FULBRIGHT UNIVERSITY VIETNAM

Psychology Major

Capstone Handbook

AY 2025-2026

Contents

I. General Information

__Description__

In the Psychology major, the Capstone is to be conducted individually and is typically a research project where empirical evidence is collected, referred to as a 'dissertation' or 'dissertation'. It can also be an applied project with an industry partner. In both cases, the Capstone should demonstrate original critical and creative thinking, and we encourage primary research (collecting empirical data in its various guises). However, it should not require extensive fieldwork. You need to think carefully about an appropriate scope of research and production for your proposed Capstone. You need to consult your prospective advisor about this early on. Applications that do not demonstrate awareness of the scope and the practicalities needed to realize the Capstone may not be approved.

Capstone by Dissertation

The Capstone by Dissertation is a 'research project' where empirical data is collected for the purpose of testing or interpreting a theoretical or philosophical concept(s). Sometimes, this will be a replication or an undertaking to extend theory. In both cases, the Dissertation will add to the body of knowledge in a 'modest' manner in keeping with the scope of a (1) one-year undergraduate research project. A vital element of the Dissertation is the Method section, which includes a 'research design' (quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods), a plan for collecting data (e.g., survey, interviews, observations, naturalistic text), data analysis (e.g., correlational, regression analysis, grounded theory, discourse analysis, narrative) and ethical considerations.

Capstone by Applied Project

The Capstone by Applied Project is a more practice-focused option where the primary focus is on designing, implementing, and evaluating a program or project that is founded in psychological theory, research, and practice. The project can be designed in partnership with other individuals, including industry partners, but the students should have a central role throughout the project. The primary final deliverable is a critical evaluation report that usually involves gathering data and assessing the extent to which the project has met its intended impact and objectives. The critical evaluation report includes sections similar to the Capstone

by Dissertation, but more focused on practice, and additionally includes extensive documentation of the student's work on the program (including planning documents, videos, pictures, and other media).

Learning Objectives

Students would complete a Capstone project will be able to:

1. **Apply** psychological concepts, theories, and frameworks to address a specific question or problem.
2. **Formulate** clear research questions or project objectives, **choose** and **implement** appropriate methods, and **analyze** findings to draw conclusions.
3. **Articulate** and **justify** the project's objectives, methods, and findings through written, visual, and oral communication.

Mapping to Major Learning Outcomes

	MLO1	MLO2	MLO3	MLO5	MLO5
CLO1	x		x		x
CLO2	x	x	x	x	
CLO3	x	x		x	x

II. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to apply for the Capstone in Psychology, you must meet the following criteria:

- Major GPA: 3.5
- Introduction Psychology and Social Science Research Methods, along with atleast TWO other psychology courses must be completed before Capstone I..

The major faculty will assess Capstone applicants based on the eligibility criteria, the quality of the proposal, and the faculty's expertise and availability. Keep in mind that projects for which there is no current faculty expertise may not be approved.

III. Supervision: Allocation of Advisor Process and Capstone Supervision

Allocation of Advisor Process

Successful applicants will provide a first choice of primary and secondary advisor. If the student's first or second preference cannot be accommodated due to maintaining a fair

distribution of faculty workload, the major Capstone coordinator will consult with the student to determine an appropriate solution.

Advising Process

Your supervisor will communicate with you how they will supervise your project. Supervision includes *individual supervision* where you will have one-on-one meetings to discuss specific aspects of your work. Supervision may also take the form of *group meetings* in which supervisors, students, and second readers may come together periodically. The latter is an opportunity for students to share their progress, provide feedback on each other's work, and swap ideas on 'project management' elements. Some projects may have an outside 'industry partner', in which case they can be invited to participate in meetings as well.

You should plan to meet with your primary advisor at least once a month, if not more often. You are expected to be proactive in organizing these meetings with your advisors and to follow up on the meetings' actionable items. The Capstone places responsibility on you to be organized and to be responsible in regular communications and submission of work-in-progression to your primary advisor.

Remember:

- *Respect your advisor's working hours*
- *Correspond professionally and courteously*
- *Use Fulbright email instead of social media platforms*
- *Be prepared at meetings (with materials and questions) and use your time efficiently*
- *You are responsible for setting up the meetings (and showing up!)*

Other expectations:

- *You cannot change your Capstone's topic and format without consulting your advisors and getting their approval*
- *We expect you to demonstrate and maintain clear communication, a steady work ethic, a capacity for self-organization, and balanced management of your Capstone workload with your other coursework*
- *Try to keep up with your timeline*
- *Manage your expectations in terms of what you can accomplish*

IV. Learning Resources

Capstone by Dissertation

Your supervisor will work with you to identify learning resources to help guide you on structuring a 'research proposal' for a dissertation, which will be the deliverables for Capstone I and form the basis of your IRB application. The following research design book provides an excellent guide and reference for thinking about and writing a quantitative or qualitative 'research proposal' that most often includes an Introduction (Research Problems, Research Questions), a critical Literature Review, and a Method.

