Students participate in the course during their four years of medical education, with proscribed steps in place to ensure successful completion.

This document is designed to consolidate information regarding the course and provide you with key points. More complete, detailed information is available in the [Capstone Course manual](#). Information is also available on the [Capstone Course website](#).

OVERVIEW
- The Capstone Scholarship and Discovery Course is overseen by the CSD Leadership Team Rachel Gerstein PhD, Steven Hatch MD MS, and Carolina Ionete MD PhD, along with Program Manager, Colleen Burnham, MBA
- The Capstone Faculty Committee (CFC) is the faculty and student advisory group for the Capstone course and has members from varied departments. Melissa Fischer MD MEd, serves as the interim CFC Chair
- Students begin Project work in the first year by considering topics, and then continue through multiple stages of project determination and Advisor selection, culminating in the Project Report and Presentation in spring of the AS (4th) year
- The longitudinal design of the course requires some form of Capstone effort across all 4 years. That effort may range from literature review to discussions with experts in their topic area to major project work
- Examples of when project work may be done include:
    - FOM1 (1st year): unscheduled time, the summer between 1st (FOM1) and 2nd (FOM2) year, interest group, optional enrichment elective or learning communities activities, new or ongoing research, international experiences, or volunteer time
    - FOM2 (2nd year): Population Health Clerkship, and other opportunities above
    - CCE (3rd year): Flexible Clinical Experience (FCE), or opportunities above
    - AS (4th year): Related electives, Capstone month (scheduled May – January offers dedicated time to complete the CSP, predominantly for report writing and compiling the final presentation)
- Students submit periodic, required reports throughout to assist them in task and time management. Some reports include drafts of final project work. All work is currently submitted online.

    - FOM1 Spring – Topic Selection

    - FOM2 Fall – Progress Report
    - FOM2 Winter – Advisor Selection
    - FOM2 Spring – Capstone Project Proposal (first of all remaining reports that requires Advisor review)

    - CCE Fall – Progress Report, with draft Introduction section
    - CCE Spring – Progress Report, with draft Methods section

    - AS Fall – final Project Report if AS Capstone completed by Aug 31, OR Fall Progress Report with draft Results section
    - AS [variable] – final Project Report, deliverables
    - AS Spring – Presentation, Reflection paper

- All reports throughout the 4 years are submitted to CSD and reviewed by CSD leadership; the Capstone Faculty Committee reviews Project Proposals and Project Reports as well as any particularly concerning reports. Reports are reviewed to ensure students are successful in their work and meeting Capstone requirements
- As noted, students submit the first Capstone Report, *Topic Selection*, in the Spring of FOM1 and a *Progress Report* in the Fall of FOM2. These 1st two Reports are reviewed by LC Mentors before submission

CAPSTONE PROJECT ADVISORS – ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Students engage a Capstone Project Advisor for their Project in the late fall of the FOM2 year. The Advisor provides project management, a role previously filled by LC Mentors.
- Advisors may be from any professional discipline and do not need to be faculty or located at UMMS. Residents or Fellows may serve as advisors with the consent of their supervising program director if they are expected to remain in that program through the duration of the student's Capstone work.
- It is recommended that Advisors accept only one student, or one student group, from each class year cohort.
- Students are the primary drivers of their project and work, utilizing Advisor assistance in finding resources, time management, right-sizing their projects, and reviewing and providing feedback on all written materials.
- The Advisor may need to help the student narrow a project to the appropriate scope of work by helping them right-size expectations. For comparison, a Capstone project should be less work across four years than a Senior Scholars Project, which is allotted 2-3 months.
  - Acceptance into the Senior Scholars Program fulfills the Capstone requirement, if a student wishes to complete a larger project. *Of note*: Students must fulfill Capstone requirements and timelines until they have been formally accepted into the Senior Scholars Program.
- Advisors are encouraged to schedule regular meeting or check-in times, and may be otherwise engaged by students as needed
- Capstone Projects requiring IRB approval should have appropriate oversight by Advisors and may require an additional time commitment
- Students submit the **Capstone Project Proposal** in early spring of FOM2
  - The Proposal is a major outline of the Project including Goals, Objectives, Methods, anticipated Results and expected Deliverables, as well as providing information regarding the need for IRB, IACUC, or SAS review[1]
- Along with the CSD team, the Capstone Faculty Committee reviews all Capstone Project Proposals to determine that they meet the Capstone Course requirements
- Beginning with the Capstone Project Proposal and through to the Capstone Scholarly Project (CSP) Presentations, **all written work is sent to Advisors for review and feedback, and designated by Advisors as "meets expectations",** *prior to* **submission.** If Advisors are not able to review before the due date, students are still required to submit when due. In these cases, review and feedback should occur after submission. Recommended timelines for allowing ample time for your review will be suggested to students; however, Advisors should plan to discuss a timeline around this and all other reports so that there is time for review and feedback while accounting for time either you or the student will not be available (conference travel, holidays, etc)
- CCE Year Progress Reports require general information and updates on how students' Projects are progressing. In addition, students will utilize these submissions to include polished drafts of various sections of their final scholarly Project Reports. The CCE Fall Progress Report includes a draft Introduction section; the Spring Progress Report includes a draft Methods section, the AS Fall Progress Report (when required) includes a draft Results section.
- In the AS year, students may complete the AS Capstone month from May – January. It is anticipated that most students will take the AS Capstone month during November, December and January. Students are allowed to schedule interviews during this time as it is possible to work on Project write-up and submission while off-campus
- Students submit the final Capstone Project Report and associated deliverables (products) no later than January of the AS year (due dates align to AS elective months)

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[1] Institutional Review Board (IRB); Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC); Students as Study Subjects (SAS)

- o The Capstone Project Report is the final, complete and detailed description of their Project, written in the format of a scholarly paper. Publication is not required, although students may do so
- Students who do not complete the AS Capstone month by end of August are required to submit the AS Fall Progress Report, including a draft Results section, in addition to the final Project report due no later than January 31 of the AS year.
- AS year, March: students present their Capstone Scholarly Projects at the Capstone Presentation Forum; the Guided Reflection is due at this time.
- Remediation (if required) must occur no later than April of the AS year

Multiple resources are available such as the Capstone Manual, BBL links and video instruction, Mentors and Advisors, House Librarians and the Library website, Forums and Workshops, CFC members and CSD leaders to assist students (and all associated) with information about Capstone and its requirements, selecting topics, finding advisors, and writing and presentation skills.

Please contact us at any time: CSD@umassmed.edu

The Capstone Team
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Rachel Gerstein PhD | CSD Course Co-Leader | Blackstone & Tatnuck (Fan)
Steven Hatch MD MS | CSD Course Co-Leader | Burncoat & Tatnuck (Gibson)
Carolina Ionete MD PhD | CSD Course Co-Leader | Quinsigamond & Tatnuck (Halpin)
Colleen Burnham MBA | Program Manager | Kelley & Tatnuck (Bennet, MacGinnis)

Acronyms

BBL – Blackboard Learn
CSD - Capstone Scholarship and Discovery course
CSP – Capstone Scholarly Project
CFC – Capstone Faculty Committee

Student years:
FOM 1 & 2 (1st and 2nd year) – Foundations of Medicine
CCE (3rd year) – Core Clinical Experiences
AS (4th year) – Advanced Studies

If interested in advising multiple students from one class cohort, please complete the Advisor Exception Request Form