

NORTH GEM SENIOR PROJECT

RATIONALE

You will complete a Senior Project as a requirement for graduation as a way to exhibit the knowledge and maturity you have acquired while attending North Gem School District. The Senior Project must be a learning stretch, meaning the topic is not something you have already experienced, but should be an area of interest or possible career path. You will need to turn in a Letter of Intent (or a proposal) for your Senior Project to your Senior Class Advisor for approval by the last day of August, during your senior year. You will also be required to have a mentor for guidance, and meet with and document at least 3 contacts with that mentor. The Senior Projects will be assessed by following grading Rubrics created for each section of the Project, and all sections must be passed in order to graduate. (Documentation forms and rubrics can be found in the Appendix section of this document.) *You will be responsible for completing and keeping track of all components of the Senior Project, so make sure you have a 3-ring binder, that you can put documents in as they are completed and keep your binder in a safe location.* The Senior Project consists of four parts:

- 1) **Research and/or Reflection Paper** – Minimum 3 page – maximum 5 page paper using MLA format following the MLA Formatting and Style Guide as outlined on the Purdue University website (owl.purdue.edu).
- 2) **Project/Product** – Created by you as an extension of the research paper. It can be oriented around a performance of a skill, the development of some physical product, or the study of a profession. It should demonstrate the application of acquired knowledge from the research, and show evidence of creativity and attention to detail in its design. The product should be the equivalent of at least 20 hours of work (not including work on the research paper, portfolio, or presentation) and should be started at the beginning of the school year (some projects may be started in the summer with the Senior Project Coordinator's approval).
- 3) **Portfolio** – Collection of documents to demonstrate what has been accomplished including: Letter of Intent, Journal logs, Mentor forms, Sample works (rough draft, photographs, videos, sketches, etc...), final Research Paper, and Presentation (slide show, video, note cards, etc...)
- 4) **Oral Presentation** – 8-10 minute explanation of the purpose, content, and experience of the Senior Project in front of an evaluation panel.

PROJECT PHASES

1) **Selection of the Topic** – The topic should be a stretch or risk for you. You may pick something you want to begin a career in, but it is not required. You may choose what interests you such as a hobby, but stay away from a topic you know all about. The topic should be project friendly, meaning it should easily lend itself to a product. For example, time travel is interesting but would not lend itself to a project; while woodworking lends itself to multiple projects.

2) **Letter of Intent** - This is the contract declaring your commitment to the project. The information to cover is as follows:

- Paragraph 1 - Should describe the general topic and the project you want to create (what it is, who is involved, potential costs, timeframe); explain why you chose the topic and what background knowledge you have on the topic (how it will be a learning challenge).
- Paragraph 2 - Address the specific research you hope to use; include questions you want answered.
- Paragraph 3 - Describe how the research and/or reflection paper relates to the project.
- Paragraph 4 - Explain plagiarism and tell why it is important to avoid copying other people's work. Also tell the repercussions of such an act including understanding that if you plagiarize on the senior project, you will fail.
 - You should follow these basic letter writing rules
 - 1. Block style
 - 2. The entire letter is typed at the left margin (one inch)
 - 3. Do not indent at the beginning of each paragraph
 - 4. The body of the letter should be single spaced, with double spaces between paragraphs.

Letter of intent needs to be submitted to your Senior Class Advisor for approval no later than the last week of August of your senior year. Once the Senior Class Advisor has approved your proposed project, you should place it in your portfolio since it is a required component of the portfolio.

3) **Research and/or Reflection Paper** – The research and/or reflection paper provides the knowledge base for the Senior Project. The format for this paper will follow the MLA Formatting and Style Guide as outlined on the Purdue University website (owl.purdue.edu). The first draft of the research and/or reflection paper will need to be turned into the English teacher by the end of October and the Final Draft submitted by the end of the first semester. Both drafts will be placed in the Senior Project Portfolio.

- **Length** – 3 – 5 pages
- **Format** – MLA format, 12 point, Times New Roman font, double spaced, 1 inch margins.
- **Works Cited** – Alphabetical listing of sources you cite in the paper to prove, support, or disprove your thesis statement. You are required to use a minimum of 3 sources.
- **Parenthetical Documentation** – Any fact you use to back up the central point of your paper must be documented, whether the fact is directly quoted or in your own words. Paraphrasing does not mean changing every third word of the original source. If you do not document a fact, you are guilty of plagiarism. If you use an author's exact words, but do not give credit and/or do not place the exact words in quotation marks, you have committed plagiarism.
- **Edit** - Be prepared to re-write your paper at least a couple times before the Final Draft is complete.

