Expectations for Capstone Faculty

Capstone courses use community service as a vehicle for students to reach their academic goals by integrating course objectives with community needs. To facilitate this connection, faculty should provide structured opportunities for students to reflect critically on their service experience through writing, reading, group discussion, and classroom activities. The following policies are in place to ensure a successful Capstone experience for the students, community partner, and the instructor.

- All instructors are required to receive a Capstone orientation from the faculty development coordinator before teaching his/her first course. In addition, Capstone instructors are encouraged to request assistance from the faculty development coordinator whenever issues of teaching and learning arise in the course (including but not limited to issues of classroom management, assessment, class discussions, use of class time, legal/liability issues, and issues of student conduct).

- Faculty will provide students with a course syllabus at the initial meeting of the course. This syllabus shall outline course learning outcomes, a course schedule, information regarding the community partnership (partner contact info, project expectations, approximate hours students should expect to serve in the community, etc.) Grading criteria shall be explicitly stated.

- Every Capstone syllabus should include specific objectives for improvement in students’ abilities to (1) communicate effectively, (2) think and inquire critically, (3) respect the diversity of human experiences, and (4) act in socially and ethically responsible ways. These are the four University Studies (UNST) Goals.

- All Capstone courses will have established meeting times (meeting frequency and length vary between Capstones) so that students may build community, explore course content, and address any challenges, questions or concerns related to the community project.

- Capstone faculty are expected to be in attendance at each scheduled class meeting. In the event that a faculty member needs to miss a class she or he should whenever possible make arrangements for a suitable substitute instructor for the missed class. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance where a faculty member must miss a class, s/he is required to contact the front desk person in the Office of University Studies at (503) 725-5890.

- Faculty will guide students in applying their disciplinary expertise to the community project, to understand how other disciplinary perspectives relate to the project, and to create a final product that reflects the contributions of various disciplinary perspectives.

- Faculty will provide feedback to Capstone students on all course assignments and a periodic assessment of student progress throughout the course.

- Faculty will award grades at the end of each quarter that the Capstone course is in session. In the case of a multi-term Capstone, an “IP” (In-Progress) can be awarded until the final grade is submitted. Grades are entered online using the information system. For more information on PSU grading policies and instructions on how to use online grading and online grade change go to: [http://www.pdx.edu/registration/online_grading.html](http://www.pdx.edu/registration/online_grading.html).

- Capstone faculty are required to participate in UNST assessment processes. Capstone courses are evaluated on an ongoing basis. This includes distributing and returning course evaluations at the end of each term, participating in Small Group Instructional Diagnostic Assessments as requested, and participating in work samples assessments as requested (typically every other year). The work sample assessment does require a short essay written by the faculty explaining how s/he addressed one of the UNST goals being assessed that year.

- In order to provide the best advising material for students Capstone faculty are required to update their Capstone course e-portfolio site located at [http://capstone.unst.pdx.edu](http://capstone.unst.pdx.edu). For more information on how to update sites please contact Randi Harris at rap@pdx.edu. The site also informs external constituencies about our program.