

Loyola University Chicago
SPRING 2019
COMM 450: Graduate Capstone
Tuesday, 4:15-6:45pm

Instructor: Richelle F. Rogers

E-mail: rrogers2@luc.edu (Please allow up to 24 hours for a response to e-mail. Remember to include your name and the course on your subject line. Please use your Loyola e-mail account when sending e-mails. Please do not send emails after 6pm.)

Office: SOC 214 – Second floor

Office Hours: T, 1PM-2PM (Walk in) - An appointment is not necessary.

Course overview:

The Master's Capstone Project involves the integration of digital media tools and storytelling, culminating in a professional project that is conveyed to a target audience and widely distributed. The project should be the focal point of your digital portfolio. It should be an example of what you have learned during the program, and a project that makes a potential employer say, "I must hire this Loyola grad!"

Your project should address the following career-based questions:

- What kind of new job, promotion, additional work responsibility or creative project do I want to do when I graduate?
- Where do I want to be in 2-5 years, and how will this capstone help me get there?
- How will this capstone add to my professional portfolio and can it get me hired?

Throughout the semester, you will produce a variety of written documents to accompany your capstone project, including:

- **A project proposal** – Details are available in the syllabus
- **A schedule of deadlines** which you will adhere to throughout the semester
- **Extensive original research/ expert interviews** – In addition, students are required to interview an industry expert to discuss their selected topic.
- **Pre-production documents specific to your project** - These types of documents may include a detailed outline, schedule, etc...
- **A final project report** that includes a bibliography, a detailed plan of distribution and any corresponding metrics proving the project reached your target audience. You need to begin a working bibliography as soon as the topic is approved. Eventually, this document will become your final bibliography, which includes all the sources you will use during your research.
- **An agenda for individual-instructor** meetings throughout the semester

IDEA Learning Objectives

- Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).
- Learning to *apply* course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions).
- Developing specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in the field most closely related to this course.

How you will be evaluated

The Capstone is an independent student-directed project that will focus on an issue that has become of interest to you during your time in the program. This is a professional project. You are creating deliverables for a real-world client.

The focus of your research, interviews, and final multimedia product (your deliverable) is based on *your* interests and choices.

Students will meet all deadlines and take a professional approach to your research, project work, and overall participation and ownership of your project.

Ability to meet deadlines – All work is due at the beginning of class on assigned dates. No work will be accepted after the due date. *Assignments cannot be accepted by email.* Deadlines for all projects are firm. Any work turned in after the deadline will receive a one letter grade reduction for each week it is late, even if by one day.

Attendance – Regular and on time attendance is essential for the educational process to work. Loyola University Chicago expects all students to attend every scheduled class on time. Exceptions may be made for University sponsored or work related activities, illness, or valid emergency situations. Any unexcused absences will result in a lower participation grade.

Attention to Detail – All written assignments must be typed (unless otherwise directed) and free of spelling/grammar errors. Allow time for proofreading, editing, and revision. As communication students, you have a responsibility to pay attention to spelling/grammar and if your work contains blatant errors, expect a reduced grade.

Time Management – This is a student-directed project, which means how you manage your time will impact the quality of your final project and determine how you progress throughout the semester. Students are evaluated on their efficiency and use of time throughout the semester.

Individual Meetings (Optional)– Appointment via Sakai Sign Up Tool. Students can have more individualized sessions with the instructor to talk through their project and receive more personalized feedback. In order to receive maximum benefit from the session, **an agenda is required.** Students will determine what topics need review. It's important that each student is organized and understands what outcomes they want before the individual meeting. Students are encouraged to attend at least one individual meeting.

Group Meetings (Required) - We will occasionally meet as a group (see dates in the syllabus) to report on the status of each project, discuss research and screen/review scripts and rough cuts.

Think of the group session as a collaborative effort to help and support each other.

Students are required to have something new to show the class for each group session.

These sessions are important. They will help you stay on track. Be prepared to present your project thus far, and critique others. This is not just a detailed update but an opportunity to help your colleagues make their projects better. Students are expected to discuss, present, and critique their work throughout the semester.

Faculty Advisor

The instructor will be the advisor of your capstone project, unless you think another faculty member could better assist you.

Faculty members do not *have* to agree to serve as advisors, however. The SOC has a diverse faculty that might fit well within your interests. Students are encouraged to research our faculty through the SOC Faculty Directory.

During the semester, you will work with your advisor on the project itself. You should check in with your advisor weekly or biweekly to provide updates on your work, ask for advice, and receive feedback and guidance.

Industry Advisor

Each student is required to have an industry advisor throughout the semester. The industry advisor will provide detailed guidance regarding project credibility and engagement. This is a great opportunity to network with an industry professional, and informally collaborate on a project.

Students are encouraged to discuss their project with their industry advisor at least once a month. SoC faculty cannot serve as industry advisors.

