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# INTRODUCTION TO THIS DOCUMENT

## Disclaimers

Neither this guide nor any of the information and requirements contained herein, constitute a contract, or create any contractual commitments between Capella University and any student, any prospective student, or any third party. The information here and in the template and any corresponding guidance are subject to change.

This guide will explain the essence of content which should be included in each section of the Capstone Template for the Doctor of Information Technology (DIT) program, for learners who began the program after January 2022 or DIT learners who were not in Advanced Doctoral by January 2022 unless they opted to complete a dissertation.

## Purpose of this Document

This document presents detailed information about each of the Sections required for a Capella DIT Capstone proposal and final project submission. Each section in this document aligns with the DIT Capstone Template. Carefully read the Template Guide so that you can be certain to provide the material that is necessary to successfully write each section of your Capstone.

Consult with your mentor about adding headings that might be necessary to enhance the organizational structure of your Capstone Project. Review the proper process to add additional levels of headings.

\*Note: The Capstone proposal is made up of Sections 1 and 2 of the template document. During the proposal phase, this should be written in future tense. After completing data collection and result analysis, you will revise Sections 1 and 2 into past tense; Section 3 will be written in past tense.

## Originality and Source-Matching Software

As you work through your capstone project, you must ensure the originality of your content and use appropriate citations to provide attribution. You should use the source-matching software provided in the course room by Capella University to check the originality of your drafts. Plagiarism, unintentional or deliberate, is a violation of ethical standards in academic research as well as a

violation of Capella University’s academic integrity policy. As you check the originality of your drafts, you might find a high number of matches to your previously submitted capstone drafts. You should filter out the matches to your prior drafts as such content is not considered an academic integrity issue.

# FRONT MATTER

## Title Page

Your Capstone requires a cover page. This area may be updated as people’s positions or titles change. You will see an updated version of the template provided when this happens. You can either download the new template and transfer your work to it, or you can update the title page, whichever you prefer.

Be sure to wait until the end (Dean’s review, Milestone 5b) to insert your degree conferral month and year.

## Instructions for the template

Delete all instructions in the template after you have read them and before you submit to committee reviewers.

## Executive Summary

Write a one-to-two-page executive summary of your project here for MS 4 and 5. This should explain the problem, purpose, method, population, and results of your project. Implications or practical uses of the project results should be included. The Executive Summary is not an APA abstract; instead, it could be used to provide a high-level explanation of your project to a CEO, COO, or other key- stakeholder.

## Dedication and Acknowledgement

You can write a brief acknowledgment to those who supported your goals toward completing your doctorate, and/or dedication to someone(s) close to you that made a difference in your progress. This is your space to determine content. If you choose not to include this, please delete the page. You can also title this Dedication or Acknowledgement, if only one or the other is provided.

## Table of Contents

Use the embedded TOC and allow the programmed headings to create the updated TOC for you. Note that right-clicking the TOC allows you to update the fields – you can update the page numbers only, or all the items. If you break the headings and link to the TOC, use the Home page button on the Word tabs, and select the correct heading in “Styles” to match to the TOC alignments.

## Lists of Tables and Figures

These are not automated. You will need to manually insert the correct pages. If you want to create automated tables, you may.

## Note about Page and Reference Quantity Recommendations

Throughout the guide, you will see page and reference quantity recommendations. These are guidelines. Some types of projects might need more (or less) content, but you should consider your instructor/chair/committee inputs if you deviate from the recommendations. If minimum numbers of citations are requested, this does not mean you can just keep re-using previous citations. These are minimum *additional* references you need to incorporate and synthesize into your work.

## Note about Redundant Information

Writing into the template should not be an exercise in redundancy. Avoid restating the same concepts multiple times. Each section has its own reason for existence and level of importance to your project; the template is designed to ensure that you move, logically, deeper into the content of your project topic, becoming more granular as you move through the template. While the overarching general problem may be high-level, the specific problem will be lower level; your project should be specific and geared to a specific IT field of study, industry or business technical problem you are studying. Each section should provide the reader with new, more, and different information from previous or other sections. The concepts should become precise and tailored specifically to your project. Avoid general statements, opinions, bias, jargon, and colloquialisms.

# SECTION 1: BUSINESS TECHNICAL PROBLEM AND PROJECT SCOPE

## Introduction

The introduction *opens the window* into your Capstone project, orienting the reader to the project topic, focus, and area of interest. The introduction should provide a concise, clear overview of the proposed project.

Include an interesting fact, statistic, or comment that catches the attention of your reader which is relevant to your topic and project. Cite the sources of your facts and statistics. Ensure a thesis sentence exists in which you identify the topic and specific focus of your project. Make a strong case for your project topic and focus.

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1 [5] Writing uses proper paragraph development, transition, academic tone with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics **(**This pertains to ALL your project sections, including all transitory, introductory, summary, and front and end matter). MS4[1] **Introductory Material:** A cohesive introduction, background, and purpose to the topic is presented. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5a[1] **Introductory Material:** The final manuscript presents a well-articulated rationale, problem statement, and anticipated significance of the project (applies to all of Section 1).

## Capstone Topic

Include information about your DIT project focus and topic, and overarching information. Explain how the project aligns with the field of study. Include at least one to two citations for support.

Here is a good format to follow:

* Include information about your DIT field of study.
* The project focus and topic, and overarching information. Consider beginning this paragraph with something like, “The project focus is .”
* Explain how your chosen topic aligns with the DIT program requirements. [One half to one page].

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS4[1] **Introductory Material:** A cohesive introduction, background, and purpose to the topic is presented.

## Problem of Practice

Describes the general business technical problem and the specific business technical problem identified in your DIT area of interest within the scholar and practitioner literature. Supports the existence of the general and specific business technical problems using baseline data and at least five supporting citations published in scholarly and/or practitioner journals within the past 3-5 years.

Focus on problems experienced by information technology (IT) practitioners, not social, government, societal, or religious organization problems.

**General business technical problem** – what is happening throughout the industry or field of interest? How is the problem manifesting? What adversity is being experienced? In other words, what harm does the general business technical problem create for the practitioner? The general problem is an umbrella problem under which the specific problem fits. Use a current

source (past 1-3 years) to cite the general problem and follow with at least two-three cited supporting sentences.

**Specific business technical problem** – what narrowed group of participants are experiencing the problem (i.e., a specific sector of the larger industry or field of study, a specific type of IT practitioner, etc.). How is the problem manifesting? What adversity is being experienced? The specific problem is a subproblem of the general problem. Use a current source (within the past 3-5 years) to cite the specific problem and follow with at least two-three cited supporting sentences.

**Here is a sample format structure you could consider using:**

The general business technical problem is resulting in (the adversity, the harm created by the general problem) (CITE A CURRENT SOURCE). Follow with a several cited facts about the general problem.

The specific business technical problem is (who, what, where) resulting in (the adversity, the harm created by the specific problem) (CITE A CURRENT SOURCE). Follow with a few supporting cited statements regarding the specific problem; including statistics is always good to expose the degree of the problem; how bad and big the problem is (%, ratio, $ in cost).

[1-2 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[2] The problem has an identified theoretical orientation. MS1[3] The topic and problem are supported by the recent literature and relevant evidence. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections).

## Purpose of the Project

Include an introductory paragraph of at least two to three sentences that supports the purpose and transitions the reader into project need and question. Within the purpose of the project, identify the project technique, the population, variables to be examined (quantitative regression), concepts or phenomenon to be explored (generic qualitative inquiry), the target population, and the geographic location written in a de-identified method (Census regions).

Qualitative example: *The purpose of this qualitative inquiry project is to explore the perspectives of IT managers in the U.S. aerospace industry regarding effective risk management strategies to improve the IT project success rate.*

Quantitative example: *The purpose of this quantitative regression project is to examine the predictive value of enterprise risk management strategies regarding reductions in cybersecurity threats in the U.S. aerospace industry.*

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS4[1] **Introductory Material:** A cohesive introduction, background, and purpose to the topic is presented. MS4[3] **Methodology:** The purpose, design, and project question align with one another. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections).

