Course Number	**PLAN 528A**
Course Credit(s)	3.0
Course Title	**Capstone (MCRP)**
Term	**Winter Term 1** **Winter Term 2** **Summer**
Day/Time	**N/A**

Short Course Description

The major purpose of the Capstone is to provide students an opportunity to demonstrate the breadth of their planning education and to synthesize their knowledge of planning. The Capstone serves as a culmination of the MCRP degree program. It allows students to articulate and demonstrate the competency they have developed in their chosen focus area, through synthesis and/or application of the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they have gained in the program. It is expected that students will be able to use the Capstone output to demonstrate their professional competency to potential employers.

Course Overview, Content and Objectives

This course fulfills the Synthesis and Application of Knowledge to Practice skills component as established and required for program accreditation by the Canadian planning accreditation body, the Professional Standards Board (PSB).

The course also fulfills overall academic objectives of the MCRP program by providing students an opportunity to synthesize planning theory, methods, and practice in a Capstone report of their own design.

Registration in PLAN 528 continues until completion of the Capstone. Submission of the Capstone Selection form to the Graduate Administrator initiates registration in the course.

The Capstone can take a range of forms. This flexibility allows students to define a Capstone that will best meet their individual educational objectives. Options include:

A. *Professional Research Report*– The product of the Capstone may be a professional report in which the student investigates a well-defined, practical planning-related question or problem. In this case, the student demonstrates competency by defining an applied problem in his/her chosen focus area and conducting appropriate research to address it. Further details are provided below. Reports should not exceed 30 pages (at 1.5 spacing) in length including executive summary, tables, figures, and references. This is roughly equivalent to a word-count limit of 7,000 words. Appendices may be added and are not counted in this page limit.

B. *Professional Portfolio* – The product of the Capstone course may be a portfolio of work produced during the MCRP degree program (e.g., from courses, internship, and/or studio) accompanied by a synthesis report. In this option, the student demonstrates competency through articulating a chosen focus area, reflecting on his/her explorations in the context of the pieces of work, and

synthesizing various strands of thought into a cohesive, integrated approach to planning. The portfolio should include information to contextualize each piece of work, such as goals, outputs, and the specific role of the student in the case of team projects. The synthesis report should integrate knowledge developed in several learning environments at SCARP. The synthesis report should be approximately 5 to 10 pages in length (at 1.5 spacing), not exceeding 3,000 words.

Examples of the professional research report option include:
- *An internship extension report* – A written report that builds on the student's internship experience. This could involve, for example, analyzing data that had been collected during the internship.
- *A studio extension report* – A written report that builds on the student's studio experience. This could involve addressing a problem that is related to but outside the scope of the client-defined studio project.
- *An independent research report* – A professional report that involves independent research outside the scope of courses, internship, or studio. The report may be undertaken for a real or hypothetical client. In some cases, it may be appropriate to conduct time-intensive activities that exceed the expectations of the 3-credit Capstone course; for example, a student may need to conduct a thorough literature review in an area where courses were not available. In these cases, a student may choose to take a Directed Study course (PLAN 550, 3 credits) in conjunction with the Capstone, particularly if this helps with meeting the 48-credit MCRP requirement.

C. *Alternative form -* With the approval of the Faculty Advisor, a student may complete the Capstone in an alternative form, such as a film, other multi-media product, or website. The Capstone product must be commensurate with the portfolio or research report options in terms of general content and depth of exploration, and must be accompanied by a paper of approximately 5 to 10 pages in length (at 1.5 spacing), not exceeding 3,000 words.

Capstone Advising

Each student's Capstone Project or Portfolio is supervised by his/her assigned Faculty Advisor. Faculty Advisors will advise students regarding all phases of the Capstone, including which Capstone option to pursue.

For the Capstone Project option, the Faculty Advisor advises on topic selection, project design, data collection and analysis, and finalizing the report. For the Capstone Portfolio option, the Faculty Advisor advises on the selection, representation and synthesis of course outputs and the development of the portfolio narrative. The Faculty Advisor grades the Capstone Project or Portfolio and provides feedback.