Creswell, J. & Creswell, D. (2022). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (6th ed). Sage.

Capstone by Applied Project

For the Applied Project stream, your advisor will also provide resources that are relevant to the fundamentals of your Applied Project. The above Creswell & Creswell textbook also serves as a foundation for the literature review, theoretical foundation, and design of your Applied Project. Since the final submission will be in the form of a critical evaluation report, we additionally highly recommend the following textbook for background in program evaluation:

Russ-Eft, D., & Preskill, H. (2009). *Evaluation in organizations: A systematic approach to enhancing learning, performance, and change, 2nd ed*. Basic Books.

Your supervisor will work with you to identify learning resources for Capstone 2. This will depend on the nature and progression of your project.

V. Grading Process

The Primary Supervisor and Secondary Supervisor will mark the students' Capstone Project independently. The final score is the total average score marked by two markers. The final score is assigned to the Capstone Project Grade according to the following scale:

Final Score (%)	Capstone Project Grade
100% - 90%	Honors
89% - 60%	Pass

| 50% - 0% | Below Expectations |

VI. Capstone by Dissertation Guidelines

1. *Capstone Deliverables for* Dissertation

A. Capstone I Deliverables

In Capstone I, you will commence research and refine your ideas into a Research Proposal (see below for a structure). Depending on the project, this will likely include developing a comprehensive bibliography and literature review focusing on background context and theoretical and methodological approaches to the topic. You will complete your application for IRB approval and produce a concrete research plan for Capstone II. Capstone I will be assessed by your active participation in the advising processes and end-of-term submission of your Research Proposal. **You will be expected to meet each deadline and complete chapters per the Dissertation Timeline below (see section V.2 below).**

Research Proposal Structure (which will make up the first 3 chapters of your final dissertation for Capstone II)

Chapter Introduction

Background

Research Problem

Research Question

Outline of Research Proposal

Chapter Literature Review

Chapter Method

Research Design

Participants & Data Collection

Data Analysis

Ethical Considerations

B. Capstone II Deliverables

In Capstone II, you will focus more on production, such as analyzing your data, testing or interpreting using your chosen theory, and then posing a series of conclusions. Below is a typical structure for the final Capstone II dissertation project, usually between 10-15,000 words. **Capstone II will be graded by assessing a student's final submission according to the**

marking rubric in Section V.3.B. In addition, you will be expected to meet each deadline and complete chapters per the Dissertation Timeline below (see section V.2 below).

Chapter Introduction

Background

Research Problem

Research Question

Outline of Research Proposal

Chapter Literature Review

Chapter Method

Research Design

Participants & Data Collection

Data Analysis

Ethical Considerations

Chapter Results

Chapter Discussion

Chapter Conclusion

Capstone Dissertation: Final Checking and Submission

Before submitting your final dissertation, conduct the final checks:

- Abstract: make sure it is clear and concise (200-250 words) and conforms to the structure noted below. This is the first piece of text your markers and wider audience will read, so you want to make a good first impression.
- Structure your Abstract in the following way:
  - What is the problem
  - What is the purpose of the research
  - What has been done so far
  - Your research methods
  - What did you find (summarise your findings)
  - What do your findings mean (summarize discussion and conclusion)
  - 200-250 words max

- Full Thesis/Dissertation Check: Go through your whole dissertation carefully checking the formatting and referencing again, e.g., make sure each chapter starts on a new page, that your chapter numbering and Table of Contents are correct, that your Reference List and in-text citations are aligned, and that you have included the required Appendices as per the marking rubric.

- Once you are happy with these, convert your Word file into one PDF version that is ready for submission.

2. *Timeline for Dissertation*

Below is a timeline that indicates each aspect of the dissertation, when it needs to be started, feedback from the supervisor, and completion. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that conducting research and writing a dissertation will take on a life of its own and may not necessarily follow exactly this process. This is to be expected.