## Project Need

Justify the need and feasibility of the proposed project. Who in the literature says this project is needed? Transition logically to the project question. Why does the project question need

answering? Support need with at least three relevant scholarly and/or practitioner articles published within the last 5 years. Explain the project’s objective(s).

Be explicitly clear regarding the need for your project and answering “who says” your project is needed.

For example, you could use statements such as:

*A need exists for this proposed project as noted by (DATE), who noted that IT leaders need more information regarding (your issue) to overcome*

*(the specific problem). [2 to 4 paragraphs].*

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[3] The topic and problem are supported by the recent literature and relevant evidence. MS4[1] **Introductory Material:** The need for the project is clearly stated and supported by the recent literature.

## Project Question

State one project question, regardless if you are using a generic qualitative inquiry technique or a quantitative regression technique. The project question should align with the specific problem, purpose, gap in practice, and the data analysis techniques you identify in 1.4.2 Approach for the Project and later in 2.6.3. Data Analysis Plan and Presentation.

PQ:

Qualitative example: *What are the perspectives of IT managers in the U.S. aerospace industry regarding effective risk management strategies to improve the IT project success rate?*

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[4] Questions align to the topic and problem and the project appears to be feasible given current supporting materials reviewed. MS4[3] **Methodology:** The purpose, design, and project question align with one another.

## Project Justification

Justify the project purpose and project question based upon gaps in practice found from searching the scholarly and/or practitioner literature. Describe the anticipated results/desired outcomes of the project. Explains the importance to individual or community improvement. The outcome of your project should inform or mitigate the gap in practice; therefore, you justify your project by explaining the gap in practice and how your findings could inform or mitigate the gap in practice. Cites to published supporting articles from the last 5 years.

A gap in practice exists when IT business leaders/practitioners are not doing something or not doing something well in their practices. Please tell us what IT business leaders/practitioners are not doing or not doing well that is leading to the specific problem.

You will want to be explicitly clear in stating the gap(s) in practice. The opening sentence for 1.3.3. should be:

*The gap in practice is (CITE).*

Then explain how your project might inform/reduce the gap in practice. [2 to 4 paragraphs].

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[2] The problem has an identified theoretical orientation. MS1[3] The topic and problem are supported by the recent

literature and relevant evidence. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement.

## Project Context: Company or Industry

Situates the issue or problem in context to the company, industry of focus, or field of study. Provide some background information on the company, industry, or field of study context with deidentified information. What are the events, trends, and issues that contribute to the specific problem? What are the events, trends, and issues that illustrate the gap in practice? Describe how the project may be useful to the company, industry, or field of study. Cites to at least three published supporting articles or company specific documentation from the last 5 years. [1 page]

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections).

* + 1. **Project Context: Terms and Definitions**

Terms and Definitions provide clarity and avoid misunderstanding. Provide a list of terms with concise definitions. One way to accomplish this is with a bulleted list. Left align the bullet and provide the term in bold lower case followed by a colon. Then provide the definition with a scholarly parenthetical citation (APA, 2020, sec. 6.52). [Half to 1 page]

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program.

## Doctor of Information Technology Project Specifications

This section includes the importance of the project and the approach for the project. Include, here, a brief introduction and transitionary paragraph (3 sentences) which set the stage for the next two sections.

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[4] Questions align to the topic and problem and the project appears to be feasible given current supporting materials reviewed. MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. (Includes all parts of 1.4: 1.4, 1.4.1, and 1.4.2).

## Importance of the Project

Describe the importance/significance of the problem to IT practitioners. Make a convincing case for the importance of the problem of practice to practitioners. Identify the challenges, problems, situations, opportunities of practice leading to the proposed project. Support your case using at least three citations from scholarly and/or practitioner literature published within the last 5 years.

Be explicitly clear regarding who will find your project significant and important.

Example: *This proposed project is significant and important to IT managers in the U.S. aerospace industry as they might gain valuable insight into effective risk management strategies to improve their IT project success rate.*

[1-2 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[1] **Introductory Material:** The significance of the project is clearly stated and supported.

## Approach for the Project

Describe the specific study techniques you will use to complete your project. You should use either a generic qualitative inquiry or a quantitative regression technique. Include your process for collecting and analyzing information, and which data collection and analysis techniques you will use and why.

Include a preliminary reference list of data sources you intend to incorporate in the project report, including scholarly literature, technical reports, online secondary data sources.

Although you will use an applied framework in your project, you will want to ensure your framework has a theoretical orientation. A theory or theory-based model should serve as the underpinning of your applied framework. You can review the [DIT Acceptable Topics and Techniques](https://assets.capella.edu/campus/doctoral-programs/AcceptableTopicsandMethodsDIT.pdf) document to review a list of recommended theoretical orientations. Clearly state the theoretical orientation of your project, yet recognize that when you begin developing your applied framework in Section 2.1.1., you might find the need to return to Section 1 and revise or refine your theoretical orientation statement.

Briefly explain the data-collection procedures (e.g., interview questions, survey, etc.) and why they are workable, and how you will analyze the data. Identify barriers and challenges to data collection and potential contingency plans should problems arise. [2 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[2] The problem has an identified theoretical orientation. MS4[3] **Methodology:** The purpose, design, and project question align with one another. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections).

## Summary

Concludes with statements that contain a summary of key points of the project and an overview of the content of the remaining sections for the project. Do not copy and paste content from previous sections, but summarize the key points from the sections above. Provide citations to at least five industry or scholarly articles that help provide the main support for your topic, problem, focus, and industry selection. Provides a logical explanation of the overarching project plan. [half-one page].

**Rubric alignment:** MS1[1] The topic area fits within the scope of the program. MS1[5] Writing uses proper paragraph development, transition, academic tone with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics. MS4[7] **Writing:** Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style. MS5a[1] **Introductory Material:** The final manuscript presents a well-articulated rationale, problem statement, and anticipated significance of the project. MS5a[7] **Writing:** The final manuscript is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (applies to all sections).

MS5a[8] **Legal:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5b[1] The document is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (all sections).

[*Note to learners: the project’s sections 1 to 1.5 will be revised into past tense after you conduct the study and write Section 3. Delete these instructions*].

# SECTION 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND PROJECT PLAN

## Introduction

You should describe the project study protocol (i.e., technique, population, industry, organization, or field of study) in one to two sentences (e.g., This capstone project will use a generic qualitative inquiry technique to collect data from U.S. IT managers through 45-60- minute semistructured interviews).

You should define your project topic and briefly point out overall trends in what has been published about the topic issues, gaps in practice, foundational scholarly or practitioner studies and articles, or theory, etc. You should also establish your position – or argument - for the need for the project and the organization of the review of literature. [1-2 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS2[6] Writing reflects academic tone, paragraphing, integration of evidence and proper grammar, usage, and/or mechanics (applies to all sections). MS4[7] **Writing:** Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style (applies to all sections).

Note that for MS2 approval, Sections 1 and 2 must meet the rubric in all criteria.

## Applied Framework

A project framework describes concepts believed to influence an outcome. An applied framework provides a *big picture* overview of various descriptive categories or concepts and how they might relate to one another. The choice of your applied framework will place your project on a trajectory to contribute towards building an integrated body of knowledge within the topical domain.

Using an established or an adaptation of an established framework, model, process, theory, or set of constructs, explain how the project will be organized and framed. The project framework is an applied, practitioner framework that is or could be used to help the IT business practitioner overcome the problem and shrink or eliminate the gap in practice. Briefly describe how the applied framework aligns with the topic, problem, purpose, gap in practice, and project question.

Identify key IT business technical/technology concepts (i.e., theories, constructs, practices, and models) found in the literature, relevant to your project. When were these concepts introduced? How has the study of these concept(s) evolved? What is the relevance of the concept(s) to addressing the problem anchoring the project? Who raised the concepts and how has that individual or group of individuals contributed to the framework? Cite at least 20 articles in the scholarly and/or practitioner literature – with at least half of them having been published in the last 5 years. [7 to 9 pages].

Create a diagram of your proposed framework for the study by outlining the concepts you have chosen to use to guide your project. The diagram should include the selected concepts, the studied problem, the gap in practice identified, and the relationship among them. Ensure you are not copying from the Internet or published articles a copyrighted framework image.

