

*Potter Valley High School*

**THE SENIOR PROJECT  
2023-2024  
STUDENT MANUAL**



Revised 07/2023  
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## THE SENIOR PROJECT, 2023-2024—OVERVIEW



### The Basics

The Senior Project is a graduation requirement. Its purpose is to help students establish their academic independence and give them a chance to explore new areas, or to exhibit mastery in an already-known subject. This program has been modeled at other local schools, and the school staff's experience is that virtually all students -- even those who are unhappy at first about this additional requirement -- are content with the process at the end and are proud of what they have accomplished.

### GENERAL OVERVIEW

- **SEPTEMBER**, the project is introduced to seniors, and seniors' parents are informed about this graduation requirement.
- **OCTOBER**, seniors decide on their projects and propose them to a committee of faculty in a **General Letter of Intent**. The faculty makes suggestions about the project, the paper idea, and possible community connections for the project.
- **NOVEMBER**, students will find a mentor to guide them through their project. A specific **Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter** is submitted in November. Once a student secures a mentor and submits a clear project plan, he/she is free to begin the project.

The projects must be done outside of school and are not part of any course the student is taking in school (except possibly the research paper). Students may not be paid for the project, but expenses may be funded. Fund-raising in the community is acceptable for projects that serve the community in turn. Students must spend a minimum of 15 hours on the project outside of the school day. (Most students spend considerably more than 15 hours on the project).

- **NOVEMBER/DECEMBER, students will complete the research paper.** It should be 2500-3000 words (about 5 complete pages). Student research must focus on a topic related to their project. It should be formatted according to the *MLA Style Guide* and include an annotated bibliography of works cited and a title page or complete heading. Students must submit all earlier drafts of the paper with the final draft, including teacher comments and score sheets. Final drafts are graded by the student's English teacher or the Senior Project Coordinator. A second teacher grades borderline pass scores of "3's" and "4's". Individual English teachers will decide how the research paper is reflected in their course grade.
- **MARCH, students should have completed their projects.** The final step in the project is a **Mentor Verification Letter**. This letter is a follow-up letter to the letter of Intent and mentor-agreement. This letter should be sent to the HS office and be signed by your mentor.
- **APRIL, students complete a portfolio** documenting and reflecting on the project experience and their overall growth throughout high school. Students then make an **oral presentation** about their project to an audience of students and a panel of faculty and community judges.

### **The Bottom Line**

In order to graduate from Potter Valley High School, seniors must complete and receive a passing grade on all four phases of the project: the research paper, the Project itself, the Portfolio and the Presentation. Senior Project score of Minimal, Adequate, Notable, or Excellent will be noted on your transcripts.

## **PROJECT POSSIBILITIES**

Senior Projects usually fall into one of the categories listed below. The examples given are projects undertaken by seniors at other school sites and ideas from the local Potter Valley community.

### **Community Service**

- helping with animal rescue
- helping with the Food Bank
- creating a film documenting early logging techniques
- working as a candy striper at a hospital or clinic
- organizing a blood drive
- working for Mendocino County Volunteer AIDS Network
  - delivering flowers to senior citizens
- volunteering in a reforestation project
- volunteering for the Red Cross
- creating a PowerPoint on domestic violence services
- volunteering for a drug rehabilitation program
- volunteering at the Fire Department
- volunteering at the Rodeo
- establish a site of historical interest in Potter Valley
- volunteering at the cemetery
- volunteering at the Post Office
- volunteering at the community center

### **Career Exploration**

- job shadowing the director of a musical
- job shadowing a deaf interpreter
- volunteering to help with an elementary project
- job shadowing an automotive mechanic/technician
- job shadowing with a nurse at the health clinic
- job shadowing with the California Highway Patrol
- job shadowing a contractor

### **Service to the School**

- organize elementary sports day
- organize a sports tournament
- organize and teach at a junior high softball clinic
- restoring a mural

- creating/improving a school recycling program
- creating a film for gang or pregnancy prevention
- creating a peer tutoring program
- creating a campus improvement program
- teaching a lesson
- refurbishing the baseball fields/bleachers
- building a memorial for an alumnus
  - produce a film about teen pregnancy for a junior high audience
- offer computer classes to senior citizens
- teaching adult literacy classes
- organizing an open-gym as a healthy alternative
- building a structure to be donated to the school for student use (arbor, bench, memorial display case, etc.)

