

## YALE-NUS PROGRAMME IN ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

### **YID4101: Environmental Studies Capstone Project AY 2017-2018 (August 2017 – April 2018)**

**Facilitator: Marvin Montefrio (with Brian McAdoo, Michiel Van Bruegel, Jennifer Sheridan, Valentina Zuin, and Michael Maniates)**

Wednesday, 1300 – 1430, CR22

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Consultation hours: Mondays and Thursdays, 10:00 – 11 a.m., and by appointment.



**Y**ID 4101 is a two-headed beast that seeks to facilitate the successful completion of your capstone project. One head: the entire capstone group (10 of you) will meet periodically during our established Wednesday meeting time to review general matters of importance to your project. Another head: You will meet regularly (weekly in the weeks leading up to the successful defense of your project proposal, and two or three times a month for the remainder of the semester) in smaller groups with your primary advisor/first reader to complete assignments, workshop draft material, and collaborate on other activities meant to drive you forward on your work. This module, which carries 10-MC of credit, is a two-semester course open only to fourth-year students in environmental studies.

#### **Learning Objectives**

The primary objective of this module is to provide structure and support for your successful completion of the capstone project. You should leave this course with improved research and writing skills, greater expertise around a topic of your choice that centrally connects to or extends your area of specialization, and a tangible research or applied product that you can proudly share with prospective employers or graduate programs. Although this module is meant to lead to the successful completion of your capstone, the ultimate responsibility for success rests with you, the student. One critical learning outcome of this module, therefore, is your demonstrated capacity to work independently toward the completion of a significant project that is conceptually and theoretically informed, even if it is a creative work.

## Course Assessment Breakdown

Your final capstone grade will be based on the following assessment breakdown:

Quality of your research proposal..... 10%  
Quality of participation in your group seminar.....15%  
Quality of required written submissions at the end of semesters one and two..... 75%  
including oral defense

Capstone advisors will provide feedback on the major work you submit by 12 November 2017 (see below), but no formal grade will be issued at the end of semester one. Instead, all students making satisfactory progress will receive an “IP” grade at the end of semester one. Final grades will be determined and awarded at the end of semester two. However, students will be informed of their proposal grade by the end of semester one.

## Capstone Groups and Second Readers

<b>First Reader/Primary Advisor</b>
<b>Marvin Montefrio</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Alaine Johnson</li><li>○ Kwok Yingchen</li><li>○ Tong Xueyin</li></ul>
<b>Brian McAdoo</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Dominic Choa</li></ul>
<b>Valentina Zuin</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Jeffrey Tong</li></ul>
<b>Michiel Van Bruegel</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Peter Lewis</li></ul>
<b>Jennifer Sheridan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Kimberly Hoong</li></ul>
<b>Michael Maniates</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Andrew Lai</li><li>○ Feroz Khan</li></ul>
<b>Guillem Riambau-Armet</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Tan Weiliang</li></ul>

## Tasks and Deadlines

20 September 2017, Wednesday (5:00 p.m.): Successful submission of your “Capstone Proposal Form” to HoS, Michael Maniates. Please drop off your forms in Michael Maniates’s mailbox at the Cendana Office. The form, available at <http://estudiesresources.courses.yale-nus.edu.sg/>, must be signed by your capstone advisor prior to submission. Approval by your second reader is not required. Your prose must be pointed, clear, and crisp.

23 September 2017, Friday (11:59 p.m.): Successful upload to Canvas of a full and complete “Capstone Research Proposal.” The proposal must include all of the elements described elsewhere in this syllabus. Please refer to successful proposals previously submitted (available on Canvas) to give you an idea of the quality of work we expect. A 10% deduction per 24-hour period of tardiness applies to all late submissions. We expect that you will have an opportunity to discuss your research proposal and workshop a draft of it in your small-group seminar meetings.

Week of 2 October 2017: An oral defense of your proposal with your primary and secondary readers. An oral “defense” is perhaps too stark a description, but you will meet with your readers during this week before break for a searching conversation about the quality of the proposal and the appropriateness and “do-ability” of your research plan. We expect this conversation to take approximately 30-45 minutes.