CAPSTONE 1 FALL SEMESTER

July, August

- Collect peer-reviewed references on research topic (both classic and contemporary) through databases such as PsychInfo and Scopus (monographs, journal articles, book chapters)

- Read and take notes. Input relevant references into a Bibliographic Program

- Start writing a critical literature review

September & October

- Read on ethical issues and take notes for IRB application

- Full draft critical literature review, submit for feedback

- Rework critical literature review

- Outline methodology chapter

November

- Draft method chapter

- Full draft research questions, submit for feedback

- Full draft method chapter, submit for feedback

- Rework method chapter based on feedback

- Submit IRB application

December

- IRB Approval

- Begin data collection

January

- Transcribe data: makes notes of analytic ideas/possible themes/curiosities

- Start Introductory & Complete Chapter

- Submit Introduction, Literature Review, and Method (main output for Capstone 1)

CAPSTONE 2 SPRING SEMESTER

February/March/April

- Full draft findings and analysis, submit for feedback

- Rework findings and analysis as per feedback

- Start writing discussion chapter(s)

- Full draft discussion chapter, submit for feedback

- Rework discussion chapter based on feedback

- Work on producing a full final draft – introduction, literature review, methods, findings and discussion

- Submit the first full draft

May/June

- Feedback on full draft

- Revisions to first draft

- Feedback on final draft

- Final writing/editing, reading, revision and proofing

- Submit Dissertation (main output for Capstone 2)

3. *Capstone Marking for Dissertation*

A. *Capstone I Advance to Capstone II: Criteria for Approval*

Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the Capstone I deliverables (see section V.1.A) will be subject to a "NO Pass" and recommended not to proceed with Capstone II. Capstone I will

also be assessed by a combination of your active participation in the advising processes and the quality of your submission.

B. Capstone II Submission: Marking Rubric

The following marking rubrics evaluate the quality of each of the specific dissertation chapters. Markers should be aware that not all theses may be structured in this way depending on the Research Questions and Problems students seek to address. For example, the Introduction and Literature Review may be combined into one chapter, as may the Results and Discussion sections and/or the Discussion and Conclusion.

Psychology Capstone Marking Rubric: Qualitative Dissertation

Marking Criteria	Description for Honors	Description for Pass	Description for Below Expectations
1. **Abstract (5%)**	Clear, concise and comprehensive summary of the entire study; correct word length (200 words).	Includes key elements of study; however, does not capture the study in the same clear and concise manner as the Hons designation.	Generally lacking key elements, vague, either too long or too short.
Score:___/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
2. **Introduction (10%)**	Clear and integrated statement of the research problem and/or research question(s), and its rationale, which is specific and answerable within the scope of study (i.e., how they are derived from or logically connected to previous argumentation). Clear and concise outline of each of the chapters in the latter part of the Introduction.	Good statement of the research problem and/or research question(s). Rationale was not entirely convincing, possibly too broad or unrealistic to some degree within the scope of the study. Good outline of each of the dissertation chapters in the latter part of the Introduction, not always clear and logical.	Research problem/ research question(s) is/are not coherent, and/or has no defensible rationale derived from previous argumentation. Likely to be unrealistic or too broad within the scope of the study. Fails to outline each chapter of the dissertation in the latter part of the Introduction, not always clear and logical.
Score:___/10	**10 – 9 points**	**8 – 6 points**	**5– 0 points**
3. **Literature Review (15%)**	Clear, convincing and critical analysis of relevant literature. Major sections are coherently and logically linked, following on from one another. Clear and relevant discussion of the theoretical framework adopted – or potential frameworks that might be adopted, given the inductive	Good analysis of relevant literature, with some critical analysis. Major sections are not always coherent and logically linked. Good discussion of the theoretical framework adopted - or potential frameworks that might be adopted, given the inductive	Poor analysis of relevant literature. Predominately descriptive list of studies with little or no critical review. Review lacks an adequate analysis of the theory and fails to analyze potential research design.

	nature of the study. The literature review also provides an indication of potential research design. Candidate provides evidence for claims and uses the most appropriate references. These include both classical (earlier, seminal works) and those that have been more recently published.	nature of the study. Analysis of research design is adequate. Candidate mostly provides evidence for their claims, uses the most appropriate references. Does not always strike a balance between seminal works and recently published material.	Candidate does not always provide evidence for their claims, uses inappropriate references. Does not strike a balance between seminal works and recently published material.
Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
4. **Methods (15%)**	Methods are fully aligned with research questions/problems and provide a powerful means to answer these and the context the study is focused on. Clear and precise description of the research design (e.g., case study, phenomenological study, discourse analysis, grounded theory) and its essential features, including associated methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, observation). Comprehensive description for choosing participants/case, including the rationale for this as well as the analytic technique adopted. Clear and concise description of the procedures undertaken to deal with ethical issues present in the research.	Methods are adequately aligned with research questions/problems. Mostly provides a means to answer these and the context the study is focused on. Good description of the research design (e.g., case study, phenomenological study, discourse analysis, grounded theory) and most of its features, including associated methods (e.g., interviews, focus groups, observation). Less than comprehensive description for choice of participants/case, including the rationale for this and the analytic technique adopted. Less than a clear and concise description of the procedures undertaken to deal with ethical issues present in the research.	Methods are only partially aligned or not aligned with the research questions and problem. Little to no links with context the study is focused on. Poor or lack of a description of the research design (e.g., case study, phenomenological study, discourse analysis, grounded theory) associated method (e.g., interviews, focus groups, observation). Comprehensive description for choosing participants/case, analytic technique, including the rationale for these largely lacking. Poorly described or absent description of ethical procedures.
Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
5. **Findings and Results (15%)**	The results section provides a clear, insightful and appropriately detailed summary of the data that is relevant to the research questions/problems. Demonstrates clear mastery of qualitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Clear and considered re-presentation of illustrative	Accurate and complete reporting of the results to address the research questions/problems. Demonstrates a good understanding of qualitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Good re-presentation of illustrative extracts, although not always aligned	Rambling, disorganized, and/or incoherent write-up of the results. Lack of understanding of qualitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Data presented is an idiosyncratic, deductively produced, and/or laden with value judgments.