### **Artistic or Craft Project**

- building a redwood bench
- building a cart for the PVHS sound system
- knitting a sweater
- making a doll and clothes
- making a quilt as part of a family tradition
- learning black-and-white photography
- producing a music video or a video on conceptual design
- creating an art exhibit or photography exhibit or slide show
- writing & publishing poetry or short stories
- write and illustrate a biography of a border crossing
- performing dramatic monologues
- acting in a community theater production
- directing a children's play
- directing a *baile folklórico* dance troupe
- choreographing a modern dance
- producing a CD of Hawaiian vocals
- producing a CD of rap music
- produce a CD of Mexican elders' oral history
- collecting and transcribing oral history of early Potter Valley settlers
- writing a history of a local commune

### **Working With Vehicles, Animals, Plants, or Food**

- learning to make and market soap
- preparing a meal for students and staff (soul, Thai, or Italian, Louisianan, etc.)

- preparing a dessert banquet for the senior class
- restoring a classic car
- replacing an engine
- working with a fiberglass body kit
- training a horse
- training a guide dog
- growing vegetables for a salad bar
- conducting a horticulture experiment at a native plant nursery
- identifying native medicinal plants

### **Learning A New Art, Skill, or Sport**

- learning and performing a martial art
- learning to scuba dive
- taking an aerobics course
- creating a cartoon using animation software
- researching family history and creating a slideshow
- learning to auction on eBay
- doing college-level soccer training
- building a Sterling heat engine
- forging a sword
- design a skateboard truck
- learn and perform flamenco dance
- learn basic boxing moves

## **Project and Mentor-- FAQ's**

### **Does my Project have to include community service?**

No. Community service is not a required component. However, including a component in your project that "benefits others" will add points to your project score.

### **May I count my hours spent organizing, planning, or on transportation?**

You need to spend 15 hours actually doing your project. You may count the organizational, planning, and transportation hours as extra beyond your minimum 15 project hours.

Example #1- You are planning tutoring lessons to tutor reading. 15 hours must be spent working with students on reading. The extra planning hours may also be counted.

Example #2- You are job shadowing a mentor in Ukiah. You need to actually observe your mentor for 15 hours. You may count your travel time as extra hours.

### **What if I need to be absent during school time to do my project?**

Some projects, such as job shadows, need to be accomplished during regular business hours. Please set these up so as to miss as little class time as possible. If you are going to miss class, you are expected to arrange missed class work and homework in advance of your absence. It is not acceptable for students to cut classes to work on the research paper, portfolio, or other last-minute project deadlines.

### **May I ask a teacher to be my mentor?**

Yes. Many teachers enjoy mentoring and value the chance to work with you on an individual project. Some projects naturally lend themselves to a school mentor.

Keep in mind, though, that the Senior Project was created to help students build a bridge between school and the Real World. *We strongly encourage you to make a connection with an adult mentor off-campus in the community.*

### **What are the rules for choosing a mentor?**

Mentors need to be at least 21 years of age. They need to be able to read and write Senior Project documents (we can translate documents for you into Spanish, if necessary).

Also important: Make sure the mentor you choose understands the importance of school requirements and school deadlines so you are supported in completing the project in a timely fashion. Some students have had problems with mentors who leave jobs or leave town unexpectedly, so try to communicate the need for a clear time commitment



from your mentor at the outset.

### **How will my project be judged?**

A panel of teachers and community members will hear your speech, read your portfolio, and score your overall project. They will score you holistically. This means they will look at the quality of your portfolio and paper, the quality of your project, the quality of your speech, and how well you answered questions. Ability to reflect on how the Project experience benefited you is also important.

In judging you, one of the first questions they will ask is, "Did the student do what s/he committed to in the Letters of Intent?"

## Instructions for the General Letter of Intent

You will use the General Letter of Intent to propose the basic Senior Project idea and the subject area of the Research Paper to a faculty committee. Your Faculty Committee will consider your letter and approve it or suggest revisions. They will inform you if your plans are realistic, too modest, or too ambitious. They may also suggest community contacts or paper topics. **The letter of intent is a commitment to a *general area of interest*. A second letter, written jointly with the senior and the mentor, will outline the project in more detail.** (See *Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter* below.)