A good search strategy is to enter applicable search terms in a Google browser and then select

“Images” to review the framework diagrams. You then click on an image to open a new sub screen in which you can then click the hyperlink to go the article in which the image is published to read about the framework.

Review this applied framework presentation to learn more: https://strategiced.zoom.us/rec/share/1\_Jl2EL\_oTzk1UqIButgsvOfEui0sFyIVCCq132e- qh0MobykdvcMtLlYjB8KP1r.qLDtGtEzbVmHvftX

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS2[4] The project utilizes a participatory framework (community, organization, practitioners, and study organizer contributors). MS4[2] **Literature Review:** The applied framework is presented in the context of the project.

## Method for Discovering Literature

Include a brief introduction to this section.

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. (Includes all parts of 2.2).

## Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Explain your inclusion and exclusion criteria for selecting and evaluating articles, providing a description of each criterion. These criteria should closely align with the scope of the specific Business problem, project objectives, and project question.

* Explain your *inclusion* criteria for selecting and evaluating articles, providing a clear, detailed explanation. Develop criteria to explain why you are including specific types of literature, such as peer-reviewed scholarly journal articles, review-type articles, conference papers, and credible practitioner literature drawn from sources such as trade journals, quality magazines, consultant reports and articles, quality newspaper articles, and/or government reports. Include a data range for sources in your inclusion criteria, recognizing that framework, theory, model, and historic context articles/previous-effort-to-address the problem articles could be more than 5 years old. Cite at least one source regarding literature inclusion criteria.
* Explain your exclusion criteria for selecting and evaluating articles, providing a clear, detailed explanation. Develop criteria to explain why you are excluding specific types of literature, such as untrustworthy sources (i.e., Wikipedia, newspaper editorial page or other subjective, opinion-based articles, chat forums, etc.), literature with no relevance to your topic, problem, or gap in practice, and/or foreign government sources with little or no applicability to your project industry context. Include a data range for sources in your exclusion criteria, recognizing that framework, theory, model, and historic context/ previous-effort-to-address the problem articles could be more than 5 years old. Cite at least one source regarding literature exclusion criteria.
* Ensure your inclusion and exclusion criteria closely align with the scope of the specific problem, project objectives, and project question, and the topical domain.

[half to 1 page].

## Search Strategy

Identify databases used such as EBSCO, ABI, IBIS World, Nexis Uni, Google Scholar, and a description of your search strategies including keywords and search terms. Identify your most important publication sources for scholarly and practitioner articles. Describe how you identified relevant literature concerning your topic. Show that you recognize the significance of experts in

your topical field. [Note to learner committees: saturation or exhaustion of the literature is not the goal of the Capstone literature review]. [half to 1 page].

## Review of Scholarly and Practitioner Literature

Provide a brief introduction to 2.3.

When completing the literature review sections below, remember, you are reviewing and critically analyzing and synthesizing the literature. You are not providing your unsubstantiated opinion of the problem or phenomenon.

The word *synthesize* as applied to a review of the literature is defined as a combining, comparing, and contrasting of findings, theories, themes, gaps, and opinions found in the topical literature and a drawing of new conclusions from the literature. Synthesis occurs through the combining of two or more parts to form a new whole. When you combine the literature through comparative and contrasting content, critically analyze, evaluate, and interpret the combined, compared, and contrasted literature, and write up your critical analysis, evaluation, and interpretation, you create a new whole. Critical analysis requires critical reading and critical thinking.

Critical reading involves:

* Ascertaining if the authors used credible evidence to support their findings as opposed to offering personal opinions or worldviews.
* Determining if the authors provided a sound argument for their conclusions.
* Evaluating the limitations of the research, relevancy to topic, significance to the field, and implications of the findings.

Critical thinking involves:

* Using logic and reasoning to evaluate the article.
* Ascertaining the constancy and consistency within the article.
* Forming an objective judgement of the article’s value, validity, and usefulness.

Questions to ask when conducting a critical analysis:

* What is context and background of the topic and problem?
* Who is affected, involved, and interested and why?
* How, when, where, and why does this problem or issue occur?
* What was the progression of the problem or issue and why did the progression occur?
* What are the implications resulting from the problem or issue?
* What can be learned from evaluating the problem or issue?

In creating a synthetic literature review, your goal is to develop a new, relevant, useful perspective by synthesizing the findings and results of previous researchers. Reflect on the word *synergy*: the combining of two or more parts, substances, companies to produce a greater effect that the sum of the parts, substances, or companies. As you develop your literature review, you will combine, compare, contrast, analyze, evaluate, and interpret the literature to create a synthetic literature review.

A review of the scholarly literature is necessary to understand your project problem from the perspective of scholarly researchers. You need to understand the findings and results of past and current studies conducted by scholarly researchers to address the problem.

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a

community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS2[4] The project utilizes a participatory framework (community, organization, practitioners, and study organizer contributors). MS2[6] Writing reflects academic tone, paragraphing, integration of evidence and proper grammar, usage, and/or mechanics (applies to all sections). MS4[2] **Literature Review:** The relevance of the theories, concepts, practices, or frameworks to the project is clearly discussed and supported by the literature. MS4[2] **Literature Review:** The review of the literature is clearly and thoroughly analyzed, critiqued, and synthesized. (Includes all parts of 2.3). MS5a[2] **Literature Review:** The final manuscript presents a thorough, well synthesized, and logical integration of current peer-reviewed literature. (Includes all parts of 2.3).

## Historic and Current Business Technical Problem Trends

Describe how the scholarly and/or practitioner articles provide an overall historic and current view of the trends about the topic/problem. Explain how knowledge of the problem has grown and changed over time. Cite to at least 10 articles published over the last 5 years, and an additional five to eight articles published over the last 5-20 years. If you use multiple headings under this, mark them 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1.2, 2.3.1.3, etc. Do not include those in the TOC.

Consider developing two distinct sub sections for 2.3.1:

* + - 1. ***Historic Business Technical Problem Trends.*** Start back 20-30 years ago reviewing/synthesizing, and providing a critical analysis of the literature on the historic trends of your general and specific business technical problems, citing 5-10 articles with publication data from 5-20+ years ago. Write this section in chronological order beginning the oldest trends and coming forward to about 5 years ago. Do not mix with current trends (within the past 5 years trends). The objective here is HISTORIC TRENDS. Write 3 pages.
      2. ***Current Business Technical Problem Trends.*** Now come forward to within the past 5 years, reviewing/synthesizing, and providing a critical analysis of the literature on the historic trend of your general and specific business technical problems, citing 10-15 articles with publication data within the past 5 years. Do not mix with historic trends (5-20 years old trends). The objective here is CURRENT TRENDS. Write 3 pages.

[5- 6 pages].

## Previous Efforts to Address the Problem

How has the problem been addressed? What degrees of success or failure? Evaluate areas of agreement, disagreement, and conflicting positions addressing the business problem. Cite at least 10 articles in the scholarly and/or practitioner literature showing the conflicting positions or varying types of examinations. If you need multiple headings here, use 2.3.2.1, 2.3.2.2, etc. Do not include them in the TOC. (Follow this rule throughout the project).

The objective of this section is to critically analyze the researchers/practitioners who tried to address your specific problem. All the literature in this section should be on your specific problem and the outcome of the author’s research.

Tell us who was successful and what was their degree of success. Tell us who was not successful in providing a solution to your specific problem. Tell us who agreed with who, who disagreed with who, who had an alternative option or solution.

Consider the following as you develop content:

* Introduction
* What scholarly researchers and practitioners in the literature discussed the problem from the past 5-20 years up to today? Focus your attention far more on current previous efforts as some problems today were not even known concepts 20 years ago.
* How have scholarly researchers and practitioners addressed the problem?
* What were the degrees of success or failure in overcoming the problem?
* What were the areas of agreement, disagreement, and conflicting positions of scholarly researchers previously addressing the problem? How are they similar? How are they different?
* What data collection techniques have been used previously?
* What data collection instruments have been used previously?
* What were the results? What were the findings?
* Conclusion [2 to 3 pages].

