Applied Sciences Capstone

BAS 491 – DL1

(3 Credits) Canvas/Online

(Spring 2025)

*Please note that date/times in this course refer to Eastern Standard Time (EST)

Syllabus is subject to change. This document was last revised on January 16, 2025

Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Andrea Bourgeois-Calvin   **Email**: abourge@gmu.edu

What you can call me: Dr. Calvin or Professor Calvin

Office Hours: Virtual and By Appointment Only (Please e-mail me to set up)

Textbook Requirement

The following textbook is **required** to be successful. You should have this book from your BAS 490 course, but if you need a copy, you may rent or purchase an E-Book or Physical Copy.

Devlin, A. S. (2020). *The research experience: Planning conducting, and reporting research.* (2nd Edition). Sage Publishing.
   o **Paperback ISBN:** 9781544377957

The following textbook is **recommended** to be successful. If you do not have an APA manual already, I strongly encourage you to get one.

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association.* (7th Edition). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
   o **Paperback ISBN:** 9781433832161

Course Description and Objectives

(*Prerequisite*: BAS 490, with a grade of C or better)

Students **complete a research project** as identified in *BAS 490- Introduction to Research Methods*. The Capstone project involves choosing and researching a topic (in BAS 490); designing, implementing, and evaluating a specific plan of action; and formally presenting the project once completed. Offered by Provost's Office. May not be repeated for credit.

The purpose of BAS 491 is to provide a high impact, culminating element of the BAS degree, helping students develop a more comprehensive and integrative understanding of their area of study and to utilize critical thinking skills. Students will combine the research skills acquired in BAS 490 with the topical knowledge from their concentration coursework to implement a research project in their field of study.

Mason Core Designation: Apex (https://catalog.gmu.edu/mason-core/). As per the Mason Core website, upon completing a Mason Apex course, students will be able to:
1. Integrate skills, abilities, theories, or methodologies gained across a Mason student's undergraduate education to explore complex issues in original ways.
2. Communicate effectively the results of the student's work with awareness of audience, purpose, and context using an appropriate modality (for example: written, oral, visual, material, embodied, multimodal).

Learning Objectives:
Students will…
1. Communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.);
2. Demonstrate effective organizational and time management skills;
3. Using an integrative approach (i.e. including perspectives from two or more disciplines), connect issues in a given field to wider intellectual, community or societal concerns;
4. Apply critical thinking skills to assess the quality or value of an idea, work, or principle based on appropriate analytics and standards.

The course is offered fully online. Each student will have to take considerable responsibility for pacing their progress and learning the material. To succeed in this course, you will need to exert the effort required to keep yourself on a timeline that will allow you to complete your project in a timely manner.

Technology Requirements

This course is fully online, meaning there are no physically required face-to-face encounters. Canvas serves as your "Classroom" for this course - it is in Canvas that you will have access to your course materials and assignments, except for your textbook which is purchased separately.

Papers can be written using text editing software of the student's choosing but must be submitted in .doc or .pdf format. Students will select a video presentation platform of their choice for the virtual presentation assignment.

Grading and Assignments

Final grades will be awarded in accordance with the Mason Grading System for undergraduate students. See the university catalog for policies and more information. Please do **not** ask for extra credit.

The grading scale for this course is:

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D	F
96.5-100%	92.5-96.4%	89.5-92.4%	86.5-89.4%	82.5-86.4%	79.5-82.4%	76.5-79.4%	72.5-76.4%	69.5-72.4%	59.5-69.4%	0-59.4%
965-1000pts	925-964pts	895-924pts	865-894pts	825-864pts	795-824pts	765-794pts	725-764pts	695-724pts	595-694pts	0-594pts

Final grades will be determined based on the following components:

Graded Component	Points Possible
General Assignments	100
Discussion Board Forums	80
Progress Reports	200
Action Research Project	620
Total Possible Points:	**1000**

General Assignments

General Assignments	100
Welcome Quiz (Week 1)	10
Upload Approved BAS 490 Proposal (Week 1)	20
Upload Recruitment Flyer from BAS 490 (Week 1)	20
Research Timeline (Week 2)	50

Welcome Quiz – 10 pts: Students will complete a small quiz to demonstrate that they have read through the syllabus and viewed the material in the Welcome Folder in Canvas.

