**Capstone Projects FAQs**

*Professor Scharbatke-Church does advise a couple capstone projects each year. Please read on in this discussion to learn more.*

**Supervising  
Professor Scharbatke-Church supervises capstones which align to her ongoing research or practice interests.  If you would like to work with Prof S-C on your capstone, please read her**[**biographyLinks to an external site.**](http://fletcher.tufts.edu/Fletcher_Directory/Directory/Faculty%20Profile?personkey=0D5B06AA-A9A8-45C1-B552-6064DCB141DB)**to see if your interests are similar.  If so, please sign up for office hours to discuss your ideas in detail.**

**Research Questions  
*Also, PSC has several research questions which could be used as a starting point for a capstone project.  Some of her current ideas are listed below and as more come up, they will be listed here.***

***What evidence exists that good quality theory of change program design improves effectiveness?***

***The role of assumptions in program design.  This would entail a literature review around assumptions in design from a wide range of fields, not limited to development and peacebuilding.  It would also seek to prescribe some tools to make better use of assumptions.***

***Collective Action: how have these ideas been effectively operationalized in international development programming?***

***Bias in peacebuilding evaluations:  this capstone would look at bias in evaluations to understand if it exists, in what form, what are the consequences and what can be done to mitigate.***

***What empirical evidence (study/research/statistics) exists that M&E has contributed value to improving development projects or other interventions?  Is there any evidence base demonstrating M&E to be worthwhile?***

***Aid effectiveness: What difference is peacebuilding making?  What do we know about how effective peacebuilding is or can be?***

***Social norms change and anti-corruption:  What is known about changing social norms that drive corruption?***

***Can retrospective baselines be used in peacebuilding contexts?***

***What does evaluation need from monitoring? This would explore the oft forgotten link between monitoring and evaluation. It would seek to identify how monitoring plans and reports can help or hinder a quality evaluation and provide recommendations for those developing monitoring plans.***

***Evidence - what is it? This would explore the issue of what constitutes evidence for whom, when and why. This thesis could explore the notion of evidence for both monitoring and evaluation or just one of the processes.***

***How do we make international nonprofits care about data? What does the current literature say about the use of data in nonprofits? Why is this the case and what can be done to increase the use of data in decision making?***

***What can we learn about how to create change from other disciplines? This capstone will identify disciplines outside of international development and peacebuilding (e.g. sociology, psychology, criminology, etc.) and review the research in that field on what catalyzes change. The capstone would then filter these lessons to determine if, when and how they are applicable to development and/or peacebuilding.***

***What has worked, or not, on creating the norm of legal obedience in a country?***

***What analytic tools does the gender community have that might be useful in fighting corruption?***

***How social justice evaluation approaches make a difference for ‘the vulnerable’?  Theory vs practice.***