ANDREW YOUNG SCHOOL OF POLICY STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT & POLICY
PMAP 8900: ADVANCED PROJECTS FOR PUBLIC AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS
CROSSLISTED WITH CRJU 8980: CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE
Spring 2022

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Class Time: T 7:15-9:45pm
Class Location: Langdale 400
Office Hours: **by appointment**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This purpose of this course is to apply the knowledge and skills of management, finance, economics, criminal justice and/or public policy through a consulting project. This course is a requirement for earning the Master of Public Policy/Administration or Master of Science in Criminal Justice degree. The course's defining features are that students work on a project with a client; the project requires integrating and applying knowledge acquired in multiple courses; and, students work in teams to complete the project. Learning to work effectively in teams is a major element of this course and an essential skill in any organization.

The course involves projects that address important problems facing public and nonprofit organizations. They may require service delivery assessment, best practice identification, operations analysis, program evaluation, fiscal analysis, policy analysis, or combined elements of these. While projects vary, all require developing and implementing a work plan for evaluating a public problem, collecting and analyzing data, developing findings, writing a final white paper/report, and articulating findings in a professional presentation.

Overall, students need to demonstrate a capacity for flexibility and resilience, as shown by adapting to changing and complex circumstances, balancing competing demands, and accepting uncertainty when it arises. Completed projects must not only meet the needs of the client, but also meet the academic quality required by an Andrew Young School master's student in their respective fields.

In the course students will develop and demonstrate skills in four areas:

1. Project Management
Students should demonstrate the ability to:
- frame and refine the problem presented by the client;
- develop and implement a project work plan with timelines and deliverables;
- monitor progress against the work plan;
- revise the work plan as necessary;
- develop well supported and realistic final product for the client.

2. Research
Students should demonstrate the ability to:
- situate their project topic in academic literature;
- identify and implement appropriate quantitative and/or qualitative data gathering and analysis methods for their particular project;
- conduct analyses required in the project;
- draw conclusions and recommendations based on their findings;
- communicate their work effectively both orally and in writing.

3. **Client Management**

Students should demonstrate the ability to:
- develop and sustain their relationship with the client;
- maintain regular and productive contact with the client;
- solicit and integrate feedback on progress against the work plan and modify as necessary;
- deliver a final product to the client's satisfaction.

4. **Team Management**

Students should demonstrate the ability to:
- develop clear roles for team members;
- recognize the importance of interpersonal dynamics and team norms;
- manage team assignments and accountability;
- advocate points of view and negotiate differences of opinion;
- solicit and offer feedback to team members;

PREREQUISITE

Students are expected to have finished all courses in the MPP/MPA or MS CJ core and to be on track to graduate by the end of the semester or one semester following. It is preferred that you take this course in your final semester of your degree program.

CROSSLIST WITH CRJU 8980: CAPSTONE SEMINAR IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Students pursuing a Master of Science in Criminal Justice take this course to fulfill requirements of CRJU 8980. Students will complete projects for clients with on a topic related to criminal justice and consult with faculty in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology for guidance on application of theory and methods appropriate to the field as they complete their projects.

TEXTS

Texts for the class will vary based on the needs of client projects. **You are expected to use peer-reviewed research (e.g., journal articles, books, clearinghouses) to inform the methods and topics of the project**. In addition, these two texts are recommended for this course:

Knaflic, C. (2015). *Storytelling with data: A data visualization guide for business professionals*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons. ISBN 978-1119002253

Zinsser, W. (2006). *On Writing Well*. New York, NY: Harper Collins. ISBN 978-0060891541

Advisors may recommend other required reading each week as it relates to your project. However, **you should be prepared to identify scholarly literature and texts about your topic on your own as needed for your project.** Your faculty advisor will recommend appropriate literature and texts, but you will be responsible for independent research to fulfill the project goal.

iCOLLEGE

This course will be managed through iCollege, which will be the primary means of communication for announcements and assignment expectations. **Please set up notifications in the iCollege system so that**

you will receive annoucements for the class. Please get familiar with the contents of the course site early in the semester.

