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From: Capstone Marketplace Managers

To: Capstone Universities and Interested Parties

Subj: Update on Capstone Marketplace

All:

A new body of 2019-2020 Research Topics has been posted to the Capstone Marketplace web site, www.capstonemarketplace.org

These topics are available for awards to any U.S. university, with no restrictions on student participation. The award process is unchanged from last year--please indicate your intentions by submission of an "Expression Of Interest" (EOI) form, available on the website. We will respond to all valid EOI with a Request For Proposal, until the Research Topic list is fully subscribed.

An overview of other recent changes for the Capstone Marketplace, and details on activities for the upcoming Academic Year are as follows:

1. Continuation of Capstones. A number of Capstone projects worked in 2018-2019 will be developed for an additional year. Schools who performed projects last year will be identified individually by Marketplace managers and government customers for continuations.

2. Less Contract Paperwork. Stevens Institute's contract terms and conditions with Capstone universities have been significantly simplified. Business offices will receive a much shorter contract document for Capstone awards, to speed up approval processes.

3. Overhead Policy. SERC expects Capstone funds will be applied to student needs, with minimum overhead "taxes", and that universities will provide faculty and support labor, facilities, equipment, and materials as collaborative contributions to Capstone Projects. See guidance on the web regarding funding in "Proposal Preparation Instructions" under the Resources tab. Capstones are designed to enrich undergraduate engineers who are learning the art of development work, and are not typical research contracts. Low overhead rates will be a factor in award selections.

4. Invoicing and Deliverables. All Capstone coordinators and faculty advisors, **and student teams** will be expected to be familiar with SERC Capstone contracts, including Statements Of Work. One of the goals of the Marketplace is to allow students to experience basic business operations--the relationship of deliverables to requirements, schedules, invoicing, and payments. Satisfaction of required deliverables must accompany invoices to the Capstone Marketplace for processing.

5. Quad Charts. As part of the Statements of Work, "Quad Charts" are to be created by student teams, for briefings and presentations on their projects. Templates for Quad Charts will be available on the Marketplace web site for download.

6. Inclusion of Graduate Students. SERC has received approval from government sponsors to include graduate students on Capstone teams. Several universities teams from last year included graduate students, with good results. Graduate students can provide mentoring, advanced analytics and modeling capabilities to the Capstone teams and receive business experience helping to manage

research and development activities. SERC has established guidelines for graduate students on Capstone teams summarized below:

- A. Capstone Team members must be predominately undergraduate students.
- B. Graduate students on the Capstone teams must be receiving academic credit for their team participation.
- C. Graduate students are expected to add additional capability to the team in systems engineering, analytics, modeling and simulation, business operations, program management, or other disciplines not typical of undergraduate curriculums.
- D. Graduate students may not charge direct labor hours to SERC Capstone contracts.

Additional information on graduate students in Capstones will be available in the “Resources” section of the Capstone Marketplace website.

7. Transitions. Planning is now underway to select the most promising Capstone projects at the end of the academic year, for transitions out of the Capstone Marketplace to funded research under respective government program offices. The most attractive Capstone projects will be competitively selected by government sponsors. More information regarding transition processes, funding levels, and awards will be forthcoming.

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