

CAPSTONE EXERCISE

The Capstone Exercise in International Studies is the culmination of your major. It should demonstrate your ability to research and analyze an important issue in ways that:

- Reflect your training in one of the thematic tracks
- Utilize insights from more than one discipline
- Employ relevant evidence and examples from the primary geographic focus of your studies
- Use comparison — across time, across regions, across countries, across cultures — to situate that issue and your primary geographic area within a broader context

A successful Capstone Exercise is usually an independent research paper of 20 to 30 pages in length written in consultation with one or more faculty members. **Quantity does not equal quality. If you are running over 30 pages, it is time to start editing! You are also strongly encouraged to use sources in the language(s) that you have studied**, although we do understand that the difficulty of some languages, like Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and possibly Russian, can make that more difficult. **Those studying easier languages, such as Spanish, German, and French, should plan on including such sources.**

The Capstone Exercise is due at 2 P.M. on Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

By that deadline, you must have sent to the International Studies Department's Administrative Assistant (Pamela Burson – email: bursomp@kenyon.edu) **PDF copies** of the following two items:

- Your Capstone Exercise. See details above.
- A Preface of 2-3 pages (which **does NOT** count toward the page total for your Capstone!) that explains how the exercise draws on ideas and coursework from your thematic track, off-campus study, and knowledge of a foreign language. The preface should also mention any faculty with whom you consulted for the project.
- A completed checklist of your track within International Studies, clearly documenting that you have completed all of the required coursework for the major.

In writing your Capstone Exercise, you should:

Consult with any International Studies faculty early and often.

- Try to use sources in the languages that you studied.
- Properly cite any and all work that is not your own – such as ideas, data, information, quotations, *and* paraphrasing – using a consistent format currently used in professional scholarship. Style manuals, such as Kate Turabian's *A Manual for Writers*, are available at both the Reference Desk and the Writing Center in the Kenyon library. Please note that only references to unpublished on-line materials must include an access date and URL.
- Include a full, and alphabetized, bibliography of works you have consulted.
- Include a table of contents for, and sections in, your paper to help your readers navigate it.

Two readers chosen from among the International Studies faculty will read your project. They may or may not be those with whom you have consulted. In evaluating your Capstone exercise, the readers will consider how well it has achieved the goals highlighted in the first paragraph of this instruction sheet as well as these other qualities (**below is a copy of the rubric your readers will use to evaluate your paper**):

Content and Scope	Places topic in a broader comparative or global perspective
	Draws on or integrates insights, experiences or research from study abroad
	Demonstrates knowledge of a geographic region's culture, history and society
	Incorporates ideas, information or perspectives derived through knowledge of a foreign language
Analysis and Argument	Displays mastery of appropriate concepts, tools and methodologies from the student's thematic track
	Uses multiple academic disciplines to analyze international connections and processes
	Logical approach to topic that acknowledges its complexity and/or ambiguity
	Main ideas are well-defined and developed with depth and thoroughness
	Evidence is germane, critically evaluated and convincingly interpreted
	Conclusions follow from careful analysis and sound reasoning
Research, Writing and Organization	Number and types of sources thoroughly address topic
	Source material is thoughtfully and smoothly integrated
	Uses standard documentation and citation procedures in text and bibliography
	Uses standard spelling, punctuation, and grammar
	Thoughtful, clear word choice and concise sentences
	Introduction engages reader as it develops focus and purpose
	Logical, coherent sequence of paragraphs, with clear analytical development and fluid transitions between ideas
	Conclusion sums up main ideas, points to larger implications, and places ideas in a broader context

You can expect our evaluations of the capstone exercises to be completed 7-10 days after the end of Spring Break. Once they are all done, you will be informed of the results via email by me (Prof. Van Holde).

The notifications will be sent out at the same time, after all of the evaluations have been completed. The only exception will be for any student whose exercise requires further work to achieve a passing grade, in which case they will be notified as soon as possible.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. And yes, sooner IS better!! Work hard, good luck, and focus on the Light at the End of the Tunnel, aka SPRING BREAK!!

All best, Steve

Capstone Exercise Timeline, 2018-19

- September 20 Attend meeting with Professor Van Holde, where he'll go over Capstone Exercise expectations. If you can't make the meeting (absolute conflicts only, please!!), plan on setting up a meeting with him in the following week.
- October 7** **DEADLINE: A short (1.5 page, single spaced) but complete description of, and rationale for, your proposed Capstone Exercise.** In that description and rationale, you should: 1, describe your topic and the major research question it will seek to answer; and 2, indicate why and how you are prepared to undertake it. As such, you should provide a short list of: 1, substantive and methodological courses you have taken here and abroad that will allow you to successfully complete the project; 2, a brief description of your competence in any language you plan to use that project; and 3, and a list of at least two professors you will consult with in order to further refine your topic and to gain insights into key issues, debates, and bibliography relevant to that topic. **Email your descriptions to Professor Van Holde, at vanholde@kenyon.edu, by midnight on Sunday, October 7.**
- October 28** **DEADLINE: Have completed at least two substantive meetings with (non-Capstone Seminar) profs,** getting additional insights and feedback from them on issues and debates to consider relative to your topic, as well as some key sources to consult as you move forward. **Send a short note to Prof. Van Holde by midnight on Sunday, October 28,** detailing whom you have consulted with, what their suggestions have been, and indicating any particular issues or problems you are encountering at this point.
- November 5 **Start researching your topic in earnest. As you read and research, start writing down your ideas, observations, and tentative hypotheses on paper – DON'T just read and read and read.** At this point, your writing will be rough, but that's fine. The thing is to get started!
- November 11** **DEADLINE: Annotated bibliography of sources you have consulted so far, emailed to Professor Van Holde and to your consulting profs, by midnight on Sunday, November 11.** By this time, you should have looked in some detail at around 15-20 academic sources.
- Thanksgiving **Dig in deeper into your research,** based on suggestions from your consulting profs and SVH. **Start writing up sections of your paper** (e.g. lit reviews, etc.)
- .December 1-15 **Give yourself a research/writing break to study for finals** and wind up your other schoolwork, but **be sure to see at least once more the prof(s)** likely to be especially helpful with your ongoing project.
- Winter Break** **WRITE! You should aim at finishing your first draft by January 14.** (The day we come back).

- January 14-18 **Spring Term begins, you have a month to finish.** Time to finish your first draft, if you haven't, and to polish it up, if you have.
- January 14-28 **Final visits with consulting profs.** Use these visits to better flesh out your ideas and arguments, ground them with ample evidence, and situate them in larger theoretical and/or geographical contexts, etc.
- Jan 29-Feb 5** **Finish your second draft.** If possible, get a friend to read it for clarity, grammar, concision, and "flow" (a NON-Inst student often works best, since they don't share your assumptions and can tell you what makes sense and what doesn't). **Revise** in accordance with their suggestions and your own best judgment.
- February 6-10 **Polish your second draft, and include tables, figures, etc. Proof, spellcheck, and proof again!**
- February 11 **Final Revisions, as necessary.** Then put your comps into PDF format, and make sure that nothing awful has happened by doing that (you DID save that Word vs., right?!)
- February 12-13** **Email your Comps it as a PDF attachment** (along with a COMPLETED **checklist** of courses you've done for the major and your track.) Send both items **to Pamela Burson (bursonp@kenyon.edu) BEFORE 2 pm on the 13th.**
- February 13** **Celebrate!!!!**