

Gerontology M.S. Capstone Guidelines

All M.S. in Gerontology students will complete a capstone paper and oral defense that synthesizes course content and applies knowledge gained to a student's area of interest. Brief guidelines are as follows, and additional information can be provided by your advisor.

Capstone Paper: Purpose and Structure

The purpose of the capstone paper is to apply your gerontological knowledge in a meaningful way to a content area of your choice. The overall scope and design of the paper is flexible and will be decided by you and your advisor, but can include a: prevention/intervention program proposal, draft needs assessment, a systemic literature review, policy development or impact report, grant proposal, or program evaluation proposal. Typically the final paper will include a literature review and purpose statement, followed by the primary content. This structure can and will vary from student to student. Papers should be in APA format, 10 - 15 pages in length, and include relevant and up-to-date references.

Capstone Paper: Proposal

Begin discussing your ideas for your capstone paper with your advisor at least one semester prior to your intended graduation. Remember, this paper is meant to be a meaningful exercise that applies your gerontological knowledge to your area of interest - so pick something you love! During the proposal process, you will agree upon a narrow, concise topic with your advisor, and complete a draft, topical outline.

Oral Defense

Upon completion of the capstone paper and with the approval of your advisor, you will schedule your oral defense. The purpose of the oral defense is to provide a brief presentation that highlights the key elements of your paper. Presentations typically include a PowerPoint, are 15 - 20 minutes long, and are completed via Zoom. Following the presentation, the student's committee will have an opportunity to ask questions and will then determine if the student has successfully passed their paper and oral defense. These presentations are open for others to attend (e.g., peers, faculty, family, friends).

Timeline

It is the student's sole responsibility to stay on track to guarantee successful completion of this capstone requirement. Starting early and keeping in close contact with your advisor are keys to success! Remember to work with your advisor to have a topic and outline solidified at least one semester prior to your graduation. You must complete your paper and present your oral defense before the K-State Graduate School's deadlines: <https://www.k-state.edu/grad/student-success/graduation/checklists.html>.

Success tip: Remember to have frequent contact with your advisor throughout this process!