

Guidelines and Evaluation Matrix
SECONDARY EDUCATION CAPSTONE (EDSE 7788)
For Initial Certification and Advanced Certification Candidates

Attachments: **Core Candidate Learning Outcomes**
Capstone Evaluation Rubric

Capstone, n. 1. Building top stone; a stone used at the top of a wall or other structure;
2. High point; something considered the highest achievement or most important action in a series of actions.

(Encarta, St. Martins Press, 1999)

Revised Fall 2014: This version goes into effect in Fall 2014 (or capstones at the Demorest and Athens campuses. Cohort capstone instructors may elect to initiate use of this version at any point during SY 2014 – 2015

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EDSE 7788 CAPSTONE = Course + Exhibition

EXHIBITION = Presentation + Documentation

Capstone Guidelines

Secondary Education Exhibition: EDSE 788 Capstone

During your last semester in the program, your challenge is to create and present a **scholarly, personal synthesis** of your experiences throughout the program – courses, readings, papers, research, teaching experiences, observations, lesson plans, initiatives, reflections, insights, changes, epiphanies, and implications for practices – to an audience of faculty and peers: *An exhibition*.

An exhibition consists of an *oral presentation* of 30 to 40 minutes (or as designated by your instructor) – including an effective assortment of writings, demonstrations, power-point, videos, slide-tapes, portfolio, CDs, static displays, etc. – *plus a notebook of documentation* to support any element in the presentation you deem necessary. Each presentation will conclude with time for questions from evaluators and members of the audience, an important feature of exhibitions.

As the final assessment of the candidate’s achievement in the program, the Capstone Exhibition provides an opportunity for the candidate to demonstrate mastery in his or her chosen field of certification.

**** Secondary Education majors who began their program of study in August 2014 or later may need to bring the completed “EDSE 6660 TKES-based portfolio” to their exhibition.**

Why an Exhibition?

College programs easily become merely a sequence of courses to be checked off, perhaps culminated with written exams (comps) or a major paper (thesis). Few programs provide participants with an incentive or structure for assimilating the learning, insights, discoveries, and continuing questions derived from the courses and experiences of their programs. The overarching purpose of the Capstone Exhibition is to provide precisely that kind of incentive and structure.

Each candidate’s program is different, and since every participant is constructing his or her own understanding about learning and teaching, each deserves the opportunity to demonstrate the completeness and elegance of that understanding. Custom designing an exhibition provides an opportunity to display a variety of learning styles, as well as a depth and breadth of understanding beyond what written exams can reveal.

Anticipating the capstone encourages participants to continuously thread together the various elements of their respective programs, rather than to simply complete separate courses in a sequence. Plan your exhibition throughout your program by journaling and accumulating insights, reflections, quotes, relevant articles, shining moments (and stinking moments), ideas for your presentation, thoughts about schools and schooling, and intentions for your practices. If you approach the capstone this way, you will find it an affirming experience.

Finally, designing and presenting an exhibition of one’s own provides a personal experience with a type of performance assessment that is increasingly being used in high schools and colleges.

Personal Pedagogy

There is no prescribed philosophy candidates are expected to present, no politically correct positions, no “right” or “wrong” orientations on key issues. What evaluators expect is a *clearly articulated, unified, persuasive essay* which serves as a guide for the candidate making the thousands of decisions involved in a teacher’s many roles. Avoid the temptation of including ideas because you think they might match evaluators’ preferences.

In reading your personal pedagogy, we expect more than a set of glib generalizations. Readers deserve to know why you are disposed to the specific views you advocate. Readers should be able to discern what you see as worthy practices and unworthy practices. We need to see how you relate issues of schooling to the larger issues humankind faces.

Often, the tendency is to cast a personal pedagogy as consisting of a set of principles as if set in stone. Educators who make the effort to refine their philosophical perspectives recognize that new questions or concerns need to be addressed, new possibilities explored, and sometimes even fundamental positions revised. It is an ongoing, dynamic task. The personal pedagogy narrative embraces those unsettled elements, noting where they come from and how they might be resolved. In other words, what do we need to know that we do not already know?

In composing a personal pedagogy, capstone candidates should attend carefully to the language indicating the strength and basis of assertions, from “perhaps” and “it may be,” to “research supports” or “experience confirms,” to “I am certain beyond doubt” or “the overwhelming evidence shows.” In general, avoid “I believe...” and “I think...” and “I feel...” statements, unless that language accurately conveys *how* you *hold* to that specific assertion.

