

RN-BSN Capstone Experience: Guide for Students

➤ RN-BSN Capstone Experience

The capstone experience is composed of several recurring projects that are infused throughout the curriculum. There are advantages to this type of program design: it allows for you to begin as a novice (which you are familiar with in Benner's Novice to Expert Model) and progress in your skills and abilities as you complete courses. Each course, each assignment, each reflection on the content provides you the deep learning that can occur with clinical practice. This leads to competency in the expert phase by the end of the program. This Guide provides a general overview and is not meant to replace the detailed descriptions within the courses.

There are two primary projects that build in a linear fashion across your program:

1. The Capstone Project
2. The creation of PowerPoint slides that showcase achievement of End of Program Student Learning Outcomes (you may see these referred to as EOPSLOs in some of the documents). The EOPSLOs are what we expect the student to gain as an end-product of the program.

➤ The Capstone Project

Purpose of a Capstone Project

A capstone project provides a venue for you to create and facilitate a project that demonstrates an understanding of accumulated knowledge. The basic purpose of a capstone project is to showcase the student's understanding of a subject and its application in the real world of clinical practice. The capstone project is clinically based, thus ensuring clinical practice experience that addresses needed aspects of the EOPSLOs from a clinical standpoint. The purpose of this individualized learning experience is to enable you to develop an original nursing project on a topic of professional or personal interest. The capstone project allows students to evaluate a potential area of change in nursing for feasibility, explore the existing research/knowledge on the subject, consider potential models for implementation of the change, and identify appropriate evaluative methods. Although the capstone project is an important part of the clinical practice experience, it comprises eight hours of the total 237 hours of clinical practice experience that are present in the BSN curriculum. The 237 hours is composed of simulation, applied practice experience such as planning and direct clinical practice experience such as interviewing, completing assessments, etc.

Capstone Project Paper

The capstone project itself is completed in NUR499, the Capstone Project Course. This is a paper iteration of the topic/problem/issue/concern. You will identify the problem/issue/concern, the current research about the topic, the plan for resolving the problem/issue/concern, the implementation of the

project, and evaluation measures you took or would take to determine success of the clinical practice experience gained through the capstone project.

Where to Begin

Capstone projects are designed to encourage you to think critically, solve challenging problems, and develop skills such as oral and written communication, research, project planning, and goal setting to achieve an outcome. The courses in the curriculum are intended to enhance your skills in research, and the design and development of projects, building you up to the place where you can produce a substantial, original, applied project that has a clinical focus. The capstone project is intended to encourage the application of theories, principles, and processes you have studied to an actual nursing-related problem or issue of interest in the clinical arena.

It is never too early to begin planning for the capstone project. The capstone project itself is completed and presented in the final Capstone course, NUR499. In your first courses, you should start thinking about topics/issues/concerns/problems that you have encountered in nursing practice, either globally or specifically at your place of employment. You will be able to refine ideas as you progress through the curriculum. For instance, in your first 400 level nursing course, you will touch on topics such as regulations in regard to nursing research, ethics in nursing practice, the impact of information technology on the healthcare environment, and nursing's agenda for healthcare reform. The information that you obtain through discussions and through classroom assignments will assist you in identifying an issue of concern and interest to you.

Continuing the Capstone Project through the Curriculum

Some of you may have experience with curriculum development and have heard the term "Program Outcomes". Program outcomes are like the goals that are established by the faculty to determine what the student needs to know to be a successful graduate. As stated earlier, we refer to these goals as end of program student learning outcomes or EOPSLOs. The courses of the curriculum are not created haphazardly. Faculty use the EOPSLOs as a guide to determine the course content and the sequence of courses that would best enable the student to learn and lead to the accomplishment of the EOPSLOs.

The EOPSLOs for the RN-BSN program are:

1. Assess effective communication in oral, written, interpersonal and electronic modes.
2. Evaluate clinical judgments based on evidence-based practice standards and ethical practices.
3. Ensure accountability when providing and ensuring safe, efficient and quality patient care.
4. Synthesize available resources to apply critical thinking to complex clinical situations.
5. Incorporate culturally competent care concepts for individuals and families across the lifespan.
6. Critique proficiency when caring for communities and populations.
7. Analyze opportunities for personal and professional growth in pursuit of career goals.
8. Integrate clinical technologies and informatics in practice.

So, what do the EOPSLOs have to do with the capstone project? You will need to keep these outcome statements in mind as you choose a topic and develop the capstone project. Since the capstone project

is a culmination of your learning, an end product of your course work, the capstone project should reflect these outcomes.

In addition to the EOPSLOs (which are written on a program level), we also have outcomes for each course that guide the content within the course. The **didactic course outcomes** for NUR499 are:

1. Evaluate the integration of the Nine Principles in a nursing organization.
2. Analyze the global forces that are impacting the profession of nursing.
3. Critique the application of strategic planning concepts.
4. Design an application of the Balanced Scorecard and Five Forces business models.
5. Assess teams for effectiveness that will assist the strategic plan.
6. Create a professional development plan.

