

Print Name of Student _____ **Student ID Number** _____

Syllabus/Contract: COMM 690 – Capstone Project, MA-C

Course Description: The capstone project requires students to collect data on an applied organizational and/or community-based issue. Students will collect and analyze their data in the same manner as they would if they were conducting thesis research, but, instead of composing an academically-oriented manuscript, the student will compose a document laying out the issue at hand, the evidence, the analysis of data, and the proposed data-based solution or outcome.

Eligibility: Students who have completed COMM 601, 602, 603, and at least 15 credit hours of electives are eligible to register for either three or six credit hours of capstone with approval of their capstone advisor.

Action: Prior to registering for COMM 690, students must identify an advisor and two other committee members to guide and evaluate their written capstone project and oral capstone project defense. It is up to each student to select the advisor and committee members that best suit his/her academic and/or professional endeavors.

However, students must select their advisor and committee members using the following criteria:

- Students must select an advisor whose area of academic expertise is most closely aligned with the proposed research project.
- Students must select an advisor for their project that they have had for at least one MA-C course.
- Students must select an advisor from the Department of Communications graduate faculty. Selecting an advisor outside of the Department of Communications faculty is not permitted.
- Students must select an advisor prior to selecting the other two committee members. Each advisor will help to guide the student on the selection of his/her committee.
- Students must select committee members they have had for at least one graduate course at the University of Southern Indiana.
 - It is permitted for students to select one faculty member from a USI graduate program outside of the MA-C program provided they have taken a course from that faculty member and that course counted toward the MA-C degree.
 - In order for students to select an “outside” member of their committee, they must obtain approval from their advisor.
 - No fewer than two members of any student’s committee must be from the Department of Communications Graduate Faculty with one serving as the advisor.
- Students must have at least one committee member with proficiency/expertise in the methodology used in the project. For instance, it is impermissible to have three qualitative researchers evaluate a quantitative capstone project.
- It is only after this contract has been signed by the student, advisor, and committee members that the student can register for COMM 690.
- In order to receive credit for COMM 690, students **MUST** successfully defend their project **prior to the end of the term in which they are registered**. If the student completes the project, but has not successfully defended their capstone, they must register for additional capstone credit. This process will take place in the form of an oral defense to be evaluated by the advisor and the other two committee members. The oral defense should be scheduled in the Office of Graduate Studies, and the Director of Graduate Studies should be invited to attend the presentation. After defending the project, students may be (a) granted the hours for COMM 690 based on a successful defense, (b) asked by the committee to provide minor written revisions to the project prior to being granted credit, or (c) be asked to conduct major revisions requiring a second oral defense before receiving credit.
- **A graduation hold is placed on all students until successful completion of either the thesis/capstone or the comprehensive examination. Thesis/capstone advisors must notify the program director when the student has successfully defended the thesis/capstone.**
- **COMM 690 is graded on a pass/no pass (P/NP) basis. With permission of the capstone advisor, a student may register for 6 credit hours in a single term or 3 credit hours in successive terms. A student must successfully complete all expectations outlined by the capstone advisor to receive a P grade. Students not completing the capstone course requirements during the term in which they are enrolled will be assigned either an NP or an “in progress” (IP) grade for the course. If a student receives an IP grade, the student will not receive credit for the course and must re-register for capstone credit to satisfy degree requirements.**

