



Boston University School of Medicine
Division of Graduate Medical Sciences
M.S. in Clinical Research Program

Capstone Mentor & Readers Responsibilities

The purpose of the Capstone Research Paper in the MSCR program is for the student to demonstrate to faculty that they have attained the body of knowledge necessary to design, conduct, analyze, and communicate a clinical research study. The Capstone readers assess whether or not the student has sufficiently demonstrated these skills. As such the readers are required to (1) read the first draft and the "near final" draft of the Capstone paper, and (2) send an approval via email to the MSCR Assistant Director or Director that the all comments have been incorporated into the Capstone paper satisfactorily. Ideally the research mentor and any other readers would attend a presentation of the Capstone project at a research seminar, but this is not a requirement.

In practice, we suggest to students that they send portions of their Capstone paper to their readers for feedback as they are initially completed. Hence, a reader might see the background section, followed by the methods section with revisions to background, followed by the results/discussion section with revisions to prior portions, etc.

The Capstone should be in the student's own writing. We ask Readers to please simply provide qualitative feedback to guide the student through the writing process. We ask that you please not re-write the paper for the student.

The Capstone Research Paper demonstrates that the student understands the context and content of their topic, including how to critically evaluate and apply their results to previous research, and the implications of their findings beyond their study.

Role of the Research Mentor in the Capstone Research Paper in GMS/MSCR is to:

- (i) Provide guidance in the development of a hypothesis, timeline and outline for the project.
- (ii) Provide supervision of the research including assistance in the experimental design as well as the interpretation and statistical analysis of collected data.
- (iii) Provide critical review and guidance during the final writing stage, as needed, in order to assist the student in their completion of the Capstone Research paper in order to develop a manuscript of the highest quality that may be suitable for publication.
- (iv) Email the Assistant Director, Stacey Hess Pino (sahess@bu.edu) confirmation that the Capstone Research Paper is in its near final form and that the student has permission to move forward with the scheduled oral presentation.
- (v) (Optional - Encouraged but not required) Ask questions of the student presenter during the oral presentation to make sure he/she understands what is presented.

Role of additional Readers in the Capstone Research Paper in GMS/MSCR is to:

- (i) Provide a critical eye as an additional evaluator of content and quality **during the writing stage** and completion of the project.
- (ii) Grant the student permission to present their research IF the Capstone Research Paper is in its **near final form** – students may not proceed with their presentation without the permission of their readers.
- (iii) Email the Assistant Director, Stacey Hess Pino (sahess@bu.edu) confirmation that the Capstone Research Paper is in its near final form and that the student has permission to move forward with the scheduled oral presentation. **Each reader** must confirm via email that the Capstone Research Paper is in its near final form before the student will be allowed to present.
- (vi) (Optional - Encouraged but not required) Ask questions of the student during the oral presentation to make sure he/she understands what is presented.

Capstone Description & Expectations

Students will not be allowed to present their Capstone Research Paper if they do not adhere to the submission guidelines below:

- The **near final draft** of the Capstone Research Paper must first be approved by the readers **2 weeks BEFORE** moving forward with the actual presentation.
- We ask that each Reader Email the Assistant Director, Stacey Hess Pino (sahess@bu.edu), confirmation at **least 2 weeks BEFORE** the scheduled presentation that the Capstone Research Paper is in its near final form.

Once the near final draft is approved by the readers, the MSCR Director and Asst. Director, the student will give a 20 minute oral presentation on their research followed by a 10 minute question and answer period.

The purpose of the oral presentation is to demonstrate the student's ability to:

- (1) describe clearly the research question, methods, and results; and,
- (2) demonstrate an understanding of the study design, analytic principles, conclusions and limitations of his/her research; and
- (3) place his/her research into a clinical context, while then proposing the next steps which should be taken with respect to future research.

The presentation is followed by a question and answer period.

