Syllabus for SMGT 495 Sustainable Management Capstone

NOTE: This syllabus document contains the basic information about this course. The most current syllabus is available in the course.

Course Description

The Capstone course is based on a student's selection of a sustainable management issue that is researched using a triple bottom line approach to develop a business plan, analyze a specific situation, or create an innovative solution to an on-going problem.

Prerequisite(s)

Passing SMGT 494 quiz with an 80% or higher grade (mandatory), **senior standing and/or SMGT Student Success Coach/Academic Director permission**. SMGT 494 is a no-credit course that students are automatically enrolled in once they have completed 10 courses.

Course Outcomes

Upon completing this course, you will be able to do the following:

1. Analyze and develop an understanding of the triple bottom line impacts associated with your specific project topic.
2. Identify and interview stakeholders and key individuals related to the selected project topic.
3. Outline and discuss sustainable options that can be implemented within your project.
4. Recommend actions that include sustainable design and development.
5. Integrate information sources (research, interviews, professional experiences) to provide a comprehensive approach to the selected project topic.
6. Apply appropriate technical skills to problem solutions.
7. Improve research and writing skills in the development of a semester-long project.

Course Requirements/Components

Capstone Project Purpose

The purpose of this course is to assess your ability to synthesize SMGT coursework with professional and personal experiences in the research, development and writing about a sustainability topic. This is done by developing a substantial project in any of the following formats: a client-based project with a client of your choosing, a business plan, research study, white paper, training manual, survey/interview, case study, strategic/long-range planning document, grant proposal, feasibility study, or sustainability campaign design (for marketing). The instructor will assess your ability to:

- develop an appropriate format and research methodology for addressing a specific sustainability issue that the student has selected;
- develop a work plan and process to use throughout the project;
- manage workflow and time throughout the semester to meet project submittal deadlines;
- utilize the knowledge gained from the SMGT program in a real-world application;
- create a scholarly, professional-quality written document.

The Capstone Project Framework lecture in the Lectures module presents the framework for the entire course. Be sure to watch it prior to beginning your project in addition to reading the following outline detailing the development of the project.

Capstone Project Types and Formats

This course centers on a student generated capstone project. The capstone project will involve specific research methods that may include observation of the site in which the project solution will reside (such as in a client-based project); interviews of stakeholders to determine need, scope, and magnitude of issue being researched; research, writing, and incorporation of best sustainability practices/methods for a student's selected topic; and/or designing a project solution for the benefit of identified community stakeholders.

In order for your project topic to be approved, the capstone topic must be of sufficient depth such that a significant well-researched final document can be developed over the course of the semester. The average written document length for a Capstone project is approximately 35-40 pages.

Project formats can include a business plan, white paper, training manual, survey/interviews, case studies, strategic/long-range plan, grant proposal, feasibility study, or campaign design (such as for marketing). If you have any questions about whether your proposed project will meet this requirement, please discuss this with the instructor in advance of preparing your proposal.

Project Format Options

Client-Based Project

Students may opt to create a product for a client (either for wages or unpaid). Creating a client-based project may take up to six weeks to arrange. The client must be notified that written work associated with the project is submitted to the course instructor for evaluation and credit every two weeks throughout the semester. Client based projects require a commitment of time and a personal contact who will meet with the student over the course of the semester. Students who select this option should have already made contact with the client prior to beginning SMGT 495 and have initiated discussions regarding the potential end product per the instructions given in the SMGT 494 Capstone Orientation.

Note: Since the SMGT program often refers to capstone projects during recruiting and public relations efforts, clients should be willing to be identified as having supported a student in

SMGT 495. If a client is opposed to this, please let the instructor know. A student can still work for such a client, but the SMGT program administrators need to be aware of this so as not to publicly use client information.

Business Plan

Students may opt to write a business plan for a sustainable business they would like to start. If this option is selected, the Business Plan Template *must* be used.

