Non-Thesis Capstone Project
ENY 6905

Spring, Summer & Fall Semesters Annually

(2-3 credits)

⭐ Course Overview

The capstone project is designed to consolidate students' learning with valuable hands-on research experience.

This course is a 2-3 credit graded class that will give you the opportunity to apply your entomological knowledge gained during your time with us by developing a scholarly project. You will design your project in collaboration with faculty members at the University of Florida or can come armed with your own idea! The project should be something individual to you, either allied to your personal or current work interests, or related to a direction you would be interested to head down in the future.

To this end, students will produce a project proposal, design and undertake their project and the work will culminate in the creation of a project report and either poster or oral presentation.

Course Catalog description: *This course serves as the final project for the non-thesis M.S. degree students. Students demonstrate their ability to apply knowledge gained during their graduate program to develop a scholarly work that addresses important problems/issues/opportunities of professional interest to them.*

Course Information

Time: Asynchronous, online

Pre-requisite: You should have taken *ENY 6931: Seminar in Science Communication*, so that you have an understanding about how best to communicate your science to a variety of audiences.

Canvas: http://elearning.ufl.edu

Instructor Information

Dr. Georgette Kluiters

Email: g.kluiters@ufl.edu

Phone: (352) 273-3919

Office: 2004 Steinmetz Hall

Office Hours: Due to the asynchronous nature of this course my office hours are flexible for each individual, you can schedule an appointment: calendly.com/ uf_distance_ed_coordinator

☑ Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

📢 **Apply** scientific principles and an understanding of the scientific process.

📢 **Apply** graduate coursework to an area of specific professional or personal interest.

📢 **Generate** new knowledge for appropriate instruction, extension or research fields.

📢 **Create** educational materials for appropriate audiences.

📢 **Communicate** the results of the project clearly in writing and in poster or oral presentation form.

*__*This course takes place over multiple semesters*__ Please read through the entire syllabus prior to registering for the class - as there are __requirements for you to complete prior to doing so__.*

How This Course Relates To The Online MS in Entomology & Nematology Learning Outcomes:
This course provides training and practice in three of our program's Student Learning Outcomes:

1) Proficiency in written communication;

2) Proficiency in oral communication; and

3) Critical thinking ability.

Instructional Methods: Course materials are included on the Canvas course website. They will information on how to select your capstone project and what the timeline is for the semester. You will work directly with your Committee and the Capstone Instructor in determining your individual timeline for the semester.

Teaching Assistants

We do not have a teaching assistant assigned to this course. Please direct all enquiries to your course instructor and your Committee.

Communication & Conduct

Meeting Policy: If you need help with any aspect of the course, **we encourage you to communicate via email** – with your instructor and committee both copied in. We will do our best to respond to messages within 48 hours (not including weekends or holidays). As a courtesy, please check the syllabus and Canvas before reaching out; answers to many of your questions can be found there! You can request a meeting with Dr. Kluiters by clicking here: calendly.com/uf_distance_ed_coordinator.

Canvas: Important information is included on the course Canvas website. To ensure that you do not miss anything, please ensure that your Canvas profile is set to receive notifications.

Email Accounts: It is UF policy that you use your GatorLink account or Canvas when emailing your instructors; we will not answer emails sent from other accounts (e.g., personal Gmail, Hotmail, etc).

Professional Conduct: All members of the class are expected to always conduct themselves in a professional and respectful manner. Please use appropriate etiquette when interacting with your peers and instructors, including during class, on Canvas, and via email. Students who behave disrespectfully or disruptively will be reported to the Dean of Students Office.

Readings & Course Materials

Textbooks & Readings: There are no required textbooks for this course.

Materials and Supplies Fees: N/A

Computer Requirement: All students must have regular access to a computer with a reliable internet connection to access Canvas and attend zoom calls with their committee and instructor.

Attendance & Participation

There is no synchronized class time, and assignment due dates as specific to each capstone project. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments and other work are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/.

Project Guidelines

You should plan to spend **at least two semesters** on this scholarly project. You have the option to take the capstone as either a 2 or three-credit class:
- a **two-credit** capstone project will require about **96 hours of work**;
- a **three-credit** course should entail about **145 hours of work**.