4) **Identify Mentor** – A subject specialist (not a family member) who will provide guidance, suggestions, and possibly sources. You should meet and document at least 3 contacts with the mentor.

5) **Project/Product Component** – The physical product gives you a chance to explore the subject in greater depth than possible during the normal course of the school year. It can be oriented around the performance of a skill, the development of some physical product, or the study of a profession. Whatever the product, you will be required to illustrate the activity in some way.

Guidelines

- Must be student generated; it is a showcase of your skills, not the mentor or parents'.
- Must show evidence of application of the research paper.
- Must show evidence of an academic stretch/risk.

- Must be approved by the senior class advisor.
- There will be no pairing or sharing of projects or products.
- Should not require large expenditures.
- In the event that the project/product involves participants or an audience, there should be no costs to the participants or audience required by the student.
- Students should not profit monetarily from their Senior Project.
- Can be community service oriented.
- Can be booklets/pamphlets.

6) Portfolio Component – The Portfolio is a collection of documents that demonstrate the project. These need to be compiled and placed into sheet protectors in a 1-inch, 3-ring binder. Throughout the process, you should keep a journal of contacts, work time, and ideas to include in the portfolio. You should document all stages until completion to ensure a dynamic portfolio. Please organize your portfolio with the following sections and have a tab labeling each section in the portfolio:

Guidelines/Components

- Letter of Intent
- Log/Journal – keeping a journal will help record important questions, ideas, and discoveries as you develop your project. Your journal should be freely written in your own voice whenever you think or do something involving your project. These writings should include plans, ideas, questions, conversations, and notes you encounter along the way. Each entry should be dated.
- Mentor Forms: Information Form, Signature Form, and Contact Log.
- Sample work (rough draft, sketches, photographs, videos)
- Final Paper
- Final Product (document evidence, photo evidence, etc.)
- Final Presentation (outline of the different parts of the presentation—a print out of your slide show slides can work for this component)

The portfolio needs to be completed and turned into the class advisor the week prior to your projects presentation.

7) Project Presentation –Presentations will be given in front of a panel of 3-6 evaluators that have been selected by the administration. The specific date will be determined during the school year, but should take place during the month of April. You will be given a 30-minute time slot on the day of your presentation which will be for the setting up and taking

down of displays and equipment, your 8 to 10-minute presentation, and a 4 to 5-minute question and answer period.

Guidelines/Presentation Must Haves

- Presentation speech between 8 to 10 minutes (the Q & A portion of the presentation will not count toward the 8 to 10 minutes.)
- Introduction should explain why you selected the topic and research.
- The body should demonstrate how the project is an extension of the research. Make sure to show and explain the project.
- Describe the role the mentor played during the course of the project.
- Include visual aids and incorporate technology.
- In conclusion, explain how the project affected and influenced your personal development, intended area of study, or employment.
- When your presentation is over, ask if the judges have any questions for you and be prepared to give honest, thoughtful, and informative answers. Evaluators will ask questions about the content of your presentation, your project, your work journal, and your personal reactions to your project, etc.
- Your dress and appearance will be a part of the evaluation, so dress professionally—like you would for a job interview.

Organizing the Presentation

I. Plan an introduction in which you:

- a. Introduce yourself
- b. Explain why you chose the topic
- c. State the purpose of your project/product
- d. Attract attention

II. Plan the presentation to last no more than 10 minutes. You will also be questioned on your work. To show what you have learned, you may wish to include:

- a. A demonstration
- b. A reading
- c. A visual aid (pictures and video)
- d. Interactions with your mentor

- e. Discussion about your research

- f. Brainstorm possible questions a viewer may have and answer them before they are asked

III. Plan a conclusion that will:

- a. Summarize your learning

- b. Reflect on your personal growth

- c. Give the audience something to think about

IV. When planning your delivery, be sure to:

- a. PRACTICE!

- b. Put an outline of your presentation on 3x5 note cards, but do not use note cards for your Introduction or Conclusion.

EVALUATION

The different components of the project will be evaluated by the Senior Class Advisors, teachers, and a panel approved by the administrator. Failure to pass any of the four parts will result in that component being improved until passing.