The personal pedagogy should **not** be constructed as the narrative for the presentation, nor loaded with examples of instructional practices that should appear in the presentation.

What we look for in a candidate’s presentation are examples of the candidate’s personal pedagogy in action.

Keep that in mind throughout the time you create your capstone.

Additional documentation: You may provide additional documents to *complement* your presentation, but additional documentation is **not** required. In deciding whether to provide additional documents, keep in mind that evaluators expect all additional documentation to address specific capstone criteria.

Each presenter provides advance copies of documentation, including the personal pedagogy, to the designated evaluators *at least one week prior to the exhibition*. Include a copy of the current capstone evaluation rubric.

Exhibition Audiences

An exhibition is a public display of mastery; therefore audiences are an essential feature. Candidates are to invite the following:

- All Piedmont faculty members involved in the secondary education program at both campuses, and including Arts and Sciences faculty.
- All secondary candidates at both campuses and all off-campus cohorts.
- Colleagues and administrators from your school.
- Family and friends.

Each team of presenters is responsible for those invitations being delivered in a timely fashion so invitees may fix capstone dates in their respective calendars. Be sure to post invitations on bulletin boards at both campuses.

The college designates days in each semester’s schedule for capstones, so faculty members may plan for them. Variances from those days require approval of the capstone instructor. NOTE: These scheduled days do not apply to cohorts.

As a reminder, complete this schedule for your capstone semester:

Capstone dates for _____ semester, 20__: Athens - _____ Demorest - _____

The course is a component of the capstone, not simply a vehicle for preparing the exhibition. A *competent performance in the course is required for an overall “Pass” for the capstone.* The Capstone Instructor will submit the Pass/Fail grade for the course.

Because the course provides a supportive structure for each individual to synthesize the elements of personal experiences into a “personal, scholarly synthesis,” there are expectations for a full, energetic fulfillment of the following:

- 1) Meeting deadlines and all commitments reliably and without prompting.
- 2) Conscientious participation as a member of a capstone team, both serving as a “critical friend” and attending to the counsel of other team members in developing effective exhibitions.
- 3) Full participation in class sessions. Attendance is required, especially at rehearsals, practice sessions, and other participants’ exhibitions.
- 4) Dealing professionally with feedback and suggestions by instructor, peers, evaluators and audience members

Benchmarks: At two points in the capstone course, the instructor will provide an assessment of each candidate’s performance on the expectations listed above.

The first benchmark will be approximately halfway through the capstone course. The capstone instructor will notify any candidates whose performance is below expectations or marginal that they may lose the opportunity to present their exhibitions that semester. Individuals so notified will meet with the capstone instructor to develop a plan of improvement. NOTE: No capstone exhibition may be presented before the first benchmark.

The instructor will continue to monitor all candidates’ performances between the first benchmark and the second benchmark and will notify anyone falling below expectations.

The second benchmark will be one to three weeks before scheduled dates for exhibitions. The instructor will notify candidates who are below expectations at that point that they will not present their exhibitions that semester and will be assigned an In-Progress (IP) for EDSE 7788. Under College policies, failure to complete a course in will result in the In-Progress becoming an “F” on the candidate’s transcript. ***Capstone instructors’ decisions in this regard are final.***

Preparing for the Capstone

1. Start preparing during your first semester in the program and continue preparing throughout the program. Set aside time for reflection, writing down your insights and concerns, and reviewing readings and notes from courses. Create a stash for ideas about your capstone.
2. During the capstone course, the instructor facilitates the processes involved in synthesizing the experiences in programs and guides the construction of individual presentations. But the primary burden for designing and presenting the capstone is on the individual capstone candidate. Capstone team members are expected to serve as “critical friends’ for other members of the team, as well as assist each other with the mechanics of exhibitions (setting up, timing, prompts, video-taping, etc).
3. Videotapes of previous capstones are available for review. NOTE: Use previous capstones as sources of ideas, not models, because the videos do not necessarily represent the “best of” previous capstones.
4. Study the evaluation criteria carefully and repeatedly.
5. Be conscientious in both your role as critical friend for fellow capstoners and your willingness to attend to their suggestions for improving yours.

Designated Evaluators

Capstone instructors arrange for at least two faculty members to serve as designated evaluators who will provide a rigorous evaluation and whose areas of expertise are complementary. (Participation by presenters in the selection of evaluators is decided by the instructor.) When Secondary Education Capstone courses are combined with Elementary and Middle Grade Capstones, the instructor will determine the number of evaluators and how they will be selected.

- One evaluator must have a strong background in the presenter’s field of certification.
- Evaluators do not necessarily have to be those you had as instructors.

