Capstone Course Development Proposal Guidelines for 2015-2016

Stipends are available to faculty and staff who are interested in developing or redesigning a capstone experience within an undergraduate or graduate degree program. Many degree programs already have such experiences in place and some examples include: didactic courses, team experiences, field placements, design projects, or supervised internships. Integrative learning experiences such as these provide an important means of achieving degree program learning outcomes. The funds are intended to support the development of new— or improvement of existing— capstone experiences and the assessment processes that help determine whether they meet intended program learning outcomes. Proposals are due by November 13, 2015.

In this initiative, $2000 awards will be available for faculty/staff to (re)design a course that engages students in an integrative learning experience that can be used for assessing specific degree program learning outcomes. For an undergraduate capstone course, it is desirable that the capstone experience be used to address at least one of the NIU Plus baccalaureate learning outcomes. Initially, $1500 will be provided to support the (re)design, implementation, and assessment effort. Faculty/staff are expected to report on the successes of the capstone course development project after the materials have been fully developed, the course/experience implemented and assessment results obtained. On receipt of an approved report by the University Assessment Panel, participants will receive the additional $500. Two faculty/staff from a department/school may work together on the capstone course and share the stipend. Only one proposal per degree program should be submitted.

The proposal for each capstone course development or redesign should include the following items:

— A completed submission form with all appropriate signatures.
— Course name and number (if applicable) with an indication of whether it is a newly developed or a redesigned course.
— A rationale for why the new capstone course or redesign is needed, and how the new course or redesign will remedy the need. Keep the rationale focused on program mission and the intended student learning outcomes.
— A list of the degree program student learning outcomes the capstone course will meet.
— A list of tentative course learning outcomes (i.e., course objectives) the capstone course will meet.
— A content outline for the course, including a description of major changes for redesigned courses.
— A description of the proposed learning opportunities in which students engage in integrative learning experiences. The description should include a plan to provide support and guidance.
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for students. In addition, the description should specify how the learning opportunities will enable students to meet the selected baccalaureate or program student learning outcome(s).

- A plan to develop major course assessments (i.e., assignments, projects, requirements) that will provide meaningful data, including a description of major changes for redesigned courses. Ideally, the types of proposed major course assessments should include direct and indirect assessments, as well as formative and summative assessments.

- An assessment matrix that demonstrates the alignment among the major course assessments (i.e., assignments, projects, requirements) with the course objectives, program student learning outcomes, and baccalaureate learning outcomes (if undergraduate).

- A project timeline listing the actions required to develop, implement, and evaluate the course. The timeline should indicate what is to be done, who will be responsible, when it will be done, and how you will know how well it was done. It should also indicate when you expect to report on the outcomes of the course and course development.

- A plan for an evaluation of the capstone course development or redesign process, including the use of measurable benchmarks and an indication with whom a report of the results of the evaluation will be shared.

- A plan for sharing and using the results from the capstone course major assessments for continuous program improvement (including with whom and when results will be shared).

EXAMPLE ASSESSMENT MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Outcomes (i.e., Objectives)</th>
<th>Program Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Baccalaureate Learning Outcomes (undergraduate only)</th>
<th>Major Course Assessments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. When given an authentic scenario, the nursing student will demonstrate critical thinking skills while communicating with a physician.</td>
<td>2. Evaluate critical thinking/clinical reasoning when providing nursing care.</td>
<td>d. Demonstrate critical, creative, and independent thought.</td>
<td>1. “Doctor! Doctor!” SBAR Assignment: practice communication with a physician, including synthesis of a patient situation.</td>
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The proposal must go through the appropriate departmental and college procedures, which may set earlier deadlines for the submission of proposals. Approved proposals should then be forwarded by the college to the Office of Assessment Services by November 13, 2015. Please contact the Office of Assessment Services with questions or for assistance in developing your proposal.
Capstone Proposal Submission Form for 2015-2016

Name ____________________________________________________________

Department/School ________________________________________________

Degree Program ____________________________________________________

Telephone ____________________________

E-mail ______________________________

Course Name and Number ____________________________________________

Is this a proposal for a new course or a redesigned course? ______________________

Proposal Title ______________________________________________________

Proposed Implementation Date ____________________________

______________________________ Date

Applicant Signature

______________________________ Date

Department/School Chair Signature

______________________________ Date

College Dean Signature

• Send an electronic copy of the proposal as an e-mail attachment to assess@niu.edu.

