



Course Syllabus – INST 490 Section 0101

Integrated Capstone for Information Science

INST490

Spring 2019

Awesome Sauce
BSIS CAPSTONE

Course Description & Learning Outcomes

Pre- or co-requisite: Completion of all InfoSci core courses.

The **Capstone in Information Science** is the main practicum course in the Undergraduate Information Science (BSIS) program. It provides a platform for students to integrate and apply many of the concepts, methods, and tools they have learned throughout their BSIS program of study. Over the course of the semester, students collaborate in groups on a specific project that addresses an information problem or fulfills an information need.

Our goals are that your capstone project will:

- Be an authentic, real-world application (i.e., has "so what" value)
- Tell an information science story with interrelated technology, human, social, information elements
- Enable you to discuss your project's impact on people/society

Upon successful completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Identify and articulate a problem that can be addressed or a need that can be fulfilled by making use of information and technology tools and methods within the field of Information Science.
- Identify the approaches, methods, tools and processes that can be used to address the problem or the need in question; and pick the most suitable solution mix given the requirements and constraints at hand.
- Develop and revise an action plan to address the problem or the need in question using the chosen solution mix.
- Implement and execute the action plan to address the problem or the need in question.
- Report the process and the outcomes of the intervention, critically evaluating the costs, the benefits, and the overall success level of the project.
- Explain how the project is situated in its broader social or organizational context and reflects ethical and equity issues.
- Assess your own learning.
- Plan for ongoing professional and career development.
- Demonstrate professional skills that are necessary to function in information science-related job markets.

Elizabeth (Beth)

Bonsignore, PhD

ebonsign@umd.edu

she/her/hers

Class Meets

Thurs

6:00 – 8:45pm

PLS Room #1130

Office Hours

PTX 2109K

by appointment

Course Communication

- Announcements, both time-sensitive and regular updates, will be posted on ELMS and e-mailed to the class listserv.
- Contact me via ELMS or by e-mail (be sure to include “**INST 490**” in the subject).
- I will try to reply to e-mails within 48 hours –but please send a reminder if I do not – again, with “**INST 490**” in the subject.

As a culminating experience, the capstone provides the opportunity for you to synthesize the information that you have been learning in academic coursework and be able to apply this information and the resulting skills to a practical project.

Capstone Project Parameters

Students will work in groups of four to five over the course of the semester, depending on the size and scope of a given project. Projects may include but are not limited to: designing or revamping an information system, administering a user experience study, establishing information system and/or policy requirements, or performing a data analysis intervention. Throughout the course, students will identify an information science problem, articulate the problem, identify tools and methods that could be used to develop a solution, create a project plan, and implement the solution. In general, the project topics will be provided to the students, and each project will have at least one external stakeholder who will meet with the students at selected points during the project and contribute to the assessment of their work on the project. Most student groups will select from a project topic that has been coordinated in advance by the instructor; however, on a case-by-case basis, student groups may propose their own project topic. In such cases, the project must be approved by the instructor.

Course Activities and Learning Assessments

Your final grade will be based on the following assignments. They are divided into **two overarching components**:

- **Project Capstone [CPxx]:** The assignments in this component cover all of the deliverables that are related to your group project. With the exception of the Capstone In-Progress Reviews (IPRs), each assignment is worth 10 points, or 10% of your grade.
- **Professionalization [PDxx]:** The assignments in this component are designed to support your efforts to launch your career as an Information Professional. We have collaborated with the UMD Career Center to craft a series of activities that will help you develop a professional profile, resume, job interview strategies, and job/internship search strategies.

Learning Assessment	Points for Assignment	Weight for Assignment
Project Capstone Component (60% of your grade)		
[CP01] Project context analysis / charter	100	10%
[CP02] Problem articulation / requirements document	100	10%
[CP03] Project plan /Work Breakdown Structure	100	10%
[IPR] Project In-Process // Internal Progress Reviews (IPRs) – multiple (x6)	20 points each , <u>drop lowest score</u>	10%
[CP04] Project final report and other deliverables	100	10%
[CP05] Project presentation	100	10%
Professionalization Component (40% of your grade)		

[PD01] Resume / Professional Profile Document	100	10%
[PD02] Search Strategies	100	10%
[PD03] Professional Networking Assignment	100	10%
[PD04] Mock job interview [throughout the semester]	100	10%

Detailed Outline: Course Activities and Learning Assessments

Details regarding each assignment are included below.