Timeline

Students must decide on the topic and format of their Capstone in their second year in the program and be expected to start their Capstone no later than the start of Year 2 Summer. This timeframe allows students to consider the Capstone after having some understanding of what their studio projects will entail.

Students are expected to meet with their Faculty Advisor in Year 2 Term 2 to discuss their Capstone topic and format. This procedure is formalized by completing a **Capstone Selection form.** The Faculty Advisor must indicate his/her agreement to oversee the Capstone by signing the student's Capstone form. The form and outline (as appropriate; one page is adequate) must be submitted to the Graduate Administrator to initiate registration in the Capstone course, PLAN 528A.

There will be set deadlines in April (to graduate in May) and August (to graduate in November) for students to submit their Capstones. If students complete their Capstones in April (to graduate in May),

they will still be required to pay the 6th term of installment fees (tuition and student fees) for the following Summer Session. Students who are unable to complete their Capstones by the end of their second year must consult with the MCRP Program Chair to determine an alternative deadline for completion.

Students may volunteer to make a short presentation on their Capstone report or portfolio on a date determined by the MCRP Program Chair.

Evaluation Criteria and Grading

The following serves to clarify expectations and grading criteria for the MCRP Capstone (PLAN 528A, 3 credits), including how assessment would differ between the professional portfolio and professional research report options.

Criteria and Expectations

Professional Research Report

The product of the Capstone may be a professional report in which the student investigates a well-defined, practical planning-related question or problem. Reports should not exceed 30 pages (at 1.5 spacing) in length including executive summary, tables, figures, and references. This is roughly equivalent to a word-count limit of 7,000 words. Appendices may be added and are not counted in this page limit. Grading criteria and expectations are as follows:

- *Context* – The report should briefly describe the context for the study, including the client (either real or hypothetical), the need for applied research, and other relevant background.
- *Problem definition* – The report should identify a clear, answerable research question(s).
- *Research design* – The overall research design should be clear, coherent, appropriate, and justified. It should demonstrate the student's familiarity with the relevant literature.
- *Analysis* – The research should be well executed and sufficiently described. Data collection and analysis should be consistent with the research design and competently conducted.
- *Recommendations* – Findings from the study should be used to support actionable recommendations.
- *Communication* – Ideas should be communicated effectively. The report should be clearly and professionally written.

Students who undertake the Professional Research Report option may volunteer to make a short presentation on their Capstone reports on a set date to be determined by the MCRP Program Chair. This presentation will not be graded.

Professional Portfolio

The product of the Capstone course may be a portfolio of work produced during the MCRP degree program accompanied by a synthesis report. The portfolio should include information to contextualize each piece of work, such as goals, outputs, and the specific role of the student in the case of team projects. No restrictions are made on the number of pieces of work to be included. Students are encouraged to revise and improve key outputs as informed by instructor feedback, relevant insights and skills gained from other courses, and personal reflections. Students should take the opportunity to elevate the quality of previous work and to present their best work. The synthesis report should integrate knowledge developed in several learning environments at SCARP. The synthesis report should be approximately 5 to 10 pages in length (at 1.5 spacing), not exceeding 3,000 words.

Portfolio content

- *Variety* – The portfolio should include pieces of work that have been developed in several learning environments at SCARP (e.g., different courses, studio, internship).

- *Documentation* – The portfolio should include information to contextualize each piece of work, such as learning environment, goals, outputs, and the specific role of the student in the case of team projects. The documentation should note any improvements that have been made, such as revisions to a course paper or project.
- *Organization* – The portfolio should be well organized, with a clear structure that fits the narrative of the synthesis report.
- *Presentation* – The portfolio should have an attractive, professional presentation.

