

Capstone Scholars Program Performance Blueprint 2010-2011 Academic Year

Capstone Scholars Program Mission: *The Capstone Scholars Program, through partnerships with campus and community constituents, recruits high achieving students to the University and enhances their development both in and out of the classroom, thus preparing them for a life of learning, service, and engagement. The Program supports the mission of the University of South Carolina and is guided by its dedication to learning, commitment to diversity and devotion to the values of the Carolinian Creed.*

Capstone Scholars Program Vision: *The Capstone Scholars Program collaborates with campus and community partners to create a dynamic living and learning environment where students are encouraged to “Dream Big! Impact the Community. Leave a Legacy” through academics, leadership, social, and service programming.*

Capstone Scholars Program: Unit Overview

The Capstone Scholars Program is a two-year educational enrichment program, designed to provide opportunities both in and out of the classroom including study abroad trips, research grants, social activities, leadership opportunities, service learning, and mentoring. Capstone Scholars live by the program motto: **“Dream Big! Impact the Community and Leave a Legacy.”** The pillars of the program are **Academics, Leadership, Social, and Service**. First-year students are invited to the program based on their academic qualifications demonstrated during the undergraduate application process. The Capstone Scholars Program is open to students from all majors.

Originally outlined in the Report of the Strategic Directives and Initiatives Committee in 2002, the Capstone Scholars Program was created through the leadership of University President, Andrew Sorensen, and the Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Academic Support, Dennis Pruitt, in the summer of 2004. The Capstone Scholars Program was developed to provide a unique and engaging learning experience for high-achieving students at the University of South Carolina. Originally envisioned as a community of 300 – 350 students, the program was received with great enthusiasm and welcomed approximately 500 students in its inaugural class in the Fall of 2005. Since its inception, the Capstone Scholars Program, a two-year program, has recruited well over 500 students each Fall semester.

2010-11 Freshman Class

- Approximately 484 Capstone Scholars
- 58% Female / 42% Male
- 40% In-State / 60% Out-of-State
- Scholars come from 29 different states
- Mean SAT: 1313
- Average USC CUM. GPA ending Spring 2011 - 3.61

Capstone Scholars Program is funded through state appropriated funds, a Capstone Scholars student fee, and a separate “D” fund from University Housing used to support all programming efforts.

Capstone Scholars represents a dynamic partnership between academic and student affairs units at the University of South Carolina. Various offices throughout the Division of Student Affairs and Academic Support have partnered with the Capstone Scholars Program: Undergraduate Admissions, the Office of Undergraduate Research, Fellowships and Scholar Programs, University 101, The Study Abroad Office, Orientation and Testing, The Office of Student Involvement and Leadership, Student Engagement, and University Housing. Please visit our website at www.sc.edu/capstonescholars for more information!

For Fall 2010, the Capstone Scholars Program contributed to the overall high quality University of South Carolina freshmen class by recruiting nearly 485 students with excellent GPA and SAT/ACT scores. Capstone Scholars were exposed to numerous university and community partners, excellent faculty, and staff members. With hundreds of Capstone Scholars building their self-esteem and confidence through the completion of Personal Challenges, leaving their legacy within the community with hundreds of hours of completed community service, applying to study abroad and/or engage in undergraduate research, learning together through Capstone Scholars sections of University 101, the Capstone Scholars in the Fall 2010/Spring 2011 academic year lived up to the Capstone Scholars motto of “Dream Big! Impact the Community and Leave a Legacy.”

Capstone Scholars Program: Contextual Statement

Aside from an “outside of the classroom” learning community, Capstone Scholars Program remains an important recruiting tool for the University. Each year roughly 1,600 invitations are offered to incoming freshmen who have been accepted to the University of South Carolina, are eligible for University scholarships, and meet the appropriate high school GPA and SAT/ACT score. For the past five years, the Capstone Scholars Program has recruited high quality students while bolstering the overall quality of the University’s freshmen class. Below are the demographic data for our previous three classes:

<i>2008-09 Freshman Class</i>	<i>2009-10 Freshman Class</i>	<i>2010-11 Freshman Class</i>
❖ <i>Approximately 524 Capstone Scholars</i>	❖ <i>Approximately 498 Capstone Scholars</i>	❖ <i>Approximately 484 Capstone Scholars</i>
❖ <i>57% Female / 43% Male</i>	❖ <i>54% Female / 46% Male</i>	❖ <i>58% Female / 42% Male</i>
❖ <i>47% In-State / 53% Out-of State</i>	❖ <i>46% In-State / 54% Out-of-State</i>	❖ <i>40% In-State / 60% Out-of-State</i>
❖ <i>Scholars come from 27 different states</i>	❖ <i>Scholars come from 24 different states</i>	❖ <i>Scholars come from 29 different states</i>
❖ <i>Mean SAT: 1300</i>	❖ <i>Mean SAT: 1307</i>	❖ <i>Mean SAT: 1313</i>
❖ <i>Mean GPA after freshmen year: 3.60</i>	❖ <i>Mean GPA ending Spring 2011 – 3.60</i>	❖ <i>Mean GPA ending Spring 2011 – 3.61</i>

Beginning with the Fall 2008 class, Capstone Scholars pay a fee of \$100 per semester. This has made a tremendous impact on the ability to offer Capstone Scholars services and opportunities at a high impact level. The ability to hire graduate and undergraduate assistants to work on key initiatives such as the Student United Way student group and the Capstone Scholars “Big Brother/Big Sister” peer mentorship program (2nd year Capstone Scholars mentoring 1st year Capstone Scholars) has been extremely beneficial. Additionally, with increased funding, the Capstone Scholars Program has been able to increase efforts to promote study abroad and undergraduate research. In the Fall 2010/Spring 2011 academic year, the Capstone Scholars Program was able to offer 20 additional \$2,000 travel grants to Capstone Scholars who were not able to receive grants from the Study Abroad Office due to limited funding. Twelve undergraduate research grants of \$2,000 were offered to Capstone Scholars in Fall 2010 and five more grants of \$1,000 in spring 2011 through the new Capstone Scholars Magellan Apprentice Program.

In addition to recruiting high quality freshmen to the University of South Carolina, the other core function is to provide “outside the classroom” opportunities to Capstone Scholars relating to the program’s motto of “Dream Big! Impact the Community and Leave a Legacy”. All programs are identified by the four pillars of the Program: Academics, Leadership, Social, and Service. With increased presence in Capstone House and help of University Housing staff, a wonderful group of University 101 instructors teaching Capstone Scholars sections of University 101, and an increased focus on student feedback, we’ve seen a significant increase in student participation over recent years. With close to half of all 2nd year Capstone Scholars completing the semester requirements and close to 78% of 1st year Capstone Scholars fulfilling all semester requirements in Fall 2010, we saw a tremendous increase in the number of students eligible for the Capstone Scholars Fellow award. This recognition is reserved for Capstone Scholars who not only complete their minimum semester requirements but also go above and beyond the minimum expectation of participation. In Fall 2010, there were 19 sophomores reaching the Capstone Fellows mark with 30 more sophomores within 10 points of becoming a fellow with one semester left in the program. Over 100 other sophomores were within 20 points of becoming a Fellow. At the conclusion of the spring 11 year, 61 sophomore Capstone Scholars were awarded the Capstone Scholars Fellow award. The first year the Fellows award was instituted, only three Capstone Scholars received the award. The following year we had 13 students become Fellows. It is truly remarkable to see the number of students increasing in participation in regards to interacting with faculty at Capstone Conversations and Faculty Dinner Series, studying abroad, engaging in undergraduate research, becoming leaders in student organizations, achieving excellent grades, and serving the community.

Goal # 1

Assist in the recruitment of a high quality Capstone Scholars freshman class to help the University in meeting student enrollment goals.

Link to Division Goal: Contributes to Division Goal #1 and #6 by recruiting high achieving students with a significant geographic diversity and assisting in the recruitment of a high quality Capstone Scholars freshman class in order to help the University meet student enrollment goals.

Also contributes by fostering a diverse and vibrant campus environment where all are welcome, all can excel, and all benefit from engagement in a diverse community of scholars.