NOTE: The capstone instructor may not serve as a Designated Evaluator.

Evaluation Criteria

Because the Core Candidate Learning Outcomes represent the overall traits we expect our candidates to attain, they serve as a fundamental reference for all assessments of candidate performances. Review them frequently for both expectations and insights for your capstone. (Attachment One)

This version of the Capstone Evaluation Rubric includes selected criteria from the Georgia Extended Framework for Teachers, as well criteria adapted from the previous versions of the evaluation rubric.

Though evaluators rate the performance on each criterion of a capstone, the final evaluation is holistic, that is, of the capstone exhibition as a whole. NOTE: Ratings of “Accomplished” are rare, as the term itself indicates.

- **An overall evaluation of “Pass” for initial certification candidates requires ratings of Basic or better on all six criteria.**
- **For advanced candidates, a “Pass” requires ratings of Basic or better, with at least two Proficient ratings, on the six criteria.**
- **Any unsatisfactory rating will result in an overall Revise and Repeat evaluation result.**

Evaluating Capstones

* After each exhibition, the designated evaluators adjourn to a separate room to complete their respective rubric forms.

* Each designated evaluator completes the rubric independent of other evaluators. Rubric forms are to be completed, including the overall evaluation, before discussing an exhibition.

Exhibitions are rated overall as “Pass” or “Revise and Repeat.” Evaluators are encouraged to include “Commendations” and “Areas needing improvement” in their ratings summaries.

Assigning an overall rating of Revise and Repeat requires **explicit written guidance for revising the capstone**. In the case of Revise and Repeat evaluations, the grade for EDSE 7788 will be reported as an In-Progress (IP). Under College policies, failure to complete a course in the following semester results in the In-Progress becoming an “F” on the candidate’s transcript.

Reporting Exhibition Results

Following the meeting of the designated evaluators, the capstone instructor provides to the capstone candidate an oral summary of the designated evaluators' overall evaluations. If the overall rating is Revise and Repeat, specific instructions for improvements are to be included.

The instructor provides copies of the summary and comments to the secondary education office, which maintains a file on all secondary education capstones. The secondary education office sends a congratulatory letter to each successful capstone candidate suitable for inclusion in professional portfolios.

Capstone (EDSE 7788) grades are Pass/Fail. In-Progress will be reported in cases described in the preceding sections. An Incomplete may be awarded in situations which meet the college's guidelines (refer to current college catalog). A failing grade will be awarded when a candidate's performance in the capstone course and the exhibition do not meet minimum expectations described in the guidelines and evaluation criteria.

Presenter: _____

Date: _____

Evaluator name _____

Capstone location: _____

Capstone Evaluation Rubric

To assign a particular rating, the candidate must meet ALL the descriptors in that rating.

Personal Pedagogy

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic rating	The personal pedagogy consists of several loosely connected ideas with clear indications about the sources of those ideas.	The personal pedagogy consists of a logically organized set of ideas which serve as a coherent frame of reference for making decisions about instructional practices.	The personal pedagogy weaves together a set of theories covering all aspects of instructional practices for a persuasive, holistic frame of reference for making decisions about professional practices.

Domain 1: Content and Curriculum

1. Content knowledge

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Content knowledge is adequate for designing instruction.	Demonstrates understanding of and applies modes of inquiry to major paradigms in the field. Demonstrates resourcefulness in acquiring content for teaching. Demonstrates a deep knowledge of the content field.	Demonstrates how student learning reflects knowledge of the modes of inquiry and major paradigms of the field, as well as connections to other academic disciplines. Demonstrates a wide and deep understanding that is woven with other content fields.

2. Developing instructional curricula

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Builds rationale for instructional curricula in the candidate's content field. Examples of planned activities in the content taught are demonstrated.	Develops and refines instructional curricula from curriculum guides, experienced colleagues, and reliable sources in the field.	Articulates persuasive rationale for instructional curricula which reflects a scholarly synthesis of curriculum guides, experienced colleagues and reliable sources in the field.

3. Pedagogical content knowledge

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic rating.	Instruction manifests some grasp of the pedagogical (principles, practice, and profession of teaching) potential of content knowledge.	Develops instructional curricula that clearly manifests understanding of pedagogical content knowledge.	Demonstrates planning and implementing instruction that builds on an understanding of pedagogical content knowledge, and results in students acquiring those habits of mind.

