**NURS 900: Capping Exercise Guidelines**

**(\*3, 0-3s-0)**

The following guidelines provide information about the capping exercise requirement of the course-based Master of Nursing in the Faculty of Nursing (FON), University of Alberta. The term capping exercise derives from stonemasonry, where a capstone is the final stone in a structure or wall.

The capping exercise is a scholarly undertaking that culminates in a product[[1]](#footnote-1) that stands as evidence of a student’s ability to analyze, interpret, apply, and communicate knowledge acquired throughout their Masters’ Program (see *FGSR regulation 204.1.3*). It is typically the final course in the program and focuses on the student’s area of advanced nursing practice. Although the form of the capping exercise will vary depending on individual interests, program focus, and intended career path, it must be completed in a 13 week term (the approximate equivalent of a \*3 course). Because a capping exercise does not involve primary data collection, ethical approval should not be required. Students whose project requires ethical approval should meet with their supervisor and the Associate Dean to discuss thesis option.

**Steps in a Capping Exercise**

1. Find a supervisor who is willing to work with you and will help you choose an evaluator.
2. Meet with supervisor and evaluator to identify a focus, establish timelines, and clarify roles and responsibilities.
3. Develop your proposal in consultation with your supervisor and evaluator.
4. Submit your proposal to Associate Dean Graduate Studies, Faculty of Nursing for review, along with the signed Capping Exercise Proposal Approval (*Appendix I*). Check the submission dates in this document, and ensure you submit by the deadline.
5. The Associate Dean will notify applicants when the proposal is approved, and a Graduate Services Administrator will register you in N900 in the term in which the project will be completed. Do not register until completion within the term is certain.
6. Meet regularly with supervisor to discuss progress and review drafts.
7. After final approval from your supervisor and evaluator, submit your capping exercise electronically to the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, along with a signed Acceptance of Capping Exercise form (*Appendix II*).
8. The supervisor will complete the necessary FGSR Program Completion form and forward to the Graduate Office. The student can apply to convocate, if all coursework is completed.

**Plan Ahead**

Identifying a topic, developing a proposal, and completing a capping exercise are intellectually demanding and labour intensive activities. Forward planning and careful organization will facilitate your efforts. Find a supervisor, and begin discussions early in the term preceding the one in which you intend

to register in NURS 900. It can take several weeks to develop a polished and realistic proposal, and it is common to have several drafts, so please allow sufficient time.

The table below offers a suggested timeline:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Planned Term to Register**  **in N900** | **1st Meeting with Supervisor** | **Capping Exercise Proposal**  **Submission Date** |
| Fall | May 1 | August 1 |
| Winter | September 1 | December 1 |
| Spring | January 1 | April 1 |
| Summer | January 1 | April 1 |

**Working with Your Supervisor and Evaluator**

Choosing a supervisor and an evaluator are important decisions. Look for individuals who can provide content and/or methodological expertise. There are two common models of working with supervisors and evaluators in the FoN:

1. the supervisor and evaluator work with the student from proposal development through completion; or,
2. the evaluator is only involved in the proposal approval and final capping exercise evaluation.

The involvement of the evaluator will vary, but it must be clear at the outset what model the project will follow.

**Criteria and Requirements for a Supervisor**

FGSR states, as minimum criteria, supervisors must:

1. be active in the general area of the student’s research ;
2. have a tenured (or tenure track) faculty appointment in a department relevant to the field;
3. hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate; and,
4. demonstrate continuing scholarly or creative activity of an original nature (i.e., publication of research papers in refereed journals, publication of books/monographs, peer recognition of outstanding professional practice, etc.)

**Criteria and Requirements for an Evaluator**

1. tenured (or tenure track) faculty appointee in a department relevant to the field; or,
2. faculty lecturer appointee in the Faculty of Nursing. Faculty lecturers will be expected to satisfactorily evaluate at least one Capstone project as an “extra” evaluator, prior to serving independently as an evaluator; and,
3. hold a degree equivalent to or higher than that for which the student is a candidate.

**Proposal Development**

The development of the capping exercise proposal is the responsibility rests with the student with guidance from the supervisor and evaluator. The proposal represents a contract between the student, supervisor and evaluator, so it is important at the outset to identify which model best suits the students’ needs, to establish clear and concise timeline for completion, to arrange to meet on a regular basis to discuss progress, and to negotiate each person’s roles and responsibilities including authorship if the student is developing a manuscript for publication. It is expected that the student will be first author of any manuscripts or presentation arising from the capping exercise.

