



Capstone Project. Bachelor in Psychology.
Academic Year 2022/2023

ASSESSMENT 1: CAPSTONE PROJECT PROPOSAL

Weighting: **20%**

Date and method of submission: **Week 14 – Fall Semester - submitted through NEO virtual learning platform.**

Word count or equivalent: **3,000 words (+/-10%), excluding references and appendices**

Formative assessments prior the final submission described below.

ASSESSMENT 1: CAPSTONE PROJECT PROPOSAL (20% of final mark)

The Capstone Project Proposal will be similar to what is widely known as a Research Proposal. A Research Proposal is a written document that describes a future research project, which on this occasion will be your Capstone Project.

Your Capstone Project Proposal will be 3000 (+/- 10%) words long, not including references, and will include the following sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Theoretical Framework and Literature Review, (3) Methodology, (4) Time plan and (5) Bibliography and References.

For further specifications regarding the structure and the content of your Capstone Project Proposal, please see the Appendix A below.

For specifications regarding the format of your Capstone Project Proposal, please see the Appendix B below.

You will submit your Capstone Project Proposal through NEOlms by the end of Week 14 in the Fall Semester.

The elaboration of your Capstone Project Proposal will be supported by a series of formative assessments throughout the Fall Semester, as outlined below in a step-by-step guide.



Step-by-step guide for the elaboration of the Capstone Project Proposal (Summative Assessment 1), with formative assessments throughout

Initial meetings with the module leader and choice of your Capstone Project supervisor

During the first three weeks of the semester, you will have a weekly meeting with the module leader of the Capstone Project in order to be provided with general information about the structure and content of the Capstone Project module, and to discuss potential topics of your interest for you to base your Capstone Project on. Depending on the specific area of your chosen topic (e.g., Educational Psychology, Social Psychology, Work Psychology, etc.), you will select and start to be in contact with a specific Capstone Project supervisor. Your supervisor, together with the module leader whenever needed, will guide you through the elaboration of your Capstone Project.

Formative Assessment 1: Capstone Project's Brief

By the end of Week 3 in the Fall Semester, you will submit a written Project Brief through NEOImS. Within this Capstone Project Brief, you will include a general description of the chosen research topic, will formulate the tentative research question, and will sketch some ideas of your potential data collection plan to answer the research question.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 4.

Formative Assessment 2: Draft 1 of the Theoretical Framework and Literature Review section of the Capstone Project Proposal

By the end of Week 5 in the Fall Semester, you will submit a first written draft of the Theoretical Framework and Literature review section of your Capstone Project Proposal through NEOImS. Please resort to the Appendix A for more detail on the expected content of the referred section.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 6.

Formative Assessment 3: Draft 2 of the Theoretical Framework and Literature Review section of the Capstone Project Proposal

By the end of Week 7 in the Fall Semester, you will submit a second written draft of the Theoretical Framework and Literature review section of your Capstone Project Proposal through NEOImS. Please resort to the Appendix A for more detail on the expected content of the referred section.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 8.



Formative Assessment 4: Draft of the Methodology and the Timeline sections of the Capstone Project Proposal

By the end of Week 9 in the Fall Semester, you will submit a written draft of the Methodology and Timeline sections of your Capstone Project Proposal. Please resort to the Appendix A for more detail on the expected content of the referred sections.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on the referred submission in Week 10.

Formative Assessment 5: Oral presentation of your ongoing work

In Week 11 in the Fall Semester (specific timing to be confirmed at a later date), you will deliver a 15-minute oral presentation about the ongoing work on your Capstone Project Proposal.

The oral presentation, which will be supported by any visual aid (e.g., Power Point presentation, or presentation in any other software, such as Prezi, Genially or Canva) will include your work so far on the following sections: (1) Introduction, (2) Theoretical Framework and Literature Review, (3) Methodology, (4) Time plan and (5) Bibliography and References.