Business plan submissions follow this schedule:

- Submission 1: Company Description (Week 4)
- Submission 2: Products and Services (Week 6)
- Submission 3: Marketing Plan (Week 8)
- Submission 4: Operational Plan and Management and Organization (Week 10)
- Submission 5: Financial Plan, Start-Up Expenses, and Capitalization (Week 12)

Other Project Formats

As discussed in SMGT 494 Capstone Orientation, students can undertake other types of project formats that include a case study, long-range plan, a feasibility study, or a training manual. Please contact the instructor with any questions regarding formats which may not be described.

Literature Research Guidelines

The research component for the project must include current literature from the past **ten** years to present. Historical documentation may include older literature when developing a timeline for occurrences or events. References that provide scholarly material includes primary literature from journals, review articles from topical journals, book chapter, conference proceedings, books and technical reports.

General Project Outline

A research document generally follows this structure:

- Introduction
- Background information to acquaint readers with the significance of the topic
- Presentation of researched material
- Summary and significance—what's important and why this is relevant to sustainability
- Conclusion
- References/bibliography
- Appendices

Weekly Reports (5 pts/week)

Each week, students will be required to submit a report reviewing their project progress. These reports must be detailed in terms of work accomplished, unresolved issues, and plans for upcoming work. Project time requirements naturally ebb and flow from one week to the next. It is understood that during some weeks, students will undertake minimal writing, while during other weeks, a substantial written portion of the project will be completed. Regardless of the quantity completed, students must submit a report each week.

Written Project Submittals for Review (20 points/submittal)

Students will submit a portion of their project for review every two weeks, beginning in Week 4. These written submittals will be specified and predetermined by the student in the proposal as part of the timeline section. **Project submittals are placed in both the appropriate drop-box and on the discussion board.**

Note on privacy: In some cases, typically client-based projects, a business may request anonymity. If this is the case, the client may request a pseudonym be used rather than the business name or a student may submit their work for instructor-only review. If this is the case, the student must inform the instructor prior to uploading Submittal 1.

The instructor will evaluate, edit, and comment on each written submittal. Edits and corrections noted on project submittals should be addressed as soon as possible so that when the student compiles written work for the draft (Week 14), s/he can minimize the amount of time spent reworking the document at the end of the semester.

Students can choose to follow either MLA or APA formatting and style. Consistency with format and style is required (i.e., do not combine MLA and APA formats). Consistent format includes, but is not limited to, in-text citations, pagination, and works cited.

Written work must be double-spaced within the body of writing and single-spaced in titles, tables and bibliography. Please use a **readable font** such as **12-point** Ariel, Times New Roman or something similar. **One-inch margins** on top, bottom and sides are required and **pagination** follows the citation method used.

Peer Review (up to 30 points)

Project submittals are posted to the discussion board for peer review, feedback, and encouragement. Please note that points are associated with peer feedback. Each comment left can receive up to three points for a thoughtful contribution that assists in project development.   A portion of each student's grade is based on the quantity and quality of the feedback provided over the course of the semester. When developing the project timeline, **students need to build in peer review commentary for at least two other students' work for each project submission.** Peer review should be completed within two weeks after a written submission is turned in. The Peer Review Document Guidelines (see Download) offers ideas and tips for developing peer review skills.

Lectures and Quizzes (10 points/quiz)

The Module 1 lecture discusses the project framework for the Capstone project. There is no quiz associated with this lecture.

There are no written submittals of the project due for review in Weeks 3, 5, 7 and 9. During these weeks, students are required to view a lecture related to the development of their Capstone document and complete a short quiz associated with the lecture. Quiz content is listed below:

- Week 1   Module 1: Capstone Project Framework
- Week 3   Module 2: Institutional Review Board--lecture and quiz
- Week 5   Module 3: Interviewing--lecture and quiz
- Week 7   Module 4: Copyright--lecture and quiz
- Week 9   Module 5: Document Design--lecture and quiz

Interviews (20 pts/interview)

During the semester, students are required to conduct and record **three** interviews with three different individuals who can contribute to the student's research and understanding of their project. **Individuals selected for interviews must have experience or expertise in the project topic.**

An interview can be research oriented or it can be a normal business meeting in which you substantially participate. In the case of a client-based project, students may submit recordings of meetings between themselves and their client. The purpose of the interviews/meetings is to provide the instructor with a means to experience the student functioning as a sustainable management professional.