Type your General Letter of Intent in proper business letter format. **Address your letter to the Senior Project Committee, Potter Valley High School, P.O. Box 10401, Potter Valley, CA 95469.** A letter that's not written in correct English or is not in business format will not be approved. Unsigned letters will not be considered until signed.

Note #1: You can't get credit for hours spent on a project until after your Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter has been approved.

Note #2: Your paper and your project must be related in general subject area (medicine, education, animals, etc.), but they do not have to be on exactly the same detailed topic. You may not write a how-to research paper that describes how you did your project.

Note #3: Once you have written your research paper, you are committed to doing a project that relates to it.

Here's what you need to cover in your Letter of Intent:

- Identify the general area of interest of your project (sports, automobiles, education, engineering, medicine, animals, poetry, the culture of a specific country, etc...). Say what interests you about it and what experience, if any, you already have in it.
- Identify the category of your project: community service; career exploration; service to the school; artistic or craft project; working with vehicles, plants, animals, or food; or learning a new skill, art, or sport. (*Projects are often a combination of categories.*) Be as specific as you can in describing what you hope to accomplish in your project, but know that we do not expect you to declare all the fine details until you write your Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter.

- Identify your paper topic. Give a general overview of what you intend to research and where you plan to find out about it.
- The letter must be typed, free of errors and formatted as a standard business letter (including a student signature).
- Make it clear that you understand what plagiarism is by defining it in your own words and write a commitment that you will not plagiarize when researching and writing your paper. Plagiarism is defined in your student handbook for your reference

## Instructions for the Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter

You will write the Agreement Letter with your mentors. We recommend that you meet with your mentor to create a rough draft of the Agreement; you should type and edit the letter, then present it to your mentor to sign. As with the Letter of Intent, it must be free of errors and formatted as a standard business letter.

Here's what you need to cover in your Agreement Letter:

- ◆ What do you hope to accomplish during your Senior Project? What will you make, do, experience and/or learn?
- ◆ Who is your mentor? Please give the mentor's name, a full mailing address, and a daytime phone.
- ◆ What role will your mentor play in your project?
- ◆ What is your proposed timeline for this project? When will it begin and end? How many hours do you anticipate needing to complete the project?
- ◆ How often does your mentor expect you to check in on your project's progress? How will this happen?
- ◆ How will you document the project? All students are required to keep a log of their project hours and activities, but what else will you produce that shows that the project occurred?
- ◆ What materials will be needed for this project? If you will not need materials, say so.
- ◆ Will there be a cost involved? If so, how will you pay for the project? If there will not be a cost, say so.
- ◆ What are your transportation needs, and how will you meet them? If you will not need transportation, say so.

**Once approved, this Agreement Letter becomes a formal commitment involving you, your mentor, and the school. If you find you must change your paper topic, you'll need to submit a letter of amendment. If you need to change your project, you'll need to submit a new Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter with both signatures.**

## **Instructions for the Mentor Verification Letter**

You will write the Mentor Verification letter with your mentors. We recommend that you meet with your mentor to create a rough draft of the Agreement; you should type and edit the letter, then present it to your mentor to sign. As with the Letter of Intent, it must be free of errors and formatted as a standard business letter.

Here's what you need to cover in your Mentor Verification Letter:

- What was your original goal and was it met?
- If there were any changes to the project goal; what were they and why were they made?
- Were the agreements in the Mentor-Agreement letter followed? If not then why and what were the changes that were made?
- What were your biggest learning moments of the project?
- What were your biggest challenges of the project?

**IMPORTANT!** Read through your Letter of Intent and your Mentor-Agreement letter. The Verification should be a follow-up to the agreements and plans that you originally made.

**Your mentor verification letter should be signed, as verification, by your mentor. By signing the letter they are agreeing with the content of the letter and the descriptions given.**

## Guidelines for Early Approval

The senior project is normally carried out during March and April. If you have a legitimate reason to begin your project earlier than March, you need to apply for early approval.