## Summary of Literature

Summarize the current state of the art and gaps in practice for addressing the problem. Establish your position – or argument for what the project will add to the field. At least two citations of your most relevant supporting study or practice-based literature should be included (should be no more than 5 years old). [1 page].

[Strive for at least 30 references in your literature review sections – this means that at least 5 can overlap among the sections, which is normal].

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS4[2] **Literature Review:** The relevance of the theories, concepts, practices, or frameworks to the project is clearly discussed and supported by the literature. MS4[2] **Literature Review:** The review of the literature is clearly and thoroughly analyzed, critiqued, and synthesized. MS5a[2] **Literature Review:** The final manuscript presents a thorough, well synthesized, and logical integration of current peer-reviewed literature.

## Recruitment

Define the sample frame for the project, how and why it was selected, who will likely participate, and how you will elicit participation. Describe the eligibility criteria for study participants, and the anticipated characteristics of the selected sample.

Sample Frame: a list of all the elements in the population from which the sample is drawn; the sample frame defines a set of elements that you use to select a sample. Every element of the target population that is important to your topic and problem are present in the sample frame.

The sampling strategy is a key element of your ability to recruit people who meet the eligibility criteria to participate in the project. You must identify the appropriate sampling strategy (purposive, convenience, snowball, random) based on your technique, topic, problem, purpose, and project question. Describe, explain, and rationalize the appropriate sampling strategy (purposive, convenience, snowball, random). Ensure the sampling strategy aligns with the technique.

As you develop content, address the following:

* State and justify the sample size as adequate drawing on the [DIT Acceptable](https://assets.capella.edu/campus/doctoral-programs/AcceptableTopicsandMethodsDIT.pdf)

[Topics and Techniques](https://assets.capella.edu/campus/doctoral-programs/AcceptableTopicsandMethodsDIT.pdf) document and as evidenced in the literature.

* Describe the strategies to account for attrition of participants.
* Describe the setting: (geographic location, organization, etc.). Ensure your geographic setting is broad enough to avoid inadvertent identification of your participants. For example, instead of writing, “The target population is 15 IT managers of aerospace companies in California,” write, “The target population is 15 IT managers of U.S. aerospace business.”
* Describe the general population (size, characteristics). NOTE: The general population is everyone within your eligibility criteria. For example, if your eligibility criteria were IT managers of U.S. aerospace businesses, the general population would be all the IT managers of aerospace businesses in United States.
* Target population (size, characteristics). The target population is the people you intend to use as participants, while allowing for potential attribution. For example, if you were using the qualitative inquiry technique, you would want to identify and target about 15 IT managers of U.S. aerospace businesses to be relatively sure you could interview 10-12 (your final sample) of IT managers.

For *quantitative regression* projects, you must identify and justify the minimum sample size using a power analysis. G\*Power is a software program you can download for free to conduct the power analysis to determine the minimum sample size for your quantitative project. See **Appendix C** for G\*Power information.

The recruitment process is a detail set of procedures you propose to engage in to identify, recruit, and gain access to participants for your project. Explain in detail how recruitment will occur, who will be invited to participate, why these people were selected, and how do you know these people possess the knowledge, experience, and expertise needed for you to collect data from to answer the project question. Therefore, clearly explain the participant eligibility criteria (inclusion and exclusion criteria) that will be used to screen potential participants. Note that the exclusion criteria should not simply be the opposite of the inclusion criteria.

If applicable to your project, discuss site permissions and attach in appendices any permissions achieved, in accordance with IRB requirements. Be sure to follow all relevant IRB and ethical requirements of participant recruitment. Do not contact participants prior to obtaining IRB approval and following all proper procedures required by the Capella IRB. Insert a *Recruitment Announcement* in an appendix within your Capstone project. Go to the [SoBTH Networking Resources](https://campus.capella.edu/sobth-doctoral-networking/resources) site to obtain a sample of a recruitment announcement you can customize for your project.

[1 to 2 pages].

[After the completion of data collection and analysis, place into past tense for the final project, and provide any variations which occurred. Variations to this plan will be provided here but explained and justified in Section 3.]

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS4[3] **Methodology:** Project design is described with specificity and detail. The exact procedures used to recruit, select, and protect

participants are clearly described in relevant detail. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5a[3] **Methodology:** The final manuscript accurately presents the design, recruitment, instruments, data collection and analysis.

* 1. **Project Protocol**

Remind the reader briefly why this project is important based on your problem statement and literature review. Articulate what you hope to find out by doing the project. Include a description of the data analysis technique(s). Provide justification for using the technique to achieve anticipated outcomes, which derives logically from the problem statement and project question for the project. Define the data collection requirements for the project.

To justify the technique for the project, you must make a sound, logical, and strong argument for why the technique is best for you to collect data that is relevant to the topic, problem, purpose, gap, purpose, and project question.

Describe the technique and explain why you will use this technique. Explain how the technique aligns with the project question you seek to answer.

As you develop content for this section, consider and answer these questions:

* How does the technique align with the problem, purpose, gap, and project question?
* Why is the chosen technique appropriate and suitable for this project and topic?
* Why is the chosen technique better than one other technique you considered and then did not choose?
* How will using the technique result in collecting data relevant to answering, responding to, or informing the project question?
* What are the advantages and benefits of using this technique?
* What are the disadvantages and limitations of using this technique?
* How and why have current and previous researchers used this technique?

Understanding how you will use the technique to collect data might be helpful as you justify using the technique. Consider referring to **Appendix C** to learn more about the step-by-step data collection procedures for each of the approved techniques (qualitative inquiry and quantitative regression) in the DIT Capstone Program.

[2 to 3 pages].

[Note that after conducting the planned study, you will revise this and other sections to state what you did, instead of what you planned to do].

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[4] The project utilizes a participatory framework (community, organization, practitioners, and study organizer contributors): The project’s design is a collective, self-reflective inquiry to understand and improve practices. MS2[5] The project plan contains a mechanism for evaluating the success of the project (applies to all subsections of section 2.6).

MS4[3] **Methodology:** Project design is described with specificity and detail. The exact procedures used to recruit, select, and protect participants are clearly described in relevant detail. MS5a[3] **Methodology:** The final manuscript accurately presents the design, recruitment, instruments, data collection and analysis (applies to all subsections of section 2.6).

## Data Sources

Include a transitionary, explanatory introduction paragraph (at least two sentences) to orient your reader to the data sources you used, and why.

* + - 1. **Preliminary sources of data expected.** Include a preliminary list of data sources you intend to incorporate in the project report, including scholarly and practitioner based published or proprietary articles, technical reports, online data sources, etc. Be as clear and detailed as possible. Explain how you propose to collect data (e.g., interview questions, survey, etc.). The data collection and analysis techniques, purpose of the study, project objectives, project question, and data to be collected must all align. [1 to 2 pages].
      2. **Instrumentation and data collection tools.** Present descriptions of instrumentation or data collection tools to include name of instrument, type of instrument, concepts measured by instrument, processes needed to complete instruments by participants. For quantitative techniques includes a detailed description of data that comprise each variable in the study. If using a survey instrument(s), you cannot create your own survey; you must use a survey that was previously validated, cite the previous uses, and provide statistical reliability data (i.e., Cronbach’s alpha). For qualitative techniques, explain the process and details; for example, if interviewing, include the interview guide as an Appendix and describe how it was constructed and reviewed and tested These are just examples; for your process, describe it, provide the tools for the technique, and cite the source(s) supporting their use.

For *qualitative inquiry* technique projects:

* Provide the interview guide and/or document review protocols and describe how they were created (provide any sources or citations from which the ideas were found within the framework or literature review). Place the actual interview guide or other protocols in an Appendix in your Capstone project. Go to the [SoBTH Networking Resources](https://campus.capella.edu/sobth-doctoral-networking/resources) site to obtain a template of an interview guide you can customize for your project and to obtain the expert review form that you will fill out and send to two experts in qualitative interviewing (one Capella faculty member and one field expert).
* Align the interview questions to the project question, explain how you used the concepts within the applied framework to develop the interview questions.
* Discuss the research that was used to develop each original source of data.
* Review and consider all Capella IRB requirements as you develop the interview and/or document review protocols.