**Proposal Format**

* Standard paper size is 8.5 inches x 11 inches (21.59 cm x 27.94 cm).
* Margins 1 in. (2.54 cm) on all sides.
* 12-point font; tables, figures, and appendices may be in 10-point font .
* Use one single font, with its italic and bold variants through the entire document.
* Maximum length **three pages** single-spaced.
* Number all pages consecutively with Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.), including reference page, appendices, and pages containing tables, figures, and illustrations.
* Page numbers may be placed at either the top or bottom of the page, centred, or in the right hand corner, but they must be placed consistently on all pages.
* Citation style: American Psychological Association. (2010). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.
* Title Page:

[TITLE]

Capping Exercise Proposal

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

Nursing 900

Faculty of Nursing

University of Alberta

by

[STUDENT NAME]

[DATE]

**Headings:**

* Background
* Purpose
* Methods
* Expected Outcomes
* Significance to Nursing
* Timelines (use table or grid to indicate interim deadlines and date of completion) – timelines should include at least biweekly meetings with the supervisor
* References: 10 or fewer
* Proposal Approval Signature Page

**The Completed Capping Exercise**

When the completed capping exercise has final approval of the supervisor and the evaluator, submit it and the copyright form **electronically** to the Associate Dean, Graduate Studies, along with:

1. Acceptance of Capping Exercise form (Appendix I) signed by the supervisor and evaluator; and,
2. Report of Final Completion for Course-Based Masters form signed by the supervisor (available at http://www.gradstudies.ualberta.ca/examsconvo/completingprogram.htm).

The Associate Dean will approve the capping exercise, sign the Report of Completion for Course-Based Masters form, review the student’s transcript to ensure that all other course work is completed, and confirm the student for convocation.

**Formatting the Capping Exercise**

Page Size & Margins (as above apart from margins):

*To accommodate binding, margins must be at least:*

* Left: 1.5 inches (3.8 cm)
* Right: 1 inches (2.54 cm)
* Top: 1 inch (2.54 cm)
* Bottom: 1 inch (2.54 cm)

**Font**

12-point font (i.e. Times New Roman or Arial); tables, figures, and appendices may be in 10-point font. Use one single font, with its italic and bold variants through the entire document.

**Spacing**

Double-spaced throughout.

**Page Numbering**

Prefatory Pages (i.e., those pages before the body of the capping exercise)

* Must each be on a separate page; they are not numbered, but must appear in the correct order (see below)

Body of the Capping Exercise

* Begin numbering on the first page of text.
* Number all pages consecutively with Arabic numbers (1, 2, 3, etc.), including reference page, appendices, and pages containing tables, figures, and illustrations.
* Page numbers may be placed at either the top or bottom of the page, centred, or in the right hand corner, but they must be placed consistently on all pages.

**Please ensure that the completed capping exercise is in the following order:**

1. Title page (Appendix IV)
2. Table of Contents
3. Acceptance of Capping Exercise (signed)
4. Copyright page (signed)
5. Dedication (optional)
6. Abstract (150-200 words, double spaced, block paragraph)
7. List of Tables (if any)
8. List of Figures or illustrations (if any)
9. Body of capping exercise
10. References
11. Appendices

**Citation Style**

American Psychological Association [APA]. (2010). Publication manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

**Electronic Copies of Capping Exercise**

Before printing, check with the supervisor and evaluator, as they may prefer electronic copies as pdf. The student may then choose not to have any hard copies printed.

**Printing & Binding the Capping Exercise**

If a hard copy is requested by the supervisor and evaluator, students will present one hard copy of the capping exercise to McCallum Printing Group Inc. (locations below); electronic documents are not accepted.

McCallum Printing Group Inc. Outlets:

* 2-50 Cameron Library
* B-29, Tory Building (only the Tory Building outlet accepts credit cards or debit)
* B-105 Education South

The capping exercise is to be bound as per the following:

* ***Domtar Grey*** front and back covers
* Use regular paper
* Title page information duplicated on the front cover
* Mylar plastic cover protectors (front and back)
* Coil bound

It is the student’s responsibility to pick up the bound capping exercise from McCallum Printing Group. Depending on the intent of the project, students may present hard copies to their employer.

**Appendix I**

**Capping Exercise Proposal Approval**

The undersigned certify that they have read, and approve the CAPPING EXERCISE

PROPOSAL entitled: [**insert title**]

submitted by: [**INSERT STUDENT NAME**]

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type Student Name – sign above] [Type Supervisor Name – sign above]

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type Evaluator Name – sign above]

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type Associate Dean Name – sign above]

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date of approval (mm/dd/yyyy)

**Appendix II**

**Acceptance of Capping Exercise**

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Nursing

for acceptance, a project entitled [**INSERT TITLE OF PROJECT** ] submitted by [**INSERT STUDENT NAME**] in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Nursing.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type Supervisor Name – sign above]

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type Evaluator Name – sign above]

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[Type dd/mm/yyyy]

**Appendix III**

**Copyright form**

**Name of Author**:

**Title of Capping Exercise**:

**Degree**:

**Date**:

Permission is hereby granted to the University of Alberta Library to reproduce single copies of this capping exercise and to lend such copies for private, scholarly, or scientific research purposes only.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the capping exercise, and except as herein before provided, neither the capping exercise nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatsoever without the author's prior written permission.

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[Type Student Name – sign above]

**Appendix IV**

**Capping Exercise Title Page**

**University of Alberta**

**[Type title of capping exercise]**

**By**

**[Type student’s full name]**

**A capping exercise submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research**

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of**

**Master of Nursing**

**© [Type student’s full name]**

**[Type convocation and year - e.g., Spring 2006]**

**Edmonton, Alberta**

1. Examples of capping exercises include, but are not limited to, a conceptual analysis, integrative literature review, curriculum plan, research

   translation project, program evaluation, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)