This course supports the assessments for JMT2. The course represents 3 competency units.

Introduction

Defending Your Project
At this point, you should have completed your capstone written project. This series of activities will walk you through what is required of you for the defense of your professional project. Your defense will consist of a formal presentation and answering questions about your capstone. The defense typically takes place via conference call.

What Happens Now?

Once you have successfully completed your capstone written project, your name will be transmitted to a capstone facilitator. This facilitator will contact you to set up a time to discuss the requirements of the capstone project defense. When you talk to your facilitator, you can ask about the presentation length, date, and time. Prior to that phone call, read through this task so you have an idea of what to expect. You may also seek guidance from the capstone community facilitator.

Oral Capstone Defense

Before you work with your Capstone Evaluator to schedule times for a dry run and then to present your oral defense, you are required to have a web camera. Such cameras are usually included in laptop computers, or you may have already purchased one that will suffice. The dry run will determine if there are technical problems. If you do not own a web camera, you can request that a loaner camera be shipped to you by submitting the Capstone Oral Defense Webcam Loan form. For additional support with ordering, please contact the Assessment Delivery Department at assessmentdel@wgu.edu or 1-888-287-0310.

Contact your Capstone Evaluator with available times for your “dry run.” This should take about 20 minutes. At the dry run your evaluator will make sure your equipment is working, conduct a recording of the Introduction, and share with you basic operations of the webinar platform for your actual defense to run smoothly.

At the dry run (or shortly thereafter) you will schedule the full Capstone Oral Defense. You should plan that the session will take from 45 minutes to one hour. It will be conducted as a webinar, using Adobe Connect, so you may consider if there are others who would like to observe the session. For example, your mentor may want to attend; colleagues, or fellow students, may also wish to attend. These individuals will be spectators and are not expected to participate in the defense. Coordinate with your Capstone Evaluator in sending out invitations and setting up the Adobe Connect session. The Capstone Evaluator may want to receive your multimedia presentation in advance to upload it into Adobe, or she or he may simply give you “presentation” rights to run it from your own computer.

Now that you have the multimedia presentation ready, it can guide you in organizing your discussion of the capstone and its presentation. Rehearse the oral defense presentation, and
time it to be less than 30 minutes long. This will allow time for a session introduction by the Capstone Evaluator and for you to respond to questions afterwards. Your Capstone Oral Defense will be recorded, if you agree, to be viewed in the Capstone Archive. So, anticipate that the Capstone Evaluator will begin the session telling you not to mention specific individuals, locations, or organizational names during the defense and will ask your permission for the recording. This “Introduction” needs to be recorded with you present on web camera for identity verification, whether or not you agree to have your Capstone archived.

Being prepared will make the presentation a positive and rewarding experience. You can confidently share all aspects of your project to an appreciative audience. Expect that the Capstone Evaluator will ask questions, but mainly to probe into areas of interest and to help you demonstrate the competencies of your degree program.

**Preparing the Presentation**

Prepare a multimedia presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, Keynote) of talking points about your project (*suggested length of 15–20 slides and approximately 30–45 minutes*) by doing the following:

A. Present an overview of your capstone project.
B. Explain the process you went through to develop your project.
   1. Discuss why you chose your project.
   2. Explain how your project fits in to the existing body of knowledge for your field.
C. Discuss the methods and outcomes of your project by doing the following:
   1. Outline any special strategies or methodologies you used.
   2. Summarize your results and conclusions.
D. Discuss the challenges you faced in completing this project.
   1. Outline any issues or obstacles you encountered.
   2. Explain the strategies you used to address these challenges.
      a. Evaluate the effectiveness of these strategies in allowing you to complete your project.
      b. Predict how you could apply these strategies to other projects you develop.
E. Discuss the weaknesses of your project.
   1. Explain how you identified these weaknesses.
   2. Explain what revisions you could make to the project to address these weaknesses.
F. Discuss the strengths of your project.
   1. Explain how you identified these strengths.
   2. Predict how you could apply these strengths to other projects you develop.
G. Provide recommendations for future study in your field.
H. Discuss how you can apply what you learned from your capstone project in your professional work environment.
I. Complete the capstone release form.

**The Model Capstone Archive**
Western Governors University has established the Capstone Archive for students to examine capstone projects to aid them in preparation of this culminating degree task. WGU has taken great care to ensure that safeguards are in place to secure the academic authenticity and prohibit the exposure of sensitive information within these examples, and you must adhere to WGU’s code of conduct to not copy others’ work. These two Archives will be of most value to you in developing your capstone: the Model Capstone Archive and the Capstone Excellence Archive.

The Model Capstone Archive contains a few solid examples of student work in each of the current capstone models upon which students can pattern their work. Besides final documents, it often contains preliminary exhibits such as project plans, proposals, permission forms, contextual material, and so forth.

The Capstone Excellence Archive contains a growing number of capstones from each College that were selected as exemplars of excellence in various degree areas because they represent top work in their expression of ingenuity, exhibition of mastery, or creation of exceptional value to others. These exemplars only contain final documents, mainly of current capstone models. If you would like to have your capstone selected for this award please speak with your Capstone Course Instructor.