Detailed ECE Capstone Timeline

2025-01-02

This is a rough timeline of the ECE Capstone Projects. Things shift back and forth by a week or two as necessary for quarter timing and cat-herding requirements.

* Winter break
  + First team meetings - teams start “forming”
  + Students try to meet with their sponsor and advisor at least once.
  + Students contemplate life, the universe, and their capstone (unofficial capstone R&D)
* January
  + 1st week
    - First *real* team meeting.
    - Teams begin to transition from “forming” to “storming”
    - Tools are chosen: collaboration site, chat, documentation, Gantt chart tools, etc.
    - Project Proposals are started
      * Students figure out what the hell they are *actually* going to do for the next 6 months
  + 2nd - 3rd week
    - Teams transition from “storming” to “norming”
    - Research, domain knowledge building, context building, reading datasheets
    - Students start prototyping!! Breadboards are ordered! Lights might blink!
    - **Project proposal rough drafts** **due**
      * Advisor and sponsor collaboration now critical
  + 4th week
    - **Final draft of project proposal**
    - Sign-off by advisor and sponsor
* February
  + 1st week
    - **Project Proposals turned in**
    - Class Check-in
    - Team reviews (15 minute team status review)
  + 2nd week: Team reviews (15 minute team status review)
  + All month
    - Serious technical progress: Students GO GO GO GO GO
    - First boards! First 3D prints! First code! Blink LEDs! Spin motors!
    - Team transitioning from “norming” to “performing”: if by early February the team hasn’t congealed into a well functioning team, there’s a serious problem and the team and advisor (and Andrew if everyone wants him to) should candidly address the issue.
* March
  + 1st week
    - Class Check-in
  + All month
    - Serious technical progress
    - First of the systems coming together: Fully working breadboard prototypes, or even a “Spin 1” of the system.
  + Finals week
    - Deliverables
      * Shared CATME (shared candid team and individual feedback)
      * Weekly Progress Reports (WPRs) are turned in en masse to Andrew (advisors should already have them week-by-week)
* Spring Break
  + If the team is seriously behind, this is the time for them to catch up. Students should take a break, but not squander the opportunity to get some solid, uninterrupted work in.
  + Teams experiencing dysfunction are in serious trouble, and interventions are done if necessary.
* April
  + 1st week
    - Class Check-in
    - Team reviews (15 minute team status review)
  + 2nd week: Team Reviews (15 minute team status review)
  + 3rd week: team reviews (15 minute team status review)
  + All month
    - Serious technical progress
    - “Spin 2” of the system. This should be a working prototype as much as possible
* May
  + 1st week
    - Class Check-in
    - In-class demos!
  + All month
    - Final system integration and functionality; possible “Spin 3” of the system
    - Final project report started.
* June
  + 1st week
    - Class Check-in
    - TECHNICAL WORK STOPS
    - Documentation uber alles
  + 2nd week (finals week)
    - Documentation cleanup
    - Final presentations to advisor and sponsor
    - Final project reports and spring WPRs are handed in
    - ECE Poster Session the Friday of exam week