What's a legitimate reason? Here are some:

- 1) Your project can't be done in the spring. For example:
  - You're coaching volleyball or soccer.
  - You're apprenticing with a ski instructor.
- 2) Your project runs all year, either because it's scheduled that way or because you need the whole year to complete it. For example:
  - Your project is to be a student rep on the school board.
  - You are doing stream restoration and need to collect data over 6 months' time.
- 3) You've got approval to graduate early.
- 4) You're involved in a community project that's going on earlier than March. For example:
  - You're helping with pet adoption through the Humane Society, and there is a dire need to begin helping immediately.

Merely a strong itch to get your project over and done with is not a legitimate reason for early approval.

To apply for early approval, *combine* your **General Letter of Intent** and the **Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter**. Insert a paragraph that states your need for early approval and your reasons why.

Note: Judges tend to expect a lot from a senior who starts the project early and has more time to complete it. Be sure to use early approval to your advantage, if you ask for it.

### **The Bottom Line:**

Until your letter of intent is approved and your request for early approval is granted, you will not get credit for any hours put into your project. Don't do your project and then apply for approval. It won't fly.

## Project Amendments & Paper Topic Changes

### Project Amendment

It is natural that your project plans will change a little bit as you fine tune the details. The Oral Judges will look at your Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter and judge you based on your project design. If you make a significant change to your project, please submit an **amendment** (see below).

Example of a reasonable amendment:

*You committed to deliver hot meals to senior citizens as your Senior Project. You discovered there is already a Hot Meals Program for the elderly in our community, so you volunteer with that organization, instead.*

Example of an unacceptable amendment:

*You committed to an ambitious project of designing a web site based on PV history. You're running out of time and ask if you can just make a poster instead.*

### Paper Amendment

Teachers and judges do not expect your research topic to be extremely well developed before you begin your research. It is expected that your topic will change as you juggle available sources and learn more about the subject.

- ❖ **If your paper topic is simply refined, you do not need to amend.**
- ❖ **If you choose to do a topic recommended to you in response to your letters, you do not need to amend.**
- ❖ **If your paper is dramatically different from your original plan, please amend. This is to avoid confusing the judges when they view your portfolio.**

For either project or paper change, write *a very brief business letter* explaining the original plan, the new plan, and why you are changing. We will only contact you if it looks like there may be a problem.

## Logs

**Logs and Self-Evaluation Statements** are required as documentary evidence of your work on your Senior Project. They should be included in your **Portfolio**. The members of your Project Presentation Judging Panel will review the Journal, the Self-evaluation, and the Mentor Verification, together with your Research Paper and Letter of Intent. These items will comprise a Portfolio to give the panel a sense of your experience with your project.

The **Log** should state what you have accomplished at intervals as the project progresses. Once you have begun working intensively on your project, the journals should cover periods of a week or less. (Your first entry, though, might cover the early months of your work, when you were planning the project and setting it in place through phone calls and other contacts.) An entry might look like this:

*FIRST WEEK (March 1-6, 2008)*

*During this week I made two trips to Ukiah to purchase all the materials I'll need to build my table. I met with my mentor to discuss what I'll be doing and to review the plans for the table. I'm going to have to order the hardware by mail from a cabinetmakers' supply house; otherwise, I experienced no problems and am ready to start building. Total time: 4.5 hours.*

The Logs that the Senior Project Judging Panel will review must be typed, neatly laid out, competently written, and proofread so that it is free of errors.\* During the project seniors will be expected to keep track of their hours and activities for their logs independently – get a notebook, journal or calendar to keep track of hours.

Make sure you head up your journal with your name and a phrase identifying the nature of your project. Format the Journal consistently, so it is easy to see the hours you have compiled. At the end of the Journal, add up your hours so far, sign it, and date it. (Please see the log form at the very end of this Manual.)

*\*As with all the documents that compile the Senior Project Portfolio, it will be judged for writing conventions as well as content.*



## **Cover Letter and Self-Evaluation Statement**

The **Cover Letter** is the first thing the judges see when they open your **Portfolio**. It is a positive-sounding invitation to learn more about your Project experience. This may be a chance to personalize your portfolio a bit with details about your plans after high school. This is not a place to make excuses or discuss personal hardships.