The number of credits should be agreed on by Dr. Kluiters and your committee before registering.

First Semester:
During the first semester propose the project, get approval, and then plan the project.

1. Identify topic and scope of project in discussion with capstone advisor (obtain approval)
2. Review literature and current knowledge about the issue/problem/topic
3. Identify need for the project/research
4. Outline the project in the project proposal (turn in for feedback and grade):
   a. Title
   b. Rationale/justification
   c. Pertinent literature
   d. Objectives
   e. Proposed scope of project and methods
   f. Cited literature, if appropriate

Second Semester:
In the next semester, complete the project and present the results. Register for the capstone project class in the last semester when you are ready to present the final paper and presentation (either two or three credits, as appropriate for the scope of the project). You will receive your grade for all components of the project in that final semester.

1. Start working on project immediately, if you have not already, and check in with capstone advisor.
2. Provide first draft of project report following this outline:
   a. Introduction (including background and rationale for project)
   b. Approach
   c. Results
   d. Conclusions / significance/implications
3. Provide final draft after receiving feedback from advisor
4. Prepare for oral presentation (10 – 12 min talk), or oral description and defense of a poster presentation

📝 Types of Capstone Projects

Below are some examples of project students have undertaken:

1. Research or demonstration project in pest management, public health, or other applied area of entomology/nematology
2. Research into natural history, biology, behavior, or conservation of insects and other invertebrates
3. Development and/or execution of training for pest management scouts, mosquito control workers, pest control industry, or related groups
4. Develop print or web educational material for outreach to Extension or public health
5. Develop curriculum and measure knowledge gain in K-12 audience
6. Literature review and synthesis of an understudied entomological or nematological topic that addresses a professional knowledge gap or personal interest
7. Portfolio of artistic endeavors/pieces related to insects or nematodes
8. Any other project that meets the requirements and is approved by the student's committee.

📅 Course Timeline

Below is a tentative* timeline. Given the nature of the capstone projects, the timeline for each project is specific to the individual undertaking the work and the semester it falls in.

Schedule of Assignments Each Semester:

Semester	Approx. Week Due	Assignment	Grade
1st	Week 2	Identify topic in consultation with advisor	-
	Week 4	Review literature and current knowledge	-
	Week 5	Identify need/rationale for the research	-
	Week 8	Proposal first draft for feedback	-
	Week 12	Proposal for grade/start working	10%
2nd	Week 8	First draft written project report	15%
	Week 10	Final written project report	50%
	Week 12	Oral or poster presentation (Zoom or in person)	25%

* Although we will do our best to adhere to this schedule, it is adjusted each semester based on semester length and individual capstone requirements, alongside accommodating opportunities, disruptions, and other circumstances. For specific semester dates and timings, please refer to your instructor and committee in the semester you take the class.

⚙ Committee

You will need a **committee** to oversee your capstone project. As the Distance Education Coordinator, Dr. Kluiters serves on all the non-thesis M.S. student committees and is the faculty lead to aid students in meeting their capstone requirements, while the student's committee chair is the lead on the capstone project determination.

A successful project always starts with effective planning. Students should start considering different project ideas right at the onset of their programs. Consider your interests, needs of your employer, any gaps in knowledge or training, and/or any materials that could be developed for the benefit of others.

Once you have an idea in mind or a general area you would like your capstone to be based around, you will work with Dr. Kluiters on determining the chair for your committee and whether any other members would be required.