INTERVAL

		extracts; logical organization and parsimony in the re-presentation of data/themes. Clarity and precision throughout, with adherence to APA style (including use of Table and Figures).	with main themes; logical organization	
	Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
6.	**Discussion (15%)**	The implications of the findings are critically evaluated and discussed in the light of existing theory, including similarities and differences in findings. Excellent integration and interpretation of results across findings. Provides alternative explanations and interpretations for the findings where needed.	Key findings are adequately evaluated and compared to the relevant literature. Adequate integration and interpretation of results across findings.	Unjustified speculation may be present, with interpretations that go beyond what the data and findings allow.
	Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
7.	**Conclusion (5%)**	Effectively summarizes findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). A reasoned and justifiable commentary on the importance of the findings and their contribution to knowledge – tightly reasoned, self-contained, and not over-stated. Project limitations are clearly and logically identified and described. Recommendations for future research directions and practice is insightful and reflects a thorough understanding of key issues	Adequately summarizes findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). Commentary on the study's contribution is made with appropriate consideration. Project limitations are adequately identified and described. Recommendations are made but may not give full attention to all relevant theoretical and practical issues.	Lack of summary of findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). The candidate may draw some conclusions that are not warranted, or that s/he has no real evidence for. Does not identify or poorly describe project limitations. Weak recommendations are made.
	Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
8.	**Quality of Writing, Formatting (10%)**	The candidate presents a clear and consistent argument throughout the disseration. Paragraphs and sentences are well constructed and follow logically from each other. Correct grammar and spelling	The main points are developed logically and taken together to present a coherent picture. The dissertation is easy to read and generally flows well. The writing is clear and	The candidate makes a clear effort to present a logical argument. The candidate has made an effort to structure the dissertation around some core issues, but the

		are used. The candidate demonstrates an excellent command of language. Writes in clear, plain English. The writing style is not overblown, verbose or unsophisticated. Headings are clear and accurately describe the content that follows. The dissertation as a whole is correctly formatted with regard to the APA conventions.	can be read and understood with minimal effort. Correct grammar and spelling are used, with a few minor exceptions. Headings make sense and help to structure the dissertation. Most of the dissertation is correctly formatted according to APA conventions.	argument as a whole may be quite difficult to grasp. The dissertation is difficult to read as a whole and contains consistent and obvious errors in grammar and spelling. The candidate has used a consistent but incorrect format for referencing.
	Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5– 0 points
9.	References & Appendices (10%)	Reference list is complete and accords with in-text referencing. All referencing adheres strictly to APA referencing conventions. Appendices are relevant and carefully presented, and must include: • ethical clearance letter; • copies of recruitment flyers/advertising used; • copies of information statements, consent forms, and instructions given to participants; • copy on interview schedule(s); • copies of any psychological tests or scales used.	References are cited properly within the text, and a complete reference list is provided. Strictly follow APA referencing style. Appendices are relevant and carefully presented.	Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a fail grade for the dissertation. Reference list and/or in-text referencing departs seriously from APA referencing conventions; there may be a significant lack of correspondence between in-text referencing citations and entries in reference list. Required Appendices are missing.
	Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5– 0 points
Total Score (out of 100)				