Remember, the Judging Panel will be made up of people from both the school and the community. They might not know you. First impressions last forever!

The **Self-evaluation Statement** summarizes your project as a personal experience. You should include:

- What you expected from the project before you began it;
- The nature of the experience, including satisfactions, difficulties overcome, skills learned, and/or knowledge gained;
- An evaluation of the experience now that it is complete.

The self-evaluation statement should be a typed page or more. Like the journal, it should be clear and correct.

## **The Portfolio**

Your Oral Presentation judges view the Portfolio in advance. The quality and depth of the research paper is part of your Project Presentation Grade. The portfolio is due in early April, approximately a week before presentations.

### **Portfolio Contents**

#### **At least:**

Include as much as you can from your project. Any planning documents you wrote, any contracts you signed, lists of 'official' phone calls or conversations.

Required parts of the portfolio:

- Cover page (Name, Project Title, Mentor Name, Date)
  - Table of Content (Accurate)
  - Cover Letter (IMPORTANT see Senior Project Manual, you will need to write this!)
  - Letter of Intent
  - Mentor Agreement Letter
  - Research Paper
  - Evidence of Project (Photos, Surveys, Feedback, Reflections, Planning documents, Permission slips, Designs, Measurements, Equipment Lists etc)
  - Mentor Verification Letter
  - Logs (List of what you did, when you did it, and how long)
  - Self Evaluation Statement (IMPORTANT see Senior Project Manual, you will need to write this!)
- You can include more than this but these are all **REQUIRED**

## The Oral Presentation

The Project Presentation is the final hurdle for passing the project. This is the point at which you present your Paper, Project, and Portfolio in a multi-media speech to a panel of teachers and community members. PVHS underclassmen will comprise your audience. You may invite family and friends, too.

You will speak for a minimum of 10 minutes—to a maximum of 20 minutes—before your judging panel. Then the panel will ask you questions about your paper, your project, and your growth as a person through the experience. Students will also be required to field questions from the audience.

Here are some tips for preparing the presentation:

- plan the speech & visuals carefully
- The speech should cover the Paper and the Project experience;
- There is no set order for the speech, but do organize the content logically. Be sure to cover the most important points within the time limit;
- Use academic and content language during the whole speech and during the Question Session;
- You may use note cards;
- Practice, practice, practice! Anticipate judges' questions and practice your answers;
- Get feedback on volume, pace, and pronunciation from school, peer, or family "coaches";
- Visit the room where your speech is scheduled;
- Using technology for your speech? Trouble-shoot any problems by doing a complete run-through in advance. There will be a place on your score sheet for the judges to find out if you did your Technology Rehearsal in advance.
- ***Look sharp and professional;***
- *Or* "dress the part" and explain your costume to the panel;
- Making up a speech as you go never works, but average-quality projects sometimes become better ones with good speeches.

Judges will discuss your presentation and portfolio privately. They will do individual point sheets, which are averaged to reach a point average. The point average will determine your score. The scores and judges' comments will be available to you in writing the next day. Senior Project Scores are part of your high school transcripts and will be seen by colleges.

## Letter to the Audience

You will have an audience of students watching your Presentation. Before your formal speech begins, as the judges prepare questions and review your portfolio, you will read a very brief letter to your student audience. You do not have to type it or include it in your portfolio, but don't just make it up.

The letter should:

- ◆ introduce yourself to the audience
- ◆ briefly explain the paper and project
- ◆ invite the audience to share your project experience
- ◆ reflect on the project experience, overall;
- ◆ offer peer advice on what to do and not do to accomplish the senior project;
- ◆ The judges will overhear this advice. Although the tone you use to address your peers will be informal, be aware that you still need to make a good impression, overall.

You may make your letter more personal than your speech will be. You are speaking to your peers, but try to maintain a positive, friendly tone.

After you read your letter, the formal Oral Presentation speech to your judges begins.  
Good luck!

