

Welch Center Capstone Rubric

Rubric Purpose: This rubric has been designed to provide an evaluation framework for limited-residency capstone work. Whether the capstone is a project, community-based event, film or academic thesis, use of rubrics can provide higher levels of feedback to students, clarify expectations and structure the evaluation process. The rubric has been designed, reviewed and revised through collaborative efforts of distance learning staff, department faculty and academic directors.

Evaluation Explanation: The Capstone committee provides direction and suggestions to the student throughout the Capstone process. Final evaluation of student work occurs at the Capstone Defense. Capstones are not graded, but students can either pass or not pass. Additionally, students may pass with completion of minor revisions or the Capstone committee may require substantive revisions and a secondary review. Each of the evaluation metrics are described below:

Pass – Work demonstrates mastery of concepts and skills, and satisfies the expectations for completion of course requirements.

Passes with Minor Revisions – Work satisfies the expectations for completion of course requirements, but requires some minor revisions to pass. A secondary review by the full committee is not needed, but the student's Capstone advisor must give final approval to the revisions.

Requires Substantive Revisions – Revisions of a substantive nature are required. Upon completion, the committee will conduct a secondary review to determine completion of course requirements.

Does Not Pass – Work does not meet minimum standards for completion of course requirements.

Criteria Descriptions:

The following five criteria are useful in evaluating capstone projects:

1. *Outcomes and impact* – Does the Capstone contribute to community vitality, social justice and/or environmental sustainability? Does the Capstone set out clear and realistic goals and are they achieved? Does the Capstone provide professional and practical strategies for addressing key issues in cultural sustainability or environmental studies? Does the Capstone demonstrate mastery of key terms and concepts in the field of cultural sustainability or environmental studies?
2. *Originality/Creativity* – Does the study or project present an original thesis, pose new questions, and/or develop effective methods for addressing new or existing issues? Is there sufficient evidence to support this? Does the work reflect creativity, innovation, a willingness to take intellectual risks, and vision? Does the Capstone contribute new theory or methodology to the field?
3. *Overall quality* – Does the scholar identify important questions for investigation? Is the inquiry well developed and is the methodology sound? Is the Capstone presented in an appropriate and professional style, with effective organization?
4. *Significance of the research to the field*– Does the Capstone adequately build on an understanding of existing scholarship in the field? Does the work demonstrate an understanding of existing scholarship through effective integration of key concepts, terminology, theory and methods?
5. *Critical Reflection* – Does the scholar critically evaluate his or her position in relation to the work, including: reflecting on their assumptions, considering alternative perspectives, and making connections between theory and practice?

Welch Center Thesis Capstone Rubric

Criteria	Does Not Pass	Substantive Revision Required	Passes with Minor Revisions	Passes
Outcomes and impact				
Originality/Creativity				
Overall quality				
Significance of the research to the field of cultural sustainability or environmental studies				
Critical Reflection				