Psychology Capstone Marking Rubric: Quantitative Dissertation

Marking Criteria	Description for Honors	Description for Pass	Description for Below Expectation
1. **Abstract (5%)**	Clear, concise and comprehensive summary of the entire study including all research question, all key components of methodology and findings; correct word length (200 words).	Includes most of the key elements of study; however, does not capture the study in the same clear and concise manner as the Hons designation.	Generally lacking key elements, vague, either too long or too short.
Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
2. **Introduction (10%)**	Clear and integrated statement of the research problem and/or research question(s), and its rationale, which is specific and answerable within the scope of study (i.e., how they are derived from or logically connected to previous argumentation.). Research questions are appropriate for the research stage of the problem under study. Clear and concise outline of each of the chapters in the latter part of the Introduction.	Good statement of the research problem and/or research question(s). Rationale was not entirely convincing, possibly too broad or unrealistic to some degree within the scope of the study. Research questions are not appropriate for the research stage of the problem under study but not too far from the right stage Good outline of each of the dissertation chapters in the latter part of the Introduction, not always clear and logical.	Research problem/ research question(s) is/are not coherent, and/or has no defensible rationale derived from previous argumentation. Likely to be unrealistic or too broad within the scope of the study. Research questions are totally inappropriate for the research stage of the problem under study, too far from the right stage Fails to outline each chapter of the dissertation in the latter part of the Introduction, not always clear and logical.
Score:__/10	**10 – 9 points**	**8 – 6 points**	**5– 0 points**
3. **Literature Review (15%)**	Clear, convincing and critical analysis of relevant literature. Major sections are coherently and logically linked, following on from one another. Clear and relevant discussion of the theoretical/conceptual framework adopted – or potential frameworks that might be adopted, including grounded provides evidence	Good analysis of relevant literature, with some critical analysis. Major sections are not always coherent and logically linked. Good discussion of the theoretical framework adopted - or potential frameworks that might be adopted, given the inductive nature of the study. Analysis of research design is adequate. Mostly provides evidence for their claims,	Poor analysis of relevant literature. Predominately descriptive list of studies with little or no critical review. Review lacks an adequate analysis of the theory and fails to analyze potential research design. Does not always provide evidence for their claims, uses inappropriate references. Does not strike a balance between seminal works and recently published material.

	for claims and uses the most appropriate references. These include both classical (earlier, seminal works) and those that have been more recently published.	uses the most appropriate references. Does not always strike a balance between seminal works and recently published material.	
Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
4. Methods (description)	Methods are fully aligned with research questions/problems and provide a powerful means to answer these and the context the study is focused on.	Methods are adequately aligned with research questions/problems. Mostly provides a means to answer these and the context the study is focused on.	Methods are only partially aligned or not aligned with the research questions and problem. Little to no links with context the study is focused on.
4.1 Research design (5%)	Clear and precise description of the research design (e.g., experiment, longitudinals study, cohort study, cross-sectional study) and its essential features, including associated methods (e.g., prospective, retrospective…).	Good description of the research design (e.g., experiment, longitudinals study, cohort study, cross-sectional study) and most of its features, including associated methods (e.g., prospective, retrospective…).	Poor or lack of a description of the research design (e.g., experiment, longitudinals study, cohort study, cross-sectional study) including associated method (e.g., prospective, retrospective…).
Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
4.2 Sampling method and procedure (5%)	Comprehensive description for choosing sampling method, including the rationale for this as well as the analytic technique adopted. Clear and concise description of the procedures undertaken to deal with ethical issues present in the research.	Less than comprehensive description for choice of sampling method, including the rationale for this and the analytic technique adopted. Less than a clear and concise description of the procedures undertaken to deal with ethical issues present in the research.	Comprehensive description for choosing sampling method, analytic technique, including the rationale for these largely lacking. Poorly described or absent description of ethical procedures.
Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
4.3 Statistical analysis strategies (5%)	Accurate statistical analysis strategies that adequately answers the research question with preliminary data analysis plan.	Accurate statistical analysis strategies that adequately answer the research questions, yet preliminary data analysis plan may not be mentioned or adequately described.	Wrong statistical analysis strategies, which cannot answer the research questions.
Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
5. Findings and Results (15%)	The results section provides a clear, insightful and appropriately detailed summary of the data that is	Accurate and complete reporting of the results to address the research questions/problems.	Rambling, disorganized, and/or incoherent write-up of the results.

	relevant to the research questions/problems. Demonstrates clear mastery of quantitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Clear and concise re-presentation of tables and figures; logical organization and parsimony in the re-presentation of data. Clarity and precision throughout, with adherence to APA style (including use of Table and Figures).	Demonstrates a good understanding of qualitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Good re-presentation of tables and figures, data is adequately presented, yet not with highly logical organization	Lack of understanding of qualitative analysis techniques associated with the chosen method. Data not neatly and systematically presented, lacking important information
Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
6. Discussion (15%)	The implications of the findings are critically evaluated and discussed in the light of existing theory, including similarities and differences in findings. Excellent integration and interpretation of results across findings. Provides alternative explanations and interpretations for the findings where needed.	Key findings are adequately evaluated and compared to the relevant literature. Adequate integration and interpretation of results across findings.	Unjustified speculation may be present, with interpretations that go beyond what the data and findings allow.
Score:__/15	**15 – 14 points**	**13 – 9 points**	**8 – 0 points**
7. Conclusion (5%)	Effectively summarizes findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). A reasoned and justifiable commentary on the importance of the findings and their contribution to knowledge – tightly reasoned, self-contained, and not over-stated. Project limitations are clearly and logically identified and described. Recommendations for future research directions and practice is insightful and	Adequately summarizes findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). Commentary on the study's contribution is made with appropriate consideration. Project limitations are adequately identified and described. Recommendations are made, but may not give full attention to all relevant theoretical and practical issues.	Lack of summary of findings and discussions in relevance to research question(s) and objective(s). The candidate may draw some conclusions that are not warranted, or that s/he has no real evidence for. Does not identify or poorly describe project limitations. Weak recommendations are made.