6 October 2017, Friday (4:00 pm): Successful submission of a scanned copy of the “Capstone Funding Application Form” to the Division of Social Science manager. A scanned copy should be emailed to the Division Manager. The form should follow the guidelines stipulated in this [link](#). You should take note that any travel costs outside of Singapore and substantial travel by taxis will need pre-approval from the Dean of Faculty.

13 October 2017, Friday (11:59 p.m.): Submission of research ethics forms online. Every student is required to submit the Yale-NUS research ethics forms, even if the project does not entail research involving human subjects. The level of complexity depends on how involved human subjects are. The forms need to be reviewed by capstone supervisors and approved by the HoS. It is highly recommended that you work early on your research ethics forms; doing so also helps frame your research proposal (e.g. methods should be designed with ethics in mind). Follow the process in this [link](#).

12 November 2017, Sunday (11:59 p.m.): Major submission of work product (complete and full drafts of your introduction and one chapter, or another body of work as determined by our capstone advisor) plus a detailed outline of work to be completed between mid-November and the end of March 2018. Submit materials to Canvas. Late submissions result in a **one-third grade deduction** (e.g. from an A minus to a B+) **on your overall capstone project grade** per 24 hours of tardiness.

5 March 2018, Monday (11:59 p.m.): Complete draft due via Canvas. We require a full and complete draft of your work, which will be reviewed by your primary capstone supervisor and returned with comments during the following week. Late submissions result in a **one-third grade deduction** (e.g. from B plus to a B) **on your overall capstone project grade** per 24 hours of tardiness.

6 April 2018, Friday (4:00 p.m.): Finished product submitted to Canvas, emailed to the HoS, and emailed to Goh Bros. Submit your final project, conforming to programme submission guidelines detailed in this [link](#). The capstone final report should include the “Student’s Declaration of Personal

Work” form. This is a College deadline, and the College has made no provision for late submissions. If programmes are allowed to levy a grade penalty for tardiness (rather than impose an outright failing grade), we will impose a **one-half grade deduction** (e.g. from B plus to a B minus) **on your overall capstone project grade** per 24 hours of tardiness.

13 April 2018, Friday (11:59 p.m.): Submission of hardcopy of the “Request for Payment” form for capstone claims to the Divisional Manager. You should take note of the guidelines for submitting expense statements in this [link](#).

16-20 April (Week 13) – to be confirmed: Oral defense of research project, and a presentation of your research results to ENVST sophomores and juniors. The oral defense, of perhaps 45 minutes or so, will occur with your first and second reader. The presentation will occur together with all other majors in your cohort and will be open to ENVST sophomores and juniors, and other members of our community. It is expected that most oral defenses will occur in Week 13 of Semester Two.

30 April 2018, Monday (3 p.m.): Public Presentation followed by celebration. You will be encouraged, but not required, to present your work in front of the ENVST community and invited guests.

## Workload

Successful students will devote an average of **10 hours/week** to this module, including time spent preparing for weekly capstone seminar meetings and periodic all-cohort meetings on Wednesdays from 1300 – 1430. Many students may need to devote more than 10 hours/week, especially during critical periods of research and writing. Speak with your capstone supervisor, or with HoS Michael Maniates, if you are spending a great deal more time than 10 hours/week (on average) on this course. Working smarter, not harder, will be central to your success in this module.

## Research Proposal

A successful research proposal will be well organized and clearly written. It will be the product of multiple drafts. All acceptable research proposals will have the following elements:

- A one-paragraph statement of your central question;
- A description of the argument, debate, or conversation within which your capstone research is situated. You are [joining a scholarly conversation](#) with your work. What is that conversation, and what are the key articles, books, essays and other elements of ‘the literature’ that define this scholarly conversation? (You may think of this as a focused literature review.)
- A description/justification of the analytic methods (i.e. case study, historical, qualitative, quantitative, etc.) that will move your capstone project from simple description to description *and* analysis;
- The description of the planned output, if the student endeavours to do a non-academic product (e.g. documentary, performance, visual arts, literary work, etc.);
- A bibliography of all works cited in the proposal;
- An annotated bibliography of **at least ten of the most relevant scholarly sources**, representing a suitable mix (for your project) of research elements such as books, journal articles, conference papers, and grey literature (e.g. government and NGO white papers, technical reports, and working papers). Emphasis should be given on academic publications, in particular books and edited volumes published by university presses and journal articles; and

- A timeline of work, with self-imposed deadlines, for the remainder of the semester.

