

# Brownsburg High School

## Senior Project Handbook

**2009-2010**



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## Senior Project Philosophy

The Senior Project engages learners as active participants in challenging, rigorous, focused, and independent learning within a supportive environment. This project allows students to work reflectively on a meaningful topic as they independently explore a current or potential passion through real-world experience. This endeavor requires a level of thought, exploration, and application that reveals the knowledge and understanding of students as they transition into the real world. A successful Senior Project will demonstrate the following 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills:

### ***Personal and Social Responsibility***

Students must be able to set and pursue personal, academic, family, and civic goals. They need the knowledge and skills to make ethical decisions; play an effective role in society at local, national, and global levels; become informed, thoughtful, and responsible citizens; and to participate in the life of their schools, community, and the wider world through service. Personal and social responsibility includes

- Leadership and Responsibility
- Communication and Collaboration
- Productivity and Accountability
- Social and Cross-Cultural Skills
- Initiative and Self-Direction
- Financial, Economic, Business, and Entrepreneurial Literacy
- Civic Literacy
- Health Literacy

### ***Digital-Age Literacy***

Given the realities of globalization in a digital world, our students need to develop the strategies and skills to communicate effectively, work with diverse groups of people, use information and communications technologies, analyze information quality, and discern bias. These 21<sup>st</sup> Century knowledge and skills are necessary to learn and work in an age of accelerating societal change. Digital-Age Literacy includes

- Global Awareness
- Information Literacy
- Media Literacy
- Information and Communication Technologies Literacy

### ***Learning and Thinking Skills***

Learners and workers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be able to engage in complex thinking and reasoning processes as they complete meaningful, relevant tasks within the range of academic domains and real-world contexts that require problem solving. Learning and Thinking Skills include

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving Skills
- Flexibility and Adaptability
- Creativity and Innovation Skills

*Adapted from Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills and Catalina Foothills District*

# Senior Project Overview and FAQs

A Senior Project connects the student's career interest with educational and life experiences. Put another way, the Senior Project is an opportunity for a student to explore areas of interest beyond academics and to find relevance in learning. This is an opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in problem-solving, decision-making, collaborative relationships as well as in oral and written communication. These are essential to success in learning for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

## Senior Project Brief Course Description

Senior Project is a student driven culminating experience designed around a relevant topic of career interest. The project requires students to work with a community consultant—an expert in the field of interest—to gain knowledge about the field and to create a project representative of the student's growth. Students are also required to make a multi-media presentation of the project. **Through the Senior Project, students demonstrate personal and social responsibility, digital-age literacy, and learning and thinking skills.**

## Grading Guidelines

Students will receive grades for each quarter in "Career Information Project" figured using the following guidelines, subject to adjustment based on the particular course of study:

- 1<sup>st</sup> quarter: Journals 30%, Senior Project Proposal (including Letter of Intent and securing of community consultant) 30%, completion of School to Career activities 20%, beginning of online portfolio 20%
- 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter: Journals 40%, completion/documentation of at least 15 hours of Career Related Experience by the end of grading period 40%, online portfolio advancement 20%
- 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter: Journals 40%, completion/documentation of at least 30 hours of Career Related Experience by the end of grading period 40%, online portfolio advancement 20%
- 4<sup>th</sup> quarter: Written reflection 30%, multimedia Senior Project Presentation 60%, completion of Career Related Experience (minimum 40 hours by May 1) 20%

When students complete their presentations, they will be awarded one of the following grades.

A (4.0) = Outstanding

B (3.0) = Pass Plus

C (2.0) = Pass

I = Incomplete at this time

A student with an incomplete grade must complete the elements on the Incomplete Project Form and represent to a panel of judges no later than 10 calendar days prior to the end of the semester.