		reflects a thorough understanding of key issues		
	Score:__/5	**5 points**	**4 - 3 points**	**3 – 0 points**
8.	**Quality of Writing, Formatting (10%)**	The candidate presents a clear and consistent argument throughout the dissertation. Paragraphs and sentences are well constructed and follow logically from each other. Correct grammar and spelling are used. The candidate demonstrates an excellent command of language. Writes in clear, plain English. The writing style is not overblown, verbose or unsophisticated. Headings are clear and accurately describe the content that follows. The dissertation as a whole is correctly formatted with regard to the APA conventions.	The main points are developed logically and taken together to present a coherent picture. The dissertation is easy to read and generally flows well. The writing is clear and can be read and understood with minimal effort. Correct grammar and spelling are used, with a few minor exceptions. Headings make sense and help to structure the dissertation. Most of the dissertation is correctly formatted according to APA conventions.	The candidate makes a clear effort to present a logical argument. The candidate has made an effort to structure the dissertation around some core issues, but the argument as a whole may be quite difficult to grasp. The dissertation is difficult to read as a whole and contains consistent and obvious errors in grammar and spelling. The candidate has used a consistent but incorrect format for referencing.
	Score:__/10	**10 – 9 points**	**8 – 6 points**	**5– 0 points**
9.	**References & Appendices (10%)**	Reference list is complete and accords with in-text referencing. All referencing adheres strictly to APA referencing conventions. Appendices are relevant and carefully presented, and must include: • ethical clearance letter; • copies of information statements, consent forms, and instructions given to participants; • copies of any psychological tests or scales used.	References are cited properly within the text, and a complete reference list is provided. Strictly follow APA referencing style. Appendices are relevant and carefully presented.	Any evidence of plagiarism will result in a fail grade for the dissertation. Reference list and/or in-text referencing departs seriously from APA referencing conventions; there may be a significant lack of correspondence between in-text referencing citations and entries in reference list. Required Appendices are missing.
	Score:__/10	**10 – 9 points**	**8 – 6 points**	**5– 0 points**
Total Average Score				

VII.   Capstone by Applied Project Guidelines

The Capstone by Applied Project will be determined in consultation with a student's primary and secondary advisors but must meet the requirement of an original project. Example projects include:

- Awareness Campaign
- Art Installation
- Community Intervention
- Social Program
- Mental Health Workshop Series
- Digital Media Campaign
- Podcast Series on Mental Health Topics
- Behavioral Health App Prototype
- Peer Counseling Program Development
- Research-Based Children's Book
- Family Dynamics Workshop Series
- Mental Health First Aid Training Program
- Community Survey on Mental Health Needs
- Public Art Project on Mental Health Themes
- Resource Guide for Local Mental Health Services
- Therapeutic Gardening or Nature Program

Each project must include extensive documentation of the process through which the original work was developed. Additionally, the Capstone by Applied Project requires a final **Evaluation Report** that demonstrates the project's relevance to psychological principles, its potential or observed impact, evidence of rigorous evaluation, and documentation of the student's involvement and implementation of the program. This report should also provide insights or recommendations for future application or research. Submissions that fall short in any of these areas will be subject to revision and/or penalties.

1. *Non-Academic Advisor*

For applied projects, students may request to work with an additional non-academic advisor (e.g., a mental health practitioner, community organizer, or applied professional) in consultation with, and

subject to the approval of, their primary and secondary academic advisors from the Psychology program.

2. *Capstone Deliverables for Applied Project*

A. *Capstone I Deliverables*

In Capstone I, you will begin the project and refine your ideas into a Project Design and Evaluation Proposal (see below for a structure). Depending on the project, this will likely include developing a comprehensive bibliography and literature review focusing on background context and theoretical and methodological approaches to the topic. If applicable, you will submit your application to the IRB Committee and produce a concrete implementation and evaluation plan for Capstone II. Capstone I will be assessed by your active participation in the advising processes and end-of-term submission of your Evaluation Project Proposal. **You will be expected to meet each deadline and complete chapters per the Project Timeline below (see section V.2 below)**.