Domain 2: Knowledge of Students and Their Learning

4. Adolescent learners

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Manifests some understanding of the traits of adolescent learners.	Demonstrates designing instruction that reflects understanding of the traits of individual adolescent learners.	Demonstrates designing and implementing instruction based on understanding of adolescent learning patterns that results in achievement by all students.

Domain 3: Learning Environments

5. Responsive classroom

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Takes steps toward establishing a culturally responsive classroom.	Demonstrates sensitivity to students' cultures, experiences, and communities in all aspects of instruction.	Demonstrates knowledge of students' unique cultures, experiences, and communities to sustain a culturally responsive classroom that engages students in the content.

6. Democratic classroom

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Provides for some student choices in making decisions about instruction. Demonstrates how to promote classrooms that will be safe and characterized by civility.	Demonstrates how to provide for student choices throughout instruction that promotes an increased sense of responsibility by students for their own learning.	Demonstrates how to create an environment that manifests an understanding of the possibilities of the democratic classroom for enhancing student learning.

Domain 4: Assessment

7. Managing assessments

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic rating.	Demonstrates use of formative and summative assessments at appropriate points in the learning process.	Demonstrates a growing awareness of the connections between classroom-based assessment methods and instructional decisions and modifies instruction accordingly.	Demonstrates how to Develop, use and refine classroom-based assessments, including authentic assessments, emphasizing higher order thinking skills, to evaluate learning and modify instruction.

Domain 5: Planning & Instruction

8. Instructional practices

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic rating.	Demonstrates and Primarily uses conventional modes of instruction that enables most students to meet content standards.	Demonstrates how to provide challenging content and engaging learning experiences. Student-centered, interactive instruction.	Demonstrates thought-provoking instruction leading to depth of understanding, applications, and higher-order thinking skills. Demonstrates a strong sense of classroom community in engaging the content.

9. Instructional decision-making

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Demonstrates an awareness of decisions required in teaching. Knows multiple ways to teach some content.	Demonstrates knowledge of the pros and cons of various instructional strategies to make instructional decisions.	Demonstrates the ability to read contexts of classrooms then implement appropriate instructional strategies based on understanding of pros and cons of each as revealed in research.

10. Differentiated instruction

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Demonstrates the ability to Design instruction that manifests some understanding of the learning styles and backgrounds of the students.	Demonstrates the ability to design and adjust instruction to build on the learning styles and backgrounds of individual students.	Demonstrates know of instruction built on knowledge of the backgrounds and preferred learning styles of the students, then guides them toward development of areas needing improvement.

Domain 6: Professionalism

11. Learning from experience

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic rating.	Demonstrates the ability to reflect on instructional practices and the connections to student learning.	Demonstrates the ability to reflect on instructional practices and student achievement to improve instructional practices.	Demonstrates systematic reflection on instructional practices and conducts self-assessments which lead to insights that result in an improved approach to instruction.

12. Research

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Makes appropriate references to relevant research.	Demonstrates discerning use of research, including accurate assessments of reported research.	Demonstrates ability to design and implement own research, as well as making discerning references to relevant research.

Presentation

13.

Unsatisfactory	Basic	Proficient	Accomplished
Does not meet basic Rating.	Elements of the exhibition were logically organized; use of visuals and media contributed to the presentation; documents other than personal pedagogy complemented the presentation; able to answer most questions satisfactorily.	Elements of the exhibition were logically organized; use of visuals and media contributed to the presentation; documents other than personal pedagogy complemented the presentation; made eye contact with audience; made effective use of voice modulation; answers to questions demonstrated depth and breadth of content knowledge and pedagogical principles.	Elements of the exhibition were logically organized and designed to engage the audience; skillful use of visuals and media contributed to the presentation; documents other than personal pedagogy complemented the presentation; made eye contact with audience; made effective use of voice modulation; answers to questions demonstrated depth and breadth of content knowledge and pedagogical principles. A creative exhibition that serves as a model.

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- For advanced candidates, a “Pass” requires ratings of Basic or better, with at least two Proficient ratings, on the six criteria.

Any unsatisfactory rating will result in an overall Revise and Repeat evaluation result.

Pass

An effective blend of presentation with documentation and displays: manifests a personal, scholarly synthesis of the experiences in the masters program at a competent or better level. Candidate held audience’s attention. All points made were clear and persuasive.

Commendations:

Areas Needing Improvement:

Revise and Repeat

The candidate did not meet the criteria adequately, as specified in the designated evaluators’ comments and suggestions. Not persuasive that the presenter has synthesized the experiences of the program.

For Revise and Repeat rating, provide specific instructions here: use back of page.

Evaluator’s Signature _____ Date _____