

CAPSTONE NEWSLETTER

We are off and running with the 2023 Capstone class! The project teams just wrapped up the four-week project initiation phase and are transitioning into the first development phase. This phase will take the teams to spring break in mid-March.

*The mid-term project presentation for the client is the next major date on the calendar. This is in about one month's time, during the week of **March 6th**.*

PROJECT UPDATE

We have 19 projects this year for the students to tackle. I'm excited to bring in seven new sponsors to the program this year. Here's a sampling of the project variety that we have this year:

- The focus of the projects varies:
 - Full stack projects – **9**
 - Data projects – **4**
 - Infrastructure projects – **4**
 - Front end projects – **2**
- Three projects have international mentors.
- Two projects are supporting very small startups.
- Three projects are delivering code to open source projects.
- Twelve projects have mentors in the Fargo region.
- Four projects have mentors based in the Twin Cities.
- React, Ruby on Rails, Azure, SQL Server, PostgreSQL, .NET, graph analytics, Python, PowerApps, Rust, JavaScript, Docker, OpenStack, neural networks, and more. The technology list is long.

INTRODUCING DEPARTMENTS

Meeting or exceeding customer expectations is the top priority in the NDSU Capstone mission. To do this, we re-brand the class, CSCI 445, as 445 Consulting Services. We ask the students to act as consultants to their clients (sponsors). They are also accountable to their manager (instructor).

We are taking the corporate mindset one step further this year and organizing the project teams into departments. The five departments - Ag, IT, Engineering, Startups, and International - align our clients into industry focused sub-groups.

This week will be the first in a series of department presentations. Each class session will involve one or two of the departments. Each team in the department will present information on their project and get peer feedback from the other groups.

Organizing this way makes a large class more manageable, encourages growth in a variety of communication skills, and exposes the students to more than just their project. I'm looking forward to seeing how departments work out.

LOOKING AHEAD

The next few weeks will move quickly as the teams start to get some traction in their projects. The mid-term goal for most teams is a 'steel thread', something that proves they have the skills to work in the targeted technologies from end to end.

Project mentors play a major role in helping the students successfully ramp up. Thank you so much for giving your time to the program!

Please drop me a note at david.froslic@ndsu.edu if you have any questions.

David