## **Core Texts/Critical Readings**

There are no required texts for our Wednesday afternoon meetings. Your capstone advisor may require readings as part of your weekly meetings. The environmental-studies research resource website at <http://estudiesresources.courses.yale-nus.edu.sg/> archives useful research materials, and lists several blogs that may be of interest. Contribute to this site by sending additional materials or blog suggestions to Michael Maniates. Also, as noted below, *“They Say/I Say:” The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing* could be useful to many of you.

## **Grading Philosophy**

We view “A” work as truly excellent, “B” work as very good, and “C” work as meeting the basic requirements of the course.

## **Academic Integrity**

This would be an unfortunate moment for you to run afoul of our shared understandings of academic integrity. Please see the Yale-NUS “avoiding plagiarism” website at <http://library.yale-nus.edu.sg/plagiarism/>. All capstone students are required to review the Cornell University Plagiarism Tutorial on this page. Attend to this task at your earliest opportunity and raise inevitable questions about these materials in our capstone seminar. You should also review <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/policies/academic-integrity/>.

Instances of lapses in academic integrity are easily found, including [this embarrassment](#) at the Republican National Convention in the United States. But other, more subtle mistakes, often associated with sloppy paraphrasing, are equally common. Be especially diligent in your notetaking practice (consider using Zotero or another citation management to help you) and work closely with the library staff and your capstone advisor if you have doubts about your ability to write in your own voice. Also consider reading, thoroughly, *“They Say/I Say:” The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, which is recommended by a number of environmental studies professors.

It is difficult to overstate in this document the difficulties that we will all experience if you should violate, either intentionally or inadvertently, our norms of academic integrity. Make every effort to err on the side of full citation of the work of others, and organizing your note-taking and draft-writing work to insure that you are composing prose that revolves around your own voice rather than the voices of others.

## **Health and Wellness Contacts**

Students are encouraged to contact the Yale-NUS Health and Wellness Centre if they are experiencing stress or if they feel they might benefit from private counseling. The wellness centre also offers a wide range of enriching workshops and events. Students may also reach out to the Vice Rector within their residential College. Please refer to this link for more information: <https://studentlife.yale-nus.edu.sg/wellness/>

## Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
<b>Semester 1</b>		
1	16 Aug (Wed)	<p><b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Getting oriented – Montefrio, Van Bruegel, Sheridan, Zuin, and Maniates</p> <p><b>Supervisor Action:</b> Required to attend meeting</p>
	17 Aug (Thurs)	Research ethics briefing session at 6:30 pm, Tan Chin Tuan Lecture Theatre. All capstone students are required to attend.
2	23 Aug (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Literature Search – Maniates
3	30 Aug (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Writing your research proposal – Montefrio
4	6 Sept (Wed)	<b>Optional All-cohort Meeting:</b> Qualitative methods design -- Montefrio
5	13 Sept (Wed)	<b>Optional All-cohort Meeting:</b> Archival analysis design – Montefrio
6	20 Sept (Wed)	<p><b>Optional All-cohort Meeting:</b> Case study design – Zuin</p> <p><b>Student Action:</b> Submit “Capstone Proposal Form” to supervisor</p> <p><b>Supervisor Action:</b> Sign and submit “Capstone Proposal Form” to HoS</p> <p><b>Facilitator Action:</b> Schedule proposal defense and communicate with students and supervisors</p>
	22 Sept (Fri)	<p><b>Student Action:</b> Submit capstone proposal via Canvas by 11:59 pm</p> <p><b>HoS Action:</b> Consolidate, sign and submit capstone proposal forms to registry by 5 pm</p>
	23 Sept – 01 Oct	RECESS BREAK
7	2 – 6 Oct (Mon – Fri)	<b>Oral Defense of Proposal</b>
	6 Oct (Fri)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit “Capstone Funding Application Form” (scanned copies to be emailed to Social Science Division Manager)
8	9 – 13 Oct (Mon – Fri)	<b>Oral Defense of Proposal (cont’d)</b>
	11 Oct (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Writing your Introduction and literature review – Montefrio
	13 Oct (Fri)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit research ethics forms online via <a href="#">myYaleNUS</a>

