# Capstone Sponsor Guide

We are excited to have you as part of our Capstone. This document outlines the role you will play in supporting the students' learning.

## Sponsor Organization Responsibilities

The project sponsor must:

1. Devise an appropriate project for the student team (in consultation with the course instructor).
2. Designate a single person as Sponsor Liaison. That person will serve as the team's primary contact and should be fully engaged with the project.
3. Pay for any necessary development resources including software, hardware, databases or services.
4. Maintain a professional relationship and working environment with the student team.

## Sponsor Liaison Role

The Sponsor Liaison is the student team's primary contact and collaborator. The Sponsor Liaison must:

1. Attend the sponsor orientation meeting at the beginning of the project.
2. Communicate regularly with the student team.
3. Meet with the student team at least once per week.
4. Update the course instructor if there are any worries, problems, or other irregularities.
5. Inform the course instructor if another person takes over the role. (Ideally, the same person will be the liaison for the entire project.)
6. Complete student evaluation forms at the mid-point and end of the project.

## Working with Students

For students, the Capstone project is part of a course. As a result:

1. The students are not interns nor employees. Their primary objective is to achieve the learning objectives set out by their instructor.
2. Project management is a key learning objective. Students must work as a team. The team is responsible for their own scheduling, division of work, and similar processes. The sponsor's management role should be to guide and advise. Do not split the students into separate subprojects or micromanage their activities.

3. Student teams should "own" their project. Think of the team as if you were hiring an external software development house. Making them part of an internal development team often creates problems.
4. Students should be involved in a variety of development tasks like requirements analysis, software design, UX design, coding, testing, and deployment.
5. Do not expect full-time work from students - most have additional classes, employment, and personal obligations.

## Project Characteristics

When planning a Capstone project, keep in mind:

1. Do not have the team work on proprietary, confidential or mission-critical aspects of your business. Students are required to present their work in public.
2. Students will have basic proficiency in coding (they will have taken introductory courses in Python and Java). Expect that students will need time to learn any other coding languages, frameworks, and tools.
3. Specific deliverables will be negotiated with the student team.
4. Student teams are unlikely to deliver software that is ready for release or for use in a production environment.
5. Consider any student software to be a prototype, demonstration, or proof-of-concept.