Ⓐ Grading Policies

This course uses a percentage system for grading. The anticipated maximum that can be earned in the course is **100%**, distributed as follows:
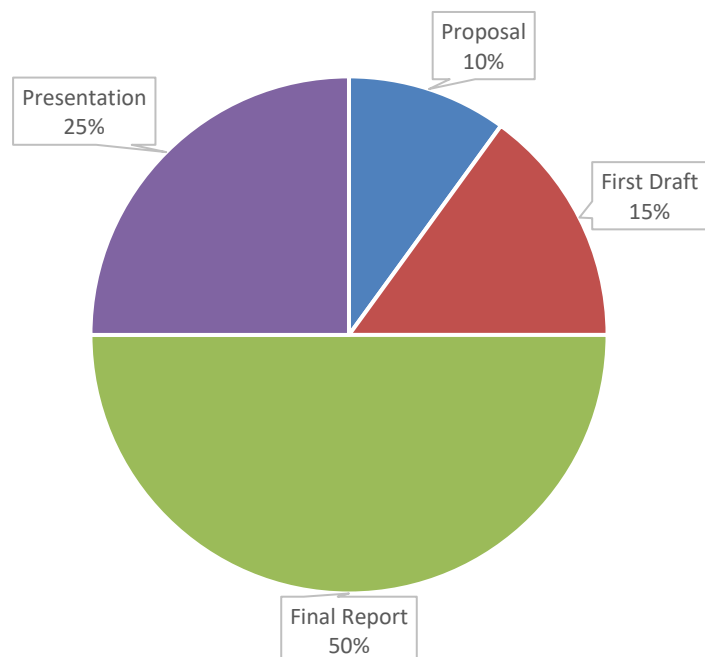
Project Proposal: **10%**
First Draft – Written Project Report: **15%**
Final Written Project Report: **50%**
Final Oral or Poster Presentation: **25%**

At the end of the semester, your total course grade will be converted to a letter grade using the scale below:

93 – 100% = **A**
90 – 92.9% = **A-**
87 – 89.9% = **B+**
83 – 86.9% = **B**
80 – 82.9% = **B-**
77 – 79.9% = **C+**

73 – 76.9% = **C**
70 – 72.9% = **C-**
60 – 69.9% = **D**
below 60% = **E**

Pie chart: Proposal 10%, First Draft 15%, Final Report 50%, Presentation 25%

Please note that the instructors do not round up grades— requests to do so will not be considered.

For current UF policies on assigning grade points, consult the following policy website:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx

Disputing a grade: If you wish to dispute a grade, you must contact the instructors in writing within two days (48 hours) after the assignment has been returned. In your message, you must include a specific explanation for why you think the grade is incorrect and how you think it should be changed. In required, an instructor will arrange a meeting with you to discuss the issue and determine whether or not to the grade should be changed. The grade assigned following this meeting will be final.

Assignments

Grading rubrics are provided in the Canvas course page for the project proposal, first draft of your written project report, final written project report and the final oral or poster presentation.

Once you have worked with Dr. Kluiters to identify your committee you should begin corresponding with your committee on what your capstone project will involve, prior to completing your project proposal.

Project Proposal (10%) – Submit your first draft of your project proposal by Week 8 of Semester 1 to receive feedback from your committee. Please use the following outline to frame your project proposal.

- Project title
- Introduction providing rationale/justification for the project & a thorough literature review
- Clearly stated project objectives
- Proposed methods section with a detailed description of how the project will be conducted
- Timeline of when major project components will be completed
- Proposed benefits of the project.
- Literature cited

Ensure that your writing is clear, thorough, and concise. Your committee will be able to provide valuable feedback if you provide them with a quality project proposal draft. Start early and do your best to provide what you consider a final draft. Submit your final proposal by Week 12 of Semester 1. Remember this proposal is graded, so be sure to incorporate all the comments received from your committee and make sure your writing is clear and concise. **The grade you receive for this assignment will account for 10% of your final grade for the Capstone Project course.**

You should begin working on your project as soon as possible after submitting your project proposal. It is good practice to occasionally check in with your committee members and update them on your progress. This will also allow faculty members to offer guidance during your project. In the semester that you are receiving credit for your capstone project, you will turn in most of the items that will make up your grade.

First Draft: Written Project Report (15%) – Communicating the projects you've completed in an organized and succinct manner is important. Provide first draft of project report following this outline:

- Project title
- Introduction providing rationale/justification for the project & a thorough literature review
- Clearly stated project objectives / hypotheses
- Approach (detailed methods used to complete the project)
- Results (Include photos, data figures or examples of project outcomes as appropriate)
- Discussion (significance/implications/conclusions/future work)
- Literature cited

The grade you receive for this assignment will account for 15% of your final grade for the Capstone Project course. Submit your draft before Week 8 of Semester 2.

You should use the feedback received from your committee to make alterations to your report in preparation for submitting the final copy.

Final: Written Project Report (50%) – Provide the final copy of project report following this outline given for the draft report. This final report should incorporate any changes noted by your committee when they reviewed your draft report.