APPENDIX

The following items are included in the appendix:

- Project Journal Form (Print as needed and place completed logs in the portfolio.)
- Mentor Forms
- Portfolio Rubric
- Paper Rubric
- Presentation Rubric
- Senior Project Component Due Dates

Project Journal

Date: _____

Approximate amount of time spent on project for the day: _____

Today I worked on my project by:

Still to do (plans, questions, ideas, etc.):

Date: _____

Approximate amount of time spent on project for the day: _____

Today I worked on my project by:

Still to do (plans, questions, ideas, etc.):

Date: _____

Approximate amount of time spent on project for the day: _____

Today I worked on my project by:

Still to do (plans, questions, ideas, etc.):

Mentor Information Form

The mentor for the Senior Project must be an adult and have extensive experience in the same area as the project's focus. The following is a series of questions that the student should be able to answer concerning the choice of mentor. It is a way to determine if the mentor is an appropriate selection for the student's work.

The following are questions to discuss with your mentor. You (the student) should write the answers. Once this form is complete, submit it and the Signature Form to your Senior Class Advisor for approval

1. What, if any, professional certificate, degree, or license do you hold or training you have completed that is related to this student's Senior Project?

2. What kind of work or experience led you to your present position or expertise?

3. Do you know of any extended periods of time you will be unavailable to meet with me?

4. Do you have a preference regarding how or when I contact you?

Mentor Signature Form

Mentor:

I understand that my position is primarily one of advising and giving technical assistance when needed and appropriate. I understand that it is not my responsibility to complete the project or to continually monitor _____ to see that the project is completed. When requested, I will send a written evaluation of _____'s work.

Based on my experience and expertise, I approve of the Project Proposal. I am willing to serve as _____'s mentor and understand that I will be expected to complete a final evaluation.

Mentor signature

Date

Mentor Name (please print)

Parent/Guardian:

As the parent/guardian of _____, I am aware he/she is engaged in completing the Senior Project at North Gem High School. I approve of the project proposed and the choice of mentor.

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)

Mentor Contact Log

1st Contact with Mentor *(Give a brief summary of the meeting including any questions you had answered, advice you were given, or plans that were made.)*

2nd Contact with Mentor *(Give a brief summary of the meeting including any questions you had answered, advice you were given, or plans that were made.)*

3rd Contact with Mentor *(Give a brief summary of the meeting including any questions you had answered, advice you were given, or plans that were made.)*

PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

**To be completed by the class advisors on or before the deadline.*

HARD COPY DOCUMENTATION <i>Required Elements:</i>		1 = missing 4 or more elements 2 = missing 2-3 elements 3 = missing 0-1 elements	1	2	3
	Letter of Intent				
	Journal				
	Mentor Forms				
	Sample Work (<i>see examples below</i>)				
	Final Paper				
	Final Product Picture Documentation				
	Presentation Outline/Slide Show				
SAMPLE WORK 1 = no sample work present 2 = research paper rough draft, corrections, and before & after pictures 3 = rough draft, corrections, before & after pictures, and ‘in action video’			1	2	3
JOURNAL 1 = no journal present or less than 5 total entries 2 = dated entries between 5- 10 3 = dated entries over 10			1	2	3
HARD COPY/PRESENTATION 1 = stapled documents with no 3-ring binder 2 = documents in a 3-ring binder, but no protective sheet and/or section tabs 3 = 3-ring binder with documents organized in protective sheets with section tabs			1	2	3