• Submit a paper copy of the proposal along with the signed submission form to the Office of Assessment Services.

Due Date: November 13, 2015
## Capstone Course Development Proposal Rubric

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Undeveloped</th>
<th>Established</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rationale</strong></td>
<td>Rationale fails to communicate why the course is needed. It is unclear how the funds will help the instructor (re)design a capstone course that will be used to foster student learning and assess program outcomes.</td>
<td>Rationale demonstrates a need for the capstone course and how the course will remedy the need, with a focus on student learning, the program mission, and program learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Rationale not only demonstrates how the capstone course will remedy significant student and program needs, but also addresses needs beyond the program (e.g., baccalaureate, accreditation).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Outcomes</strong></td>
<td>Unclear which student learning outcomes will be addressed. Program, course, and/or baccalaureate learning outcomes are missing.</td>
<td>Program, course, and (if undergraduate) baccalaureate student learning outcomes are listed.</td>
<td>Student learning outcomes are listed and clearly linked with each other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Assessment Matrix</strong></td>
<td>It is not clear how specific program, course, and (if undergraduate) baccalaureate student learning outcomes will be assessed. No assessment matrix is provided.</td>
<td>Assessment matrix is provided showing alignment among course, program, (if undergraduate) baccalaureate student learning outcomes, and major assessments.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content Outline</strong></td>
<td>Course content outline is not provided or is extremely vague.</td>
<td>Course content outline fits with course objectives and program student learning outcomes; Major changes described for redesigned courses.</td>
<td>Innovative course outline clearly describes how students will achieve student learning outcomes; Major changes described for redesigned courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Opportunities</strong></td>
<td>Student learning does not appear to be a priority. Students are not required to interact with others, or students are required to interact but no plan for support and guidance is provided.</td>
<td>Clear, student focused description of how course will affect learning. Students will be engaged in active, collaborative learning; support and guidance will be provided. For undergraduate course, the learning experiences provide an opportunity to meet the baccalaureate student learning outcomes.</td>
<td>Student learning is paramount, with a plan to solicit student input in the (re)design effort. Plan to develop significant active or collaborative learning opportunities for the students inside and outside of the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Course Assessments</strong></td>
<td>Plan has few ideas regarding possible methods of assessment. General pass/fail or course grades are listed as methods of assessment. No direct, summative methods of assessment are listed.</td>
<td>It is clear the major course assessments will provide meaningful data. Assessments include a range of direct and indirect assessments as well as formative and summative assessments. Major changes for redesigned courses are provided.</td>
<td>Detailed plan for developing/redesigning major assessments, including a description of possible scoring criteria and rubrics. Clear description of why each direct and indirect, summative and formative method of assessment is critical.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Timeline</strong></td>
<td>No timeline is presented or timeline is vague or unrealistic.</td>
<td>Timeline is feasible with all elements of the course design accounted for (e.g., development, implementation, evaluation, reporting).</td>
<td>The timeline is feasible, includes all elements, and indicates who is responsible, what is to be done, when it is to be done, and how well it is to be done.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sharing and Using Assessment Results</strong></td>
<td>Incomplete plan to share and use the results of course assessments for program improvement (i.e., no indication of with whom and/or when results will be used).</td>
<td>Clear plan to share and use capstone course major assessment results for continuous program improvement. Stakeholders include students, faculty, and relevant university committees (e.g., UAP).</td>
<td>Clear program improvement focus, including a curriculum map or narrative of program assessments detailing how the major capstone course assessment results fit within the entire program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation Plan</strong></td>
<td>Plan for evaluation of the course development or redesign process is lacking. No indication of measurable benchmarks and/or with whom results of evaluation will be shared (e.g., UAP).</td>
<td>Plan describes how the course development process will be evaluated, including the use of measurable benchmarks and an indication with whom the results will be shared (e.g. program faculty and UAP).</td>
<td>Provides clear and comprehensive evaluation tied to the course development or redesign process, including use of measurable benchmarks to monitor progress. Plan indicates how the UAP and program faculty will be informed of the evaluation results.</td>
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</tbody>
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