



North Eugene High School Senior Project Guide

2015-16

PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

This guide is intended to help you understand the Senior Project at North, what it is and how to approach it.

The Senior Project is a chance for you to exercise your own initiative and engage with an area of your own interest and choosing as you examine your post-secondary options. It is intended for you to:

- Engage in personal inquiry, action and reflection by sharing and setting goals for your plans after high school
- Gain an invaluable community experience through an internship, work study or volunteering
- Develop your communication skills by reflecting on your experience and plans meaningfully and thoughtfully
- Exhibit your critical and creative thinking skills by planning, doing and reflecting within the project

The Senior Project requires the four following components:

- A goal-setting exercise related to your post-high school plans
- An accompanying community experience—service, internship, job shadow or work study—of at least 10 hours
- A written reflection of at least 750 words with accompanying images or other tangible evidence of your experience
- A presentation to staff members about your goals, experience and outcomes

With the completion of the Senior Project, we expect you will achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Experience an increased awareness of your personal strengths and challenges
- Undertake new and different experiences
- Plan and initiate activities
- Work collaboratively with others
- Show perseverance and commitment in activities
- Develop new skills
- Expand your awareness of community connections, citizenship and social responsibility
- Explore your interest in a post-secondary option

Your goal-setting, reflection, and presentation will require you to address these learning outcomes.

Senior Project Due Dates and Requirement Checklist

In a portfolio, you must submit the following components:

- Goal-setting exercise
- Signed Mentorship Letter
- Community Experience Log
- Reflection paper
- Presentation plan
- A copy of a thank-you note you wrote to your community organization

List of meeting dates, information and components due:

DATE	TIME and LOCATION	TASK
Monday, September 21	OAT: Auditorium	Goal-setting Exercise
Wednesday, October 14 (Testing day)	9:00 am: Auditorium	Discuss Community Experience process Additional senior year information
Thursday, October 22	6:30 - 8:30 pm: College and Career Night	Explore your post-high school options!
Monday, November 2	OAT: Auditorium	More on your Community Experience
Monday, November 16	OAT: Auditorium	Discuss Written Reflection
Monday, November 30	OAT: Auditorium	Discuss components of portfolio
Thursday, December 3	All day: College and Career Center	Turn in portfolio
Thursday, January 14	6:30 - 8:30 pm: Senior Family Dinner	Have dinner and fill our your FAFSA!
Monday, January 25	OAT: Auditorium	Discuss components of presentation Additional senior year information
Friday, February 5	Classrooms	Presentations to panel members

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GOAL-SETTING EXERCISE

Please review the learning outcomes on page two. We hope that as students at North Eugene High School, you will work towards these outcomes by committing to a specific community experience that enhances both your personal and professional goals.

For this assignment, please consider your current strengths and weaknesses in terms of the learning outcomes and your post-secondary goals by answering the questions below in paragraph responses. Then, as you are engaged in your community experience, please consider and reflect on how you are changing, developing or challenging yourself to meet the goals you have set, or how your goals are growing or changing along with you.

Please type at least one paragraph per prompt, 12-point font, double-spaced:

- What do you believe are your strengths, academically? Your challenges?
 - What education or other preparation will you seek after high school? What do you hope to accomplish in the future?
 - Because of your unique skills, where will you seek a community experience and why?
 - In your community experience, how will you move beyond your strengths to find a placement or fulfill a role that also challenges you in new and different ways and supports your post-secondary goals?
 - Write three specific and detailed goals you hope to achieve during your community experience. How will you achieve these goals? Use the **learning outcomes** to support your writing.
- **Example #1.** My goal is to study Biology at the University of Oregon. By volunteering at Mount Pisgah Arboretum, I will become more knowledgeable about invasive species and their impact on native plants while working outside, an activity I enjoy. I will achieve this goal by reading, talking to my supervisor, and identifying and eradicating invasive species at the Arboretum. In addition, I will complete at least 10 hours of service at the park prior to the deadline.
 - **Example #2.** I want to become a counselor after I travel and work for a year. Through my job shadow at the White Bird Clinic:
GOAL 1. I will learn more about how to work with individuals in crisis. *I know I am a compassionate person, but this experience will put me in direct contact with challenging situations.*
GOAL 2. I will become more knowledgeable about the social, economic and personal conditions that lead people to White Bird. *I will discuss these issues with my supervisor and make personal observations.*
GOAL 3. Finally, I will practice my communication skills by interacting with employees and clients. *I will ride along in the crisis van and answer phone calls to the best of my ability.*
 - **Example #3.** After high school, I will attend Lane Community College and take classes in early childhood education. By volunteering in my church's nursery, I will plan and initiate activities to support and entertain children while they are away from their parents. I will achieve this goal by using my experiences from Child Development and the North Eugene Pre-school.

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE

The Community Experience is at the heart of the Senior Paper. It allows you the opportunity to explore a topic of interest and then relate it to your post-secondary goals. It allows you to connect in a larger way with people outside of your normal school setting and as a result, you will no doubt draw upon your knowledge and skills from a variety of your own experiences, your classes and their content.