ATTENDANCE

This course meets as a class for the first four weeks of the semester. After teams are formed, students meet weekly with their faculty/project director at a time that fits with the group members' schedules. Students are expected to attend all class and/or team meetings with their faculty advisor. **Students who miss a class/meeting for unexcused reasons will have their final grade reduced by three grade points for each absence.**

Excused absences include legal obligations (jury duty, military orders); religious obligation; death or illness of a student's immediate family; and illness that is too severe or contagious to attend class/meetings. All excused absences require written documentation from an authoritative source verifying the absence by date and reason. Excused absences for **medical** reasons (including COVID) are managed through [GSU's Dean of Students Office](#) and professors will be notified when illness is verified.

COURSE MILESTONES

A set of milestones (activities and products) are required of students. Time frames for milestones are found in the course schedule, though actual timing during the semester may vary depending on the situation of each team and client. HOWEVER, plan to submit milestones on the dates listed unless told otherwise. **Students are responsible for keeping track of milestones as announced in class, posted on iCollege, described by email from the instructor, or incorporated into team work plans.**

Major course milestones and grade weightings include:

- Plunge Memo and Presentation   **15%**
- Client Work Plan   **10%**
- Weekly Progress Reports   **10%**
- Final Project Presentation   **20%**
- Final Report   **30%**
- End of course performance evaluations   **15%**

All milestones should be submitted to their designated Assignment folders on the due dates and time posted on iCollege. Timeliness and meeting deadlines are important aspects of professional behavior. Accordingly, **teams who do not submit materials on time or by agreement with the faculty advisor will have their grades on the deliverable lowered a full grade.**

COURSE ELEMENTS AND TIMETABLE

This schedule provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary.

Date	Modality	Activity	Deliverable*
01/11	In-Person	Course Introduction & Plunge Exercise	Self-Introduction on iCollege due by 5:00pm
01/18	In-Person	Plunge Exercise Presentations	**Plunge Memo & PPT**
01/21	NA	Project Rankings	Due by 11:59pm
01/25	In-Person	Team Charter & Work Plan	Team Charter due by 11:59pm
01/28	NA	Team Introduction to Client	Due by 5:00pm
02/01	In-Person	Work Plan & Client Kick-Off	Draft Work Plan
02/08	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	**Work Plan due by 11:59pm**
02/15	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	**Weekly progress report**
02/22	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	Problem Statement, Purpose, Methods of Final Report
03/01	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	**Weekly progress report**
03/08	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	**Weekly progress report**
03/15	NO CLASS	SPRING BREAK	
03/22	In-Person	Practice Presentation	**Weekly progress report**
03/29	Webex or In-Person	Project Work	Annotated Outline & Tables/Figures for Findings of Final Report
04/05	Webex or In-Person	Project Work & Report Writing	**Weekly progress report**
04/12	Webex or In-Person	Project Work & Report Writing	**Weekly progress report**
04/19	Webex or In-Person	Project Work & Report Writing	**Weekly progress report**
04/22	NA	Final Project Submission	**Final Report due by 11:59pm**
04/25-29	Webex or In-Person	Final Presentation to Client	**PPT due 4/29 by 11:59pm**
05/03	NA	Reflection	**Self & Peer Evaluations due by 11:59pm**

Note: * Bolded deliverables are graded.

Weeks 1-2: *Plunge Exercise*

In preparation for client projects, students will participate in a one week "plunge" using a prepared exercise that requires you to identify a problem, critically evaluate potential solutions, and recommend a solution. The first week of class will introduce the exercise and expectations for the plunge memo. The memo and presentation will be due during the second week of class. Students are assigned to teams for the exercise.

Weeks 2-3: *Project Ranking & Team Assignments*

In the third week of class, students will review project proposals for the course and be able to ask questions about the client organizations and the projects. Students will have several days to rank their project preferences through an online survey and be assigned to project teams based on their preferences and skill sets.