*For quantitative regression* technique projects, address the following:

* Describe the instruments used for data collection and explain how each instrument aligns with the project question, hypotheses, framework, and variables.
* Provide previously reported validation and reliability data (Cronbach’s alpha measure of reliability or consistency) for each instrument and cite the sources.
* Explain why this instrument will work for your project (cite previous similar studies using the instrument).
* Detail how the instrument measures the variables and describe any subscales. Explain the scoring process for each scale or subscale.
* Specify the type and level of data (nominal, ordinal, interval, ratio) collected with each instrument for each variable and how the data aligns with the selected design/statistical analysis approach.
* Include demographic information to be collected that is needed or specific to the project. Note: Do not collect unneeded demographic information.
* Review and consider all Capella IRB requirements as you identify validated instruments,

such as obtain written permission or purchasing a license from the holder of the

instrument’s copyright. Insert documents, such as site permission, instrument permission, or licensing agreements with copyright holders in appendices. [1 to 2 pages].

## Data Collection

To prepare for data collection, you must have a keen understanding of the various steps and procedures as well as the order of the steps to be successful. Writing a proposed plan for data collection is a detailed process that requires you to think and write in recipe card mode. You must be aware of all the steps and have them in the correct order. The only way you can replicate another chef’s recipe is to follow the exact process and procedures; hence, the objective here is for you to provide, describe, and explain the step-by-step procedures you propose to use to carry out all the major steps for data collection for the project in a way that would allow another researcher to replicate the project. Do not use word clouds.

Describe how raw data will be prepared for analysis and how the integrity of the data will be assured (i.e., recording and transcribing interviews, conducting transcript reviews, data export formats (if applicable), scoring process for survey instruments, etc.). Explain how you propose to mitigate personal biases, remain objective during data collection, and set aside personal worldviews.

Refer to **Appendix C: Proposed Data Collection Technique Steps** to learn more about the step-by-step data collection procedures for each of the approved techniques in the DIT Capstone Program.

For qualitative inquiry technique projects, develop an interview guide and place your interview guide in an appendix within your Capstone project. Go to the [SoBTH Networking Resources](https://campus.capella.edu/sobth-doctoral-networking/resources) site to obtain a template of an interview guide you can customize for your project. [2 pages].

## Data Analysis Plan and Presentation

The data analysis plan is a logical step-by-step process to organize, process, analyze, and interpret the data, followed with the plan to present the analyzed data. Explain how you will analyze the data using the recipe card approach (i.e., list the steps in the proper order). Ensure your data analysis plan is appropriate in consideration of the data collection technique and plan.

Explain how you will analyze the data. For each project question, provide a description of the techniques to be used for data processing and analysis (such as coding, classification, categorization, tabulation, %, and statistical techniques, etc.). Define your approach for how you will present the final deliverable, which includes outcomes, findings, and recommendations to your appropriate target audience or site. Specify who that target audience (or site) will be.

Explain how you propose to mitigate personal biases, remain objective during data analysis, and set aside personal worldviews.

Refer to **Appendix D: Proposed Data Analysis Steps** to learn more about the step-by-step data analysis procedures for each of the approved techniques in the DIT Capstone Program.

[1 page].

## Validity and Reliability OR Trustworthiness

Your goal as a doctoral practitioner-scholar is to conclude the project with valid findings. You need to identify and understand the potential threats to reliability and validity

(quantitative regression technique) or trustworthiness (qualitative inquiry technique) before you can recognize how to mitigate these threats and present valid and accurate findings.

For the *quantitative regression* technique, be sure to note any reliability and validity issues and the implications for interpretation of the findings. Cronbach alpha reporting, when applicable to an instrument use, is required. Explain the concepts of reliability and validity in general terms and then in specific terms as related to your project. Describe the potential threats to validity and include your proposed plan to mitigate the noted threats.

For the *qualitative inquiry* technique, be sure to note any trustworthiness issues related to data collection and analysis and the implications for interpretation of findings. Describe and explain the proposed procedures to ensure dependable, credible, confirmable, and trustworthy data and findings. Explain how you propose to improve the prospects of future researchers transferring the findings to other projects and settings. Describe the potential threats to trustworthiness and include your proposed plan to mitigate the noted threats. [one page]

## Ethical Considerations

Every researcher faces a variety of ethical considerations; therefore, the need exists to identify potential ethical concerns prior to recruiting participants and collecting data. It is important to have a plan to maintain strict ethical standards. Identify any ethical concerns in applying the project technique, recruitment of participants, and collection of data. Explain in detail privacy, confidentiality, and data security procedures and concerns. Discuss the measures to be taken for protection of participants’ rights.

Begin now to review the requirements for your chosen technique and data collection procedures. If Capella IRB deems your Capstone project as *human subjects research* requiring IRB oversight, include an informed consent form customized for your project in an appendix.

As you develop this section, consider the following concepts and address each:

* Obtaining Capella University IRB approval.
* Adhering to The Belmont Report protocols of respect for persons, beneficence, and justice.
* Obtaining informed consent from participants, if required.
* Ensuring the participants understand the potential risks and benefits of participating in the project.
* Ensuring the privacy and confidentiality of participants.
* Explaining participants’ right to withdraw as well as withdrawal procedures.
* Mitigation of conflicts of interest, if applicable.
* Avoiding the use of excessive participant incentives.

**Resources:** [Informed Consent](https://campus.capella.edu/doctoral-programs/research-scholarship/institutional-review-board/informed-consent) [Conflict of Interest](https://campus.capella.edu/doctoral-programs/research-scholarship/institutional-review-board/conflict-of-interest) [Data Collection and Compliance](https://campus.capella.edu/doctoral-programs/research-scholarship/data-collection-compliance) [one page].

[Any changes or problems arising during the pendency of the project should be reflected in Section 3.].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[3] **Methodology:** All ethical considerations and procedures taken to address them are clearly described, and Capella's IRB's approval is noted.

## Overview of the Project Study Plan

Provide timeline of project phases inclusive of data collection, analysis, report preparation. Identify key resources to support the implementation of the project and key stakeholders, if any to be involved. Discuss the feasibility of the plan, and any anticipated barriers or challenges to the plan. Two key concepts that apply to a DIT Capstone Project are manageability and feasibility. Provide a weekly timeline of project phases inclusive of data collection, analysis, report preparation, and final approvals. In paragraph format, clearly describe and explain how your project timeline is manageable and feasible. Create a table for your project timeline. Use the exact format of the sample table provided below. Insert the table in this section of your project. Fill in the estimated time column for your proposal. Fill in the actual time column as you complete each phase.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Table #**  *Timeline for Project* |  |
| Phase | Estimated |
| Expert panel review | 1 |
| Test run Interview(s) | 2 |
| IRB approval | 4 |
| Recruitment | 2 |
| Data collection | 5 |
| Data analysis | 4 |
| Final write-up | 4 |
| Final approvals | 3 |
| Total time to  completion | 27 |
| *Note.* Estimated and actual times are provided in  weeks. | |

[1 to 2 pages].

[Note that after conducting the planned study, you will revise this and other sections to state what you did, instead of what you planned to do].

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[5] The project plan contains a mechanism for evaluating the success of the project.

## Summary and Conclusion

Provide a recap of the business technical problem, gap in practice, purpose of the study, and technique to attempt to better understand the problem, gap, or achieve the study’s purpose here. [half page].

[*Note to learners: the project’s* S*ections 1 and 2 will be revised into past tense after you conduct the study and write Section 3*].

**Rubric alignment:** MS2[1] The project seeks to provide insight into a practical concern of a community, organization, or population. MS2[2] The project is connected to practice improvement. MS2[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. MS2[6] Writing reflects academic tone, paragraphing, integration of evidence and proper grammar, usage, and/or mechanics (applies to all sections). MS4[7] **Writing:** Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style (applies to all project sections). MS5a[7] **Writing:** The final manuscript is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (applies to all sections). MS5a[7] **Writing:** The final

manuscript is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics. MS5a[8] **Legal:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5b[1] The document is well- written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (all sections).

