For more information, please contact Dr. Cathleen Fleck, Director, Middle East Studies Program, mes@slu.edu

Capstone Project Requirements

Capstone Project Description
St. Louis University students who wish to graduate with a minor in Middle East Studies (MES) are required to complete a Capstone project. The student will choose a research, writing, or creative project that was already prepared in a class that is accepted for credit in the MES minor program. In consultation with a faculty mentor (likely the instructor of the original class), the student will work to develop that project in greater depth. The student will then present the final project at a Capstone event and prepare a narrative summary of their MES experience.

Students on both the SLU St. Louis and Madrid campuses will follow these guidelines.

Credit
The project bears no credit, but is a requirement for graduation with the MES minor.

Schedule
The Capstone project will be conducted in the student's final academic year at Saint Louis University.

- The student should be discussing the project already with his/her professor by October 15 of that academic year.
- The student will let the MES director know of his/her project plans by November 1.
- Students must share a near-final version of the project with their supervisor at least two weeks before the annual Capstone event for comments and suggestions for improvement.
- The final Capstone project will be due in April at the time of the Capstone event. The precise date for the Capstone event will be determined annually by the MES Board.
  - Students graduating in December will still be expected to participate in the capstone event in April. They should therefore begin work on the project beginning in the fall one year prior to their graduation. They will follow the deadlines above, planning to present at the annual Capstone event in April.

The Capstone Project
Students will prepare a ten-page research paper or show the equivalent level of work in a creative research project in a format agreed upon with the faculty supervisor.

Students will present this material at the annual MES Capstone event in April. Students will submit the final paper or materials to the MES director in an electronic version on the date of the Capstone event.

Capstone Project Supervisor
Students will ask the professor of the class in which they first prepared the assignment to be his/her Capstone project supervisor. If the professor agrees to be the supervisor and is available, the student should have at least three significant meetings or exchanges with the supervisor as he/she prepares the Capstone project.
If the student prepared the original project in a class that was not on the same SLU campus, for instance a St. Louis student who was at SLU Madrid or at another program abroad, he/she may ask that distant professor to supervise. If it is possible for that distant professor to supervise via electronic exchanges, the student will also seek out a local advisor from among the faculty on the relevant SLU campus and meet with him/her at least once. If the distant professor is unable to supervise, then the student may see if a faculty member in a related area on that SLU campus can oversee the project as the main supervisor.

The Capstone Event
The Middle East Studies program will host a Capstone event at which all of the students who are preparing a Capstone project are required to come and present. This event will occur in April annually. Currently, the plan is to hold the event in St. Louis, with any Madrid campus student attending via teleconferencing. In the future, the Madrid campus may hold its own event.

At this event, MES students will present their Capstone project for approximately 20 minutes each, in a format decided in agreement with his/her supervisor. Options would be to read a slightly reduced version of the paper (approx. 8 double-spaced pages), to use powerpoint, and/or to speak with no paper. We will invite the faculty and students who are a part of the minor as well as other appropriate students and faculty, along with family and friends of the presenting students.

Capstone Summary
To complete the Capstone project, MES students will also prepare a 2-page narrative to address how their MES coursework and Capstone project have advanced their knowledge of the Middle East. This narrative will be due in an electronic form on the date of the Capstone event to the MES director.