Synthesis report
- *Synthesis* – The student should articulate a vision and cohesive, integrated approach to his/her chosen focus area in planning, illustrated through reference to the pieces of work in the portfolio and the knowledge, skills, and experience gained in the program. This synthesis should enable the portfolio to be understood as more than the sum of the individual pieces of work.
- *Relation to theory* – The synthesis report should indicate the student's awareness of planning-related theory and research related to the chosen focus area. The student should be able to articulate his/her perspective on planning in relation to the larger literature.
- *Relevance to practice* – The report should discuss the relevance of the student's vision, ideas, approach, and pieces of work to planning practice, considered broadly.
- *Self-reflection* – The report should provide evidence of realistic and constructive self-reflection.
- *Communication* – Ideas should be communicated effectively. The report should be clearly and professionally written.

Alternative forms

With the approval of the faculty advisor, a student may complete the Capstone in an alternative form, such as a film, other multi-media product, or website, accompanied by a paper. The Capstone product must be commensurate with the portfolio or research report options in terms of general content and depth of exploration, and must be accompanied by a paper of approximately 5 to 10 pages in length (at 1.5 spacing), not exceeding 3,000 words.   In this case, the Faculty Advisor and student should discuss appropriate assessment criteria, which are expected to be consistent with the learning objectives of the Capstone.

Grading

Letter grade	Numerical grade	Description	Explanation
A+	95-100%	Outstanding	Extraordinary performance. Extremely professional, thorough, original, and insightful.
A+	90-94%	Excellent	Consistently high quality work. Substantially exceeds expectations of SCARP students. Performance better than that of most peers.
A	85-89%	Very good	Fully meets and occasionally exceeds expectations of SCARP students. Work conducted on time, competently, and professionally.

A-	80-84%	Good	Generally meets expectations of SCARP students.
B+	76-79%	Fair	Some deficiencies; e.g., capstone submission late, instructions not followed, writing lacking professionalism, analysis superficial or problematic.
B	72-75%	Fair	
B-	68-71%	Fair	
C+	64-67%	Serious deficiencies	Serious deficiencies in work.
C	60-63%	Marginally pass	
F	0-59%	Fail	Does not meet minimum expectations.

Course Schedule

Students are expected to complete their Capstones by the end of their second year of their program. Students who are unable to complete their Capstones by the end of their second year must consult with the MCRP Program Chair to determine an alternative deadline for completion.

Presentations

Students may volunteer to make a short presentation on their Capstone to the School and other invited guests. The objectives of the presentations are to inform the School of the results of the student's work and to demonstrate his/her presentation skills in a context that simulates common characteristics of professional practice. The Chair of the MCRP program chairs the proceedings.

Students will be expected to notify the Graduate Administrator of their interest to present their Capstone, who will then coordinate with the MCRP Program Chair to determine the presentation date.

Submission

Students submit a final copy of their Capstone to their Faculty Advisor and a grade is communicated to the Graduate Administrator for the student's academic record. If the Faculty Advisor feels that the Capstone is of highest quality to be published in cIRcle, UBC's open access digital repository for published and unpublished material created by the UBC community and its partners, he/she will notify the Graduate Administrator. The Graduate Administrator will contact the nominated student on the processes involved in publishing their Capstone in cIRcle.

Additional Resources

UBC has numerous research, pedagogical and health resources available to students throughout their degree program. Students are encouraged to become familiar with the broad spectrum of resources that UBC has available to them. These include the following:

- Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology (CTLT)
- Irving K. Barber Learning Centre
- Centre for Writing and Scholarly Communication
- Student Health Service
- Counselling Services

UBC Centre of Accessibility

Students are to inform the Faculty Advisor as soon as possible if they require access and diversity accommodation of any kind. Please visit the UBC Centre of Accessibility for more information on campus

resources.

Academic Integrity

The University is an environment that fosters learning and the free exchange of ideas while maintaining responsibility and integrity. Violations of academic integrity include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, dishonesty, fabrication of information, submitting previously completed work and misusing or destroying school property. Any material or ideas obtained from digital or hard copy sources must be appropriately and fully referenced. Students are expected to uphold all the standards articulated in UBC's academic integrity site. If the instructor finds evidence of a violation of academic integrity the case will be investigated by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and, where appropriate, action will be taken. Disciplinary action may lead to a failing grade or suspension from the University.

A more detailed description of academic integrity, including the University's policies and procedures, may be found in the UBC Academic Calendar.