# SECTION 3: RESULTS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

## Introduction

Provide a brief introduction to the results section by describing the study in two sentences, and then introducing the results by overviewing this section. [One paragraph].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[7] Writing: Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style (applies to all project sections). MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections).

## Data Collection Results

Reporting the results of data collection occurs through a methodical and logical process. You will provide a detailed, step-by-step account of the results of the data collection process. Refer to **APPENDIX E: Data Collection Results** to recognize each specific element of data collection that you will address in this section based on your chosen technique.

State the actual data collection and recording activities for each instrument. Describe the location, number of participants, and duration of data collection for each data collection instrument introduced in section 2.6. Throughout Section 3, if you create next level headings for organization (i.e., 3.2.1), use the “Heading 2” heading style to incorporate into your TOC. If you create a next level (i.e., 3.2.1.1), do not incorporate into the TOC.

Explain any variations or unusual participant or organizational conditions encountered in data collection versus the plan presented in Section 2.6.2. How did you address these conditions? How did these conditions impact your project?

Detail the major demographic characteristics of the sample. Describe the sample as specifically as possible, with emphasis on characteristics that may have bearing on the interpretation of results/findings of the project.

[1 to 2 pages]

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[4] **Results:** The obtained sample is clearly described and of sufficient size to answer the project question. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5a[4] **Results:** The final manuscript presents the execution and results of an accurate analyses in a logical manner to address the project question or proposed change to practice and/or policy. MS5a[8] **Legal:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5b[2] The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession.

## Data Analysis

Begin by discussing the specific analysis approach and procedures used to addressing the over- arching project question or project intent.

Explain and justify any variations in data analysis versus the plan presented in Section 2.6.3. How did these variations impact your project?

Logically and sequentially address the data analysis for the project question. Present data to support each finding in the form of tables or charts. When appropriate include the presentation of descriptive statistics, quotes from transcripts and pertinent textural descriptions from documents. Summarize the answers to the project question.

Refer to **APPENDIX F: Data Analysis Results** to recognize each specific element of data analysis that you will address in this section based on your chosen technique.

[3 to 5 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[4] **Results:** Data and findings are presented clearly and with sufficient detail to allow the reader to follow the analysis and refer back to the raw data (words of the participants, field notes, graphs, etc.) to support the findings. MS4[4] **Results:** Description of the results demonstrates a clear alignment among the analysis, results, sampling, design, and project question. MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5a[4] **Results:** The final manuscript presents the execution and results of an accurate analyses in a logical manner to address the project question or proposed change to practice and/or policy. MS5a[8] **Legal:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5b[2] The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession.

## Contribution to Theory, the Literature, and the Practitioner Knowledge Base

A key objective of presenting the results of a DIT Capstone Project is for you to state in detail how the project results contribute to the field of study, industry, or area of interest, IT practitioners, the literature, and the applied framework. You must relate the results of your project to the existing body of knowledge.

Detail how the findings confirm, disconfirm, or extend knowledge of the applied framework and findings from scholarly and/or practitioner studies from the literature review.

Connect or dispute the findings compared with the existing literature on effective business practices. Describe how the findings contribute to the gaps in the practitioner knowledge base of your industry, organization, and/or field of study. Ensure the interpretations do not exceed the data, findings, and scope of the project.

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[4] **Results:** Description of the results demonstrates a clear alignment among the analysis, results, sampling, design, and project question. MS4[5] **Conclusions:** The project results are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the applied framework. MS5a[4] **Results:** The final manuscript presents the execution and results of an accurate analyses in a logical manner to address the project question or proposed change to practice and/or policy. MS5a[5] **Conclusions:** The final manuscript discusses conclusions within the context of the literature, theory, framework, or practice presenting clear recommendations for future research, practice, or policy change. MS5b[2] The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession.

## Project Application and Recommendations

Provide a detailed discussion on the applicability of the findings with respect to the professional practice of IT/business. Clearly state how IT leaders or practitioners might apply your findings to improve their practices. Explain how and why the findings are relevant to improved IT/business practices.

State to whom the results relate, and how the results might be disseminated to academic and practitioner communities. Present a clear plan for how you will disseminate your findings, such as submitting articles for publication in scholarly journals and practitioner publications, presenting the findings at an industry conference, or conducting a training session to share your findings with IT/business practitioners.

Drawing upon the specifics of your findings, provide several practical suggestions for the

implementation of your findings, conducting additional studies, or replicating your project in other industries, organizations, or fields of practice. [1 to 2 pages].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[5] **Conclusions:** Relevant limitations and delimitations are clearly identified and discussed. MS4[5] **Conclusions:** Practical implications and recommendations are presented. MS5a[5] **Conclusions:** The final manuscript discusses conclusions within the context of the literature, theory, framework, or practice presenting clear recommendations for future research, practice, or policy change. MS5b[2] The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession.

## Conclusion

You will end Section 3 with a strong conclusion that contains a clear *take-home* message. The conclusion is not simply a brief summary of Section 3, but the final message that contains the overarching results for your project conveyed in succinct, yet convincing language. You will clearly denote how you addressed the problem, fulfilled the purpose, informed the gap in practice, used the applied framework, and answered the project question. Remind the reader of your topic, field of study, or area of interest. Leave your reader with the impression that you know what you accomplished by completing this project. Discuss what you learned about the role of the DIT in developing, implementing, and evaluating the project. Describe how this project has or could influence the knowledge base or practice of the studied industry or field of practice. [1 page].

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[7] **Writing:** Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style (applies to all project sections). MS4[8] **Compliance:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5a[5] **Conclusions:** The final manuscript discusses conclusions within the context of the literature, theory, framework, or practice presenting clear recommendations for future research, practice, or policy change. MS5a[7] **Writing:** The final manuscript is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics. MS5a[8] **Legal:** The sites and participants are de-identified (applies to all sections). MS5b[1] The document is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (all sections). MS5b[2] The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession.MS5b[3] This is an exemplary Capstone and could be considered for sharing externally (all sections). MS5b[4] The Capstone is approved by the Dean (all sections).

**Rubric alignment note:** All of Sections 1-3 (plus all front and end matter) must meet the rubrics for MS4 (Program Committee Member), MS5a (School Reviewer), and MS5b (Dean) to achieve completion of the project.

*Note, for some types of studies a different sequence or order from the above content items may work better and more logically. Check with your mentor and/or school reviewer to find out if they recommend a revision in the order.*

**REFERENCES**

American Psychological Association. (2020). *Publication manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Note: Use APA formatting on your references, except single space with hanging indent, with double- spaces between each reference. Use the Capella APA standard and follow the Capella Document Publication guidelines for exceptions or modifications to APA.

Academic Writer provides samples of reference page entries from a wide variety of different sources. Go to: <https://academicwriter-apa-org.library.capella.edu/>

Select the Learn Center, then Go to Sample References. Scroll until you find the type of source you are using, then format your reference based on the sample.

Strive for at least 60-70 total references.

**Rubric alignment:** MS4[6] **References:** A sampling of the sources are listed in APA style. A sampling of the sources cited within the manuscript is included in the References. Sources in the References are cited in the manuscript. A majority of sources are primary peer-reviewed scholarly articles in the writer's discipline and comply with the expectations of the school. MS5a[6] **References:** A sampling of the references illustrates proper formatting and references are reflective of the current literature of the field.

# APPENDIX A

Appendices should be used sparingly but using all content necessary to ensure your project is understandable and complete. Some examples of content you may include in your appendix are:

The publishing agreement and statement of original work go *after* all appendices.

An instrument used, with permission, and with permission to publish it in your document. An interview, document review, or other protocol or guide.

Any items which the IRB requests be placed in the appendix.

Participant screening and/or consent forms *until* the school review is completed; then delete them for final Dean review.

If you have only one appendix, it has no letter. If you have more than one, you letter them. Tables or figures within the appendix bear the letter of the appendix before the table or figure number. If an appendix has only a table or figure, the title of the appendix takes the place of a figure or table title (and does not get a number).

# APPENDIX B: UNIVERSITY PRO-DOC RUBRICS (MILESTONES 1-5)

## Milestone 1 Rubric.

Requires scoring of MET on each section by the Topic Endorser. (*Applicable sections noted*).

