

## **MAR Capstone Project Guidelines and Requirements**

The MAR student is required to exhibit the satisfactory completion of a Capstone Project, which can be fulfilled through one of the following three options: 1) portfolio, 2) extended paper, or 3) a thesis. The candidate's capstone project should demonstrate mastery of the basic perspectives and knowledge of the chosen area(s) of study, ability to formulate productive questions, and capacity to use research methods and resources pertinent to the relevant disciplines. Upon receiving approval from your reader(s) and program convener, submit your Prospectus and MAR Capstone Project Prospectus Form to the Office of Graduate Academic Services at [gacservices@drew.edu](mailto:gacservices@drew.edu) by the first week of the last semester in your program. Also, see the rubric provided below for the criteria of assessment.

### **1) Portfolio**

- a) Zero credit is given for a Portfolio. If the student chooses this option, then they must register for CRW 692 - MAR Portfolio (0 credits) and take an additional elective class in order to satisfy the MAR credit requirement. It is strongly recommended that this elective course be in one's area of study.
- b) The student submits a portfolio to a designated digital platform that includes the following:
  - i) Signature assignments from REL 530-533 classes;
  - ii) Signature assignments from 3 courses in one's chosen area of study; and
  - iii) A 5-page reflection paper that integrates the key themes of their MAR studies and shows how the submitted artifacts can be seen to demonstrate mastery of the basic perspectives and knowledge of the one's area of study, articulate and address critical questions, and utilize research methods and resources pertinent to their project.
- c) Grading: Assessment follows a pass/fail format; must pass in order to qualify to graduate.
- d) Timeline
  - i) Beginning of the graduation semester: submit a completed MAR Capstone Project Prospectus Form to the Office of Graduate Academic Services. Prior to submission, the student needs to make an arrangement with a faculty in the student's area of study or the MAR program convener to serve as their portfolio reader.
  - ii) Draft Due: week 8 of the graduation semester.
  - iii) Meeting with the reader (to review the draft): week 10 of the graduation semester.
  - iv) Final submission: submit a completed portfolio to the reader, including the integration paper, by the last day of instruction for the semester. The reader will oversee evaluation of the portfolio as pass or fail.

## **2) Extended Paper:**

- a) Three credits are given for an extended paper.
- b) Students write the extended paper stemming from a paper that received a grade of B or higher for a course in some previous semester. The following are guidelines for the extended paper.
- c) The student begins the process by making an arrangement with a faculty in the area of one's study or the MAR program convener to serve as their reader.
- d) Extended Paper Prospectus for the MAR degree includes the following:
  - i) a brief abstract that describes how the original paper will be expanded upon;
  - ii) an outline that organizes the paper in a coherent manner to develop one's thesis;
  - iii) and an appropriate bibliography.
  - iv) This prospectus is submitted to the chosen reader for review and approval.
- e) The student and the reader maintain communication during the writing process to explore in greater depth and breadth of scholarship concerning the topic, which are then incorporated into the final draft. It is this constructive dialogue between the student and the faculty as well as the process of expanding upon the original paper in a substantive way that distinguishes the extended paper from a term paper written for other classes. During the process, be sure to demonstrate the skills listed above in the general description of the Capstone project in a satisfactory manner.
- f) Extended Paper requirements:
  - i) Length: approximately 35 pages, excluding bibliography, double spaced, 12 pt. font, one-inch margins.
  - ii) Bibliography will combine the course paper's bibliography and material necessary for the extension.
- g) CRW 975 and grading:
  - i) Students writing an Extended Paper are required to take one semester of CRW 975 A/B accumulating 3 credits. The reader assigns the grade for the Extended Paper, which becomes the grade for the course (CRW 975) taken.
  - ii) Grading: assessment follows a letter grade format; B- or below fails to qualify.
- h) Timeline (may vary slightly depending on the reader's expectations)
  - i) Initial discussion with the reader who usually is the instructor for which the original paper (i.e., the paper to be extended) was written occurs at the beginning of the final semester, if the program is undertaken full-time, or its equivalent. Submit an approximately 3-page prospectus: 1-page abstract, 1-page outline, and 1-page bibliography with a minimum of 10 items, by week 2 in the same semester.
  - ii) Draft due: week 8 of the graduation semester.
  - iii) Meeting with the reader to review and discuss the draft: week 12 of the graduation semester.
  - vi) Submission by the end of the semester (i.e., last day of classes).

## **3) Thesis**

- a) Six credits are given for a thesis.
- b) The thesis will require two readers. Discuss your thesis project with the first thesis reader who will guide and assess your work and also with the second reader. It is strongly suggested that this conversation take place as early as possible, ideally in the first

semester but definitely by the first half of the second semester of one's program, to ensure sufficient time to complete the project.

