

CJ 790 Final Project Guidelines and Rubric

Overview

The final capstone project consists of three components. The first component is a problem analysis. The second component is a presentation to internal stakeholders. The third component is a personal and professional reflection.

As the final step toward your master's in criminal justice degree, you will complete a capstone that will allow you to demonstrate your knowledge and experience. For the duration of the course, you will integrate what you have learned in your coursework and create an authentic demonstration of your abilities as a criminal justice professional. The problem analysis, presentation to internal stakeholders, and professional reflection will serve as evidence of your identity as a professional and represent the skills and abilities you can bring to a potential employer.

The criminal justice system is designed to maintain order, detect and deter criminal behavior, and penalize offenders through detention and rehabilitation. Administration is responsible for creating and managing departmental policy and procedure while creating and maintaining positive relationships with the community, all while making transparency a priority. In the criminal justice system, the focus is on crime suppression and efficient organizational operation through proper resource management.

A leader in the field of criminal justice is tasked with optimizing an agency in an ever-changing environment. Administrators are placed in a reactive position, frequently tasked with making decisions after an issue is detected. Administrators are often called upon to make decisions that are in the best interests of not only the agency but the community as well. This challenging task can be accomplished through the analysis of trends, data, and research. There is a strong demand for criminal justice professionals to analyze and interpret emerging trends within the field while enhancing relationships with the surrounding community. The master's in criminal justice program has provided you with the skills to make informed decisions as a leader in your field, affect policy change and development, and ensure that your organization is fulfilling its mission statements.

Capstone Component 1, the problem analysis, is divided into **three milestones**, which will be submitted at various points throughout the course to scaffold learning and ensure a quality final submission. These milestones will be submitted in **Modules Two, Four, and Six**. Capstone Component 2, the presentation to internal stakeholders, is due in **Module Eight**. Capstone Component 3, the personal and professional reflection, is due in **Module Nine**.

Evaluation of Capstone

This capstone will be assessed somewhat differently than other courses you have taken online at SNHU. There are three (3) separate components which will be submitted at different times during the course; however, they all operate together to comprise the whole capstone experience and *are not* assessed separately. You will be evaluated on all three (3) as a unit in determining whether you have demonstrated proficiency in each outcome. Your work is expected to meet the highest professional standards.

In this assignment, you will demonstrate your mastery of the following course outcomes:

- Apply moral reasoning to make ethically sound and socially responsible decisions that exemplify service philosophy and leadership in the field of criminal justice
- Employ criminological theory, research methodologies, and analysis to impact solutions to contemporary issues and problems in the field of criminal justice
- Utilize multiple strategic planning and problem solving approaches that impact crime reduction and public service and that reflect critical and creative thinking
- Create authentic strategies and plans designed to improve and maintain effective organizational structure and culture for influencing professional identities, criminal justice management, leadership, and policy making
- Employ effective decision-making methods and strategies that reflect versatility of thought in addressing the diverse needs of public service agencies
- Employ professional, appropriate communication strategies for effective resource planning, consensus building, and long-term planning

Prompt

As a criminal justice professional, you will often be tasked with finding solutions to problems that affect both your organization and the surrounding community. As you have learned throughout this program, there are various steps involved in the decision-making process; they include identifying the problem, researching the problem, and ultimately coming to a decision on how to address the problem in a way that will reflect favorably on your department and the community. In your first capstone component, you will use those skills to complete a problem analysis. Your problem analysis will include a statement of the problem, an in-depth analysis of the problem, a literature review, and a detailed proposal for a solution. For the second component, you will create a professional presentation to disseminate information about your proposal to internal stakeholders in your organization. The presentation will also include your plan to spread information about the proposal to external stakeholders in your selected city. For the final component, you will write an insightful reflection on your personal and professional journey through the program.

To begin this capstone project, you must first select one scenario from the [two scenarios](#) provided. The scenarios are designed to situate you within a particular field of criminal justice, either law enforcement (scenario A) or corrections (scenario B). The scenario will also provide you with relevant details about the fictional criminal justice organization in which you will assume a leadership role.

Next, select a city from the following list:

- Chicago, IL
- Detroit, MI
- Memphis, TN
- Oakland, CA

- St. Louis, MO

Imagine that the criminal justice organization described in the scenario is located within that city. You must conduct research on your selected city to find a current criminal justice issue occurring in that city. Whatever issue you select should be highly publicized so that you can use it as the basis of your problem analysis.