Prior to undertaking interviews, you must complete the Interviewing Skills lecture and the associated quiz. The lecture will help you prepare for the interview and ensure that the required steps are completed. If you plan on doing interviews early in the semester, view the lecture and take the quiz prior to your first interview.

Guidelines

- The interviews/meetings must be at least 30 minutes and no more than 60 minutes in length.
- Each interview/meeting should be **digitally recorded** and submitted to the appropriate assignment.
- Submitted interviews must be in mp3 format. Interviews should include the name of the person interviewed, their title, their area of expertise, and the interview date.
- Record interviews in a quiet area so that questions and responses are audible.
- Information gained from interviews should be integrated into written work and properly cited.

Note: If you have trouble uploading the recorded file to Canvas, you can also use Google Drive. After uploading the file to Google Drive, please submit a document with the Google file link in the comments. Be sure to set the Google Drive file sharing to "Anyone with the link can view."

Interviews must include the following:

- the name of the person interviewed and her/his title;
- the date of the interview;
- an explanation of why this individual was selected for an interview;

Students will have each person who is interviewed sign the following Informed consent form and follow the procedures outlined therein, depending on whether the person interviewed wishes to remain anonymous or not. All signed consent forms are included in the final documentation for the project.

The interviews will be graded for:

- Professional conduct
- Knowledge (ability to ask project pertinent questions and offer proper responses and follow-up)
- Skill (this is dependent on the interview topics)

COVID Update for Interviews

Interviews have proved challenging as we have moved into many restrictions in terms of social interactions.

While face to face interviews (practicing social distancing) may not be possible or preferred by those with whom you request an interview, options include interviews via Zoom, Webex, GoToMeeting, Google Hangouts Meet, Team Viewer or Adobe Connect, among others. This method of interview is preferred. Another option is a recorded phone interview. Email interviews are not as effective as personal conversation, because of the limited ability to use follow-up questions for clarification or to discover new areas of relevant project research.

All interviews must contain the following information as mentioned previously:

- the name of the person interviewed and her/his title;
- the date of the interview;
- an explanation of why this individual was selected for an interview;

If you are unable to record an interview, please **inform the instructor**, who will discuss with you the submission of a written transcript of the interview.

Transcripts of non-recorded interviews must include the following:

- the name of the person interviewed and her/his title;

- the date of the interview;
- an explanation of why this individual was selected for an interview;
- a list of the questions asked;
- a detailed summary of the responses.

Informed Consent for Interviews

Students will have each person who is interviewed sign the following Informed consent form and follow the procedures outlined therein, depending on whether the person interviewed wishes to remain anonymous or not. All signed consent forms are included in the final documentation for the project.

Document Draft (50 points)

Students are required to submit a draft of their final document during Week 14. This draft document is the compilation of all previous written material, updated and corrected from individual submissions throughout the semester and should integrate interview information into this document. The instructor will review the draft and provide the final feedback of the semester before the student submits the project document in its final form. Feedback, corrections, and necessary changes must be addressed prior to submitting the final written project document in Week 15.

Final Documentation (200 points)

At the end of the semester, students will be asked to document their entire capstone experience. This will include all project work completed since the beginning of the semester, starting with the proposal, the weekly reports, an expanded professional bio, contacts and resources consulted during research (bibliography), and your written document complete with citations and a works cited section. The final documentation also includes a written self-evaluation of your project work and capstone experience as well as an evaluation of the SMGT program and advice to future students, which will be shared with the SMGT program administration and potentially used in presentations regarding the program.

Grading

Final project documentation is evaluated as follows:

Methods	20
Sustainability Knowledge	20
Research Aspects	20
Analysis Skills and Conclusions	20
Contribution or Effectiveness	20
Organization and Structure	10
Formatting/Layout/Design	10

Professional Writing Quality	15
References and Resources Cited	15
Overall	50
Total Possible	**200**

Point totals will be accumulated and the final letter grade is based on the following scale:

A	94 - 100%
A-	89 - 93%
B+	84 - 88%
B	79 - 83%
B-	74 - 78%
C+	69 - 73%
C	64 - 68%
C-	59 - 63%
D+	54 - 58%
D	49 - 53%
D-	44- 48%
F	< 43 %