- **Capstone Project Component.** Sixty percent (60%) of your grade is tied to your group capstone project. With the exception of in-progress/in-process reviews (IPRs), each assignment is worth 10% (10 points) of your grade. The IPRs will be due periodically, at regularly scheduled intervals throughout the semester, and will be completed in coordination with the instructor, during class.
 - **Project selection and assignment [CP01a].** For the first two weeks of the course, potential projects will be introduced to the class, and each student will have an opportunity to select up to three projects that s/he is interested in, and team members with whom s/he would like to work. The instructor reserves the right to load balance team members based on the skills needed to tackle the project with individual and team-based synergy. That is, a project that requires someone with database design and implementation experience will need at least one team member who is comfortable with/familiar with DBMS strategies and implementation.
 - **Project context analysis [CP01]:** Once your team is assigned a project, you will conduct a detailed analysis of the current situation, history, and issues pertinent to your client and project overall. The context analysis will result in a general/broad project charter and context overview. Its purpose is help you and your team to frame the project and understand your client's company/goals for undertaking the project.
 - **Problem articulation / requirements document [CP02]:** You and your team will develop a document that articulates an information problem or need based on the problem/project that we have identified for you to work on (via the project selection process). This document will frame the requirements and specifications for the project your team will work on.
 - **Project plan [CP03]:** Based on the feedback they receive on the project proposal, you will develop a detailed, time-bound plan to carry out the project. Upon receiving the instructor's approval of the project plan, you will start working on the project.
 - **In-Process/Progress Reviews (IPRs):** Throughout the semester, each team will meet with the instructor to review, present and submit an IPR that summarizes some incremental aspect of the project. For example, the IPR will typically consist of a review of one functional requirement from the requirements document, with team members reviewing how the status of that requirement. Some questions that should be reviewed include: Is this functional requirement completed/What is the status overall? What are the challenges met or still being worked, and what are the opportunities that have been taken? What are the potential points of failure? Who is working which issues, and what client feedback has been provided? (~Five IPRs for the semester, at 20pts for the IPR).
 - **Project presentation [CP04]:** Students will present their project work either as a poster or a live presentation at the end of the semester. In most cases, the primary client will attend the presentation (others who are deemed key stakeholders, depending on the project, may also attend).
 - **Project report [CP05]:** By the end of the semester, the students will wrap up their project, bring together the project deliverables, and write a report that summarizes what they have achieved, what they have failed to achieve, what they see as the strengths and limitations of their project solution, and what future improvements and extensions they envision.
- **Professionalization Component.** Forty percent (40%) of your grade is tied to your own individual professional development.

- **Resume & Online Professional Profile [PD01]:** This assignment will be broken into three different parts: an initial resumé that will be used for your capstone project “bidding” and an online professional profile. **PD01a** is your initial resumé and response to a survey. **PD01b** is your online professional profile (e.g., LinkedIn). This online presence will lay out your career interests, potential job descriptions that are of interest to you, your existing skills and knowledge that are relevant to your identified career paths and potential jobs, and what other skills and knowledge you think that you need to acquire to be competitive as a professional pursuing their identified career paths and potential jobs, as well as a plan for acquiring those skills and knowledge during your remaining time in the InfoSci program and even beyond graduation. Effectively, this will be a LinkedIn Profile (but it could also be a personal website). Please note, as you craft your professional profile document, that UMD has a student social media policy: <https://www.president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-v-student-affairs/v-120a>.
- **Search strategies [PD02]:** This assignment involves conducting a [search strategy](#) for a job. Based on the UMD Career Center’s recommended best practices, or “[Job Search Plan](#),” you will conduct a search and reflect upon how you would update your resume to best fit the jobs you’re interested in applying for. Schedule a search strategy review with the Career Center, if desired. Your assignment “deliverable” is a short ~1page, single-spaced reflection (400-600 words) about your process.
- **Networking strategies [PD03]:** You will complete at least ONE of the following three activities:
 - 1. prepare for and participate in an informational interview for a career domain you wish to learn more about. (Informational interviews are different than job interviews, but require preparation just the same.) After the informational interview, write a ½ - 1 page (single spaced) essay reflecting on the experience.
 - 2. Identify and contact no less than five leaders in a career domain of interest, asking them to participate in an informational interview with you. Document your attempts to get the interview. Write a ½ - 1 page (single spaced) essay detailing what questions you would have asked, what insights you hoped to gain, and anything you learned through the experience of trying to set up interviews.
 - 3. Attend a networking event (such as a job fair) and talk to at least five different employer representatives (each representing a different organization) while there. Provide some documentation for who you visited (e.g., business cards) and write a ½ - 1 page (single spaced) essay reflecting on the experience and what you learned.
- **Mock interview [PD04]:** You will prepare for and participate in a mock interview for a position you have identified within your career domain. We will be practicing and receiving feedback in class, and will work with the UMD Career Center and iSchool faculty/contacts to conduct the interviews. More details to come as we get closer to this exciting professionalization activity.