Analysis of Goal Achievement

We revised the annual Capstone Scholars brochure and distributed it to almost 1,500 prospective students and families. Of those 1,500, roughly 500 went to Undergraduate Admissions to for use with an additional 200 used by the Visitors Center during campus tours. The rest were used during recruiting events such as Open House during Fall 2010 and Scholars Day in spring 2011 when Capstone Scholars staff and undergraduates met with prospective students and families. In terms of the website, during the heavy recruiting season in September, October and November 2010 we received on average over 4,200 hits per month on our homepage with hundreds of individuals looking at our opportunities, student testimonials, student videos, housing options, and requirements. In March 2011 (busiest month for our recruiting) alone we received over 4,000 hits to our website. In January, February and April 2011 the average hits to our website was 1243. Close to 400 students joined our new Facebook page in Fall 2010 (ability to target students News Feed with updates, videos, pictures and announcements) with 473 total as Spring 2011. Our new Twitter account to reach current and prospective students has 64 followers as of Spring 2011. We presented the Capstone Scholars program at two Open House events and one event targeting South Carolina guidance counselors. Additionally, during the Fall 2010 semester, we have met with over 15 prospective students and families in one-on-one appointments in the Capstone Scholars office. In Spring 2011 we met with over 45 prospective families and continue to schedule one-on-one meetings throughout Summer 2011. In terms of how the class performed academically, at the conclusion of the Fall 2010/Spring 2011 academic year, the cumulative GPA for 1st year Capstone Scholars was 3.61. The cumulative GPA for 2nd year Capstone Scholars was 3.60.

Initiatives

1. Represent Capstone Scholars Program at University recruiting events (Open House, Scholars Day, Junior Preview, etc.) as well as one-on-one recruiting meetings with prospective students and parents
 - a. KPI: Over 15 individual meetings with prospective students and families took place in Fall 2010. Attendance at two Open House events. Spring 2011 – attendance at Scholars Day and Admitted Students Day. We also met with over 45 prospective students and families on a one-on-one basis in our office during the semester.
2. Update printed and electronic recruiting materials (website) as well as Facebook/Twitter accounts

- a. KPI: Twitter and new Facebook page developed. Website revamped to include more student testimonials and videos. Opportunities page was reconstructed in Spring 2011 to allow for better navigation and the ability to promote more programs seeing how the Opportunities page received a heavy amount of traffic. Capstone Scholars brochure updated to reflect new changes and updated student pictures for use in 2011.

Goal # 2

In cooperation with our campus partners, develop meaningful and appropriate academic, leadership, social, and service opportunities that encourage interactions for the Capstone Scholars with faculty, staff, and members of the community outside the classroom leading to student success and satisfaction.

Link to Division Goal: Contributes to Division Goal #1 and #2 by providing a rich and rewarding student-centered learning and working environment, facilitating for all Carolinians the highest levels of intellectual and personal achievement. Also contributes by enhancing the richness of the student experience in and beyond the classroom and provide excellent educational experiences for all constituents.

Analysis of Goal Achievement

In many areas we saw an increase in student participation in Fall 2010. Close to 78% of 1st year Capstone Scholars completed all 5 semester requirements (one Capstone Conversation, one Capstone Cinema, one social event, one community service opportunity, and one personal challenge). The majority of the remaining 1st year students completed all but one or two requirements with only 3% failing to participate in one activity. The fact that these requirements are not tied financially to their scholarship or with penalty of being removed from the program, these numbers show the level of buy-in the 1st year students have with the program. For the Spring 2011 semester, we held the highest number of programs yet while removing the Capstone Cinema requirement. While 64% completed all of their requirements it was only 18% who did not complete any requirements. The remaining 18% still completed most requirements save for one or two.

As for the 2nd year Capstone Scholars, 34% completed all 5 semester requirements in fall 2010 while 19% completed them in Spring 2011. Sophomore participation has always been a struggle, but there is a silver lining in this case. There were 19 2nd year Capstone Scholars that had reached the level of a “Capstone Scholars Fellow” in terms of participation during fall 2010 which is close to double what we had last year total. This is our highest number ever at such an early timeframe. Over 30 more sophomores were within 10 points of becoming a Capstone Scholars Fellow and 101 are halfway to becoming a Capstone Scholars Fellow. At the conclusion of the Spring 2011 semester, 61 2nd year Capstone Scholars became Capstone Scholars fellows. This is a record number in the brief history of the program! This is an

extremely positive number for the program as there has never been such a buy-in from our 2nd year students as this particular class. The interesting aspect of this that it shows while we struggled to maintain involvement across the entire sophomore class, those that did get involved were extremely involved. In order to help improve the participation levels of sophomores, the 2nd floor of South Quad was reserved exclusively for 2nd year Capstone Scholars. Traditionally, they had been scattered throughout South Quad. An office for an Assistant Principal was going to be used as a satellite office; however the other Assistant Principal left the University before the semester began. As a result, the focused effort on sophomores took a negative hit. For the upcoming 11/12 academic year, South Quad as a housing option will expire, and the 2nd floor in Capstone House will be reserved for sophomores to increase participation making Capstone House a true 2-year living learning community. We have also adopted a Peer Mentor program where sophomores mentor freshmen. Already over 45 2nd year Capstone Scholars have signed up for the program at the conclusion of the Spring 2011 semester.

