

Why is WCU requiring capstone courses and assignments?

Capstone courses and associated assignments are high-impact practices because they enable students to integrate learning from their university experience, demonstrate mastery of skills, and establish a foundation for their post-university careers.

What is the difference between the “Capstone Course” and the Gen Ed “Capstone Assignment”?

As part of the 2019 General Education Program, CAPC asked all programs to identify a *capstone course* within the major that would serve as a required culminating experience for every student. CAPC also asked that each capstone course include a Gen Ed “capstone assignment” asking students to reflect on the integration of their major, minor, and Gen Ed courses, and co-curriculars, as well as their own progress on meeting the goals of the Gen Ed program.

Do I need to teach any General Education goals in my capstone course?

No. Students will use the various artifacts that they have placed in their e-portfolio to look back on their years at WCU and write a personal reflection essay addressing the Gen Ed goals. We are not asking faculty to develop assignments or anything else that “teach” the Gen Ed goals, we only want the faculty teaching the capstone courses to include this assignment as a required aspect of the course. Faculty would only need to present the basics of the assignment and make sure that students upload it appropriately, e.g., to their electronic portfolio.

Am I required to use a specific assignment?

Each program/major will submit a Gen Ed capstone assignment to CAPC for approval, and all sections of the capstone course(s) in that program/major will use the approved assignment. This will aide assessment. If you are assigned to teach a Capstone course, check in with your department chair about what the Gen Ed Capstone Assignment is for the course.

Do I need to grade the capstone assignment?

No. The assignment is required, but it is not required for faculty to grade it, though the faculty may choose to do so; faculty might use it, for example, for a participation grade or submitted/not submitted grade. It will be used to assess General Education goals, part of reporting to Middle States. Course faculty only need to share examples of completed assignments with the assessment team.

What does a capstone assignment assess?

It assesses students’ learning from general education courses, major courses, elective, and co-curricular experiences. The assignment will be used for assessment of the General Education program, which is an important aspect of reporting to Middle States.

Where can I get help in creating a capstone assignment?

We are providing a variety of examples that you can tailor to your own needs (see separate “Examples” tile). If you would like more assistance, please contact Sharon DeJoy at sdejoy@wcupa.edu.