9	18 Oct (Wed)	<b>Optional All-cohort Meeting:</b> Tips in surviving capstone project – TBD
10	23 - 27 Oct	Individual work
11	30 Oct – 3 Nov	Individual work
12	6 – 10 Nov	Individual work
	12 Nov (Sun)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit major work product via canvas by 11:59 pm
13	15 Nov (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> What’s next? – Montefrio, Van Bruegel, Sheridan, Zuin, and Maniates  <b>Supervisor Action:</b> Required to attend meeting
	13 – 19 Nov	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Review major submission and prepare feedback  <b>Student Action:</b> Fill in End of Semester 1 Capstone Evaluation
Exam Weeks	27 Nov (Mon)	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Provide advisees feedback on major submission
	29 Nov (Wed)	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Finalize research proposal grades and submit “End-Semester 1 Capstone Progress Form” to HoS, Michael Maniates
	1 Dec (Fri)	<b>HoS Action:</b> Consolidate “End-Semester 1 Capstone Progress Forms” and submit to registry by 5 pm.

<b>Semester 2</b>		
1	17 Jan (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Updates and schedule for Sem 2 – Montefrio, Van Bruegel, Sheridan, Zuin, and Maniates  <b>Supervisor Action:</b> Required to attend meeting
2	24 Jan (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Analysis and writing – Montefrio
3	31 Jan (Wed)	<b>Required All-cohort Meeting:</b> Writing your whole capstone project – Montefrio
4	7 Feb (Wed)	Individual work and sharing session/testing your ideas (optional)
5	14 Feb (Wed)	Individual work and sharing session/testing your ideas (optional)
6	21 Feb (Wed)	Individual work and sharing session/testing your ideas (optional)
	24 Feb – 04 Mar	RECESS BREAK
7	5 Mar (Mon)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit complete draft of capstone project via canvas by 11:59 pm

	5 – 9 Mar	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Closely review each complete draft
8	12 - 16 Mar	Individual work <b>Supervisor Action:</b> Provide detailed feedback to student
9	19 – 23 Mar	Individual work
10	26 – 30 Mar	Individual work
11	2 – 6 Apr	Individual work
	6 Apr (Fri)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit final capstone product via canvas and email to HoS and Bros by 4:00 pm <b>Facilitator Action:</b> Finalize and communicate oral defense schedule to students and supervisors
12	9-13 Apr	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Review and assess final product and prepare for oral defense <b>Student Action:</b> Fill in “Capstone End of Year Student Feedback Form” and submit by 13 Apr
	13 Apr (Fri)	<b>Student Action:</b> Submit hardcopy of the “Request for Payment Form” for capstone claims to the Social Science Division Manager by 4 pm
13	16-20 Apr	Final oral defense
Exam Weeks	27 Apr (Fri)	<b>Supervisor and HoS Action:</b> Meet to deliberate final grades and best capstone awardee/s
	30 Apr (Mon)	Final Presentation and celebration
	2 May (Wed)	<b>Supervisor Action:</b> Accomplish and submit “Capstone Final Assessment Forms” to HoS, Michael Maniates.
	4 May (Fri)	<b>HoS Action:</b> Submit “Capstone Final Assessment Form”, “Final Grade Submission Form”, and “Best Capstone Award Nomination Form” to Registry. key in final capstone grades via IMMS.