In terms of student satisfaction in fall 2010, approximately 92% of 1st year Capstone Scholars and 90% of 2nd year Capstone Scholars said they would recommend the program to incoming freshmen. At the conclusion of the Spring 2011 semester, 94% of 1st year Capstone Scholars and 92% of 2nd year Capstone Scholars said they would recommend the program to incoming freshmen. We saw gains at the conclusion of the Spring 2011 semester in both freshmen and sophomore satisfaction and their willingness to recommend the program to incoming students. When asking 1st year Capstone Scholars which part of the motto (Dream Big, Impact the Community and Leave a Legacy) the program helped with students to fulfill, 62% said *Dream Big*, 40% said *Impact the Community*, and 33% said *Leave a Legacy*. For 2nd year students, 53% said *Dream Big*, 55% said *Impact the Community*, and 32% said *Leave a Legacy*. When asked which pillar (Academics, Leadership, Social, and Service) the program best prepared them, 1st year students said 70% Social, 24% Academics, 49% Service, and 27% Leadership. Sophomores indicated the program prepared them for these pillars as follows: 52% both Social and Service, 47% Leadership, and 45% Academics. We saw gains in each area from the fall to Spring semester.

In order to increase the leadership development aspect of our program, new to this semester was the Challenge Course for Capstone Scholars which was a partnership with Campus Recreation to build a climbing tower, rope swing, and low elements to further facilitate leadership development within the Capstone Scholars Program. When asking how the course developed areas of skills development, stress management, leadership and team building, over 72% of students said the tower contributed to development in those areas.

As for our Hand Middle School mentoring partnership with Psychology, 63 Capstone Scholars participated in the service experience in fall 2010. Of those 63, 62 completed the minimum requirements requested of them by the CHP. The remaining scholar could not complete because

her student moved to another state unexpectedly. Out of the 63, over 500 hours of services were provided. Out of these hours over 93% of the hours spent were spent engaging in the prescribed curriculum (460~). Out of all mentors Capstone Scholars represented about 90% of the mentors. For the Spring 2011 semester, 25 of those Capstone Scholars continued in the mentoring program providing another 250 hours of mentoring. According to our partners, "It's safe to say that the program is a Capstone Scholars mentoring program, more than anything else." Many of the capstone scholars have reported that they will be returning to mentor next semester, which has made the school very happy.

Initiatives

1. Facilitate academic success and faculty – student – staff interactions beyond the classroom through a variety of programs (Capstone Conversations, Spring Times, Faculty Dinner Series, University 101 reunions, News and Views)
 - a. KPI: For Fall 2010: 5 Capstone Cinemas (+1 from Fall 09), 7 alternative Capstone Cinemas (+2 F09), 12 News and Views, 11 Capstone Conversations (+1 F09), 7 alternative Capstone Conversations (+1 F09). Average attendance at Capstone Conversation for Fall 2010 was 81 (up from 76 last year). Average attendance for freshmen was 63; average for sophomores was 19. For Spring 2011: 5 Spring Times featuring NY Times journalists, 5 evening Capstone Conversations led by students, 20 alternative Capstone Conversations, and 11 News & Views events.
 - b. KPI: At the conclusion of the Fall 2010/Spring 2011 academic year, the cumulative GPA for 1st year Capstone Scholars was 3.61. The cumulative GPA for 2nd year Capstone Scholars was 3.60.
2. Increase student participation and retention with the Capstone Scholars programs
 - a. KPI: If students only due the minimum requirements, point total will be 20 after two years. Must reach 40 to attain Capstone Fellows. For Fall 2010, 19 sophomores are already at Capstone Fellows level with 30 more students within 10 points and 101 more students having 20 points or more. Final number of Capstone Scholars Fellows for the 2010/2011 academic year is 61; the largest group in our brief history (15% of the 2010 Capstone class).
3. Increase leadership development through personal challenge, team building, and mentoring programs (Hand Middle School, sophomore Capstone mentor program, U101 peer leaders)
 - a. KPI: For Fall 2010: 63 students were involved in Hand Middle School mentoring, more than last year. For Spring 2011, 25 of the Capstone Scholars returned to continue the mentoring program.