Sample Project Structure

Rationale

Literature Review

Evaluation Questions

Project Design & Implementation (including current project status)

Evaluation Plan

Ethical Considerations

B. *Capstone II Deliverables*

In Capstone II, you will focus more on writing and completing the project. This will involve implementing the project, answering your evaluation questions, and then posing a series of conclusions. Below is a typical structure for the final Capstone II Applied Project, usually between 5-10,000 words (excluding references and documentation). **Capstone II will be graded by assessing a student's final submission according to the marking rubric in Section VI.4.B)**. In addition, you will be expected to meet each deadline and complete chapters per the Project Timeline below (see section VI.3 below).

Executive Summary

Rationale

Literature Review

Applied Output

Impact

Program Evaluation

Discussion

References and Documentaiton

Capstone Evaluation Project: Final Checking and Submission

Before submitting your final evaluation project, conduct the final checks:

- Although these elements have been previously addressed, it is essential to carefully review the Executive Summary. It should be clear and concise, adhering to the specified word limit of 200-250 words. As the initial text encountered by evaluators and the broader audience, it is crucial to create a positive first impression.

- Structure the Executive Summary in the following way:

  - What is the problem

  - What is the purpose of the program

  - What has been done so far

  - Your program

  - Your evaluation findings

  - What do your evaluation findings mean (summarize discussion and conclusion)

  - 200-250 words max

- Go through your whole evaluation report and check the formatting and referencing again, e.g., make sure each chapter starts on a new page, that your chapter numbering and Table of Contents are correct, that your Reference List and in-text citations are aligned, and that you have included the required Appendices (especially the documentation) as per the marking rubric.

- Once all necessary revisions have been made, the Word file should be converted into a single PDF document that is ready for submission.

3. *Capstone Marking for Applied Project*

A. *Capstone I Advance to Capstone II: Criteria for Approval*

Students who fail to satisfactorily complete the Captone I deliverables (see section VI.2.A) will be subject to a "NO Pass" and recommended not to proceed with Capstone II. Capstone I will also be assessed by a combination of your active participation in the advising processes, and the quality of your submission.

B. *Evaluation Report*

The primary written deliverable for the Capstone by Applied Project is the **Evaluation Report**. This report must include:

A. Executive Summary (5%): A concise overview of the project, capturing the objectives, methods, and anticipated impact of the applied work. This section should clearly outline the project's purpose and the expected contributions to the field of psychology or applied mental health.

B. Rationale (10%): An explanation of the theoretical and psychological foundations for the project. This section should detail the project's objectives and its significance, establishing a clear link between psychological concepts and the applied goals.

C. Literature Review (10%): A critical analysis of relevant research and psychological literature, showing deep understanding and integration with the project's objectives. This review should support the theoretical basis and provide context for the project's intended contributions.

D. Applied Output (20%): Documentation and description of the completed applied work (e.g., an awareness campaign, community event, artistic installation). This section should explain how the work was implemented, highlight its connection to the project goals, and describe the anticipated impact on the target audience.

E. Impact (10%): A detailed articulation of the project's intended or observed effects, addressing the significance of its contributions within psychological practice or community applications. This section should provide evidence of the work's

theoretical and practical importance, including any feedback received or early indicators of impact.

F. Program Evaluation (10%): A critical assessment of the project's structure, effectiveness, and areas for improvement. This evaluation should reflect on the methods, implementation, and outcomes, discussing both successes and challenges encountered in the project.

G. Discussion (15%): A comprehensive discussion that integrates the applied work with broader psychological and community contexts. This section should interpret the project's outcomes, draw connections to psychological theory, and suggest implications for practice or further inquiry.

H. References and Documentation (10%): Thorough, well-organized references and documentation supporting the project, including supplementary materials and relevant data. For media-based projects, this may include visual documentation, video, interview materials, or other artifacts that illustrate the development of the applied work.

I. Quality of Writing, Formatting (10%): Attention to writing quality and formatting should be evident throughout the Evaluation Report. The report must be professionally written, well-organized, and adhere to academic standards for grammar, clarity, and APA formatting.

The Evaluation Report will be assessed based on completeness, critical depth, intellectual rigor, and effective use of evidence and psychological theory, rather than solely on whether the project fully achieved its goals. Each component is essential to demonstrating the project's development, impact, and potential contributions to the field of psychology or mental health practice.

