

Review of Summary of Capstone Faculty Survey – 2008-2009

Question #	Comments or analysis
1.	73% of the respondents indicated they teach capstone in Spring Semester.
2.	63% of respondents first taught a capstone course 5 or more years ago.
3.	10% of the respondents have taught a capstone only once and 58% taught a capstone 6 or more times.
4.	When capstones were introduced 26% of respondents indicated they were skeptical/resentful or confused and 39% indicated they were excited.
5.	After teaching capstones, 22% indicated skeptical/resentful or confused and 48% report they are excited.
6.	Of the items selected as being particularly helpful in designing and delivering capstones courses the top response was "Other faculty who have taught capstones", A distant second and third were "college meetings" and "Curriculum Committee materials...."
7.	83% of respondents indicated capstones were good or very good as an appropriate method to assess student performance in relation to our all college outcomes. 17% reported fair and 0% reported weak.
8.	85% of respondents indicated capstones were very good or good as an appropriate method to assess student's ability to synthesize and apply what they have learned. 10% said fair and 5% weak.
9.	33% of respondents use the writing/ speaking rubrics and 33% do not. 11% use the rubrics sometimes and 22% plan to use them the next time they teach a class. Overall, 66% use, plan to use or use sometimes.
10.	95% of the respondents said they would keep the capstone course in some form even if we dropped the requirement and only 5% would drop it entirely. 79% of respondents indicated they would retain course as an ordinary offering and 16% indicated they would keep the course, but alter it in some way.
13.	84% of respondents agree to some level that capstone courses provide students opportunities to expand learning in relation to all-college outcomes.
14.	73% agree that capstone courses provide students opportunity to expand learning in relation to general education outcomes.
15.	71% of the respondents indicated that their experience with the capstone has changed their view of the value of the capstone course.

Overall Conclusions:

Based upon the feedback from faculty teaching capstones there are some conclusions that can be drawn:

The vast majority of courses are taught in Spring semester

The vast majority of departments would keep the course even if the requirement went away (although some would change the course)

The vast majority see capstone courses as a way to assess all college outcomes

The idea that capstone courses are generally disliked and unpopular across campus is not evidenced in this survey. There do remain areas of extreme discontent with capstone courses, but these responses are not the norm.

Concerns and Recommendations-

There is still confusion on the purpose and role of capstone courses. E.g. Some respondents praise the ability to offer a portfolio capstone, while another faculty lamented that they could not offer a portfolio option. Recommendations: The curriculum committee and Academic Affairs should clarify parameters of capstone courses and share widely on campus. Academic Affairs can facilitate development of alternative capstone course models by facilitating faculty connections and information sharing.

There is evidence that faculty to faculty contact is more effective than other options to support and help faculty deal with capstone courses. Recommendations: The curriculum committee and Academic Affairs should support activities that facilitate faculty interaction on capstone course development, and offerings.

Virginia Fish

Dean of Instruction