

Evans School of Public Policy and Governance

CAPSTONE PROJECT SEMINAR 2018 (WINTER - SPRING)

PUBPOL 608 G - Syllabus¹

Friday, 11:30 AM – 2:20 PM
MGH 058 (Winter) – **PAR 308 (Spring)**

Instructor: Carlos E. Cuevas, Senior Lecturer/Distinguished Practitioner

Office: 408 Parrington Hall

Office Hours: Thursday 12:30 -2 PM (please email to schedule), or by appointment

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Class site: <https://canvas.uw.edu/courses/1125725>

Course Overview

The core goal of this seminar is to help students complete a research project that satisfies degree project requirements and meets the needs of a client organization, hence preparing the students to conduct such studies in professional practice. In a structured format, the seminar works through the stages of developing and executing such a project, while enabling students to learn from each other, from the research literature, from their interaction with the client, and from the instructor's advice. Students will complete projects that span a variety of topics and methods, in areas that include policy analysis, program evaluation, program design, and program/project management.

Course Structure and Expectations: The two-term seminar will help students design and conduct their research, interpret their findings, and write a final report for their client, as well as prepare other deliverables agreed upon with the client. Class discussions will offer general resources and insights about the research process and help students apply them to their project. The seminar is designed to keep students on pace to complete a high quality final report by the end of the spring term, at which point students are expected to know how to:

- Craft a feasible research question;
- Work with a client to manage and meet expectations about the project;
- Plan the phases of a research project;
- Design all elements of an applied research project, including a literature review, appropriate research methods, data collection, presentation of findings, diagnoses of underlying causes, selection of policy options or

¹ Version as of 22 March 2018. Please be aware that a course syllabus may be modified at the discretion of the instructor.

- alternative treatments, fashion recommendations that respect the client's need to make the final decisions, and evaluate the results in an effective manner;
- Prepare an articulate, convincing written report that clearly explains the completed research, its findings and conclusions, and that meets the client's expectations;
 - Present findings before an audience in a concise and engaging way.

In order to maximize the benefits of the seminar format, we need everyone's full participation. This requires regular attendance and the completion of work by assigned deadlines. By participating in class work, students sharpen their analytic skills and provide reviews of each other's work. Students will be encouraged to prepare project plans that distribute the necessary tasks over the whole study period.

Course Evaluation

Capstone Project Degree Paper: 77 percent

Evaluation of Capstone Project (CP) paper is based on overall quality, analytical rigor, value for the client, and quality of presentation(s). Grade scale: 4.0.

CP Seminar participation: 20 percent. This component includes:

- Intermediate assignments (e.g., letter of agreement, work plan, research question and methodology note, draft outline) of adequate quality and turned in on time.
- Peer contributions to other students' work. Each student will be assigned peer-reviewer responsibilities for two other project team's work. Feedback will be provided in oral or written form throughout the two terms. See APPENDIX for Peer Review Assignments.
- Grade scale for assignments under Seminar participation:
 - 2 points for assignments of satisfactory quality and delivered on time;
 - 1 point for assignments of unsatisfactory quality and/or delivered late, but within 24 hours of the due date/time;
 - 0 points for non-delivery or delivered beyond the 24-hour overdue deadline.
 - For **written peer review assignments**, scale goes up to 3 points for feedback of special quality and value.

Peer evaluation: 3 percent. Students working in teams are expected to contribute equitably to the collective output. They will be asked to complete a confidential individual peer evaluation at the end of the Capstone Seminar, and grades will be adjusted in cases of unbalanced contributions.

Evans School Policy on Academic Integrity, and Community Conversation Norms.

Please note that all students are bound by these policies and norms. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with these (if you are not already familiar), using the following links:

Policy on Academic Integrity: <http://evans.uw.edu/myevans/students/student-handbooks>

Community Conversation Norms: <http://evans.uw.edu/myevans/community-conversation-norms>

Resources

The Evans School has assembled some materials that you may find useful as you develop and undertake your research:

Main CP website: <https://evans.uw.edu/myevans/students/capstone-projects-overview>.