Weeks 4 – 14: *Project Work*

Teams will work on their projects for approximately 10 weeks. There will be weekly meetings when teams will report on project progress and issues, and advisors will assess progress and provide advice. Teams are expected to meet and work towards completion of their project outside of the weekly meeting with the advisors and/or class. **Students should expect to spend 6-9 hours per week on the project.**

Weeks 9 – 16: *Final Report Drafting and Presentation*

The outcome of the class is a final report and a presentation tp the client of findings from the project. The written product will be submitted multiple times as drafts and as a final version for grading. Additional advisor review is expected at each step in the process and prior to any distribution.

Professional work typically is revised several times before final submission. You should anticipate revising your final product and allow sufficient time for this process. Final submissions will be graded by faculty and you will be asked to make edits before presenting it to your client.

GRADING

All members of a team receive the same grade for all deliverables, except for weekly progress reports and performance evaluations. **In circumstances when there is clear evidence of uneven contributions among team members, an individual's grade will be higher/lower than a teammate's grade as reflected in weekly progress reports and peer and self-evaluations.** Peer and faculty evaluations will provide a basis for assigning different grades among team members.

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

93 - 100	A	77 – 79.99	C+
90 – 92.99	A-	73 – 76.99	C
87 – 89.99	B+	70 – 72.99	C-
83 – 86.99	B	60 – 69.99	D
80 – 82.99	B -	Below 60	F

A Excellent: Exceptional work for a graduate student. Work at this level is unusually thorough, well-reasoned, creative, methodologically sophisticated, and well-written. Work is of exceptional, professional quality.

A- Very Good: Very strong work for a graduate student. Work at this level shows signs of creativity, is thorough and well-reasoned, indicates strong understanding of appropriate methodological or analytical approaches, and meets professional standards.

B+/B Good: Sound work for a graduate student; well-reasoned and thorough, methodologically sound. Indicates the student has demonstrated the basic objectives of the course.

B- Adequate: Basic work for a graduate student with weaknesses. Demonstrates most course objectives but understanding of important issues and/or methodological or analytical skills is lacking.

C+/C Borderline: Weak work for a graduate student; meets the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Understanding of salient issues is somewhat incomplete. Methodological or analytical work performed in the course is minimally adequate.

C-/D/F Deficient: Inadequate work for a graduate student; does not meet the minimal expectations for a graduate student in the course. Work is inadequately developed or flawed by numerous errors and misunderstanding of important issues. Methodological or analytical work performed is weak and fails to demonstrate knowledge or technical competence expected of graduate students.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

We expect students to abide by the academic rules and regulations established by Georgia State University. Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the *Georgia State University Graduate Catalog*. By registering for this course, you acknowledge your awareness of the Student Code of Conduct, and you must become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the code. Any violation of the University's academic honesty policy may result in an F for the course.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have any condition, such as a physical or mental disability, which will make it difficult for you to carry out the work as outlined above or which will require extra time on assignments, please notify me in the first two weeks of the course. Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the GSU Access & Accommodations Center (AACE). Students may only be accommodated upon issuance of a signed Accommodation Plan by AACE. Students are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought.

BASIC NEEDS

Students who face challenges securing food or housing and believe this may affect their performance in the course are urged to contact the Dean of Students and the professor for support. The Embark Program at GSU also provides assistance to students experiencing homelessness or in the foster care system.

COVID PRECAUTIONS

Maintaining your physical and mental health is an important element of success in graduate school. **Staying healthy requires minimizing risky behaviors and stressors that can result in illness and an inability to attend class or complete coursework.** In this class, becoming ill also impacts the productivity of your team and the quality of the work delivered to your client. The best way to stay healthy while COVID-19 still poses risks to our community is to get vaccinated and **wear a mask in class** and elsewhere when you can't socially distance. Students will be requested to wear masks in class and required to wear a mask if meeting with a client who mandates masks in their work.

If you're exposed to COVID-19 during the semester, you should get tested immediately either on campus or through other local testing centers. If you test positive for COVID-19 after exposure, you should submit documentation to the Dean of Students Office to be excused from class while isolating. **You will not be excused from class and will face attendance policy penalties without this documentation.** Changes to campus operations resulting from CDC guidance will be announced via email and other university media should they be necessary.