*In addition to a scoring sheet with points in the categories of Project, Presentation, Portfolio, and Deadlines, the judges will use these guidelines to score your presentation.*

### **Guidelines for Judging**

#### **Potter Valley High School Senior Project Oral Presentations**

- ◆ Students are required to give a brief “Advice to My Peers” speech as a warm-up for the audience. You are not grading this brief warm-up speech.
- ◆ The presentation should be organized and well-rehearsed, but need not be memorized. Note cards or notes may be used.
- ◆ Delivery should be loud and clear, with good pronunciation.
- ◆ The speech should be a minimum of 10 minutes in length—and a maximum of 20 minutes. You should hear the student’s live voice for a total of 10 minutes, not including Q&A, even if the student plays a film or audio clip in the middle of his speech. Note: this expectation is often shortened for our Special Education students.
- ◆ Use of audio or visual aids are encouraged. Students may choose to narrate over a DVD or PowerPoint presentation. We accept a broad range of “audio/visual aids,” ranging from wearing a costume appropriate to the project to multimedia technology. We offer all students the option of doing a PowerPoint with student technology support. Students are expected to attend a Technology Rehearsal in advance of the presentation day.
- ◆ The content of speech should include information about the research paper, as well as a detailed account of the project. Students are instructed to reflect on what they learned about the topic(s) as well as what they learned about the process and themselves.
- ◆ The student should use vocabulary appropriate to the project, i.e.; will know the correct terminology for learning to use a software program, or will know the correct names for wood-working tools, etc. Students should use Standard English and academic vocabulary.
- ◆ The student will be able to competently answer panelists' questions, providing additional reflection or insight into the project experience. It is acceptable for a student to ask to have a question repeated or rephrased.

## **The Portfolio**

- The portfolio should be attractive and well-organized.
- The portfolio should contain: a cover letter, letters between the senior and the committee, a log of hours, the research paper, a self-evaluation, and any other evidence of the project. (NOTE: It is acceptable for the research paper to contain some personal observation. It is acceptable for the senior to have used the short or the long self-evaluation guidelines.)
- All documents should be in correct Standard English.

## **Guidelines for Judging Different Types of Projects** (*Projects may be a combination.*)

### **Working on a product or craft**

With this type of project, the student is producing a concrete, physical project for evaluation or repairing and/or manipulating an existing product. Examples are a woodworking project or the repair or modification of a vehicle. The oral board presentation will include actual display and demonstration of the product. Additional criteria are:

- student's product *reflects concern* for craftsmanship and professional execution
- the work should accurately conform to the original plan
- materials selected should be suitable for the application
- attention is paid to neatness and detail
- the product should function as planned

### **Learning a new art, skill or sport**

This type of project involves learning a brand new skill or honing an existing interest. As examples, a student may choose to learn how to dance the tango or undertake an advanced automotive repair. Projects that are products may have the appearance of beginner's work, but the student should show awareness of the standards for craftsmanship in the chosen field. (*See standards above.*) For example, a student who attempts a beginning sewing project under the tutelage of a mentor may not produce a dress that looks professionally made; however, the student should be able to point out areas for improvement on the dress. The presentation should focus on demonstrating the new art, skill, or sport learned.

### **Career exploration (investigation, apprenticeship or job shadow)**

In an investigation, the student explores an area of interest such as learning how to begin a business, or learning how to become a licensed pilot. Several adult contacts may be involved in this type of project. It may involve additional interviews (beyond the research paper done in English class). The presentation will clearly demonstrate organization and synthesis of the information.

A student in an apprenticeship or job shadow has worked closely with an adult who is a professional or expert in the field. An example is a student whose job shadows a nurse. The student may be observing to get an overview of the job or may be doing hands-on work as a volunteer to gain work experience. For these career exploration projects, the student's presentation should focus on what was learned.

**Volunteer for the school or community**

This type of project will be oriented toward social service. The student may be: assisting peers or younger children; volunteering for an organization; creating a service; or repairing or restoring school or community property. This kind of project often crosses over into career exploration or making a product. Volunteer projects range from being an assistant coach to organizing a blood drive for the Red Cross. The presentation will clearly address what was learned by doing service for others.



## **POTTER VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT TIMELINE 2023-2024**

Deadlines labeled "**Important Deadline**" count toward your overall score in May. Missed deadlines result in point deductions from your total score.

