

M.A. in Liberal Studies Capstone: “White Paper” Report Guidelines

MALS Students doing capstones are required to submit a report at the conclusion of their project. This “White Paper” report serves as a permanent record of project accomplishments and must be submitted to the program and library.

In the report, the student provides a summary of the capstone project, including how the capstone relates to their course work and concentration, what they have learned, what problems they have encountered, how these problems were overcome, and recommended best practices highlighting what worked. All reports should be approximately twenty pages and must be submitted to the department with the capstone project. It is later submitted to the library following the Library’s formatting guidelines for submitting a thesis (<http://libguides.gc.cuny.edu/dissertations>). The format (including cover page and signature pages) should follow that of the Library’s requirement for a thesis, otherwise the white paper will not be accepted until it is formatted correctly.

Examples may also be posted on the MALS capstone website for the students to consult with the student’s approval.

The structure of the “White Paper” report should be as follows

1. Cover Page

The cover page should include the student’s name, the student’s concentration, the title of the capstone project, and the year and month of submission.

2. Capstone Signature Page

This page should be signed by the Advisor and Department (like the thesis signature page).

3. Abstract

Include the abstract that was submitted to the department or a revised version thereof.

4. Narrative Description

The items listed are provided to help guide the narrative description of the report. Because projects vary considerably, some items may not be relevant for certain projects. Students are encouraged to organize this portion of the report to present the clearest account of the project and the process behind the completion of the project.

- *Provide a description of the Capstone Project*
 - Include process of development and impetus for the project.
 - Discuss what practices worked best to realize project goals.
 - If the project is digital in nature, please provide the URL.

- *Relationship to Concentration and Previous Course of Study*
 - Discuss how the capstone project relates to the student’s concentration and previous course work

- *Evaluation*
 - Provide an evaluation of the project that assesses how strongly the completed version of the project captures the objectives outlined in the initial project application.
 - Discuss what setbacks and challenges one faced and how one handled these.
 - Outline the successes and failures of the project.
- *Continuation of the Project*
 - Indicate if there are any plans to continue working on the project after the completion of your MA. Specify if this is due to the success of the project or a desire to see the project through if it has not yet been completed.
- *Select Bibliography*
 - Include sources that were important to the capstone project.

5. Appendices

Include any supporting material that would contribute to an understanding of the project and its accomplishments to date. These materials can include representative samples or screenshots of completed work, articles submitted to journals, publicizing materials, illustrated field reports, exhibition catalogues, examples of fiction, and the like.