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From: Capstone Marketplace Managers

To: Capstone Universities and Interested Parties

Subj: Update on Capstone Marketplace

All:

New 2020-2021 Research Topics have 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..

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 Past Year Capstones. At the moment, we do not have continuing Capstone projects from last year. This may change if government sponsors decide on continuation. Schools who did projects last year and are selected for continuation will be identified individually by Marketplace managers and government sponsors.

2. COVID 19 Procedures. All universities proposing on Capstone Research Topics for Fall 2020 must describe health and safety requirements and their effects on Capstone student teams and design activities.

3. Reduced Contract Paperwork--Increased Responsibilities. Stevens Institute's contract paperwork for Capstone projects has been significantly simplified. Business offices enjoy a streamlined process to complete a Capstone contract. However, the character of SERC's fixed price contracts shares performance responsibilities between university business offices, faculty, and students. **Faculty Advisors and students must become familiar with contract schedules, finances, deliverables, final presentations, reports, and other basic contract requirements.**

4. Overhead Policy. SERC expects Capstone funds will be applied to student project needs, with minimum taxes, and that universities will provide faculty and support labor, facilities, equipment, and materials as collaborative contributions to Capstone Projects. Capstones are designed as both beneficial to government sponsors and as enrichment for undergraduate engineers. Low overhead rates will be a factor in award selections.

5. Invoicing and Deliverables. A goal of the Marketplace is to allow students to experience basic business operations--the relationship of deliverables to requirements, schedules, invoicing, and payments. Satisfactory contract deliverables must accompany invoices to the Capstone Marketplace.

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

7. 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.

8. Transitions. Plans are in work to select Capstone projects at the end of the academic year, for possible transitions to funded research under respective government program offices. More information regarding transition processes, funding levels, and awards will be forthcoming.

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