### *Quarter 1-- EARLY PLANNING*

An overview of The Project is presented to the senior class. Parents of seniors receive a letter explaining The Project. Seniors are encouraged to seek advice on project plans from faculty, family, and community members.

### *Quarter 2-- GENERAL LETTER OF INTENT*

#### **October 27th, 2023 -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**

**General Letter of Intent due in the office by 4:00 p.m. *Students leaving on Independent Study before this date should submit their Letter of Intent in advance.***

The General Letter of Intent describes the Research Paper topic idea and the general area of interest for your proposed senior project. A faculty committee reviews your plan and offers suggestions and comments. Submit all letters to the office. **(Save all copies of: Letters and Responses, Research Paper drafts, Journals, and other documentation for your Portfolio.)**

### *Quarter 2-- RESEARCH PAPER AND SENIOR-MENTOR AGREEMENT LETTER*

#### **November 17th, 2023 -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**

**Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter due in the office by 4:00 p.m.**

The Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter gives specific details about the project and is signed by both the student and the mentor. When approved by the Senior Project Committee, it becomes a formal commitment. Senior Project judges look carefully at the project described in this letter. Completing the project to which you have committed is an important part of your score. After this point, if you change your project, a letter of revision must be filed and approved. Small revisions may be done with an Amendment to the Project. Larger revisions will require a new Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter. Submit all letters to the office.

**Research paper due date December 15th, 2023** The research paper is graded by an English teacher and one other faculty member on a 6-point holistic rubric. Submitting late papers past the deadline set in the class will lower your quarter grade. Submitting a final draft which does not meet the passing score of a “4” will lower your grade, and you will have to revise it until it passes.

The research paper, of 2000-3000 words (5 pages, double-space, 12-pt. font), is written on a topic related to the project. It follows formal MLA research guidelines and requires full citations and bibliographies. The Research Paper is the last writing benchmark and is written as a process essay. Submit all research paper drafts to your English teacher.

In January, meet with your counselor to reflect on your growth throughout high school. Your counselor advisor will help you design a project which addresses your own areas of strength and weakness.

**November 17th, 2023 -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**  
**Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter due in the office by 4:00 p.m.**

The Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter gives specific details about the project and is signed by both the student and the mentor. When approved by the Senior Project Committee, it becomes a formal commitment. Senior Project judges look carefully at the project described in this letter. Completing the project to which you have committed is an important part of your score. After this point, if you change your project, a letter of revision must be filed and approved. Small revisions may be done with an Amendment to the Project. Larger revisions will require a new Senior-Mentor Agreement Letter. Submit all letters to the office.

**January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024 Senior Project officially begins. You are free to begin your project as soon as your Mentor Agreement Letter has been submitted.**

**February 23rd, 2024 -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**  
**Log Checkpoint. Summary of hours achieved so far is due at 4:00 p.m. Please submit an itemization of time spent, plus a total of hours completed so far. Logs must include date, activity, hours spent and total hours. You should be halfway done with your project.**

*Quarter 4-- THE PROJECT, PORTFOLIO\* AND ORAL BOARDS*

**March 22nd, 2024 -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**

**Mentor verification due by 3:30 p.m. in the office. Your mentor should be able to verify seeing the beginning, middle, and end of your project.**

**Portfolios due April 4th, 2024 (Thursday) -- IMPORTANT DEADLINE**

**Portfolio due by 4:00 p.m. in the office.**

Please submit 3 copies of Portfolio. **Save all copies of: Letters and Responses, Research Paper drafts, Journals, and other documentation for your Portfolio.**

**April 5th, 2024**

**Teachers and Staff participate in a Dress Rehearsal for Senior Project Oral Presentations**

**Senior Project Oral Presentations April 18th and 19th, 2024**

Judged Oral Boards will be held within the school day. You will be presenting to a panel of teachers and community judges and an audience of students. Your job is to prepare a presentation that describes your Research Paper, Senior Project Experience, and growth as a person.

**The bottom line:**

A Research Paper passing in content, organization, length, format, documentation, and writing conventions is required for graduation;

A verified Project, a passing Paper, and completed Portfolio submitted in triplicate are required to participate in Oral Presentation;

Passing the Oral Presentations with a panel of teachers and community member judges (portfolio review, speech, and question-answer session) is required for graduation.