Upload Approved BAS 490 Proposal & Recruitment Flyer – 20 pts each: Students will upload copies of their approved BAS 490 proposal and the recruitment flyer that the student completed during BAS 490 (please upload most recent copies – adjust the proposal/flyer as you need based on BAS 490 instructor feedback).

Research Timeline – 50 pts: Using the template provided in Canvas, you will map out your research for the semester. Demonstrate that you can effectively organize and manage your time. Think of this assignment as your to-do list. You'll break up your research methods into manageable tasks and assign deadlines to each.

Discussion Board Forums

Discussion	80
Welcome & Re-Introduction Forum (Week 1)	25
Conducting You Research (Week 3)	25
Virtual Presentations (Week 7)	25
Link to Presentations (Week 13)	5

Students will complete discussions on topics as scheduled. Please read the below section very carefully.

Discussion Board Expectations:

Using the prompt and course material as your guide, you are to interact with one another and have a virtual class discussion within the thread. You are to respond first to the prompt that is given to you by me. This should be done with thought and substance. While more casual than papers, discussion board posts should also be grammatically correct and display college-level writing skills. A good post is roughly **_200 words_** but can be longer or shorter. Express your thoughts thoroughly.

In these posts, you should demonstrate that you can communicate effectively and professionally, even in a more casual forum. Use proper grammar and appropriate tone. Be clear, organized, and concise.

This original post is due by Friday of its assigned week at 11:59pm.

You must also respond to 2 peers each time a discussion board post is assigned **(all responses are due by Sunday of the assigned week at 11:59pm**). You should engage your peers in conversation. What about their post do you relate to? Can you make suggestions, or provide some of your own personal insight? Your posts should be succinct, while still demonstrating that you are engaging with the course content, and with your peers. Although there is no official word count requirement, replies that consist only of responses such as "You make an excellent point" or "Good example" do not demonstrate significant thought or effort on your part and will be graded accordingly. Again, the overall substance and depth of your overall interaction/posts will determine your grade. Social moments, tangents, and use of supporting sources are welcome if relevant.

Posts and responses should be grammatically correct, and without spelling errors. I recommend that you compose first in a word- processor so that you can check for grammar and spelling correctness, then copy and paste the post in the forum. Please, do not use fragments or abbreviations such as you use in text messages to friends. This is a college course, and you are expected to correspond as an educated adult.

Note. Discussions are set so that you will not see any posts until you have posted something. Although late posts are not accepted, partial credit can still be awarded for doing the peer responses – which means you would have to post something.

Discussion posts may <u>not</u> be turned in late or made-up. Your peers are relying on you to do your part.

Progress Reports

Progress Reports	200
Progress Report 1 (Week 4)	50
Progress Report 2 (Week 6)	50
Progress Report 3 (Week 8)	50
Progress Report 4 (Week 10)	50

Progress reports (template is within the course) will be submitted 4 times throughout the semester to ensure you stay on track with your research timeline. While they are submitted to the professor, the purpose of these reports is for your benefit. By checking in with yourself regularly, you will be able to identify if you are falling behind or need assistance.

Action Research Project

Action Research Project	620
First Draft of Paper to Peer Reviewer (Week 10)	100
Final Draft of Paper to Instructor (Week 12)	120
Virtual Presentation (Week 13)	150
Final Paper/Project (Week 15)	250

You already have your proposal completed from BAS 490. In order to transform your proposal into your final manuscript, you will need to update and expand upon the paper by:

- Changing from present or future tense to past tense, as your research is now complete
- Rewording the methods section to match what you actually did for your project (versus what you are proposing to do)
- Adding new sections: Abstract, Table of Contents, Results, Discussion, and Appendices (if applicable)

You will be *completing* your proposed research study from BAS 490 during this semester. This means that the study you proposed in BAS 490 (and were approved to move onto BAS 491) with must be carried out by you-- data collected, results analyzed, and findings reported in your final paper.

Peer Review:
A peer review process is commonplace in professional research and publication. Feedback from one's peers provides different perspectives and important feedback on what is compelling and what is problematic in an early draft. Peers can provide suggestions on not only the mechanics of a paper, but also suggestions for further research.

In Week 8, peer review teams (of generally 2 people) will be assigned. In Week 10, students will be provided with full details of the assignment, including a template to guide the review.