Clinical Practice Experience Outcomes:

1. Create a capstone project for an identified clinical problem, issue, or concern
2. Collaborate with other healthcare professionals to complete the capstone project.

You will need to keep these course objectives in mind as well, as you choose your capstone project topic.

In NUR402, the first 400-level course of the curriculum, you will be asked to consider a problem, issue, concern, passion, or interest related to nursing that you would like to consider developing into the capstone project.

Consider how you might design a project that incorporates or reflects the course outcomes and the EOPSLOs, and what you will do to support that you have met these outcomes. In addition, the capstone project will fulfill the need for the eight hours of direct care experience in NUR499.

Examples of possible projects include (but are not limited to):

- Work with other providers in any setting where health care is delivered, including the community, to identify gaps in care and implement a quality improvement strategy
- Collaborate with nursing staff to implement a new procedure or nursing practice that is evidence based.
- Work with an interprofessional team to evaluate the outcomes of a new practice guideline and implement recommended changes
- Design and implement a coordinated, patient-centered plan of care with an interprofessional team.
- Participate in interprofessional performance improvement team working on implementation/evaluation of national patient safety goals
- Conduct a mock root cause analysis on a near miss and share results with staff or shared governance council or participate in an actual root cause analysis (RCA) and/or failure mode effects analysis (FMEA).

- Teach vulnerable populations about avoiding environmental risks.
- Collaborate with institutions, such as a day care center or a homeless shelter, to develop and implement policies to minimize transmission of communicable diseases.
- Construct a genetic pedigree by collecting family history information to identify a risk profile. Develop and implement a plan of care, including patient education and appropriate referrals.
- Evaluate and make decisions about the organization, prioritization and appropriate delegation of care using an actual care team in a microsystem of care.
- Consult with the professionals to improve transition of elderly patients across care settings. Develop and implement a plan for an older patient to transition from one level of care to another within the same facility and from one facility to another.

As you can see the opportunities are endless, constrained only by your creativity.

In order to assist you with the capstone project as you progress through the program, all students are required to choose one of two BSN faculty who are familiar with the capstone project process as your capstone mentor. You will initiate contact with one of these mentors via phone or email, explain your thoughts regarding potential projects, and ask for feedback. These two faculty are primary faculty for NUR499, the Capstone course, and are specialists with the capstone project. Whichever faculty you choose will remain your capstone mentor for the duration of the program and are available for any questions/concerns about the capstone project. Please obtain faculty information under the Mentors tab in The Global Village. Directions for access to the Global Village are found in your course.

In the courses between NUR402 and NUR499 (first 400-level course to the last course in the curriculum), there may not be specific capstone project assignments, but you should continue to think about and plan for your capstone project. You may identify better ideas about a topic for the capstone project as you complete assignments in your courses.

In NUR499, you will complete the capstone project. We have provided 8 hours of clinical time for you to do so. Specific directions for the capstone project are in the course; this will provide an overview.

- You will design the clinical practice experience project. Make sure you have reviewed the EOPSLOs as you will be asked how your topic supports that you have met the EOPSLOs.
- You will discuss your capstone project with your peers as a discussion question. You will have a chance to receive feedback from your peers and provide helpful suggestions to them in regard to their projects.
- Communicate with your faculty during the course as you develop your paper iteration of your capstone project.
- You will develop PowerPoint slides that outline your project, the research you did on the topic, your analysis of the project with its plan, initiation and evaluation. You will include slides that indicate how the EOPSLOs are reflected in your project. (Refer to the section that describes the PowerPoint presentation.)
- You will submit your capstone project paper and the PowerPoint slides as final assignments for the course. Rubrics are available in the course to help you determine exactly how you will be graded.

➤ The Professional Development Plan

The final course, NUR499, requires the completion of the Professional Development Plan. A professional development plan documents the goals, the required skills and competency development for a career, and identify the objectives that a person has in support of their career development. The Professional Development Plan is also incorporated into the PowerPoint presentation that is given at the end of NUR499. (See the section on PowerPoint slides and presentation for further information.)

References to scholarly work that you have completed throughout the program can be referenced in the Professional Development Plan and can even be added as attachments to the Plan. The following chart identifies some of the assignments that you have completed in the program and might want to keep as reference to showcase professional development.