This assignment is worth 50% of your overall grade. Your Final Written Project Report is due by Week 10 of Semester 2.

"Research does not exist until it is communicated." This is true for any type of capstone project that you've chosen. Writing the report is important and counts as one form of communication, but it is also important to reach others through oral presentation.

By this point in your program, you should have taken ENY 6931 Seminar in Scientific Communication and thus, be familiar with basic methods used for communicating research. At the completion of your capstone project, you are expected to present your project to your committee members via Zoom or in person. Typically, this presentation will be announced to the rest of the department, as there will likely be others interested and those that can benefit from your work.

Presenting Your Capstone (25%) – You are free to chose between two different methods of oral presentation. You may choose to present your project in the form of either:
- a 10-12 minute oral presentation similar to that of a student competition at a scientific meeting, or
- an oral description and defense of a poster presentation similar to that of a student competition at a scientific meeting.
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Regardless of the presentation method, great care must be taken to communicate your project effectively and professionally.

You must schedule and deliver your oral presentation to your committee members and others before the Last Week of Semester 2. Keep your presentation within 15-20 minutes in length. After you deliver your presentation orally, send the presentation to your committee via email.

This assignment makes up 25% of your overall grade for the capstone project.

Exams: There are no exams as part of this course.

Extra Credit: There is no extra credit as part of this course.

Submitting assignments: All assignments for this course will be submitted online via Canvas and via email to your committee. It is your responsibility to ensure that you submit these assignments by their due date; work that is submitted after the due date will be subject to late penalties as described in this syllabus. Alternative means of submission (e.g., emailing assignments to an instructor) will not be accepted.

You are responsible for ensuring that all your work is uploaded correctly and completely by the deadline. Corrupted files will be treated as missing work (= 0 grade) until they are reuploaded correctly and late penalties will apply if your resubmission is past the deadline. So, please always double check your files right after you upload them! If you experience technical problems when submitting your work in Canvas, contact the UF Computing Help Desk for assistance: https://helpdesk.ufl.edu.

⏰ Late Work & Make-Up Assignments

Assignment Policy: Assignments have specific due dates that are spread out over the course of the semester so as not to overload you at any particular time in the semester and are specific to your particular capstone project. All materials will be available at the beginning of the semester so feel free to work ahead and submit assignments early if you need to accommodate your personal schedule. Assignments turned in after the due date and time will lose 10% of their value each day.

Make-Up Policy: All assignments must be submitted **by the due date and time indicated on Canvas**. There are no provisions for make-up assignments. The assignments can be submitted early to work around work or personal obligations. The policy for late submission of assignments is shown above. However, if the student misses the deadline for an assignment due to a medical or family emergency (accompanied by a note from a medical professional), the late assignment penalty will be waived.

Extensions will be considered on a *case-by-case basis* (at instructors and committee discretion) only in the event of unforeseen emergencies. In such a case, you must contact the instructors as soon as possible to discuss the situation prior to the deadline; note that the instructors may request documentation. No extensions will be granted for students who miss the due date for any other reason.

A note about deadlines: Remember, the due date doesn't have to be the "do" date! In other words, we encourage you to work on your assignments in advance– don't wait until right before the deadline to submit your work! Last-minute computer problems or other non-emergency situations that arise right before the deadline are not valid reasons for requesting an extension; such requests will not be considered and late penalties will be applied to your work if it is not submitted before the deadline.

Course Technology: Materials, including recorded seminars, will be available on Canvas. Good broadband internet access will be necessary to watch the recorded seminars. Students will need access to a laptop computer with microphone and camera, or a webcam and external microphone that can be connected to a desktop computer to record their oral presentation in Zoom.
- http://helpdesk.ufl.edu
- (352) 392-HELP - select option 2

⚙ Software Use

All faculty, staff and students of the university are required and expected to obey the laws and legal agreements governing software use. Failure to do so can lead to monetary damages and/or criminal penalties for the individual violator. Because such violations are also against university policies and rules, disciplinary action will be taken as appropriate.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The **Disability Resource Center** coordinates the needed accommodations of students with disabilities. This includes registering disabilities, recommending academic accommodations within the classroom, accessing special adaptive computer equipment, providing interpretation services, and mediating faculty-student disability related issues. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Disability Resource Center

001 Reid Hall
(352) 392-8565 | https://disability.ufl.edu/

Instructors' note: We want you to succeed in this course! To ensure your accommodations are in place when you need them, please be sure to have your DRC accommodation letter sent to us as early as possible– ideally at the beginning of the semester.