1. **The topic area fits within the scope of the program. (Sections 1.1., 1.2., 1.2.1, 1.3.,**

**1.3.1., 1.3.2., 1.3.3., 1.3.4., 1.3.5., 1.4., 1.4.1., 1.4.2., and 1.5.)**

1. **The problem has an identified theoretical orientation. (Sections 1.2.1., 1.3.3., 1.4.2)**
2. **The topic and problem are supported by the recent literature and relevant evidence. (Sections 1.2.1., 1.3.1., 1.3.3.)**
3. **Questions align to the topic and problem and the project appears to be feasible given current supporting materials reviewed. (Sections 1.3.2., 1.4, 1.4.1., 1.4.2.)**
4. **Writing uses proper paragraph development, transition, academic tone with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics. (All sections)**

## Milestone 2 Rubric

Requires scoring of MET on each section by the School Reviewer. Applicable sections of direct rubric alignment are noted yet recognize that the School Reviewer will review the entirety of Sections 1 and 2.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Criteria** | **MET** |
| **[1] The project seeks to** | The project design is appropriate to the problem and context. |
| **provide insight into a** | The proposed project is situation-based and context specific. |
| **practical concern of a** |
| The project’s proposed plan will address the problem. |
| **community, organization, or**  **population. (Sections 1.3.4.,** |
| The project has direct relevance to the practice. |
| **1.4., 1.4.1., 1.4.2, 2.1., 2.2.,** |  |
| **2.2.1., 2.2.2., 2.3., 2.3.1.,** |  |
| **2.3.2., 2.4., 2.6., 2.6.1.,** |  |
| **2.6.1.1., 2.6.1.2., 2.6.2., 2.6.3.,** |  |
| **2.6.4., 2.6.5., 2.8.)** |  |
| **[2] The project is connected to practice improvement.** | The project will gather the information that will improve practitioners' service delivery. |
| **(Sections 1.3.3., 1.4., 1.4.1.,** |  |
| **1.4.2, 2.1., 2.3., 2.3.1., 2.3.2.,** |  |
| **2.4., 2.5., 2.6., 2.6.1., 2.6.1.1.,** |  |
| **2.6.1.2., 2.6.2., 2.6.3., 2.6.4.,** |  |
| **2.6.5., 2.7., 2.8.)** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **[3] The project has the potential to contribute to the goals of social science. (Sections 2.1., 2.1.1., 2.3.,**  **2.3.1., 2.3.2., 2.4., 2.5., 2.8)** | The project will develop or demonstrate theory in practice. |
| **[4] The project utilizes a participatory framework (community, organization, practitioners, and study organizer contributors). (Sections 2.1.1., 2.3., 2.3.1.,**  **2.3.2., 2.6., 2.6.1., 2.6.1.1.,**  **2.6.1.2., 2.6.2., 2.6.3., 2.6.4.,**  **2.6.5., )** | The project’s design is a collective, self-reflective inquiry to understand and improve practices. |
| **[5] The project plan contains a mechanism for evaluating the success of the project. (Sections 2.6., 2.6.1., 2.6.1.1.,**  **2.6.1.2., 2.6.2., 2.6.3., 2.6.4.,**  **2.6.5., 2.7.)** | The project plan contains an appropriate analysis for evaluating the success of the project. |
| **[6] Writing reflects academic tone, paragraphing, integration of evidence and proper grammar, usage, and/or mechanics. (All sections)** | Writing reflects academic tone and strong paragraphing with appropriate integration of evidence and proper usage of grammar, usage, and/or mechanics. |

## Milestone 3: IRB Approval

## Milestone 4 Rubric.

Requires scoring of MET on each section by the Program Committee Member. Applicable sections of direct rubric alignment are noted yet recognize that the Program Committee Member will review the entire project (Section 1, 2, and 3).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Individual Criteria** | **Program Reviewer Checklist [Met/Not Met]** |
| **Ready for Review** | No indications of academic honesty or research misconduct violations. |
| All required components are included in the submission for review; Correct format of the manuscript. |
| **[1] Introductory Material (Sections 1.1., 1.2., 1.3., 1.3.1.,**  **1.4.1.)** | A cohesive introduction, background, and purpose to the topic is  presented. |
| The need for the project is clearly stated and supported by the recent  literature. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | The significance of the project is clearly stated and supported. |  |
| **[2] Literature Review**  **(Sections 2.1.1., 2.3.,**  **2.3.1., 2.3.2., 2.4.)** | The applied framework is presented in the context of the project. | |
| The relevance of the theories, concepts, practices, or frameworks to the project is clearly discussed and supported by the literature. | |
| The review of the literature is clearly and thoroughly analyzed, critiqued, and synthesized. | |
| **[3] Methodology**  **(Sections 1.3., 1.3.2.,**  **1.4.2., 2.5., 2.6., 2.6.5.)** | The purpose, design, and research or project questions align with one another. | |
| Research or project design is described with specificity and detail. The exact procedures used to recruit, select, and protect participants are clearly described in relevant detail. | |
| All ethical considerations and procedures taken to address them are clearly described, and Capella's IRB's approval is noted. | |
| **[4] Results (Sections**  **3.2., 3.3., 3.4.)** | The obtained sample is clearly described and of sufficient size to answer the project questions. | |
| Data and findings are presented clearly and with sufficient detail to allow the reader to follow the analysis and refer back to the raw data (words of the participants, field notes, graphs, etc.) to support the findings. | |
| Description of the results demonstrates a clear alignment among the analysis, results, sampling, design, and project questions. | |
| **[5] Conclusions**  **(Sections 3.4., 3.5.)** | The project results are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the applied framework. | |
| Relevant limitations and delimitations are clearly identified and discussed. | |
| Practical implications and recommendations are presented. | |
| **[6] References** | A sampling of the sources are listed in APA style. | |
| A sampling of the sources cited within the manuscript is included in the References. Sources in the References are cited in the manuscript. | |
| A majority of sources are primary peer-reviewed scholarly articles in the writer's discipline and comply with the expectations of the school. | |
| **[7] Writing (applies to all sections)** | Writing demonstrates clear logic, flow, structure, and content focus. | |
| Writing demonstrates appropriate paragraph development, transitions, and academic tone for doctoral level scholarship. | |
| Writing is free from persistent or frequent errors in grammar, usage, mechanics, and APA format/style. | |
| **[8] Compliance (applies to all sections)** | The sites and participants are de-identified. | |

## Milestone 5a Rubric.

Requires scoring of MET on each section by the School Reviewer. Applicable sections of direct rubric alignment are noted yet recognize that the School Reviewer will review the entire project (Section 1, 2, and 3).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Individual Criteria** | **School Reviewer Checklist [Met/Not Met]** |
| **Ready for Review** | No indications of academic honesty or research misconduct  violations. |
| All required components are included in the submission for review; Correct format of the manuscript. |
| **[1] Introductory Material (applies to all of Section 1)** | The final manuscript presents a well-articulated rationale, problem statement, and anticipated significance of the project. |
| **[2] Literature Review**  **(Sections 2.3., 2.3.1.,**  **2.3.2., 2.4.)** | The final manuscript presents a thorough, well synthesized, and logical integration of current peer-reviewed literature. |
| **[3] Methodology**  **(Sections 2.5., 2.6.,**  **2.6.1., 2.6.2., 2.6.3.,**  **2.6.4., 2.6.5., 3.2., 3.3.)** | The final manuscript accurately presents the design, recruitment, instruments, data collection and analysis. |
| **[4] Results (Sections**  **3.2., 3.3., 3.4.)** | The final manuscript presents the execution and results of an accurate analyses in a logical manner to address the project questions or proposed change to practice and/or policy. |
| **[5] Conclusions**  **(Sections 3.4., 3.5.**  **3.6.)** | The final manuscript discusses conclusions within the context of the literature, theory, framework, or practice presenting clear recommendations for future research, practice, or policy change. |
| **[6] References** | A sampling of the references illustrates proper formatting and references are reflective of the current literature of the field. |
| **[7] Writing (applies to all sections)** | The final manuscript is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics. |
| **[8] Legal (applies to all sections)** | The sites and participants are de-identified. |

## Milestone 5b Rubric.

Dean Approval

1. **The document is well-written with proper grammar, usage, and mechanics (all sections).**
2. **The results of the study are clearly and logically interpreted and discussed in the context of the literature and wider profession (Sections 3.2., 3.3., 3.4., 3.5., 3.6.)**
3. **This is an exemplary Capstone and could be considered for sharing externally (all sections).**
4. **The Capstone is approved by the Dean (all sections).**

Note that the Capstone project must be in .pdf format to submit to the Dean.