4. Promote study abroad through Capstone Scholars maymesters and passport travel grants
 - a. KPI: Two Capstone Scholars maymester trips (Ecuador and Jordan) were created, but the Jordan trip was cancelled due to unrest in the region. 20 travel grants were offered through Capstone Scholars funding (up from 12 from last year).

5. Promote undergraduate research through Capstone Scholars Magellan Apprentice Program grants, Magellan, and Mini-grants.
 - a. KPI: For Fall 2010: 7 Capstone Scholars Magellan Apprentice grants (\$2,000) were awarded to Capstone Scholars. Additionally, 8 Capstone Scholars received the Magellan grants in which are good for Spring 2011.
For the Spring 2011 semester, 5 Capstone Scholars received a Magellan Apprentice grant of \$1,000.

6. Strengthen the relationship between the Program's offerings to the four pillars of the program (academics, leadership, social and service).
 - a. KPI: Freshmen who reported the program best prepared them to fulfill each of the four pillars for Fall 2010: 70% Social, 24% Academics, 49% Service, and 27% Leadership; Sophomores - 52% both Social and Service, 47% Leadership, and 45% Academics.
At the conclusion of the spring 2011 semester, freshmen reported as such: 51% Academics, 32% Leadership, 62% Social, and 38% Service. Sophomores reported as such: 55% Academics, 59% Leadership, 68% Social, and 50% Service.

7. Prepare Capstone Scholars to achieve program motto (Dream Big! Impact the Community and Leave a Legacy) during the two years of the program and beyond.
 - a. KPI: Freshmen who reported the program helped them to achieve motto for Fall 2010: 62% *Dream Big*, 40% *Impact the Community*, and 33% *Leave a Legacy*. Sophomores - 53% *Dream Big*, 55% *Impact the Community*, and 32% *Leave a Legacy*.
At the conclusion of the spring 2011 semester, the Freshmen reported as such: 62% *Dream Big*, 49% *Impact the Community*, and 34% *Leave a Legacy*. Sophomores reported as such: 68% *Dream Big*, 64% *Impact the Community*, and 51% *Leave a Legacy*

8. Increase student satisfaction with Capstone Scholars Program, staff, programs, and Capstone Scholars sections of University 101.
 - a. KPI: For Fall 2010 - Satisfaction rating based on Personal Interactions, Visibility, Accessibility, and Helpfulness: Freshmen – 80% satisfied with 13% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Sophomores – 73% satisfied with 21% neither satisfied

nor dissatisfied. 92% of 1st year Capstone Scholars and 90% of 2nd year Capstone Scholars said they would recommend the program to incoming freshmen.

At the conclusion of the spring 2011 semester – Satisfaction rating based on Personal Interactions, Visibility, Accessibility, and Helpfulness: Freshmen – 89% satisfied with 8% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied; Sophomores – 89% satisfied with 12% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 94% of 1st year Capstone Scholars and 92% of 2nd year Capstone Scholars said they would recommend the program to incoming freshmen.

9. Increase service opportunities for Capstone Scholars enabling completion of semester service requirements
 - a. KPI: In Fall 2010, 21 students participated in Service Friday's offered through Capstone Scholars Office. Sixty three participated in Hand Middle School mentoring accounting for over 500 hours of mentoring. Service Saturdays and service completed through student organizations/churches/class were also accepted. 86% of freshmen completed their community service requirement; 46% of sophomores completed their community service requirement. For in the spring 2011, 19 students participated in Service Friday. Twenty five continued the Hand Middle School mentoring program providing an additional 250 hours of mentoring. 64% of freshmen reported completing their community service requirement; 26% of sophomores reported completing their community service requirement. In all, a total of 3,946 hours of service was completed during the Fall 2010 semester and 3875 hours during spring 2011 bringing the total number of service hours by Capstone Scholars to 7,821.