This oral presentation will provide you with the opportunity to practice your presentation skills and get feedback on the progress of your Capstone Project Proposal from the supervision team and your peers. This feedback will be helpful in preparation for the draft of your Capstone Project Proposal, that you will submit by the end of Week 12 in the Fall Semester.

Formative Assessment 6: Draft of the complete Capstone Project Proposal

At the beginning of Week 13 in the Fall Semester, just after Winter Holidays, you will submit a written draft of your complete Capstone Project Proposal through NEOImS.

Your supervisor will provide formative feedback on your submission by the end of Week 13 in the Fall Semester. This feedback will be helpful in preparation for the final submission of your Capstone Project Proposal, which you will submit by the end of Week 14 – Fall semester.

Summative Assessment 1 (20% of final mark): Capstone Project Proposal

By the end of Week 14 in the Fall Semester, you will submit your Capstone Project Proposal through NEOImS. This submission will be subject of summative assessment (20% of your final mark on the Capstone Project module).



Assessment criteria for Assessment 1 (LO1, LO2, LO3, LO4, LO5 and LO6 will be assessed)

This assessment will be marked according to the following criteria:

- **Knowledge and understanding I (20%).** The student is able to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the main elements of a research proposal, as indicated in the guidelines.
- **Knowledge and understanding II (20%).** The student is able to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of selected topic object of the Capstone Project.
- **Cognitive skills (20%).** The student is able to demonstrate knowledge in a coherent and appropriate structure and organization, where the main points are developed logically.
- **Academic skills I (20%).** The referenced sources are drawn from a wide range of reliable academic sources.
- **Academic skills II (5%).** The referenced sources are presented in accordance with Harvard Referencing system.
- **Communication skills (15%).** The student is able to communicate ideas fluently in written form and using an appropriate style of writing. This written presentation element requires students to be able to present an assignment that is correct in terms of spelling, grammar, and paragraphing.



Appendix A

Specifications for the Capstone Project Proposal

The structure and the content of the Capstone Project Proposal should include:

Title

The title of your Capstone Project Proposal should be succinct and descriptive. This title is preliminary, i.e., your final Capstone Project can have another title.

1. Introduction

The Introduction should include the following issues:

- Background of the research topic. Description of a brief frame of reference for the chosen research topic, including a general description of your research topic, a discussion of the significance of such a topic in the field, and reference to key debates / perspectives that are relevant to study.
- Research question. Clear and concise formulation of the research question, whose scope has to be narrowed as to make the implementation of the planned research feasible considering the available time frame and the resources. The research question should be framed within the previous literature and should usually arise from a gap in such literature.
- If hypotheses are appropriate for the type of research to be developed, they should be also stated on this section, along with a rationale.
- Rationale and significance of the research. Explanation of why the research question is relevant to be addressed and how it will potentially contribute to existing knowledge in the field (refining, revising, or extending it).

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

After you have identified your research question, you have to determine what theories and ideas exist in relation to your topic. By presenting this information, you 'frame' your research and show that you are knowledgeable about key existing concepts and theories.

The definitions and models that you select also give your research direction, as you will continue to build on these choices in different stages of your Capstone Project. The theoretical framework also provides scientific justification for your investigation: it shows that your research is not just coming "out of the blue," but that it is grounded in scientific theory.

Furthermore, it should relate the existing studies to your research, and it also allows you to show the readers what is new about your research (for instance, you may address identified gaps in knowledge in the literature or whether your research adds new knowledge to existing knowledge).

For further detail, the literature review critically reviews key issues relevant to the research topic, drawing on references to academic literature. It presents a

logical, detailed and coherent picture of what literature states about the research topic. From this review, you identify a gap in knowledge and raise question(s) about your topic which requires collection of new data to provide answers to these questions and/or fill the research gap.

The literature review serves several important functions: ensures that you are not "reinventing the wheel"; gives credits to those who have laid the groundwork for your research; demonstrates your knowledge of the research problem; demonstrates your understanding of the theoretical and research issues related to your research question; shows your ability to critically evaluate relevant literature information; indicates your ability to integrate and synthesize the existing literature; convinces your reader that your proposed research will make a significant and substantial contribution to the literature.

