

## **BILINGUAL/ESL EDUCATION CAPSTONE PROJECT GUIDELINES**

One of the requirements for the Bilingual/ESL Education Master Degree is to complete a Capstone Project. This requirement allows candidates to demonstrate mastery of their academic and professional development as an educational leader in bilingual/ESL education.

The Capstone Project requires candidates to identify a problem-of-practice related to the candidate's program area of interest and professional goals. Each candidate will design, develop, and describe the proposed problem-of-practice research area and research-based best practices (e.g., teaching or assessment strategies, curriculum, intervention, teacher professional development, or program etc.).

The requirements for the Capstone Project will be provided through detailed instruction in CUIN 7301/7375 Capstone Project course. Courses throughout your master's program will provide content and guidance to assist in crafting the required components of your Capstone Project. To complete the Capstone project, you will receive guidance initially from your instructor-of-record in CUIN 7301/7375. For further guidance/questions to complete the Capstone project, the candidate may contact Dr. Jie Zhang at [jzhang64@uh.edu](mailto:jzhang64@uh.edu) and/or Dr. Mikel Cole at [mwcole2@central.uh.edu](mailto:mwcole2@central.uh.edu).

### The Capstone Project Components

**Title Page:** Your name, title of your Capstone Project, date and the name of your academic advisor.

**Description of the Problem-of-Practice:** A detailed description of the need and context for your project. In this section you could provide data to support the need(e.g., demographics or assessment data etc.) or descriptions of instructional situations that would benefit from innovations in teaching and learning practices (e.g., new teaching/assessment strategies or intervention, teacher PD or a new program etc.). Here are a few examples of problems-of-practice:

- Your teacher team wants to develop a curriculum unit incorporating culturally relevant pedagogies to honor and build on bilingual students' linguistic and cultural resources.
- Teachers are not sure about whether a fourth-grade bilingual/ESL student's reading difficulties are related to second language acquisition or learning difficulties. You may want to collaborate with the special education teacher in your school to find out the sources of reading difficulties and provide appropriate support for the student.
- You are being charged by your principal/district leader to design, develop, and evaluate a small professional development or after-school program to enhance bilingual/ESL student learning experiences in your school.
- Teachers wonder why students in a certain bilingual/ESL program/class A performs better than students in another program/class B. You want to collect and analyze student assessment data to study patterns of academic performance.

**Project Description:** A description of the Capstone Project, a timeline for development and completion, a list of resources needed to complete the project, grade-level(s) used and additional information that would include demographics of the school setting, students, teachers, etc.

**Literature Review:** The purpose of the literature review is to survey print and electronic scholarly resources that are relevant to your problem-of-practice. For each source you cite, you will provide a description of the major information in the resource, a summary of the information and a critical evaluation of each resource in relation to your problem-of-practice. For example, a problem-of-practice related to ineffective comprehension skills among bilingual or ESL students in your fifth-grade class would require an in-depth review of the literature related to comprehension instruction in first and/or second language.

In your Capstone course, you will learn about developing a literature review and you will be provided with an instructional video that will assist you in learning to locate print and electronic resources related to your problem-of-practice. Your literature review will include a synthesis and summary of relevant research studies, journal articles and other published materials that could include websites, video, book chapters and news articles. You are encouraged to use the following YouTube link to learn the process of retrieving these resources from the University of Houston Library: <https://youtu.be/FJNmAPHFbnI>. Your literature review will be 8 – 10 double-spaced pages. You are to use the most current *APA Publication Manual* so that you will cite your references correctly. You may also use the Purdue Online Writing Laboratory website for additional examples for using the APA style (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/2/10/>).

**Research-based Best Practices:** This section should include recommended strategies/practices to address the problem-of-practice based on the literature review. The recommended strategies/practices should be research-based, actionable, and relevant to the context of your proposed problem.

**Action Plan:** This section should include an action plan to investigate the problem. For example, if you plan to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogies to enhance lessons, you will need to come up with specific action plans to design/refine lessons and assess student learning processes and outcomes. You may propose data sources such as lesson plans, student work-samples, student feedback, formative assessment items, field observation notes, state of Texas assessment scores, and other relevant products.

Important Note. Due to the IRB and time constraints, you are NOT required to actually conduct the proposed study by collecting or analyzing data or presenting results.

**Self-reflection Discussion:** What did you learn from this experience? What would you do differently if you could repeat the project? This should be a discussion of information you will share with other professionals in the fields of bilingual/ESL education through possible publications and/or presentations.

Reference List of all Items used in Your Literature Review and in other Sections of Your Capstone Project following APA guidelines.

Timeline

| <b>Capstone Project Products</b>       | <b>Semester to Have Products Completed</b> |
|--|--|
| Title Page                             |  |
| Description of the Problem-of-Practice |  |
| Project Description                    |  |
| Literature Review                      |  |
| Research-based Best Practices          |  |
| Action Plan                            |  |
| Self-reflection Discussion             |  |
| Reference List                         |  |

Scoring Rubric

| <b>Descriptors</b>  | <b>Below Expectations (1)</b>   | <b>Meets Expectations (2)</b>  | <b>Exceeds Expectations (3)</b>  | <b>Score</b> |
|---|---|--|--|--------------|
| Need for the Problem of Practice                              | Not clearly defined.  | Presented with a limited description.  | Clear presentation with examples and data trends.  |              |
| Project Description   | The design and execution plan of Capstone project is incomplete.  | The design and execution plan of Capstone project is presented with limited details.                   | The design and execution plan of Capstone project is presented with a comprehensive description. |              |
| Explanation of the Literature Related to the Capstone Project | Inadequate presentation of the literature related to the Capstone Project.  | Adequate presentation of the literature related to the Capstone Project.                               | Professional presentation of the literature related to the Capstone Project.                     |              |
| Action Plan   | The action plan is presented without details.   | The action plan is presented with limited details.   | The action plan is comprehensive and accurate.   |              |
| Professional Reflection                                       | Inadequate presentation of a critical and interpretive reflection.  | Adequate presentation of a critical and interpretive reflection.                                       | Professional presentation of a critical and interpretive reflection.                             |              |
| Writing Competence  | Inadequate presentation reflective of graduate level work and too many writing convention errors. Did not correctly follow the assigned format. | Adequate organization of ideas with few writing convention errors. Limited use of the assigned format. | Written document is comprehensively and professionally presented using the assigned format.      |              |