C. Logistical Support

If the applied project requires logistical arrangements outside the university's typical academic scope, the student must notify the Psychology faculty and relevant Fulbright University functionaries well in advance. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Events organized by the student in partnership with groups inside or outside Fulbright University Vietnam

- Applied projects taking place on the FUV campus (e.g., organizing an exhibition, producing a documentary)

- Any project that may raise liability concerns for the student or the institution

D. Applied Project Marking Rubric

Marking Criteria	Description for Honors	Description for Pass	Description for Below Expectations
Executive Summary (5%)	Provides a concise, comprehensive summary of the project, covering its objectives, methods, and anticipated impact. Clear and impactful, capturing key elements of the applied and psychological aspects.	Includes most key elements of the project but may lack clarity or depth in summarizing objectives or impact.	Lacks a clear summary of project objectives and outcomes; omits key elements, or is unclear.
Score:__/5	5 points	4 - 3 points	3 – 0 points
Rationale (10%)	Clearly explains the rationale for the project, effectively linking psychological theory with the applied objectives. Articulates the importance of the project and its relevance to current issues.	Provides a rationale, though the connection to psychological theory or objectives may be weak.	Lacks a clear or coherent rationale; connection to psychological concepts is unclear or absent.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5– 0 points
Literature Review (10%)	Provides a thorough, critical analysis of relevant literature, showing deep understanding and integration with project objectives. Cites appropriate sources that enrich the project's foundation.	Adequate review of relevant literature, though may lack depth or critical analysis. Cites some relevant sources but may lack integration with project objectives.	Minimal or irrelevant literature review, lacking critical analysis or relevant sources. Does not integrate literature with project objectives.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5 – 0 points
Applied Output (20%)	Presents the applied work effectively, demonstrating a strong connection to project goals. Delivers an impactful and meaningful experience for the intended audience.	Presents the applied work, though the connection to project goals may be unclear or lack impact.	Applied work is poorly presented or lacks coherence; does not effectively engage the intended audience.

Score:__/20	20 – 18 points	17 – 12 points	11 – 0 points
Impact (10%)	Articulates the intended impact of the project, with well-reasoned potential outcomes. Shows awareness of both the theoretical and practical significance of the work.	Describes intended impact, though rationale may be unclear or lacks depth in explaining significance.	Fails to articulate a meaningful impact; rationale is missing or superficial.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5 – 0 points
Program Evaluation (10%)	Critically evaluates the project's structure, strengths, and areas for improvement. Provides thorough insights into program effectiveness.	Provides some evaluation, though may be lacking in depth or critical insight. Some areas for improvement are identified.	Little to no evaluation provided; lacks critical insight or awareness of areas for improvement.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5 – 0 points
Discussion (15%)	Offers a comprehensive discussion that integrates findings with broader psychological and applied contexts. Provides insightful interpretations and implications.	Adequate discussion of findings, though may lack depth or broader contextual integration. Some interpretations are offered.	Lacks coherent discussion; minimal interpretation or integration with broader contexts.
Score:__/15	15 – 14 points	13 – 9 points	8 – 0 points
References and Documentation (10%)	Provides thorough, well-organized references and documentation supporting the project, including supplementary materials and relevant data. Clear and professionally presented.	References and documentation are included but may lack organization or thoroughness.	Minimal or poorly organized documentation; lacks key supporting materials or references.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5 – 0 points
Quality of Writing, Formatting (10%)	Writing is clear, logical, and professionally presented throughout the project. Grammar and style are consistently correct, and formatting adheres to guidelines.	Writing is generally clear and organized, though some minor errors in grammar or formatting may be present.	Writing is unclear, with frequent grammatical or formatting errors that detract from readability.
Score:__/10	10 – 9 points	8 – 6 points	5– 0 points
Total Average Score			

VIII.   IRB Approval

If your project requires working with human subjects through processes that include, but are

not limited to, in-person or online interviews, direct or indirect observations, opinion surveys,

etc., you will be responsible for obtaining approval from Fulbright University Vietnam's Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB approval process involves taking an online module to learn about IRB procedures, as well as submitting an application detailing your research design and plan for data collection and protection. Please consult with your supervisor to decide whether your project requires obtaining IRB approval.

Students must obtain IRB approval **prior to** the period of their Fulbright-affiliated research. Failure to do so would result in delays to the project and/or its suspension. For this reason, Psychology students are advised to **begin their IRB application as soon as their Capstone application is accepted**, or during Capstone I at the latest.

More information on the IRB approval process can be found at https://fulbright.edu.vn/irb/

IX. Academic Integrity

The Capstone is subject to the regulations described in Fulbright University Vietnam's Code of Academic Integrity including the use of generative AI.

X. Style Guidelines and Formatting

Unless specified otherwise by supervisors, students are required to follow the style guidelines and formatting from the American Psychological Association 7th ed (https://apastyle.apa.org/). The following are links within this website that you will find most helpful:

- How to reference: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/references/examples
- Paper formatting: https://apastyle.apa.org/style-grammar-guidelines/paper-format