3. **Methodology**

In this section, you should provide a full description of your research paradigm and design, as well as the specific research methods and procedures that you are going to use in order to answer your research question. You should also explain the limitations of your research and the ethical considerations to be acknowledged. For more detail, below there is a list of the sub-sections to include.

- Research epistemology (i.e., positivist, interpretative, critical)
- Research design (e.g., experiment, ethnography)
- Research methods (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods)
- Unit of analysis
 - If people (field work research, collection of empirical data): include the age, gender, and other relevant characteristics, and explain why and how you have selected this group of people to study (sampling), referring to your research question.
 - If documents or other data sources (library-based research, revision of previous literature): describe them and explain why you have selected them and how you have selected them (sampling), referring to your research question.
- Data collection instrument(s). Description of the method(s) and the type of data to be collected (e.g., interview, observation, questionnaire...) and explanation on why it/they is/are suitable for your research.
- Data analysis techniques. Description of how you are going to figure out what the collected data mean, including any tools that will be used to assist with the analysis. It is key to indicate how analysing the data in this way will answer your research question.



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- Limitations of the research. Explanation of the limitations of your research and its design in terms of the reliability and applicability of the results.
- Ethical considerations. They might include: the rights of those being researched (e.g., confidentiality, preservation of anonymity, use of informed consent), the researcher's responsibility, and how data will be collected, stored, and disposed of.

4. Time plan

It will include an outline of the different tasks involved in carrying out your research and the time estimated for each task (for example, time allocation for the elaboration of a detailed literature review, period for data collection, etc.).

The elaboration of the timeline is intended to determine the scope of the research and notice if it is achievable within the given timeframe (the Capstone Project is expected to be submitted by the end of Week 14 in Spring Semester).

References & Bibliography

References: List any academic literature (books, book chapters, journal articles, etc.) cited in your Capstone Project Proposal.

Bibliography: List any academic publications which are relevant to your research topic and which might be used in the elaboration of your Capstone Project, but which have not been not yet cited.

In both cases, you should use Harvard Referencing system (guidelines are available in NEOImS).

Appendices

They can be a place for questionnaires and the like. Separate appendices are to be used for different sets of detailed information that would not be appropriate to include in the main text.



Appendix B

General Guidelines on the format of your Capstone Project Proposal

1. Style

- a) Clear language should be used.
- b) When an ordinary word is used in a technical or special sense, explain its meaning briefly.
- c) A general rule for numbers in the body of the text is that, up to ten, they are expressed in words (e.g., one, six instead of 1, 6) and above ten in figures (e.g., 124, 1,762). However, 'one hundred', 'five thousand', 'ten million' etc are expressed in words.
- d) Only recognised abbreviations should be used, and each should be given in brackets, on the first occasion, e.g., Department of the Environment (DOE). You may wish to provide a separate list of abbreviations.
- e) If a quotation from any source is included, it must be an exact copy of the original text and quotation marks must indicate exactly where the quotation begins and ends. At the end of the quotation, the author, date of publication and page reference must be given to ensure that you do not commit plagiarism.

2. Pagination

All pages should be numbered consecutively throughout the proposal.

3. Section Heading

The use of headings in each section and sub-section is required.

4. Tables and figures

They should be placed in the text and their presence indicated (e.g., "see Table 3"). They should be numbered and given an accurate and descriptive title. All components should be carefully labelled, for example, axes given titles, frequencies indicated to be frequencies and so forth.

5. Referencing

Harvard Referencing system must be used consistently, both when citing the sources within the text and in the list of references at the end. For further information, please find the guideline for referencing on NEOLms under the Section Library and within the page for the Capstone Project itself.

6. Appendices

They should be numbered (Appendix 1, Appendix 2, etc.) and referred to in the main text. For example, you may refer to the appropriate appendix by putting in brackets (see Appendix 5). They should be clear, carefully structured and organized.