

MPA/MPP Capstone Projects Fall 2023 Request for Proposals

Does your organization collect data that no one has time to analyze? Do you have projects that get postponed due to a lack of resources? Need expertise to assess a management or financial challenge facing your organization? We can help!

Capstone projects are learning in action. The Capstone provides graduate-level students with experiences that allow them to integrate classroom learning with a relevant problem-solving experience in a professional work situation. Over the course of one semester, Master of Public Administration (MPA) and Master of Public Policy (MPP) students work in teams to address organizational challenges, identify opportunities for a client organization, conduct research on a pressing management issue, and analyze data. Capstone projects contribute to students' professional training, offer organizations the opportunity to access MPA and MPP expertise, and strengthen the relationships between the Department of Public Administration and organizations around the city, state, and region.

The UIC Department of Administration requires all graduating MPA and MPP students to complete the Capstone course. This course gives students the opportunity to work on practical problems and to apply their new skills to work with local organizations. Our students are specifically trained in public management, local government management, financial management, information management, public policy, and survey research methods. The Capstone course requires students to blend these different areas of learning in a real-world work setting.

The Capstone course is a 15-week course for graduate students. Students enroll in the course during the last two semesters of the MPA or MPP program at which point they have successfully completed essential statistics, budgeting, and managerial skill classes. Students work together in groups of 3 – 4 students on projects proposed by organizations in the non-profit or government sector.

MPA/MPP Capstone Project Timeline

- **June 5, 2023:** RFP process begins. Organizations interested in an MPA or MPP Capstone Project must submit a Capstone Proposal – use the link below to access the application form.
- **July 22: Deadline for Capstone proposal submission.**
- **August 26, 2022:** Clients notified of Capstone project award or rejection.
- **December 4-8, 2023:** Presentations

Apply for an MPA and/or MPP Capstone Project

Organizations must complete and submit a written project proposal for consideration.

Applications are available at: <https://go.uic.edu/capstoneapp>

Ideal MPA and MPP Capstone Projects...

1. Have a clear project scope and a clear definition of the problems or issues being addressed.
2. Are achievable within the framework of one academic semester (approximately 12 weeks - to allow enough time for a final presentation and any revisions the organization may request)
3. Are specific about what the Capstone team is to accomplish or deliver.
4. Require the use of data collection and analytical skills.
5. Have the support of organizational leadership, including a contact person at the agency who will act as the point person for the project.

Things to Consider:

- **We generally receive more proposals than we can accommodate given the number of available student teams, or proposed projects may require particular skills that are not represented among students taking the course. Thus, we cannot guarantee that a proposal will be chosen. However, projects can be reconsidered the following semester.**
- All Capstone clients must designate one person in the organization who will act as the project liaison. The project liaison is expected to act as the main contact person for the Capstone Team.
- Students will present their findings to the client at the end of the semester. Each Capstone team will be required to write a report and prepare a presentation that describes the project's purpose, methodology, key insights and recommendations.
- The final work produced by the Capstone team is owned by the Capstone client organization. However, the UIC Department of Public Administration will publicly list the organization as a client, keep copies of all Capstone teams' final reports, and include a brief project description in the Capstone promotional materials. Students will be allowed to use the work produced for their Capstone client in pursuit of their academic or professional careers.

Questions?

If you have additional questions about the MPA and MPP Capstone Research Program, please contact:

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MPA/ MPP Program Website: <https://cuppa.uic.edu/academics/pa/>

MPA/ MPP Capstone Website:

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