Grades

Grades are not given, but **earned**. Your grade is determined by your performance on the learning assessments in the course. If earning a particular grade is important to you, please speak with me at the **beginning** of the semester so that I can offer some helpful suggestions for achieving your goal.

All assessment scores will be posted on the course ELMS page. If you would like to review any of your grades (including the exams), or have questions about how something was scored, please email me to schedule a time for us to meet in my office.

I am happy to discuss any of your grades with you, and if I have made a mistake I will correct it quickly. Any formal grade disputes must be submitted in writing and within one week of receiving the grade.

Final letter grades are assigned based on the percentage of total assessment points earned. To be fair to everyone I have to establish clear standards and apply them consistently, so please understand that being close to a cutoff is not the same this as making the cut (89.99 \neq 90.00). It would be unethical to make exceptions for some and not others. I do not round grades up, so do not ask me to do this at the end of the semester. **I will not respond to email requests for a grade bump at the end of the semester.** The cutoffs are as follows:

Final Grade Cutoffs							
+	97.00%	+	87.00%	+	77.00%	+	67.00%
A	94.00%	B	84.00%	C	74.00%	D	64.00%
-	90.00%	-	80.00%	-	70.00%	-	60.00%

Late Assignments

A late penalty will be applied to any assignment that is submitted late (starting one minute beyond the due date and time).

Late assignments will be graded according to the following formula:

$$[\text{grade on assignment}] * 0.92^{[\text{number of days late}]}$$

For example, if you turn in a 10-point assignment 1 day late, and earned a 100% on that assignment, your final grade for that assignment would be (1.00)(0.92¹), or 92%. If you turned in the same assignment 3 days late, and earned an 80%, your grade would be (0.80)(0.92³), or 62%. Therefore, although your grade will take a serious hit if the assignment is late, **in this class it is always better to turn in an assignment late than to not do it at all.**

Please prepare in advance so that you will not encounter technical difficulties that will result in your work receiving a late penalty. **Technical difficulties are not an excuse for late assignments.** If you have a conflict with the due date, assignments can always be submitted early. **Generally speaking, illnesses are not an excuse for late assignments** because you will receive the assignments at least one week before they are due.

If you know you will not be able to meet an assignment deadline, contact me **before** the due date to explain why you will need to submit the assignment late; these will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Note that **in-class activities and learning checks cannot be made up**; however, only 20 will count toward your final grade, giving you some leeway for missed classes.

Project Presentation Policy

This policy is adapted from the UMD Exam Policy, as your capstone project presentation requires the same level of commitment and responsibility as is required for scheduled exams. **If you need to miss your Project Presentation because of outside circumstances** (e.g., a religious holiday, military duties, work/athletic team travel), you must email me **before the drop/add period ends (September 10)** to reschedule your team's project presentation time. If you are sick on any project presentation or IPR days, you must provide me with a doctor's note to be excused ([see the UMD policies on absences](#)) and should email me before the exam time to let me know you're sick. If you miss an exam due to other circumstances (e.g., oversleeping), you will not be able to make up the presentation.

Policy on Academic Misconduct

Cases of academic misconduct will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct irrespective of scope and circumstances, as required by university rules and regulations. It is crucial to understand that the instructors do not have a choice of following other courses of actions in handling these cases. There are severe consequences of academic misconduct, some of which are permanent and reflected on the student's transcript. For details about procedures governing such referrals and possible consequences for the student please visit <http://osc.umd.edu/OSC/Default.aspx>.

University of Maryland Code of Academic Integrity

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://shc.umd.edu/SHC/Default.aspx>.

Accommodations

Students with disabilities should inform me of their needs at the beginning of the semester. Please also contact the Disability Support Services (301-314-7682 or <http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS/>). DSS will make arrangements with the student and me to determine and implement appropriate academic accommodations. Inclusion is one of the iSchool's core values, and we have attempted to make all materials and assignments accessible to people with varying abilities. However, if there is something else I can do to make the class more accessible please schedule a time to come talk to me. This will benefit not only yourself but also future students!

Get Some Help!

You are expected to take personal responsibility for your own learning. This includes acknowledging when your performance does not match your goals and doing something about it. Everyone can benefit from some expert guidance on time management, note taking, and exam preparation, so I encourage you to consider visiting <http://ter.ps/learn> to schedule an appointment with an academic coach. Sharpen your communication skills (and improve your grade) by visiting <http://ter.ps/writing> and schedule an appointment with the campus Writing Center. Finally, if you just need someone to talk to, visit <http://www.counseling.umd.edu>.



Everything is free because you have already paid for it, and **everyone needs help**... all you have to do is ask for it.

Names/Pronouns and Self Identifications

The University of Maryland recognizes the importance of a diverse student body, and we are committed to fostering equitable classroom environments. I invite you, if you wish, to tell us how you want to be referred to both in terms of your name and your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them, etc.). The pronouns someone indicates are not necessarily indicative of their gender identity. Visit trans.umd.edu to learn more.