PORTFOLIO TOTAL _____

**If score is under 8, the student must redo the portfolio.*

PAPER RUBRIC

**To be completed by the English 12 teacher.*

	DISTINGUISHED 4 Points	PROFICIENT 3 Points	DEVELOPING 2 Points	INADEQUATE 1 Point
UNDERSTANDING	Demonstrates a complete and thorough understanding of the subject under investigation	Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the subject under investigation	Demonstrates some understanding of the subject under investigation	Demonstrates little or no understanding of the subject under investigation
TOPIC	Clearly focuses on a compelling research topic that answers a question or solves a problem	Focuses on a research topic that answers a question or solves a problem	Research topic that may not answer a question or solve a problem	Unclear research topic
TOPIC AND EVIDENCE	Explains the relationship between the topic and the examples and/or facts, demonstrating a synthesis of multiple sources on the subject	Identifies the relationship between the topic and the examples and/or facts, indicating a synthesis of multiple sources on the subject	Attempts to connect the topic and the examples and/or facts, trying to synthesize sources on the subject	Does not connect the topic and the examples and/or facts, demonstrates no synthesis of sources on the subject
EVIDENCE	Significant and relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and/or examples that thoroughly develop and explain the topic	Relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, and/or examples that thoroughly develop and explain the topic	Facts, definitions, details, quotations, and/or examples that attempt to develop and explain the topic	Limited, if any, facts, definitions, details, quotations, and/or examples related to the topic
STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION	Structure and organization crafted to support the topic, with effective formatting, graphics, and/or multimedia that enhance comprehension	Structure and organization that is aligned with the topic, with formatting, graphics, and/or multimedia that aid comprehension	Attempts a structure and organization to support the topic, with some formatting, graphics, and/or multimedia	Contains limited, if any, structure or organization, with little, if any formatting, graphics, and/or multimedia
DICTION AND SYNTAX	Strategically uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text	Uses words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text	Contains limited words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text	May or may not use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text
CONCLUSION	Engaging conclusion provides insight to the implications, significance, and future relevance of the topic	Conclusion provides the implications, significance, and future relevance of the topic	Conclusion ties to and supports the information/explanation	Conclusion, if any, merely restates the development
AUDIENCE	Consistently addresses the audience's knowledge level and concerns about the topic, and addresses their specific needs	Considers the audience's knowledge level and concerns about the topic, and addresses their specific needs	Inconsistent awareness of the audience's knowledge level and concerns, but attempts to address some of their needs	Lacks an awareness of the audience's knowledge level and concerns
TONE	Presents an engaging, formal, and objective tone, and uses sophisticated, topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic	Presents a formal, objective tone, and uses relevant, topic-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic	Presents a formal tone with vocabulary that attempts to manage the complexity of the topic	Limited, if any, awareness of formal tone and topic-specific vocabulary
ENGLISH CONVENTIONS	Intentionally uses standard English conventions of usage and mechanics, while specifically attending to the norms of the discipline (MLA, APA, etc.), 12 point, Times New Roman, double spaced	Uses standard English conventions of usage and mechanics, while attending to the norms of the discipline (MLA, APA, etc.), 12 point, Times New Roman, double spaced	Some accuracy in standard English conventions of usage and mechanics, while attending to the norms of the discipline (MLA, APA, etc.), 12 point, Times New Roman, double spaced	Limited awareness and inaccuracy in standard English conventions of usage and mechanics

Score ___/40

Awesome job on this:

Work on improving this:

PAPER TOTAL _____

**If score is under 70%, the student must redo the paper.*

PRESENTATION RUBRIC

**To be completed by the Judging Panel during Senior Project Presentations.*

INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION <i>Required Components</i> <table border="1"> <tr><td></td><td>Personal introduction</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Reason for choosing the topic</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Purpose of the product/project clearly stated or implied</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Describes the mentor's role</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Summarizes</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td>Reflects personal growth or learning</td></tr> </table> Comments:			Personal introduction		Reason for choosing the topic		Purpose of the product/project clearly stated or implied		Describes the mentor's role		Summarizes		Reflects personal growth or learning	1 = missing 4 or more elements 2 = missing 1-3 elements 3 = missing 0 elements	1	2	3
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PRESENTATION TOTAL _____

**If the average score is under 8, the student must redo the presentation.*

SENIOR PROJECT COMPONENT DUE DATES

Selection of the Topic: You should have a good idea of what you are wanting to do for your Senior Project by the end of your junior year.

Letter of Intent: Turn into your Senior Class Advisor before the **last day of August** of your senior year of high school.

Research and/or Reflection Paper: The rough draft or first draft of your paper should be submitted to the English teacher by the **end of October**, and the Final Paper is to be submitted to the English 12 teacher by the **end of the first semester** of your senior year of high school.

Mentor Information Form and Mentor Signature Form: Turn into your Senior Class Advisor by the **end of the first quarter** of your senior year of high school.

Project/Product: It is up to you, the student, to organize, schedule, and complete your project on your own time. Just remember that your project/product, your project journal, and your mentor contact log all need to be completed before your portfolio due date.

Portfolio: Turn into the Senior Class Advisor or the School Counselor the week before your scheduled presentation time. Since these dates are not set dates and have to be scheduled around school events each year, a good rough estimate would be to aim to have your portfolio completed by the middle of **March** of your senior year of high school.

Project Presentation: Your presentation is another component that has to be scheduled around school events. Toward the beginning of the second semester of your senior year, the School Counselor will determine when and where the Senior Project Presentations will be held and a sign-up sheet will be passed around for seniors to sign up for a 30-minute time slot. Do not put off preparing your presentation speech to the last minute because an outline of the speech needs to be included in your portfolio, which is due the week before your presentation. You can roughly plan on your presentation being in the first part of the month of **April** of your senior year of high school.