<i>NUR402</i>	<p>Objective: Synthesize available resources to apply critical thinking to complex clinical situations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Case study from Week 5 • Final project – the nursing process paper
<i>NUR405</i>	<p>Objective: Ensure accountability when providing and ensuring safe, efficient, quality patient care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 8 assignment: the complete head to toe assessment
<i>NUR410</i>	<p>Objective: Evaluate clinical judgments based on evidence-based practice standards and ethical practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 7 assignment: ethics and prevention • Week 7: Final Project: Nursing Theory and Research
<i>NUR415</i>	<p>Objective: Integrate clinical technologies and informatics in practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 8 Final Project
	<p>Objective: Assess effective communication in oral, written, interpersonal, and electronic modes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 8 Final Project

<i>NUR417</i>	<p>Objective: Critique proficiency in caring for communities and populations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 2 practice experience assignment: needs assessment of a community • Week 3: Education program to meet health goals • Week 5 practice experience assignment: Family health promo teaching
<i>NUR427</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Week 7 practice experience assignment: PowerPoint Presentation
<i>NUR441</i>	<p>Objective: Incorporate culturally competent care concepts for individuals and families across the lifespan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint slides • Week 3 assignment: case study • Week 8 assignment: comprehensive case management plan
<i>NUR499</i>	<p>Objective: Analyze opportunities for personal and professional growth in pursuit of career goals.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation • Capstone project paper • Professional Development Plan

NOTE: Other documents may be placed in the Professional Development Plan at the student's discretion as a means of showcasing exemplary work.

➤ The PowerPoint Slides

You will create PowerPoint slides for each course that provide your self-reflection of how you feel certain aspects of the course assist in meeting the EOPSLOs. (Remember, the EOPSLOs were introduced in the capstone project section of this document!) One of the eight EOPSLOs is assigned to each of the 400-level courses and becomes the focus of your PowerPoint slides for that course.

The individual programmatic outcome that is to be addressed in each course is listed below:

- NUR402 Transition to Professional Nursing: Synthesize available resources to apply critical thinking to complex clinical situations.
- NUR405 Health Assessment for Professional Nursing: Ensure accountability when providing and ensuring safe, efficient, quality patient care.
- NUR410 Theoretical Concepts of Research in Nursing: Evaluate clinical judgments based on evidence-based practice standards and ethical practices.
- NUR415 Nursing Informatics: Integrate clinical technologies and informatics in practice.
- NUR417 Nursing Leadership and Management: Assess effective communication in oral, written, interpersonal, and electronic modes.
- NUR427 Population Health in the Global Community: Critique proficiency in caring for communities and populations.
- NUR441 Case Management Concepts: Incorporate culturally competent care concepts for individuals and families across the lifespan.

- NUR499 RN-BSN Capstone Project: Analyze opportunities for personal and professional growth in pursuit of career goals.

Thus, you will be producing 2-3 PowerPoint slides for every 400-level course. These slides identify how you feel the EOPSLO is met in the course. By the time you reach your final course you will have accumulated a body of work that provides a thorough overview of every EOPSLO in your program. The PowerPoint slides you create for each course will be combined into the PowerPoint Presentation in NUR 499.

➤ The Presentation

The presentation is where it all comes together during your last course, NUR499, RN-BSN capstone project. You have been completing 2-3 PowerPoint slides in each class. Those PowerPoint slides reflect how you perceive that the program outcome designated for that course has been met. In this last course, NUR499, you have completed a capstone project for resolution of a clinical issue/problem/concern on a topic of your choosing. You will now reflect back on all of the program outcomes and determine how these outcomes have been met as reflected in your capstone project. Again, using PowerPoint or a media presentation device of your choosing (approved by the faculty of record), you will develop slides that portray two things: 1) a synopsis of your capstone project; and 2) your reflection of how all eight of the program outcomes have been met as demonstrated in your capstone project. This is a narrated presentation with speaker's notes attached to the PowerPoint slides that will be submitted as an assignment in NUR499.

Synopsis

This is a lot of information to absorb! Here is a table of how all this fits together as you move through each of the 400-level courses in the curriculum:

COURSE STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE COURSE

<p><i>NUR402</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review the EOPSLOs. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a discussion question on what you are considering as your Capstone Project and ask any questions you have about the process. <input type="checkbox"/> Review the EOPSLO assigned to this course and develop 2-3 PowerPoint slides that identify how you have met the EOPSLO. <input type="checkbox"/> Add the required documents to the PowerPoint slides and any additional documents you wish to save.
<p><i>NUR405 NUR410 NUR415 NUR417 NUR427 NUR441</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Review the EOPSLO assigned to this course and develop 2-3 PowerPoint slides that identify how you have met that EOPSLO. <input type="checkbox"/> Continue to think about a topic for the capstone project. Continually refine your thoughts about the capstone project as you progress through the program.

NUR499

- Complete your capstone project per the directions in the course.
- Collect all your PowerPoint slides into one presentation.
 - Produce a single PowerPoint presentation that combines the information about your Capstone Project and the slides that identify your educational journey in accomplishing the EOPSLOs. You may revise previous slides at this time. The presentation can be completed in a VoiceOver PowerPoint or Camtasia or any other media of your choice that produces a verbal narrative of your journey. The presentation will describe how you have met each outcome with its related artifact and will summarize how this process has impacted your current and future role as a nurse leader with an advanced degree.

Feel free to meet with your capstone mentor at any point during this process to obtain feedback.

It is important to remember that these major program processes span the entire program which can take a year or more. You have plenty of time to complete these and be successful. You are also encouraged to reach out to your course faculty, capstone mentor, your Student Advisor, or any member of the nursing team. We are committed to your success.