Additionally, how you identify in terms of your gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and dis/ability, among all aspects of your identity, is your choice whether to disclose (e.g., should it come up in classroom conversation about our experiences and perspectives) and should be self-identified, not presumed or imposed. I will do my best to address and refer to all students accordingly, and I ask you to do the same for all your fellow Terps.

Students in Need

If you feel you are encountering psychological problems that hamper your course work, please refer to the Counseling Center (301-314-7651 or <http://www.counseling.umd.edu/>) for expert help. For more information on UMD's Student Services, see <http://www.studentaffairs.umd.edu/student-life>.

If you or someone you know feels unsafe, the university has resources (see list below). Read more about hate-based crimes here: https://ocrsm.umd.edu/files/Hate_Bias_FAQs_final.pdf.

Name	Phone	Website
University Counseling Center	301-314-7651	www.counseling.umd.edu
University Health Center and Mental Health Services	301-314-8180	www.health.umd.edu
University of Maryland Chaplains		thestamp.umd.edu/memorial_chapel/chaplains
Office of Civil Rights and Sexual Misconduct	301-405-1142	www.ocrsm.umd.edu

Week	Topics	Readings/Audio/Video	What's Due?
1 1/31	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review syllabus and structure of capstone project & professionalization component Class Introductions Goals + Planning/Collab. Activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Project Descriptions (uploaded onto ELMS 8/30-9/4) 	2/4: Getting to Know you Survey Due 2/6: [PD01a] Initial / Current Resumés uploaded to ELMS.
2 2/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of “menu” of possible capstone projects Introduction to Project Management Principles The Project “Charter”/Context Analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project Management overview (on ELMS) Project Bidding Survey Project Charter Templates (on ELMS) Reviewing Various LinkedIn and other (online) Professional Profiles 	2/8: Project Survey Responses (“bid” on your Top 3 choices)
3 2/14 <3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment of Projects (by 2/12) 	Team IPRs (~15” each) Client History/Issues/Scope Review Client Questions Establish/Outline Team Roles	IPR #1 (Initial Team Review / Context + Charter)
4 2/21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Defining/Establishing Requirements The Requirements “Interview” Project Team Roles (defined, discussed) [CP] Search Strategies Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UMD Career Center’s recommended best practices/Job Search Plan Requests for Proposals (examples) 	Teams Select IPR #2 timeslot 2/18 [PD01b] LinkedIn Assignment 2/22 [CP01] Project Context Analysis Due
5 2/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crafting Project Requirements Feedback on Meetings with Clients Client Use Cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team IPRs (~15” each) Project Progress/Status Implementation Client Feedback / Review 	IPR #2 (Requirements Review)
6 3/7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elements of a Project Plan Developing Project Plans from Requirements + Charter Discuss Project Planning Tools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing Sample Project Plans Project Planning Tools Potential Industry visitors 	Teams Select IPR #3 timeslot 3/7: [PD02] Search Strategies & Peer Feedback Reflection Due
7 3/14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team IPRs – Sharing amongst the Class! Peer Feedback /Discussion 	3/12 [CP03] Project Requirements Specs Due 3/14 IPR #3 – *In-Class* Teams Select IPR #4 timeslot
SPRING BREAK March 17-24			

8 3/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Progress Finalizing the Project Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Industry Visitors 	3/29 [CP03] Project Plan & Requirements Revisions Due IPR #4 - (Team reflection / 360 review – IN-CLASS)
9 4/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your Professional Profile (online) “Branding statements” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UMD Career Center Resume Series Resumes: Intro (~1” viewing) How to Improve Your Resume (~4” viewing) How to Format Your Resume (Work Experience Section, ~3” viewing, 4” total) How to Tailor Your Resume for a Specific Position (4” viewing) 	IPR #5 (Project Status & Implementation, Ongoing Issues, Challenges, etc.)
10 4/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Team Project Reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential Industry Visitors 	4/12: [PD03] Networking Strategies
11 4/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Resume Review Resumé Presentation (Career Center) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Team IPRs (~15” each) Project Progress/Status Implementation Client Feedback / Review 	Teams Select IPR #6 order
12 4/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Team Project Reviews 		IPR #6 – Stand-up Meetings (Project Status & Implementation, Ongoing Issues, Challenges, etc.)
13 5/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Time for additional meetings with Clients, Beth, etc. 		
14 5/9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Project Reviews! (ALL Groups ATTEND) 		5/8: [CP04] Final Presentations DUE [PD04 final] Mock Interview, with reflection and fany eedback must be completed by 5/15 5/15: [CP05] Final Project Deliverables and Reports/Reflections Due