You will need to employ *critical thinking* skills here. What about your peer's research is strong? What needs improvement? Are there any gaps in their research? Were they able to communicate their ideas effectively? Likewise, you need to use your own *effective communication skills* to ensure your feedback is helpful and relevant.

Students are required to copy the instructor on the e-mail to their partner in which they send their draft. Due to the nature of this assignment, peer review teams may need to be adjusted to account for students that are not staying on track with assignment deadlines. A student's grade will not be impacted by another student that is not putting in the work/effort required for this course. Please reach out to me if you have issues with your peer review partner.

Final Draft of Paper (post-peer review):
After the peer review process is completed, you will be required to review your partner's comments/feedback and incorporate whatever you find useful into your paper. I will expect that you are continuously working on your paper throughout this entire course to make it a strong final product. Students will be required to submit their final draft (post-peer review) in Canvas for review by the instructor in Week 12.

Virtual Presentation:

Beginning in Week 7, you will research virtual presentation tools and guidelines for successful virtual presentations. In your presentation, you are expected to display professional, effective oral communication skills. You need to speak clearly, ensure your presentation is appropriately tailored to your audience, and use an appropriate tone while also remaining concise and informative. Your final presentation should be15-20 minutes long. Full assignment parameters will be provided in Week 7.

In Week 13, you will submit your presentation to the instructor, and provide a link on the discussion forums.

In Week 14, you will choose two peers' presentations to review, and will provide constructive feedback utilizing the provided template.

Final Paper/Project:

Your final paper is the culmination of the work that you started in BAS 490. Full details about the contents of the paper are in Canvas.
- Your paper must be written professionally and demonstrate strong written communication skills (clear, concise, proper grammar and tone, etc.).
- You can generally expect the body of your final paper to be between 3000-5000 words (so, excluding the abstract, references, appendices, etc.)
- *Special Note: The use of Generative AI, Including ChatGPT, is not permitted in the writing of your Action Research Project.*

None of the assignment grades for this course will be dropped. Peer Reviews and Presentations WILL NOT be accepted late nor will presentation feedback (in Discussion Board Forum).

Course and Institution Policies/Resources

Late Submissions

Should a learner have a "life situation" that could lead to a late submission, extensions will be granted based on *pre-notice* of the late submission by the student. Having another assignment due for another class is never an excuse for a late submission.

Unexcused late submissions will be penalized as follows:
- Up to 7 days late: -20%
- 8-14 days late: -50%
- More than 14 days late: **No credit.**

Classroom Conduct

In our online classroom, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is conducive to learning, as directed by the instructor. Any student who negatively impacts the opportunity for other students to learn will be warned – if disruptive behavior continues, the student will be removed from the course.

Name, Gender Identity, and Pronoun Use

If you wish, share your name and gender pronouns with me and how best to address you in class and via email. I use she/her/hers for myself and you may address me as Dr. Calvin or Professor Calvin in email and verbally.

Academic Standards

Academic Standards exist to promote authentic scholarship, support the institution's goal of maintaining high standards of academic excellence, and encourage continued ethical behavior of faculty and students to cultivate an educational community which values integrity and produces graduates who carry this commitment forward into professional practice.

As members of the George Mason University community, we are committed to fostering an environment of trust, respect, and scholarly excellence. Our academic standards are the foundation of this commitment, guiding our behavior and interactions within this academic community. The practices for implementing these standards adapt to modern practices, disciplinary contexts, and technological advancements. Our standards are embodied in our courses, policies, and scholarship, and are upheld in the following principles:

- **Honesty:** Providing accurate information in all academic endeavors, including communications, assignments, and examinations.
- **Acknowledgement:** Giving proper credit for all contributions to one's work. This involves the use of accurate citations and references for any ideas, words, or materials created by others in the style appropriate to the discipline. It also includes acknowledging shared authorship in group projects, co-authored pieces, and project reports.
- **Uniqueness of Work:** Ensuring that all submitted work is the result of one's own effort and is original, including free from self-plagiarism. This principle extends to written assignments, code, presentations, exams, and all other forms of academic work. ***Special Note: The use of Generative AI, Including ChatGPT, is not permitted in BAS 490.***

Violations of these standards—including but not limited to plagiarism, fabrication, and cheating—are taken seriously and will be addressed in accordance with university policies. The process for reporting, investigating, and adjudicating violations is outlined in the university's procedures. Consequences of violations may include academic sanctions, disciplinary actions, and other measures necessary to uphold the integrity of our academic community.

