

Applied Sciences Capstone

BAS 491 – DL1 & DL2

(3 Credits) Canvas/Online

Fall 2025

Syllabus is subject to change.
This document was last
revised on August 15, 2025

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

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](#).

- **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.](#)

- **Paperback ISBN:** 9781433832161

Course Description and Objectives

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

In this culminating course, students complete a research-based capstone project, building on the foundation established in **BAS 490 – Introduction to Research Methods**. The project includes selecting and researching a topic (initiated in BAS 490), designing and implementing a specific plan of action, documenting and evaluating results, and delivering a write-up and presentation upon completion.

The primary goal of BAS 491 is to serve as a high-impact, integrative experience within the BAS degree. It helps students synthesize their concentration coursework with the research skills gained in BAS 490, applying critical thinking and discipline-specific knowledge to a real-world research project.

Offered by the Provost's Office. May not be repeated for credit.

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).

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 with no required in-person meetings. **Canvas** functions as your virtual classroom, where you will access all course materials and assignments (excluding the required textbook, which must be purchased separately).

Written papers may be created using any word processing software but must be submitted in **.doc** or **.pdf** format. For the virtual presentation assignment, students may choose the video presentation platform that best suits their needs.

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 Proposal and the Recruitment Flyer, completed in BAS 490.

Research Timeline – 50 pts: Using the template provided in Canvas, students will map out your research for the semester.

Discussions

| Discussion | 80 |
|--|-----------|
| Welcome & Re-Introduction Forum (Week 1) | 20 |
| How You'll Conduct Your Research (Week 3) | 20 |
| Sharing Preliminary Findings (Week 7) | 20 |
| Review Classmates' Presentations (Week 13) | 20 |

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

Discussion Board Expectations:

Throughout the course, you will participate in online discussions via Canvas. Each discussion includes two components: an original post in response to a prompt and replies to at least two classmates. Your original post should directly address the prompt provided by the instructor and demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the topic and relevant course materials. While these posts are more conversational than formal essays, they should still reflect college-level writing—clear, grammatically correct, and well-organized. A strong response is **typically around 200 words**, though it may be slightly longer or shorter depending on the topic. The original post is due by **Friday at 11:59 PM** of the assigned week.

In addition to your own post, you are required to respond to at least two classmates by **Sunday at 11:59 PM**. These replies should go beyond simple agreement and should engage meaningfully with your peers' ideas. You might relate to a point they made, offer constructive feedback, or share your own perspective. While there is no strict word count for replies, they should reflect genuine effort and critical engagement. Responses that simply say “Good point” or “I agree” without further explanation do not demonstrate sufficient thought and will be graded accordingly.

All posts and replies must be grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Please avoid using abbreviations, sentence fragments, or informal language typically found in text messages. This is a college-level course, and your

writing should reflect that standard. To help ensure quality, it is recommended that you draft your responses in a word processor first and then copy and paste them into the discussion thread.

Please note that you will not be able to see your classmates' posts until you submit your own. While late original posts are not accepted and cannot be made up, you may still earn partial credit by completing your peer responses. Your classmates are depending on you to participate on time, so your consistent engagement is essential to the success of the discussion and the overall learning experience.

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 |

You will submit progress reports four times throughout the semester to help you stay on track with your research timeline. A template is provided within the course. Although these reports are submitted to the professor, they are primarily for your benefit. Regularly checking in allows you to monitor your progress, recognize if you're falling behind, and seek help if needed.

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 have already completed your research proposal in BAS 490. This semester, in BAS 491, you will carry out the research you proposed—collecting data, analyzing results, and reporting your findings in a final manuscript. To transform your proposal into a completed research paper, you will need to update and expand your original document. This includes:

- Changing the tense from present or future to past, since your research has now been completed.
- Revising the Methods section to reflect what you actually did, rather than what you planned to do.
- Adding new sections, including an Abstract, Table of Contents, Results, Discussion, and Appendices.

Your final paper should present your completed study in full, demonstrating your ability to carry out and report on independent research.

Peer Review:

Peer review is a standard part of professional research and publication. Receiving feedback from peers offers valuable insights, helping you identify both the strengths and weaknesses of your draft. Peers can provide input not only on writing mechanics but also on content, structure, and potential areas for further research.