Capstone Component 1: Problem Analysis

The first of three capstone components is the comprehensive problem analysis, which should have four primary sections and demonstrate the knowledge and skills you have honed throughout the MS in criminal justice program:

- I. **Statement of the Problem:** Referring to your research, provide an overview of a criminal justice issue and explain how it is affecting the community in your selected city. Be sure to include the relevant criminological theories that apply.
- II. **Analysis of the Problem:** Outline the scope of the criminal justice issue as it applies to your selected city and criminal justice organization, using actual data from your selected city and information about the organization in your selected scenario to support your response. The analysis should include (but is not limited to) the following:
 - A. Recurring trends or patterns that city data reveals about the issue
 - B. External contributing factors supported by research
 - C. Internal contributing factors supported by details provided in the scenario
 - D. The root cause of the issue
- III. **Literature Review:** Use relevant scholarly bodies of work to perform a brief and systematic literature review. You will research how the criminal justice issue that you identified has been addressed historically, and what is currently being done to address it in other communities. You should refer to criminological theories as well as the best practices used by other agencies. The outline of your literature review will should include the following:
 - A. Identify two or three possible solutions to the issue that you are researching, along with your reasoning for focusing on those approaches.
 - B. Methodology: Explain your search strategy and the selection criteria adopted for this review, and provide descriptions of the types of research reviewed.
 - C. Summarize the main findings of your research.
 - D. Draw conclusions about which approach is the most appropriate for solving the issue in your selected city.
- IV. **Proposal:** Propose a detailed solution to the criminal justice issue in your selected city, explaining how this solution meets the needs of the community and how it will impact your organization, including the following:
 - A. An explanation of each step of your plan and how you came to your decision
 - B. The overall goals of the proposal, including short term objectives and desired long term outcomes

- C. The resources required for implementation, including staffing
- D. The potential challenges for implementation
- E. The expected effects on the culture of the organization

Capstone Component 2: Presentation to Internal Stakeholders

The second of three capstone components, this professional presentation uses the information from your problem analysis to demonstrate your communication skills and your ability to disseminate information about your proposal. This visual presentation should be clear and concise and should present the logical reasoning behind your proposal. Envision yourself giving this presentation to internal stakeholders in your organization as you seek their support. Since you will not actually deliver this presentation in person, you must create a presentation with speaker notes or audio included.

In addition to a compilation of key aspects from your research into the criminal justice issue you identified, your presentation should also include:

- A. How your proposal supports the organization's mission
- B. What strategy you will use to communicate the proposal to external stakeholders in your selected city, including members of the community
- C. Where you estimate the organization and surrounding community will be 5 to 10 years after proposal has been implemented

Capstone Component 3: Personal and Professional Reflection

For the third component of your capstone, you will write a personal and professional reflection looking back on your experiences building your capstone project. Throughout the MS in criminal justice program, you have compiled final project work and professional documentation in your personal ePortfolio. In this third component of the capstone, you will document examples from this professional website to demonstrate that you have the knowledge, skills, abilities, and disposition to take the next step in your career as a criminal justice professional. Be sure to provide a hyperlink to your ePortfolio as part of your submission.

Envision this component as a personal reflection on the capstone and your experience in the criminal justice program as a whole. This component is not about evaluating the capstone itself but rather your experience with the capstone project. Your reflection should discuss your strengths and also any problems you encountered while completing the capstone project. You may include discussions of unforeseen problems and obstacles and any unexpected surprises that occurred during the completion of your ePortfolio and your capstone experience. For instance, in the context of the capstone, you could discuss what you did (or intended to do), what worked well, what challenges you faced, and what you would change or do differently to make your experience better. Finally, examine how the project will be useful in the job market, or if you desire to further your education. You are expected to support the thoughts and claims you make in your reflection with references to your ePortfolio.

Some of the issues that you could address in this final component of this capstone may include the following:

- Overall, what was your capstone experience like?
- What feedback was most useful to you during the process of compiling and refining the contents of your ePortfolio?

- How do the skills and knowledge you have gained from the criminal justice program increase your value and marketability in your profession?
- How has your experience in the criminal justice program made you a better criminal justice professional, and what contributions can you make from this point on?
- How did moral reasoning impact your research and guide your proposal?
- From a criminal justice perspective, how has your professional ethical point of view developed during your degree journey? Do you see yourself positioned to make socially, morally, and ethically responsible criminal justice decisions?
- How has the capstone experience changed your view of criminal justice and made you a more enlightened member of the criminal justice community?

Milestones

Milestone One: Statement of the Problem and Analysis of the Problem

In **Module Two**, you will complete a draft of the first part of your problem analysis, the statement of the problem and analysis of the problem. Your analysis should include why the issue you identified occurred and how it began. You will have an opportunity to apply instructor feedback to this part of Capstone Component 1 before final submission in Module Eight. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone One Rubric.**

Milestone Two: Literature Review

In **Module Four**, you will complete a draft of the first part of your problem analysis, the literature review. You will continue the work you started in Module Three. You will have an opportunity to apply instructor feedback to this part of Capstone Component 1 before final submission in Module Eight. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Two Rubric.**

Milestone Three: Proposal and Presentation to Internal Stakeholders

In **Module Six**, you will submit a draft of your proposal, which is the final part of Component 1: Problem Analysis. You will propose a detailed solution to the criminal justice issue in your selected city, explaining how this solution meets the needs of the community and how it will impact your organization. You will also submit a draft of Component 2: Presentation to Internal Stakeholders. For this professional presentation, you will use the information from your problem analysis to demonstrate your communication skills and disseminate information about your proposal. You will have an opportunity to apply instructor feedback to these components before final submission in Module Eight. **This milestone is graded with the Milestone Three Rubric.**

Final Submission: Capstone Components 1 and 2

In **Module Eight**, you will submit your final problem analysis (Capstone Component 1) and presentation to internal stakeholders (Capstone Component 2). Your problem analysis should include the following four primary sections: statement of the problem, analysis of the problem, literature review, and proposal.

