EDUC90747: EVALUATION CAPSTONE

Details

Coordinator	Amy Gullickson (**amy.gullickson@unimelb.edu.au**)
Credit	12.5
Duration	Semester 2 over 14 weeks
Assessments	**20%** Project Proposal, 1000 words **20%** Capstone Conference, ~1000* word poster or wiki, or 10-minute presentation* **60%** Project Report, ~3000* *15-20% over the word limit acceptable
Learning Outcomes Students will:	Appreciate feasibility, utility, accuracy and appropriateness as aspects of the evaluation process Identify introductory aspects of project management Understand the mechanics of reports or journal articles Gain experience in evaluation leadership and professional practice

Schedule

Week	Content	Location	2013 Dates & Deadlines
1 -2	Introduction, project selection	Online	
3	Full day work session	On campus	Saturday, August 17
5	Submit one page proposal, 1000 words	Online	Monday, August 26
5-10	Work on capstone project, regular check ins with evaluation fellow		
10	Capstone Conference	On campus	Saturday, October 5
11-12	Wrap up project, finalize paper		
13	Submit report or article	Online	Monday, October 21

Introduction

The Australian Quality Framework (AQF) requires that Master of Evaluation students who began their study in 2013 must demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills through a 25 credit capstone experience. This experience consists of two 12.5 credit subjects which must be satisfactorily completed: (i) Research methods (satisfactory completion of one of: Quantitative, or Qualitative, or Mixed Methods modules) and (ii) the Capstone subject. In the Capstone subject, students will apply theory, knowledge and skills developed throughout the Master of Evaluation to design and complete an individual project. To achieve this, students will design a project, submit an abstract and justification for it, work on it under the mentorship of an evaluation fellow, present on it to their colleagues and the MGSE community at a subject conference, and deliver a paper or other product to an Evaluation Fellow for marking and to the subject coordinator for moderation.

The subject is designed to allow students to explore different aspects of evaluation theory, method or practice. It is designed to enable students to extend knowledge acquired in previous subjects in the Masters of Evaluation towards a specialised topic of interest. The substantive content will vary depending on the nature of the project. Students are required to choose a topic related to evaluation practice, conduct a small study and report on it. The conference format will give students the opportunity to demonstrate their leadership and professional skills to the broader community.

Project

For the capstone project, each student will undertake work in one of two streams:

> **Stream 1:** Research on Evaluation, e.g., a substantial critical review of a particular body of literature or an evaluation approach **OR**
>
> **Stream 2:** Practice Evaluation, e.g., working with a team or as a supervised individual to conduct an evaluation

Criteria for the project:

- The work must be conducted within the subject period (Semester 2)
- It must not require MGSE ethical approval or already have ethical approval
- Approval of host site must be provided in writing (if applicable)
- Mentorship agreement signed by an Evaluation Fellow (if applicable)

Evaluation Fellows

Students in both streams will be mentored by a qualified Evaluation Fellow in their capstone project. Evaluation Fellows have sound knowledge of the discipline and theories of evaluation and have demonstrated exemplary practice in the area of evaluation. The Evaluation Fellow will help the student refine his or her topic and define the deliverables, meet with the student at least fortnightly to discuss the project and his or her learning from it, communicate periodically with the subject coordinator, and mark the student's project submission. For both streams, the Capstone coordinator will

review the project proposal, check in periodically with the student and his or her Evaluation Fellow, and moderate the final paper.

Details for each stream are as follows:

Stream 1: Research on Evaluation. The subject coordinator or another CPE staff member will serve as Evaluation Fellows for students in this stream, unless a student makes other arrangements with the subject coordinator.

Stream 2: Practice Evaluation. The type and location of the project will determine who serves as a student's Evaluation Fellow in this stream. Practice evaluation possibilities include:

STREAM 2 POSSIBILITIES			
Location	**Content**	**Evaluation Fellow**	**Arrangements**
in the student's current workplace.	Student designs a Capstone project that contributes to his or her current work role.	Project supervisor from workplace, if necessary, in partnership with a CPE staff member	Contact the coordinator to discuss project and Evaluation Fellow arrangements
Melbourne-based	Students work on an existing evaluation project with a Melbourne based organization or consultant	CPE-identified Melbourne based evaluators, researchers, and academics	Contact the coordinator
at CPE	Student works on an existing project at CPE.	CPE staff	Contact the coordinator
international or interstate	Student designs an independent project or identifies a local evaluation fellow to work with on an existing project	Identified by student and approved by coordinator or work online with a Melbourne-based, CPE identified evaluation fellow.	Contact the coordinator to discuss project and Evaluation Fellow arrangements

Ethics

Capstone project proposals will not be accepted if they require ethics approval. Students can work with evaluation fellows on projects that have already attained ethics approval or projects that are exempt from the MGSE process (e.g. private evaluation projects and consultations).

Attendance

Students will be required to attend two one-day sessions on the Parkville campus:

1. In approximately week 3, CPE staff will give an orientation to the subject, discuss ethics and code of conduct, and provide resources to assist students with project management. Students will present, discuss, and refine their topics and familarise themselves with the capstone implementation process. Students who are unable to physically attend can make arrangements to participate via Adobe Connect.
2. In week 10 (or thereafter), students will come together for a mini-conference at which they present on their projects. Students who are unable to attend the mini-conference may create a wiki, poster, or video conference to deliver their presentation.

Assessment

The Capstone assessment has three components:

1. Project Proposal, 1000 words
2. Capstone Conference, ~1000* word poster or wiki, or 10-minute presentation*
3. Project Report, ~3000*

The first two components are modeled on the process for proposing and delivering a session at an annual professional evaluation conference like those held by the Australasian Evaluation Society or the American Evaluation Association.

Project Proposal: 1000 words

The Project Proposal will include the following:

- Abstract: 150 words, summarizing the project, suitable for marketing your session at the mini-conference
- Indication of type of session – Poster, Presentation, or Wiki
- Justification Statement: 350 words, describing the aim and rationale for the project (i.e., contribution to the student's development as a professional evaluator)
- Methods and Logistics: 500 words, describing the methods, timeline, and structure for the final paper/product.

If applicable, the proposal should also include a bibliography, a letter of approval from the host site, and a letter of agreement from the Evaluation Fellow. These will not contribute to the overall word count.

Capstone Conference Session: 1000 words*

Students will attend the on campus conference at Parkville and deliver either a poster or 10-minute presentation on their project. Students who cannot attend in person may create a wiki through LMS or arrange for a video conference presentation during the day. For those conducting Research on Evaluation, the conference session should summarize findings, highlight the applications of the findings, and lessons learned. For those conducting a Practice Evaluation, the conference session should focus on evaluation approaches, methods, and tools used, and lessons learned. Creativity in presenting is encouraged!

Project Report: 3000 words*

Each student will produce a synthesis of their work appropriate to the task he or she has undertaken. This may take the form of a journal article or report. The final format will be negotiated with and agreed upon by the student's Evaluation Fellow, and approved by the subject coordinator.

Caveat

*15-20% over the word limit on the conference session and report is acceptable.