Research writing:

<http://evans.uw.edu/myevans/students/research-writing-and-team-resources>

List of award-winning DPs: <http://evans.uw.edu/myevans/students/student-awards>

Degree Projects archive: <http://evans.washington.edu/students/forms-advising/degreeprojects/archive>

Letter of agreement template and Sample Work Plans:

[http://evans.uw.edu/sites/myevans/students/proposal-presentation 20Samples.docx](http://evans.uw.edu/sites/myevans/students/proposal-presentation%20Samples.docx)

Key PSC dates: <http://evans.washington.edu/research/public-service-clinics/structure>

Human Subjects approval information: <http://evans.uw.edu/myevans/evans-school-student-projects-and-human-subjects-approval> Contact Deborah Fishler at fdeborah@uw.edu, or 206-543-3885.

EPAR resources, including literature review:

<https://evans.uw.edu/policy-impact/epar/resources>

Winter 2018 Schedule

January 7th - Session 1. Introductions, goal-setting

Purpose: understanding the CP Capstone process; Public-service clinic projects; non-PSC projects. Setting goals over two academic terms.

Required readings:

Browse through all, then read in detail at least two of the five Outstanding CP papers in the class site.

Based on the readings, come prepared to discuss:

- What makes a CP paper remarkable, and useful to the client?
- How is the research organized?
- How is a research question clearly articulated?
- How is methodology consistent with the question(s) being addressed?
- How does the paper “wrap up” in the conclusions section – i.e., goes back to the research question and explains how the research addressed it?

January 12th. Session 2

Assignment 1(draft), due in class site. Clearly identify the file names using your last name(s), please.

- Draft research question(s).
- Draft work plan (excel or other).
- Draft Letter of Agreement with client.

Literature review. 1:00 – 2:20 PM, Venue TBD

- **Session with UW Research Librarian, Emily Keller.** Purpose: organizing literature review, understanding how it may inform the research, and help define methodology and paper organization.

January 19th - Session 3.

Research questions, work plan. Purpose: formulating research questions, planning the work to address it.

Class will go around the draft research questions and work plan for each project, and report on status of letter of agreement preparation.

January 22nd, Assignment 2 (draft), due in class site Page for peer review (note MONDAY due date)

- One-page memo including **final research question(s)**, outlining and justifying **research design and methods**.

January 26th - Session 4. Research strategy and methods

Purpose: refining research strategy and methods. Class will work in groups with peer feedback providers.

Required reading: one-page memos submitted by assigned authors. Come prepared to discuss and provide constructive critique. Pay attention to feasibility given timelines, adequacy of methods to research questions, possible improvements.

Assignment 1 (final), due in class site Page

- Final work plan.
- Final, signed, Letter of Agreement.

February 2nd - Session 5. Interviews and Survey Design – Guest Lecture (TBC)

Assignment 2 (revised), due in class site Page:

- One-page memo, Final methodology design, and its rationale (consistency with research questions, feasibility).
- Annex with draft data collection instruments (surveys, interviews), as relevant. May use extra page for these.

February 9th - Session 6. Progress report (TBC)

Purpose: Update on research progress by all teams; presentations and class discussion.

Required reading: one-page memos on methodology submitted by assigned authors. Come prepared to discuss and provide constructive critique.

Assignment 3, due in class site Page

- One-page summary of Conclusions of Literature Review
- Outline of background chapter(s) in CP paper.

February 16th. Session 7

Purpose: peer exchange on memos submitted on February 2nd and February 9th: final methodology design, literature review, and outline of CP background chapter(s).

Required reading: memos of assigned projects submitted on February 2nd and February 9th: final methodology design, literature review, and outline of CP background chapter(s). Come prepared to discuss and provide constructive critique.

February 23rd – No class meeting

Assignment 4 (draft), due in class site Page

- Annotated outline of the CP report/paper.
- First draft of Introductory chapter(s), which should include the research purpose, background, research questions, methods and rationale.

March 2nd - Session 8. Peer Review of CP paper Outline and Introductory Chapter(s)

Purpose: provide and receive feedback on report outlines and introductory chapters.

Required reading: annotated outline and introductory chapters submitted by assigned authors. Come prepared to discuss and provide constructive critique. Focus on completeness, gaps and suggestions to remedy these, usefulness to client, rigor, realism given timeline.

Assignment 5, due in class site Page

- ***Written comments required on***
 - Annotated outline of the CP report/paper.
 - First draft of Introductory chapter(s), which should include the research purpose, background, research question, methods and rationale.
- No page-length limit, but conciseness will be appreciated.

March 9th – No class meeting

Assignment 4 (revised), due in class site Page

- Annotated outline/draft text of the CP report/paper.
- First draft of Introductory chapter(s), which should include the research purpose, background, research questions.
- Methods and rationale.
- Status of data collection, results and analyses.