- c) CRW 975 A/B and grading:
  - i) Students writing a Thesis are required to take CRW 975 A and B (full year sequence) accumulating 6 credits. The first reader in consultation with the second reader assigns the grade for the Thesis, which becomes the grade for the courses CRW 975 A/B taken.
  - ii) Grading: assessment follows a letter grade format; B- or below fails to qualify.
- d) Prospectus requirements:
  - i) Provide a thesis statement that describes the question, issue, or topic of your inquiry. Be sure to define your project clearly and thoroughly.
  - ii) Articulate approaches, methods, or theories relevant to the subject at hand.
  - iii) Discuss previous scholarship on the topic, including major debates and issues.
  - iv) Explain why your research is worth pursuing, especially note how it will contribute to advancement of your field of study.
  - v) Present a proposed outline for the thesis to show organization, coherence, and flow.
  - vi) Attach a preliminary bibliography that is critical to the project.
- e) Prospectus and Thesis specifications:
  - i) Prospectus length: 3-4 double-spaced pages of text, bibliography not included.
  - ii) Format: typed, 12 Pt. font, double spaced, and one-inch margins.
  - iii) Documentation Style: Use a citation style appropriate to disciplinary practices, usually Chicago style.
  - iv) Annotated bibliography: a minimum of 15-20 sources (including texts, monographs, articles, dissertations, manuscripts and other sources central to your thesis).
  - v) If deemed necessary, consult with the University Writing Center before submission of Prospectus.
  - vi) Thesis length: 50-75 pages, excluding bibliography, double spaced, 12 pt. font, one-inch margins. Chicago citation style preferred.
- f) Timeline for thesis (coordinated with the timeline of 975A and 975B)
  - i) Initiate discussion with two potential thesis readers at the latest by the first half of the second semester in the program when enrolled full-time, or its equivalent.
  - ii) At the latest by the beginning of the 6th week in the third semester in the program when enrolled full-time, or its equivalent, confirm the two readers.
  - iii) Prospectus: As described above due by the end of the third semester (i.e., at the end of CRW 975A)
  - iv) Follow the timeline of 975B, e.g., thesis writing and communication with the readers.
  - v) Draft submission: due by the end of the 8th week of the graduation semester.
  - vi) Thesis defense: completed by Friday of week 12. Must be scheduled two weeks in advance.
  - vii) Final submission by the end of the semester (i.e., the last day of classes). Note that MA theses will be uploaded to the Drew University Library catalog and to ProQuest

#### 4) Tutorial for Extended Paper and Thesis

- a) As stated above, if you select to write an Extended Paper, then you are required to enroll in CRW 975, either A or B (MAR Thesis/Extended Paper Workshop) for a semester (3

credits), and if you are writing a Thesis, then you are required to enroll in CRW 975 A&B (6 credits). The course functions mainly as a writer's workshop, and, while there is no specific course content, there are expectations as outlined in its syllabus.

- b) Please note that at present CRW 975 A (usually Fall semester) is devoted to research for thesis writers, culminating in the Prospectus outlined above 3d), and CRW 975 B (usually Spring semester) is dedicated to writing.

## MAR Capstone Project Rubric

The rubrics are applicable to all MAR Capstone Projects and defense: portfolio, extended paper, or a thesis. Assessment follows a letter grade format; B- or below fails to qualify.

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

Area of Study: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Adviser: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Categories\Points	4	3	2	1
<b>1. Clearly defined goals (Portfolio) or thesis (Extended Paper or Thesis); addresses a substantive question or problem</b>	The project contains a compelling thesis that clearly articulates and skillfully addresses the substance of a question or problem.	The project contains a coherent thesis that articulates and develops a question or problem with reasonable competence.	The project's thesis is not entirely coherent, and it articulates and develops a question or problem with uneven degrees of competence.	The project lacks a thesis and a substantive question or problem.
<b>2. Quality of comprehension</b>	The project reveals a thorough grasp of the relevant subject matter.	The project reveals an adequate grasp of the relevant subject matter.	The project reveals an inadequate grasp of the relevant subject matter.	The project consistently fails to grasp the relevant subject matter.
<b>3. Diverse Contexts</b>	The project reveals a thorough awareness of the diverse social and cultural contexts of the subject matter.	The project reveals an adequate awareness of the diverse social and cultural contexts of the subject matter.	The project reveals an inadequate grasp of the diverse social and cultural contexts of the subject matter.	The project consistently fails to grasp the diverse social and cultural contexts of the subject matter.

<p><b>4. Support from relevant sources</b></p>	<p>The arguments are persuasively supported by skillful referencing and interpretation of appropriate sources, reflecting an excellent grasp of the relevant scholarly literature.</p>	<p>The arguments are adequately supported by appropriate sources, reflecting a substantial grasp of the relevant scholarly literature.</p>	<p>The arguments are unevenly supported by appropriate sources, reflecting an imperfect grasp of the relevant scholarly literature.</p>	<p>The arguments are not supported by appropriate sources, reflecting lack of engagement with the relevant scholarly literature.</p>
<p><b>5. Appropriateness of research methods</b></p>	<p>The project utilizes a research methodology that is fully appropriate to the field and the thesis, and reflects a keen awareness of diverse social contexts.</p>	<p>The project utilizes a research methodology that is largely appropriate to the field and the thesis, and reflects a degree of awareness of diverse social contexts.</p>	<p>The project does not adequately use accepted methodologies, nor does it adequately reflect awareness of diverse social contexts.</p>	<p>The project has no discernible methodology, nor does it reflect awareness of diverse social contexts.</p>
<p><b>6. Writing/communication</b></p>	<p>The project reflects mastery of the arts of scholarly writing and communication: organization, style, grammar, punctuation, spelling, diction, formatting, and citation.</p>	<p>The project reflects competence in the arts of scholarly writing and communication: organization, style, grammar, punctuation, spelling, diction, formatting, and citation.</p>	<p>The project reflects deficiencies in some aspects of scholarly writing and communication skills.</p>	<p>The project reflects a general lack of scholarly writing and communication skills.</p>

24-23	22	21	20	19 and below, not passing	18 not passing	17 not passing	16 not passing
A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-

**Comments:**

<b>Optional comments on preparedness for further graduate work</b>	The process of proposing, researching, drafting, editing and writing the paper indicates the student is excellently prepared for further graduate work.	The process of proposing, researching, drafting, editing and writing the paper indicates the student is reasonably well prepared for further graduate work.	The process of proposing, researching, drafting, editing and writing the paper indicates the student needs significant additional preparation for further graduate work.	The process of proposing, researching, drafting, editing and writing the paper indicates the student is unlikely to succeed in further graduate work.
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