1. **How do I start thinking about a capstone?**

You will start thinking about your capstone during your first career planning session with career services. During that consultation you will discuss your career goals and what you would like the next job in your career to be. You will start considering what career support you want to gain from a capstone. This can include:

- Objectively showing your ability to do similar work
- Providing experience at a target employer
- Connecting you with a distinguished employer that will open more doors in your job search
- Test driving a type of job or organization

Give yourself time to start building connections that will ease the later process of actively planning your capstone.

2. **Do I have to find a site on my own?**

Ultimately, you will lead the search for your capstone site with support from Tufts. Career Services will provide host organizations with contact information who are open to being contacted by you about potential projects. You are not limited to this list. Handshake, your online community with employers, gives you the ability to search for other ideas. You may target any capstone host site that meets the academic requirements. Career Services also provides training and resources on how to approach a potential host, language to discover what the host will gain from the capstone, and a process to keep the discussion moving from potential interest to agreement.

3. **Is there someone I can talk to about finding a capstone site?**

Initially you can contact the program director or course director about any questions or concerns you have about finding a site for your capstone experience. We will work with Career Services and the capstone Course Director with additional resources as needed to find each student a capstone site and preceptor.

4. **Will the Immersion Experience help me with my capstone? How?**

The immersion was designed to help you with planning a successful capstone project. During the Immersion Experience Career Services will be on hand to consult with students about potential host sites that will support their career goals. Career Services will lead workshops during the Immersion Experience to guide you through the process. Potential hosts will be invited to the Immersion Experience to give the opportunity to connect directly with host sites. Program faculty and staff will also be available during the immersion weekend to answer questions and provide support in the process. Do not hesitate to reach out to the program at any time with questions you may have.

5. **What are the steps in choosing a site and project? - Website**
This process may vary by student, but here are the recommended steps to follow when choosing a site and project:

- Decide in which area of health informatics or analytics would you like to do your project i.e. a hospital, clinic, public health or company.
- Choose what kind of work would you like to do in this context: planning project, data design project, data collection and/or management project, or data analytics project.
- Identify potential host institutions and preceptors in those institutions.
- Identify a faculty mentor for the project.
- Attend an Immersion Weekend
- Develop a capstone proposal and work plan

6. **Do you have examples of capstone projects for health informatics? Health analytics?**

**Informatics**

- Enabling Electronic Health Record (EHR) data exchanges with the <Local, State, Federal> Immunization registry
- Development of an automated clinical pathways for diabetes case management at a healthcare facility
- Implementing privacy and security policies for cross-state data exchanges for telehealth patients
- Implementing information sharing with healthcare partners via Health Information Exchange (HIE)
- Defining requirements for clinical decision support (CDS) system in pediatric care.
- Supporting information sharing for a state emergency operating center

**Analytics**

- Improving hospital readmission rates for a hospital
- Supporting patient recruitment campaign for a new healthcare facility
- Hospitalization records as a tool for evaluating business operation performance and quality of care
- Understanding hospitalizations patterns due to selected infections caused by opportunistic premise plumbing pathogens (OPPP) and reported drug resistance in the United States older adult population in 1991–2006
- Artificial intelligence projects in healthcare organizations
- Supporting data analytics for emergency preparedness
7. What makes for a good capstone site?

- It has a background and basic understanding of health informatics and/or health analytics?
- An organization or agency that could benefit from an informatics solution or health data analysis may include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acute care hospitals</th>
<th>Governmental agencies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ambulatory clinics</td>
<td>Health departments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ambulatory surgery centers</td>
<td>Health information exchanges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavioral health facilities</td>
<td>Healthcare software companies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Blood centers</td>
<td>HIM service providers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chiropractors</td>
<td>Home health agencies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compliance organizations</td>
<td>Hospice care centers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consulting agencies</td>
<td>Hospital associations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data analysis organizations</td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dental offices</td>
<td>Information technology departments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialysis centers</td>
<td>Insurance agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disease specialty centers</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- Provide on-site or remote work opportunities for 4-8 hours week (minimum)?
- Provide a professional environment and team opportunities for students be engaged in
- Have time for a student
- Be able to facilitate a capstone experience by – summarizing. Looking a problem that needs to be addressed, identify a system that needs improvement, provide data or be able to get data, etc.?
- Not use student ALE time and energy for their own personal gain (i.e. analysis to further own work)
- Will your practicum project
- Be for the benefit of an organization, agency, or program (not an individual)?
- Result in a useful deliverable for the agency?
- Be realistic for a 3-month 140-hour time period?
- Have a real “field” component outside of academics including remote opportunities?
- Have a beginning, middle, and end (projects can be “stand alone” or part of a bigger “parent project”)?

8. I have found a capstone site, now what do I do?

Conceptualize your project with your site preceptor:

- Summarize the problem or what is the question that needs to be answered?
- Overview and scope of the project – High level

Complete the Capstone Project Form and submit to program for approval
9. **I have a full-time job. Can I spread the capstone over two semesters?**

*Capstone Committee*

You will be supervised by an employee of the organization (preceptor) who will meet with you at least once a week. In addition, you should expect to designate time each week to fulfill your capstone requirements, e.g., conducting literature reviews, working with data systems, developing presentations, papers and publications. You should approach the Capstone Experience as you would any other course in the program and manage your time accordingly.

10. **Do I have to spend a minimum number of hours each week at my capstone site?** – the following response was adapted from the admit packet that students sign

You are required to create your schedule with your preceptor’s to ensure completion of capstone hours and responsibilities. We are unable to arrange for capstone schedules that are exclusively during evening/weekend hours. Absences from your responsibilities can disrupt the schedule and ultimately impact your ability to complete requirements on time.

11. **How much time should I expect to spend on the Capstone Practicum course?** – Website

- 140-160 hours

12. **What are the deliverables I am expected to work before, during and after the Capstone Practicum?**

   - **Before:**
     - Proposal
     - Workplan
   - **During:**
     - Deliverable to organization
   - **After:**
     - Project white paper/article
     - Reflection paper
     - Oral presentation

13. **When should I start looking for my capstone project?** – Website

As soon as you feel you have a reasonable understanding of the kind of experience you want from your capstone. For some students this means exploring types of capstone sites (e.g., insurance industry, healthcare system, government health department, pharmaceutical company, etc.). Others may have entered the program with an idea of the kind of project they wanted to pursue. You can ask for assistance from our Career Service Office, faculty with whom you have taken a course or the Capstone Practicum course instructor.

14. **Can I do my project remotely?**
Yes, although you would need to do some additional planning with the Capstone Practicum instructor to ensure that you make full use of the capstone experience.

15. Can I do my Capstone Practicum at my current place of employment?

Yes, but in a different department; purpose of capstone is to experience a new learning environment and use skills/knowledge developed in the program.