# APPENDIX C: PROPOSED DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUE STEPS

**Qualitative Inquiry**

* + State the proposed data collection and recording activities for each instrument.
  + Explain how you plan to recruit participants.
  + Provide boundaries (inclusion & exclusion) criteria of the participants.
  + Describe the proposed setting in the context of the project.
  + State the proposed location of the interviews (onsite; offsite; Zoom virtual face-to-face, etc.).
  + Denote who will be present for the interviews.
  + State the proposed number of participants.
  + Describe how you plan to confirm the credibility of your data collection instrument.
  + Describe the materials you plan to provide to the participants (informed consent, recording devices, handouts, or others).
  + Detail how you propose to introduce the interview process to the participants.
  + Describe how you plan to share the interview transcripts and project findings with the participants (if at all).
  + State the anticipated length of the interviews.
  + Describe the proposed format and process for the interviews.
  + Detail the demographic characteristics of the proposed sample population with emphasis on characteristics having bearing on the results/findings.
  + Describe the proposed mechanism for collecting demographic information.
  + List proposed interview questions; illustrate how your interview questions map back to your project question.
  + Detail possible follow up questions to probe participants responses.
  + Detail how you propose to close out the interview
  + Justify how the literature will help to inform the creation of the interview questions.
  + Identify concepts of the applied framework that will guide the creation of the interview questions.
  + Explain your plan to deal with variations or unusual participants or organizational conditions encountered in data collection.

**Quantitative Regression**

* + Describe in detail the proposed systematic procedures to carry out all major steps in the data collection for the project.
  + Explain and justify the quantitative regression technique to align with the project question and hypotheses (independent and dependent variables).
  + Explain and rationalize the proposed population, sampling frame, and sample size (i.e., use of sampling software; G\*Power).

 G\*Power free download: [https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-](https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower) [und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower](https://www.psychologie.hhu.de/arbeitsgruppen/allgemeine-psychologie-und-arbeitspsychologie/gpower)

 Test family: F test

 Statistical test: Linear multiple regression: Fixed model, R2 deviation from zero

 Type of power analysis: A priori: Compute required sample size-give alpha, power, and effect size

 Effect size f2: 0.15

 Alpha error probability: 0.05

 Power: 0.95

 Number of predictors: insert the number of independent variables

 Select (click) Calculate

 You will now see the total sample size populated.

# APPENDIX D: PROPOSED DATA ANALYSIS STEPS

**Qualitative Inquiry**

* Describe the proposed procedures to identify relevant information from the data (thematic, theoretical, or inductive).
* Describe the method you plan to use to classify the data from concepts into categories and themes of information regarding the experience or event.
* Discuss the proposed specific analysis approach and procedures to address the overarching project question.
* Explain and justify any anticipated variations in data analysis versus the intended plan.
* Describe your plan to address the data analysis logically and sequentially for the project question.
* Describe your plan to present data to support each finding in the form of tables or charts.
* Describe your plan to present descriptive data, quotes from transcripts, and pertinent textual descriptions.
* Denote that your objective is to answer the project question.

**Quantitative Regression**

* State the purpose statement and the project question and hypotheses (independent and dependent variables)
* Explain your plan to analyze the participant demographics using tables, justifying the sample size using G\*Power, discussing potential sampling outcomes and emergent limitation of the data you propose to collect.
* Describe how you will use descriptive statistics to describe the measure of central tendency (mean, median and mode), range, variance, and standard deviation.
* Explain how you plan to analyze, evaluate, and critique the results of the descriptive statistics using appropriate tables and/or figures for categorical or continuous variables.
* Describe your plan to analyze data using linear multiple regression and your plan to use tables and figures to display the analyzed data.
* Explain your proposed actions to analyze, evaluate, and critique the results of the descriptive statistics; reporting the results in detail using appropriate tables and/or figures.
* Describe the proposed plan to test and assess hypotheses and report the analysis and assumptions of the statistical results and findings in detail using appropriate tables and/or figures.
* Describe how you propose to summarize, evaluate, and justify the key findings, and report out how the findings answer the project question.

# APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION RESULTS

**Qualitative Inquiry**

* + State actual data collection and recording activities for each instrument.
  + How did you recruit your participants?
  + What were the location of the interviews?
  + Who was present for the interviews?
  + What were the number of participants?
  + How did you confirm the credibility of your data collection instrument?
  + What materials were provided to the participants (informed consent, recording devices, handouts, or others)?
  + Detail how you introduced the interview process to the participant?
  + How will the interview transcripts and project findings be shared with the participants (if at all)?
  + What was the length of the interviews?
  + What was the format and process for the interviews?
  + Detail the demographic characteristics of the sample population with emphasis on characteristics having bearing on the results/findings.
  + Describe the mechanism for collecting demographic information.
  + List interview questions; illustrate how your interview questions map back to your project question.
  + Detail follow up probing questions to participants responses.
  + Detail how you closed out the interview.
  + Justify how the literature helped to inform the creation of the interview questions.
  + Identify concepts of the applied framework that guided the creation of the interview questions.
  + Explain/address variations or unusual participants’ or organizational conditions encountered in data collection compared to your previous plan?
  + How did the variations or unusual participants’ or organizational conditions impact your project?

**Quantitative Regression**

* + Describe in detail the systematic procedures used to carry out all major steps in the data collection for the study.
  + Explain and justify the quantitative regression technique to align with the project question and hypotheses (independent and dependent variables).
  + Explain and rationalize the population, sampling frame and sample size (i.e., use of sampling software).
  + Provide boundaries (inclusion & exclusion) criteria of the participants.
  + Describe the setting in the context of the project.
  + Formulate, describe, explain in detail, and justify the data collection process including measurement scales of the instrument(s) and variables (independent and dependent variable(s) - i.e., levels of measurement.
  + Detail information on how instrument(s) were administrated. Who administrated the instrument(s)? Describe the protocol for administrating the instrument(s).
  + Explain and justify the data collection process, how the raw data was collected, techniques for evaluating the data, and identify and fully explain the software provider and version.

# APPENDIX F: DATA ANALYSIS RESULTS

**Qualitative Inquiry**

* + Identify relevant information from the data (thematic, theoretical, or inductive).
  + Describe the method used to classify the data from concepts into categories and solution of information.
  + Discuss the specific analysis approach and procedures in addressing the overarching project question.
  + Explain and justify any variations in data analysis versus the intended plan.
  + Logically and sequentially address the data analysis for the project question.
  + Present data to support each finding in the form of tables or charts.
  + Include the presentation of descriptive data, quotes from transcripts and pertinent textual descriptions.
  + Summarize the answers to the project question.

**Quantitative Regression**

* + State the purpose statement and the project question and hypotheses (independent and dependent variables).
  + Analyze the participant demographics using table, justifying the sample size, sampling outcomes and emergent limitation of the data actually collected.
  + Using descriptive statistics, describe the measure of central tendency (mean, median and mode), range, variance, and standard deviation.
  + Analyze, evaluate, and critique the results of the descriptive statistics; reporting the results in detail using appropriate tables and/or figures for categorical or continuous variables.
  + Analyze and verify data using linear multiple regression and provide tables and/or figures to display the analyzed data.
  + Analyze, evaluate, and critique the results of the descriptive statistics; reporting the results in detail using appropriate tables and/or figures.
  + Test and assess hypotheses and report the analysis and assumptions of the statistical results and findings in detail using appropriate tables and/or figures.
  + Summarize, evaluate, and justify the key findings and report how the findings answer the project question.