The principles outlined in these academic standards reflect our collective commitment to upholding the highest standards of honesty, acknowledgement, and uniqueness of work. By adhering to these principles, we ensure the continued excellence and integrity of George Mason University's academic community.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for understanding how these general expectations regarding academic standards apply to each course, assignment, or exam they participate in; students should ask their instructor for clarification on any aspect that is not clear to them.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Disability Services at George Mason University is committed to upholding the letter and spirit of the laws that ensure equal treatment of people with disabilities. Under the administration of University Life, Disability Services implements and coordinates reasonable accommodations and disability-related services that afford equal access to university programs and activities. Students can begin the registration process with Disability Services at any time during their enrollment at George Mason University. If you are seeking accommodations, please visit https://ds.gmu.edu/ for detailed information about the Disability Services registration process. Disability Services is located in Student Union Building I (SUB I), Suite 2500. Email: ods@gmu.edu. Phone: (703) 993-2474.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for registering with Disability Services and communicating about their approved accommodations with their instructor *in advance* of any relevant class meeting, assignment, or exam.

FERPA and Use of GMU Email Addresses for Course Communication

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governs the disclosure of education records for eligible students and is an essential aspect of any course. More information about Student Privacy and Student Rights under FERPA can be found at: http://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/

Registered students will be given access to a section of the Canvas Learning System for this course. Canvas will be used as the primary mechanism to disseminate course information, including announcements, lecture slides, assignments, and grades.

Students must use their GMU email account to receive important University information, including communications related to this class. Instructors will not respond to messages sent from or send messages regarding course content to a non-GMU email address.

Communication with the instructor on issues relating to the individual student should be conducted using Canvas mail, Mason email, or in-person - **not** in the public discussion board on Canvas. Federal privacy law and Mason policy require that any communication with a student related in any way to a student's status be conducted using secure Mason systems – if you use email to communicate with the instructor you **MUST** send messages from your Mason email account.

Student responsibility: Students are responsible for checking their GMU email regularly for course-related information, and/or ensuring that GMU email messages are forwarded to an account they do check.

Student Privacy and Additional Resources

Instructors respect and protect the privacy of information related to individual students. As described above, issues relating to an individual student will be discussed via email, telephone or in person. Instructors will not discuss issues relating to an individual student with other students (or anyone without a need to know) without prior permission of the student.

Graded work other than exams will be returned to individual students directly by the instructor (or by a faculty or staff member or a teaching assistant designated by the instructor or via another secure method). Under no circumstances will a student's graded work be returned to another student.

Faculty and staff will take care to protect the privacy of each student's scores and grades.

A variety of student services are available:
- Distance Education Services, University Libraries (http://library.gmu.edu/distance)
- Writing Center (http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/)
- Learning Services (https://learningservices.gmu.edu)

Title IX Resources and Required Reporting

As a part of George Mason University's commitment to providing a safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and working environment for all members of the University community, the University does not discriminate on the basis of sex or gender in any of its education or employment programs and activities. Accordingly, **all non-confidential employees, including your faculty member, have a legal requirement to report to the Title IX Coordinator, all relevant details obtained directly or indirectly about any incident of Prohibited Conduct** (such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, gender-based stalking, dating/domestic violence). Upon notifying the Title IX Coordinator of possible Prohibited Conduct, the Title IX Coordinator will assess the report and determine if outreach is required. If outreach is required, the individual the report is about (the "Complainant") will receive a communication, likely in the form of an email, offering that person the option to meet with a representative of the Title IX office.

For more information about non-confidential employees, resources, and Prohibited Conduct, please see University Policy 1202: Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence. Questions regarding Title IX can be directed to the Title IX Coordinator via email to TitleIX@gmu.edu, by phone at 703-993-8730, or in person on the Fairfax campus in Aquia 373.

Student opportunity: If you prefer to speak to someone ***confidentially***, please contact one of Mason's confidential employees in Student Support and Advocacy (SSAC), Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), Student Health Services (SHS), and/or the Office of the University Ombudsperson.