Industry Interviews

Students will conduct two separate interviews with an industry professional. Students will have to write questions before the interview and take detailed notes during the interview. Students are also encouraged to record their conversation. The interview should cover the following:

- A discussion of your selected topic, its relevance to your intended audience and the overall viability as a multimedia digital project. Students should think about how to incorporate the professional's suggestions into their project.
- The second interview, ideally after more than 50 percent of your project is complete, is a detailed feedback session of your project's progress.

Research Support

SOC Librarian Katherine Paterson is a good resource for your project. Students can schedule an appointment online <http://libguides.luc.edu/communication> . Students are encouraged to meet with Katherine once during the semester.

Writing Support

Written assignments are expected to be well written and proofread. For writing support, please visit the following resources:

1. Loyola University's University Writing Center at <http://www.luc.edu/writing/index.shtml>
2. Students can also visit the SOC Writing Center at [SOCWritingCenter.slack.com](https://socwritingcenter.slack.com)
Students can book appointments, browse resources, and get immediate help through the Slack Group.

SOC Equipment

The School of Communication has a variety of equipment that we can use for class-related projects. This equipment may be checked out through the Owl lab in SOC 004 (phone 312-915-8830).

Weekly updates available via Sakai

Sakai will serve as the course hub. You are expected to check on Sakai before each scheduled class. The syllabus, updated class assignments and the individual meeting sign up tool are available via the class Sakai website.

Grading Standard

A
B
C
D
F

Project Proposal: 10 percent

25 percent of Project Presentation: 10 percent

50 Percent of Project Presentation: 30 percent

Final Project Screening: 50 percent

Project Deadlines (please make early note of these deadlines in your calendar). These dates will not change.

February 12: Project proposal presentation due in class

February 26: 25 percent of project due – Students will present their progress to the class. Presentations should not exceed 10 minutes.

March 26: 50 percent of project due including a rough script/project edit. Students will present their progress to the class. Presentations should not exceed 10 minutes.

April 16: Rough Cut Screening - Students will provide feedback and apply suggestions.

April 23: Final Project Screening – Location: Beane Ballroom on the 13th floor of Lewis Towers – Family and friends are invited

Project Proposal Presentation – Due February 12, 2019

Students will introduce their project to the class in a ten-minute presentation. In addition, students will submit a **5-6 page written proposal via the class Sakai website**. The proposal will include the following:

- **A working title of your project**
- **A project description** – Include topic background and the intended target audience – Include an explanation of why your audience will be interested in your project. Explain why your topic is relevant. Include a plan on where/how the project will be distributed and promoted through digital channels
- **Visual walk through of your project** - Formats you are considering and how you will apply it to your project (app, web site, video, podcasts, etc.)
- **Examples of similar projects** – include both a good example and an example that needs improvement and note what you will do differently.
- **Summary of first discussion with both your faculty and industry advisor** and how you see them contributing to the project– all students are required to meet with their advisors before the presentation to discuss their topic's viability and relevance.
- **Work plan** – Think of this component as your risk section. Develop a **preliminary schedule** that includes what you'll have finished by the four key project dates outlined in the syllabus. Include a **risk assessment** of your project- what could go wrong and alternatives. Make sure you have thought everything through – in detail.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity – Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.

Plagiarism in your work will result in a minimum of a failing grade for that assignment. The case may carry further sanctions from the School of Communication or the University, the most serious being permanent expulsion. Avoid turning in work that could be interpreted as plagiarism or academically dishonest. It is dishonest to: 1) Turn in the same work for multiple classes; 2) Turn in a paper you have not written yourself; or 3) Copy from another student or use a “cheat sheet” during an exam. This is an academic community; being uniformed or naïve is not an acceptable excuse for not properly referencing your sources. The policy can also be found here: <http://www.luc.edu/soc/Policy.shtml>.

Special Needs – Please give the instructor written notice in the first week of class about any medical or other conditions that may interfere with your individual performance. Documentation is required. Information about Services for Students with Disabilities: <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/index.shtml>

Course Schedule (subject to change)

Class does not meet every week. Students will have an allotted number of work days to develop a project, meet with your advisor, etc...

January 15: Review Syllabus/ Schedule/Class Expectations, **First Assignment:** Proposal Presentations (up to ten minutes) will be held Wednesday, February 12, 2019. Students will also submit a 5-6 page written copy of their proposal via the class Sakai website.

January 22: Work Day

January 29: Work Day

February 5: Individual Meetings by appointment (optional)
Students sign up for individual meetings via the class Sakai website.
An agenda is required.

February 12: Group Meeting - Project Proposal Presentation Due (Prior to the presentation, proposals must be approved by your faculty/industry advisor)

February 19: Work Day

February 26: Group Meeting – Students should have 25 percent of their project complete and be prepared to update the class on their project

March 5: Spring Break

March 12: Work Day

March 19: Individual Meetings by appointment **(required)**
Students sign up for individual meetings via the class Sakai website.
An agenda is required.

March 26: Group Meeting – 50 percent of project due in class

April 2: Work Day

April 9: Work Day

April 16: Group Meeting - Rough Cut Screening

April 23: Final Project Screening (Family and Friends are invited)
Location: Beane Ballroom on the 13th floor of Lewis Towers