Course Evaluations

Student assessment of instruction is an important part of efforts to improve teaching and learning. At the end of the semester, students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course using a standard set of university and college criteria. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via **GatorEvals**. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at: https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/ students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at: https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Technical Help

For issues with technical difficulties for Canvas, please contact the UF Help Desk at:

- http://helpdesk.ufl.edu

- (352) 392-HELP (4357)

Any requests for make-ups due to technical issues MUST be accompanied by the ticket number received from the Help Desk when the problem was reported to them. The ticket number will document the time and date of the problem. You MUST e-mail your instructor within 24 hours of the technical difficulty if you wish to request a make-up.

University Policy on Academic Honesty

As a student at the University of Florida, you have committed yourself to uphold the **Honor Code**, which includes the following pledge: *"We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honesty and integrity."* You are expected to exhibit behavior consistent with this commitment to the UF academic community, and on all work submitted for credit at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: *"On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment."*

It is assumed that you will complete all work independently in each course unless the instructor provides explicit permission for you to collaborate on course tasks (e.g. assignments, papers, quizzes, exams). Furthermore, as part of your obligation to uphold the Honor Code, you should report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. It is your individual responsibility to know and comply with all university policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and the Student Honor Code. Violations of the Honor Code at the University of Florida will not be tolerated. Violations will be reported to the Dean of Students Office for consideration of disciplinary action. For more information regarding the Student Honor Code, please see: http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code.

Class Demeanor or Nettiquette: All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, threaded discussions, and chats. See the Netiquette Guide for Online Courses

Instructors' note: Any action that subverts the learning goals of the course (or a particular course activity) will be treated as academic misconduct and reported to the Dean of Students Office. This includes– but is not limited to– cheating or assisting others in cheating, plagiarism (i.e., misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, whether it is copied directly or paraphrased), self-plagiarism (i.e., copying/reusing work that you have submitted previously), collaborating with others when it is not permitted, fabricating data, lying to an instructor, and bad faith attempts to undermine the intent of an learning activity. In addition to being reported to the Dean of Students Office, a student will earn a grade of 0 on any assignment that is plagiarized or that otherwise violates these academic honesty policies. This 0 grade is irreversible– it cannot be dropped and the assignment cannot be resubmitted for a different grade. After this, any subsequent incidents of plagiarism or academic honesty will result in an automatic E (= failing grade) in the course.

Campus Helping Resources

Students experiencing crises or personal problems that interfere with their general wellbeing are encouraged to utilize the university's counseling resources. **The Counseling & Wellness Center** provides confidential counseling services at no cost for currently enrolled students. Resources are available on campus for students having personal problems or lacking clear career or academic goals, which interfere with their academic performance:

University Counseling & Wellness Center
Counseling Services, Groups and Workshops, Outreach and Consultation, Self-Help Library, Wellness Coaching

3190 Radio Road
(352) 392-1575; https://counseling.ufl.edu

Other campus resources include:

U Matter, We Care: http://umatter.ufl.edu

Career Connections Center: Reitz Student Union- First Floor; (352) 392-1601; http://career.ufl.edu

Student Success Initiative: http://studentsuccess.ufl.edu

Student Complaints: Complaints regarding on-campus courses may be filed at https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-studentconduct-code/. For online courses, please see https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/

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It is your responsibility to ensure that you fully understand the policies outlined in this syllabus as well as the policies of the university as they relate to this course. By remaining enrolled in this course, you agree that you have read and understood all of these policies and that you will be held accountable to them.

At their discretion, the instructors may change aspects of the course during the semester to accommodate new opportunities, unforeseen disruptions, or other circumstances. These changes will be communicated clearly in class and through Canvas. The current version of the syllabus will always be available on our course's Canvas website. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are following the most recent version of the syllabus.

If you have any questions, please contact the instructors as soon as possible (preferably at the beginning of the course)!

Cover Photo: 100 Creative Personal Project Ideal – The Talent Bank