Assignments Schedule Summary – Winter 2018

Number	Assignment *	Draft	Discussion	Revised (final)
1	Research Qs, Work plan, LoA	1/12	1/19	1/26
2	Research design memo (w final research questions, draft methods)	1/22	1/26	2/2
3	Literature review conclusions; background chapters outline	2/9	2/16	
4	CP report annotated outline. Draft Intro chapters	2/23	3/2	3/9
5	Written comments by peer reviewers on A. 4	3/2		

*Refer to text of syllabus for detailed descriptions of assignments. Yellow shade indicates the version that will be graded.

Spring 2018 Schedule

NOTES:

- Peer review assignments remain the same
- Class meeting in PAR 308, EXCEPT April 13th – Denny Forum
- All assignments due by end-of-day on the specified date.

March 30th – NO CLASS MEETING. Independent work.

April 6th - NO CLASS MEETING. First Spring Assignment Due in class site.

Three-page summary of progress on data collection and analysis. It should include an updated work plan for data collection completion, finalizing analysis and first draft CP report write-up. Please make sure to recap:

- Research question
- Methodology – answering the research question
- Preliminary results (if available)
- Report annotated outline.

April 13th - Session 1. Progress Report discussion and feedback

PLEASE NOTE: Meet in Denny Forum

Purpose: provide and receive feedback on current status of CP project.

Required reading: progress report submitted by assigned team. Come prepared to discuss and provide constructive critique. Focus on completeness, gaps and suggestions to remedy these, usefulness to client, rigor, realism given timeline.

April 20th – NO CLASS MEETING. Second Spring Assignment due in class site.

Preliminary (or final) findings from data analysis. Tables, graphs, narratives are fine; please limit to 4 pages.

April 27th - Session 2. Preliminary/final findings discussion

Purpose: provide and receive feedback on data analysis and findings.

Required reading: preliminary/final findings reports submitted by assigned authors. Please focus discussion and critique on rigor, caveats, validity issues.

May 4th – NO CLASS MEETING. Third Spring Assignment due in class site.

First draft CP report to peers and agency contacts. First full draft, following the annotated outline provided earlier. Please request feedback from agency contacts within 7 days, copy to instructor.

May 11th –Session 3. Fourth Spring Assignment due in class site.

Written feedback by peers. Three-page (max) written feedback to assigned projects.

May 18th – NO CLASS MEETING. Fifth Spring Assignment due in class site. Revised draft to client/peers.

May 25th - Session 4. Class presentations.

NOTE: Final presentations to client agencies to be carried out between May 14th and May 25th.

JUNE 1ST - Revised CP report (per feedback received from clients and peers). FINAL VERSION TO BE GRADED.

June 1st - Session 5. Class presentations
Deadline for Completed Capstone Project, formatted to Evans School standards and prepared for instructor’s signature.

Assignments Schedule Summary – Spring 2018

Number	Assignment *	Draft	Discussion
1	Three-page summary of progress on data collection and analysis	4/6	4/13
2	Preliminary (or final) findings from data analysis	4/20	4/27
3	First draft CP report to peers and agency contacts	5/4	
4	Written feedback by peers	5/11	
5	Revised draft to client/peers.	5/18	

*Refer to text of syllabus for detailed descriptions of assignments. Yellow shade indicates the version that will be graded.

JUNE 1ST - Revised CP report (per feedback received from clients and peers). FINAL VERSION TO BE GRADED.

APPENDIX. Peer review assignments

Projects	Team members	Atlas Relief	Providence	R. Rwanda	T-Smart	W-Relief
Atlas Relief & Development International (ARDI)	Nina Boe		x			
	Heidi Hannah			x		
	Liz Harding				x	
	Rebecca Sinah Lee					x
Providence Health and Services	Leslie Otto	x				
	Kathryn Rendon			x		
	Ethan Talbott					x
Richards Rwanda IMPUHWE	Lydia Boote	x				
	Sarah Jean Ernst				x	
	Cheryl (Hsin-Ju) Yu					x
TeenSmart International	Dayna Emmons	x				
	Daniel Seymour		x			
	Alejandro Urrutia Rodriguez			x		
	Xiao Wei					x
World Relief Seattle	Anuj Kalra	x				
	Jaewoo Lee		x			
	Ko Eun Lee				x	
	Chelsea Sweeney				x	

