

## On Capstones: Tabitha Akins, MAPW Alumna

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# Tabitha Akins

**My graduation year is :** Spring 2017

**My MAPW concentration and support area are:** Applied; Composition and Rhetoric

**My capstone project:** My capstone project was titled [Creating a Web Presence for a Small Business Using a Holistic Content Strategy Approach](#). This project used a content strategy process to revise a small business website, in order to better meet the content needs of the business and its customers. It involved several activities, including, but not limited to, conducting a content inventory and multiple content audits, creating several reports and presentations, and learning how to work with the client's chosen content management system to rebuild the client's website.

**My capstone committee is:** Dr. Sergio Figueiredo and Dr. Todd Harper

**On capstone planning:** I first spoke with Dr. Figueiredo and Dr. Harper about the general idea for the project and asked their agreement to be on my committee. Once I received their approval, I consulted Terri Brennen about the overall capstone process, the proposal requirements, and important timeline concerns. From this meeting, I spent several months drafting my proposal, emailing my committee members about advice, and working out the schedule for the project's deliverables.

**On capstone research:** The research process was one of the most enjoyable parts of the capstone for me. I started with a list of books and resources that I had previously

compiled the semester before my capstone was to begin. In this way, the research process was a bit different from previous projects, since I was not starting from scratch. At the time of my proposal creation, I already had a solid list of about 25 sources from which to start. After reading those initial materials, I combed through their bibliography sections to find any other relevant materials. In the end, I spent about four months reading and expanding my content strategy knowledge base, until I felt that I was appropriately saturated in the conversations and theories of the field.

**My favorite part of creating my capstone was:** Figuring out what my client's and her customer's content needs were. Inventories and audits can be a bit tedious; however, the information that comes from them is invaluable. It was thrilling to find which content areas needed the most work and which were already working. Communicating those results to the client and my committee was also an enjoyable experience.

**For those who are starting to think about capstone:** My best advice would be to start talking about your capstone ideas with potential committee members and MAPW faculty as soon as you possibly can. My early conversations with Terri Brennen, Dr. Figueiredo, and Dr. Harper were invaluable. I would also recommend reviewing previous student's capstones. Reading through similar capstones helped me to orient myself to the project and feel less like I was wandering through unknown territory.