

BM-MAT Capstone Project

(Revised April 19, 2011)

The *Capstone Project* provides an opportunity for the student to engage in a high level of specialization in the professional area of the student's choice. Capstone projects will be inquiry and practice-centered, and may draw upon philosophy, research, principles of pedagogy, curriculum design, or technology encountered in graduate courses and elsewhere.

Students may identify the topics for their *Capstone Project* during their course work at any point in their graduate music education degree program. Capstone projects often take their inspiration from projects, papers, and experiences related to course work in the degree program. However, to demonstrate the ability for independent work and capacity for self-directed inquiry, capstone projects must demonstrate in what ways the graduate student has researched, developed, extended, or applied ideas and strategies.

Capstone Projects for Music Education are of two types: a scholarly document that describes a research study, or a domain project that situates research into practice. Domain projects may take a variety of final formats. These may be, but are not limited to the production of materials to be used in teaching, exemplification of 'better practices' or alternative formats for presenting scholarly work.

Capstone Projects encourage the application of knowledge gained throughout the MAT program toward teaching and learning settings. Additionally, the *Capstone Project* should demonstrate the depth and extent of knowledge of the student.

A successful *Capstone Project* shall:

- Illuminate and bring new insight to an area of the music education field
- Demonstrate a depth and breadth of understanding, and the application of this understanding to scholarship and/or practice
- Contain a clearly articulated framework, situating the project within established academic practices and/ or ideas
- Offer a research-based element where the student can validate their propositions in the real world.

General Guidelines

In consultation with faculty, students will select a topic and submit a formal proposal to the music education department. Upon acceptance, students may proceed with their *Capstone Project*. Proposals must be submitted to the music education department no later than two weeks into the semester in which the

capstone is to be completed, however it is recommended that the student proposal be approved in the semester before the capstone is to be completed.

To gain proposal approval, students will present an oral presentation of their proposed projects to the music education department. After project approval, students will register for ME 750 *BM/MAT Capstone* (3cr). Students will work with their project advisor for one semester, during which time the project shall be completed. ME 685: *Research in Music Education* is a prerequisite for ME 750 *BM/MAT Capstone*.

Students who require more than one semester to complete their *Capstone Project*, shall register for *ME 650: Thesis* (1-credit) for each semester after ME 750 *BM/MAT Capstone*.

All capstone projects require a substantive final form and will be archived by the music education department upon completion. Capstone projects must be completed by the last day of the semester in which the student is registered.

Proposals

A *Capstone Project Proposal*, 5 to 10 pages long in length, should be delivered to the chair of music department and a second copy provided to the sponsoring faculty member, who will advise the project. Students will also deliver a 10-minute oral presentation of their proposal to the faculty. The proposal should contain the following:

1. *Introduction* – Explains the interest in the topic and situates the project in a scholarly or praxial context.
2. *Goals and Process* - Describes the goals and purpose of the project. This section will detail the activities that will take place during the project, including who will be involved, and the role the MAT student will play.
3. *Final Product and Timeframe* - Outlines the timeline for the project. This section will also detail the final form the project and how it will be presented.
4. *Commitment from a faculty advisor/mentor* - Student will identify faculty advisor/mentor for this project and confirm that there has been a commitment from the faculty member to advise the project. The advisor/mentor need not be the student's academic advisor.

Format of Capstone Projects

A *Capstone Project* may be a scholarly paper **or** a domain project (*choose one*).

1. *Scholarly Paper (minimum 20 pages, maximum 40 pages – excluding bibliography)*

- Written projects should contain a substantial review of pertinent literature. This review should clearly demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the issues.
- Paper should follow publication parameters. This research-based investigation will present the student's original work.
- A final "Implications" section must be included. This section allows the student to position new ideas learned, knowledge gained or data gathered vis-à-vis a projected impact on the music education profession.

2. *Domain Project*

- A domain project may take several forms and often yields the production of materials for teaching or for a variety of applications within the field.
- Each domain project must show: (a) depth and breadth of scholarly understanding, and (b) the application of this understanding to practice.
- A condition of the domain project is that students demonstrate the ability to gather materials, review current literature and to examine sufficient background material to inform the development of original work.
- To this end, the domain projects must include a narrative that describes and reflects upon the process, as well as a literature review sufficient to provide a scholarly contextualization of the project. This narrative should be a minimum of 10 pages, exclusive of materials and references.
- The length of each completed domain project will vary, but a good guideline is between 15 and 40 pages inclusive of sample lesson materials and references. Printed scores of music and copies of materials to be used by the teacher should be included when applicable.