University Counseling Services

Life is stressful and we all need a little support sometimes. Students are encouraged to contact Counseling & Psychological Services (3129 Student Union Building I, http://caps.gmu.edu/) at 703-993-2380 for assistance with any kind of psychological/life problem or crisis.

Religious Holidays

A list of religious holidays is available on the University Life Calendar page. Any student whose religious observance conflicts with a scheduled course activity must contact the instructor at least 2 weeks in advance of the conflict date in order to make alternate arrangements.

Important Dates

Dates for adding, dropping the course, etc. are available via: *http://registrar.gmu.edu.*

**By being enrolled in this class, you understand that you are agreeing to adhere to the policies and actions required of you by both me and the institution. You agree to the content and regulations of the most recent student/institution handbook. If you feel this will be difficult, you are welcome to drop the class.

Course Calendar

NOTE: The content within the Weeks in the Canvas course site will be the final authority for due dates. The Syllabus below is intended as a global view of the semester's work <u>but is subject to change</u> at the discretion of the instructor.

Session	Content	Activities	Assignments Due
Week 1 (1/21-1/26)	Welcome and Research Review	- Welcome and Introductions - Brush off your research proposal and recruitment flyer from BAS 490	**Discussion Forums:** • Welcome & Re-Introduction **Assignment:** • Welcome Quiz • Submit Approved Proposal & Recruitment Flyer from BAS 490
Week 2 (1/27-2/2)	Timeline	- Create a research timeline	**Assignment:** • Submit Research Timeline
Week 3 (2/3-2/9)	Begin Research	- Begin research - Discuss research plan - Review progress report (PR) template	**Discussion Forums:** • How you will conduct your research
Week 4 (2/10-2/16)	Progress Report 1	- Submit PR 1 - Work on project	**Assignment:** • Submit Progress Report 1
Week 5 (2/17-2/23)	Research	- Work on project	**No Assignment Submission** • Continue your research
Week 6 (2/24-3/2)	Progress Report 2	- Submit PR 2 - Work on project	**Assignment:** • Submit Progress Report 2
Week 7 (3/3-3/9)	Presentation Tools	- Review presentation tools content in Canvas - Work on project	**Discussion Forums:** • Virtual presentations
Week 8 (3/10-3/16) *Spring Break	Progress Report 3	- Peer reviewers assigned - Info on how to write results and discussion sections - Submit PR 3 - Work on project	**Assignment:** • Submit Progress Report 3

Week 9 (3/17-3/23)	Writing Sections & Finishing Research	- Review Methods section - Writing Results and Discussion sections - Finishing research	**No Assignment Submission** Use this week to finish your research and write your draft
Week 10 (3/24-3/30)	Peer Evaluation and Progress Report 4	- Submit draft for peer review - Submit PR4	**Assignment:** • Submit Progress Report 4 • Submit first draft of your paper to your peer reviewer and instructor.
Week 11 (3/31-4/6)	Peer Evaluation	- Finalize review of peer's paper	**Assignment:** • Submit feedback to your peer and the Instructor
Week 12 (4/7-4/13)	Final Paper Draft	- Incorporate feedback received from your peer - Submit draft to Instructor	**Assignment:** • Submit final paper draft to Instructor in Canvas
Week 13 (4/14-4/20)	Presentation	- Finalize and submit presentation.	**Assignment:** • Submit presentation to instructor in Canvas **Discussion Forums:** • Link to Final Presentation Forum
Week 14 (4/21-4/27)	Presentation Review	- Choose two peers' presentations to watch and review.	**Discussion Forums:** • Provide constructive feedback to your peers
Week 15 (4/28-5/4)	Final Paper	- Incorporate feedback from your draft into your final paper.	**Assignment:** • Submit final paper in Canvas

Important Dates:
1/21: First Day of Classes
1/28: Last Day to Add Classes
2/4: Last Day to Drop (100% tuition refund)
2/11: Last Day to Drop (50% tuition refund)
2/12-2/25: Unrestricted Withdrawal Period (no tuition refund)
2/26-3/31: Selective Withdrawal Period (no tuition refund)

Please consult Mason's Academic Calendars for the most up-to-date information on withdrawal dates, university holidays, and other important deadlines: https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/spring_2025/