

Alternatives to the Capstone: Volunteering, Service---Learning and Technology

Maria J. D'Agostino, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Roundtable

The capstone course is an opportunity for our students to apply knowledge, skills and competencies acquired during their studies. There are several capstone models in the different academic disciplines. Given the practitioner focus of the public administration degree most capstone courses follow a consultancy model, policy paper, or agency based project. However, these models do not necessarily coincide with our student population and their multiple responsibilities. For example, many of our students do not work in the public sector or are not employed making the agency-based project unfeasible. Students also have caretaker responsibilities that limit their flexibility and time they can dedicate to a consultancy project option. What are some alternatives? What innovative approaches and technology can we incorporate to address the challenges to successful capstone courses?

Some suggested alternatives to the traditional capstone are volunteering and service learning via technology.