Your presentation to internal stakeholders should be a compilation of key aspects from your research into the criminal justice issue you identified. In addition, you should include an explanation of how your proposal supports the organization's mission, your strategy to communicate the proposal to external stakeholders in your selected city (including members of the community), and an estimation of where the organization and surrounding community will be five to ten years after proposal has been implemented. **This submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric.**

Final Submission: Capstone Component 3

In **Module Nine**, you will submit the third component of your capstone, the personal and professional reflection. In your reflection, you will look back on your experiences building your capstone project. You will also reflect on the criminal justice program as a whole. Use the previous reflections in your Module Five and Module Seven journal assignments to help you complete this reflection. Be sure to provide a hyperlink to your ePortfolio as part of your final submission. **This submission will be graded using the Final Project Rubric.**

Deliverables

Milestone	Deliverable	Module Due	Grading
One	Statement of the Problem and Analysis of the Problem	Two	Graded separately; Milestone One Rubric
Two	Literature Review	Four	Graded separately; Milestone Two Rubric
Three	Proposal and Presentation to Internal Stakeholders	Six	Graded separately; Milestone Three Rubric
	Final Submission: Capstone Components 1 and 2	Eight	Graded holistically; Final Project Rubric
	Final Submission: Capstone Component 3	Nine	Graded holistically; Final Project Rubric

Final Project Rubric

Guidelines for Submission: Your problem analysis should be 15–20 pages and follow APA formatting, including a title page, table of contents, and reference page. For the presentation to internal stakeholders, there is no minimum or maximum number of slides required. You should use your best judgment to create a presentation of appropriate length that will convey the relevant details of your proposal while keeping the attention of your audience. Your personal and professional reflection should be 5 pages and follow APA formatting.

This rubric will be applied to all components as a whole, and no component will be assessed on its own. The “Possible Indicators of Success” are examples for you and the instructor of the types of concepts to look for to demonstrate proficiency. They are neither exhaustive nor proscriptive and should be used as guides for illustrating how your capstone embodies the outcome. All outcomes are weighted equally.

CJ-790-01: Apply moral reasoning to make ethically sound and socially responsible decisions that exemplify service philosophy and leadership in the field of criminal justice	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to make decisions that align to an organization's values set forth in the mission statement?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to form unbiased conclusions?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to evaluate possible solutions with current criminological research studies?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to propose plans that address the needs of an organization and the surrounding community?		
CJ-790-02: Employ criminological theory, research methodologies, and analysis to impact solutions to contemporary issues and problems in the field of criminal justice	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to identify emerging criminal justice issues within communities and construct plausible solutions?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to analyze data and recognize patterns to determine the underlying causes of criminal justice issues?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to apply appropriate criminological theories to problems?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to create insightful literature reviews that inform the direction of proposals?		
CJ-790-03: Utilize multiple strategic planning and problem-solving approaches that impact crime reduction and public service and that reflect critical and creative thinking	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to use best practices within the field to identify crime patterns that define underlying problems?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to critically analyze why problems occur by using appropriate resources?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to creatively employ problem-solving techniques to address both internal and external factors surrounding issues?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to create response plans that address both the symptoms and root causes of criminal justice issues?		
CJ-790-04: Create authentic strategies and plans designed to improve and maintain effective organizational structure and culture for influencing professional identities, criminal justice management, leadership, and policy making	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to choose appropriate methods of dissemination for proposals?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to incorporate the needs of both the community and organizations into strategic proposals?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to synthesize best practices and scholarly resources to create well-supported solutions to issues?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to identify relevant resources required to initiate proposals within organizations?		
CJ-790-05: Employ effective decision-making methods and strategies that reflect versatility of thought in addressing the diverse needs of public service agencies	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%

<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to clearly convey implementation plans in proposals		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to combine knowledge from multiple sources to form proposals that meet the unique needs of cities and organizations		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to describe the challenges and opportunities for criminal justice organizations associated with addressing problems within communities		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to prioritize the betterment of organizations within proposed solutions		
CJ-790-06: Employ professional, appropriate communication strategies for effective resource planning, consensus building, and long-term planning	Proficient 100%	Not Proficient 0%
<i>Possible Indicators of Success</i>		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to clearly communicate how proposals may benefit organizations and communities in the future?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to effect change through clear communication grounded in both organizational best practices and research?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to create visual presentations that clearly identify problems, relevant research, and proposed solutions?		
Does the student demonstrate the ability to manage appropriate resources during strategic development of proposals?		