Peer review teams (typically made up of two students) will be assigned in Week 9. In Week 10, you will receive full instructions for the assignment, along with a template to guide your review.

This process will require you to apply critical thinking skills. Consider what your peer has done well, what could be improved, whether there are gaps in their research, and how clearly their ideas are communicated. At the same time, your feedback should be thoughtful, specific, and constructive—demonstrating strong communication skills.

When you send your draft to your partner, you are required to copy the instructor on the email. If a peer is falling behind or not participating, review teams may be adjusted. Please note: your grade will not be affected by a partner who fails to meet expectations. If any issues arise with your peer review partner, contact me as soon as possible.

Final Draft of Paper (post-peer review):

After the peer review process is complete, you are expected to review your partner's feedback and incorporate any suggestions you find helpful into your paper. You will then submit your revised final draft in Canvas for instructor review in **Week 12**

Virtual Presentation:

For your presentation, you are expected to demonstrate professional and effective oral communication skills. This includes speaking clearly, tailoring your content appropriately to your audience, using a suitable tone, and being both concise and informative. Your final presentation should be **15 to 20 minutes** in length.

In **Week 13**, you will submit your presentation to the instructor and share a link to it in the discussion forum. During **Week 14**, you will select two peers' presentations to review and provide constructive feedback using the provided template.

Final Paper/Project:

Your final paper is the culminating product of your Capstone, building upon the work you began in BAS 490. Complete details about the paper's requirements are available in Canvas. Your paper must be professionally written, demonstrating strong communication skills, including clarity, conciseness, proper grammar, and an appropriate tone. It must also display the academic rigor required of a capstone project.

**Please note that all assignment grades in this course count—no grades will be dropped.
Peer reviews, presentations, and presentation feedback will not be accepted late.**

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.

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 but is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

| Session | Content | Activities | Assignments Due |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Week 1 (8/25-8/31) | Welcome and Research Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Welcome and Introductions - Brush off your research proposal and recruitment flyer from BAS 490 | Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome & Re-Introduction Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Quiz • Submit Approved Proposal & Recruitment Flyer from BAS 490 |
| Week 2 (9/1-9/7) | Timeline | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a research timeline | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Research Timeline |
| Week 3 (9/8-9/14) | Begin Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Begin research - Discuss research plan - Review progress report (PR) template | Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will conduct your research |
| Week 4 (9/15-9/21) | Progress Report 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit PR 1 - Work on project | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Progress Report 1 |
| Week 5 (9/22-9/28) | Research | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work on project | No Assignment Submission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue your research |
| Week 6 (9/29-10/5) | Progress Report 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Submit PR 2 - Work on project | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Progress Report 2 |
| Week 7 (10/6-10/12) | Share Preliminary Findings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss preliminary findings - Work on project | Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing Preliminary Findings |
| Week 8 (10/13-10/19) | Progress Report 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Info on how to write results and discussion sections - Submit PR 3 - Work on project | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Progress Report 3 |

| | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| Week 9 (10/20-10/26) | Writing Sections, Finishing Research, Peer Reviewers Assigned | - Peer reviewers assigned - 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 (10/27-11/2) | Peer Review Draft, Progress Report 4 | - Submit draft for peer review - Submit PR4 | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit Progress Report 4 • Submit first draft of your paper to your peer reviewer and instructor. |
| Week 11 (11/3-11/9) | Peer Evaluation | - Finalize review of peer's paper | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit feedback to your peer and the Instructor |
| Week 12 (11/10-11/16) | Final Paper Draft | - Incorporate feedback received from your peer - Submit draft to Instructor | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit final paper draft to Instructor in Canvas |
| Week 13 (11/17-11/23) | Presentation | - Finalize and submit presentation. | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit presentation to instructor in Canvas Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link to Final Presentation Forum |
| Week 14 (11/24-11/30) * Thanksgiving Week | Presentation Review | - Choose two peers' presentations to watch and review. | Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide constructive feedback to your peers |
| Week 15 (12/1-12/7) | Final Paper | - Incorporate feedback from your draft into your final paper. | Assignment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit final paper in Canvas |

Important Dates:

8/25: First Day of Classes

9/2: Last Day to Add Classes

9/8: Last Day to Drop (100% tuition refund)

9/16: Last Day to Drop (50% tuition refund)

9/17-9/30: Unrestricted Withdrawal Period (no tuition refund)

10/1-10/27: 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/