You must complete at least 10 hours of a community experience related specifically to your goal-setting exercise. This could be community service, an internship, or a job shadow. The only requirement is that it link to something you are sincerely interested in studying or working towards in greater depth as evidenced by your goal-setting exercise. It also needs to be an experience upon which you can reflect meaningfully.

Getting started:

It's completely understandable you might not feel comfortable calling or emailing people you don't know in order to set up your community experience. However, it is a crucial skill as you leave high school for college or career. Below are some tips and a sample script to help you make your community connection.

Tips and guidelines:

- Be respectful and gracious—say please and thank you! Remember that no one is obligated to help you with your project. They are doing you a favor by helping you.
- Use professional language ever—and only send emails that are carefully and formally structured.
- Make sure you know a little bit about the organization between contacting someone there.
- Be clear about your topic, what you need, and how you think working with the organization could help you with your learning.

Sample script for phone call:

Hello, my name is (your name) and I'm a senior at North Eugene High School. Our senior project involves setting up a community service experience at a local organization and I think (name of organization) would be a good fit for my goals. Is there anyone in your office I could speak with?

Sample script for email:

Hello, my name is (your name) and I'm a senior at North Eugene High School. Our senior project involves setting up a community service experience at a local organization, and I think (name of organization) would be a good fit for my topic. I'm wondering if anyone at your office might be willing to supervise me as I complete ten hours of (community service, job shadow, internship, etc.) If so, I would greatly appreciate hearing back from you at your earliest convenience. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss the project more.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you.

*Sincerely yours,
Your name
Your phone number
Your E-mail address*

Mentor/Supervisor Agreement Form

Dear Prospective Mentor/Supervisor:

The North Eugene High School Senior Project is a chance for students to explore an experience of interest to them related to their post-high school plans. As a part of the project, each student is required to completed at least 10 hours of a community experience. In order to do this, students need to find a community member or organization willing to supervise their hours and ensure they are engaged in thoughtful, active, meaningful learning experiences related to their area of interest.

If you are willing to supervise a student in this endeavor, please provide your signature and contact information below.

The North Eugene High School staff wishes to extend our gratitude to you for your willingness to support student learning. Your time and effort on the behalf of students is a measure of your commitment to young people in our community. If you would like more information about the project and our expectations, please don't hesitate to call or email the school.

Sincerely yours,

North Eugene High School

Yes, I am willing to serve as the mentor/supervisor for

_____.

I understand the expectations outlined above and am willing to ensure the student completes at least 10 hours in a thoughtful, active, meaningful setting.

Supervisor's name

Supervisor's signature

Email address

Phone number

Please provide a brief explanation of the site where you will be supervising the student and your job title/responsibilities. Thank you!

COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE: THANK YOU LETTER/NOTE GUIDE

Please write a note and send it to your community organization. Place a copy in your portfolio.

Remember that writing a thank you letter/note to your community mentor is very important.

When you write your letter/note remember to do the following:

1. Be neat. Watch your spelling, grammar and conventions.
3. Begin your letter/note with a sentence that specifically thanks the community mentor for allowing you to spend time at his/her place of work. For example, "Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to meet with me during my senior project experience.
4. State something specific that you learned or enjoyed during the senior project experience..

For example, "I learned a great deal about how an engineer uses computers and I really enjoyed taking a tour of the facility and participating in a small hands-on project."

Your community organization will be incredibly impressed with your thoughtfulness!

WRITTEN REFLECTION

Your written reflection should be a minimum of 750 words, and is just that: a reflection on what you have learned, how you have grown and the extent to which you achieved your goals via your experience.

Your reflection should:

- Be typed in 12-point font and double-spaced
- Include tangible evidence of your experience—photos, drawings, brochures, posters, etc.
- Address the following questions:
 - o What was your experience? How did you expect it to support your goals? Was this experience a new role for you? If so, how?
 - o Overall, how did your experience:
 - Increase your awareness of your personal strengths and weaknesses?
 - Provide you new and different challenges?
 - Help you plan and initiate activities?
 - Allow you to work collaboratively with others?
 - Give you the opportunity to show perseverance and commitment in activities?
 - Support you in developing new skills?
 - Expand your awareness of community connections, citizenship and social responsibility?

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Presentation Overview: The final presentation is your opportunity to share with panel members what you learned both personally and professionally from your senior project. Please dress professionally as if you are going to a job interview. Your presentation should be 8-10 minutes in length with an accompanying visual that illustrates your main ideas (a Powerpoint, Prezi, video, or some other visual media form). Please make sure to save your work to a GoogleDoc so it will be accessible from any school computer—no flash drives or e-mailing, please!

As a part of your portfolio, please create an outline for your presentation.

In your presentation, you should:

- Introduce your experience. What were your goals that led you to choose this experience?
- Explain the process you went through to choose your community experience. What resources did you use, what setbacks did you encounter, and what conclusions did you draw?
- Describe your community experience and how it was relevant to your life, your community, and your future plans.
- Describe the challenges you faced throughout this project and how you overcame them.
- Describe what you would do differently with this project if you had the chance.
- Discuss any new learning, ideas, or results that you discovered. Share some of your reflections on the learning outcomes.
- Draw some final conclusions about the process, your project and its outcomes.

Please also prepare to engage in a question and answer session with your panel members about your experience!