## The Senior Project and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills

By completing the senior project, you will have the opportunity to demonstrate critical 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills. An ideal project experience will allow you to

- Demonstrate exceptional personal responsibility and flexibility in personal and community contexts (Flexibility and Adaptability)
- Set and meet high standards and goals for one's self and others (Productivity and Accountability)
- Develop, implement, and communicate new ideas to others (Creativity and Innovation Skills)
- Exercise sound reasoning in understanding and making complex choices (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving)
- Analyze, access, manage, integrate, evaluate, and create information in a variety of forms and media (Information and Media Literacy Skills)

- Demonstrate teamwork and leadership; adapt to varied roles and responsibilities; work productively with others, including your community consultant; exercise empathy; respect diverse perspectives (Communication and Collaboration)
- Frame, analyze, and solve problems (Critical Thinking and Problem Solving)
- Act responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind; demonstrate ethical behavior in personal, workplace, and community contexts (Leadership and Responsibility)
- Understand, manage and create effective oral, written, and multimedia communication in a variety of forms and contexts; wear professional attire and use polished written and spoken English (Communication and Collaboration Skills)

### **What key steps does a student take when completing a Senior Project?**

To complete the Senior Project, student must

- Complete a project proposal that must be approved by a panel of adults.
- Identify a community consultant, who is an expert in the student's topic of interest, who will agree to work with the student in completing the project.
- Maintain a log of the time spent on the project and a journal reflecting upon the experience.
- Complete the project.
- Meet with your community consultant and discuss your experience using the *BHS Senior Project 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Rubric*.
- Write an extended reflective essay about the project that explains what the student learned from the experience.
- Make a multi-media presentation summarizing the project and experience. The presentation is made to a panel consisting of teachers and community members.

### **What are the incentives for a student to do a Senior Project?**

- Opportunity to make connections between classrooms, careers, and community.
- Opportunity to prepare for the challenges of post-high school experiences.
- Opportunity to earn one credit for completing the experience that will enhance the grade point average.
- Opportunity for in-school time to work on the project with a possible opportunity for release time if needed to work with the community consultant.
- Documentation of senior project completion would be included on the transcript.
- Projects that are community service based could increase scholarship opportunities.

### **What time will be allowed for students to work on their Senior Projects?**

The flexible schedule for Cadre classes will allow students time for Senior Projects, including the opportunity or leave school when necessary to meet with their community consultant or work on the project.



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### Senior Project Timeline 2009-2010

Mid-term Project Dates	Senior Project Happenings	Year-Long Project Dates
Spring or early Fall 2009	Completion of project planning and letter of intent; community consultant identification	August 17-October 2, 2009
Spring or early Fall 2009	Project proposal panels approve projects	October 5-21, 2009
June 2009 through November 2009	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Communicate regularly with community consultant and work toward completion of the project</li> <li>✓ Maintain a journal/ log of activities and time spent in completion of project; keep written reflections of your progress</li> <li>✓ Compile photographic documentation</li> <li>✓ Collect any necessary and pertinent correspondence in completing the project</li> </ul>	September 2009 through February 2010
October 2009	Midterm check of progress	December 2010
December 2009	Complete extended reflective essay on the senior project experience	March 2010
December 2009	Meet with your community consultant and discuss your experience using the <i>21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Project Rubric</i>	March 2010
December 2009	Prepare presentation; compile binder of documentation and continue to update portfolio	March and April 2010
December 8-12, 2009	Rehearsal of presentations	March and April, 2010
December 15-19, 2009	Presentation of project to senior project evaluation panel	April 12 - May 14, 2010



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### Senior Project Checklist

- Sign the *Senior Projects Commitment Form* (p. 8); your parents must sign, too.
- Use *Planning for Your Senior Project* (p. 9) to help get your project started.
- Complete the letter of intent.
- Present your proposal to the Senior Project Proposal Panel for approval.
- Secure a community consultant and have that individual complete the *Community Consultant Information Form* (p. 12). If you need help getting a community consultant, contact the School to Career Coordinator.
- Maintain a journal reflecting upon your experience.
- As you conclude your project, discuss your experience with your community consultant. Use the *BHS Senior Project Presentation Score Sheet* (p. 14-15) to guide your discussion. Ask your community consultant to provide written comments to you; a recommendation letter to the Senior Project Evaluation Panel would be one way to do this.
- Write an extended reflective essay regarding the completed project and describing how you benefited from the experience.
- Make a multi-media presentation to a panel of adults showcasing your project and reflecting upon your experience.

Remember, maintain your Senior Portfolio electronically and in print form. Include these pieces from your Senior Project experience:

- Senior Project letter of intent
- Sample reflections (at least 3) from your journal of progress
- Written comments (letter of recommendation) from your community consultant
- Documentation and artifacts
  - Pictures/video clips
  - Other artifacts

Your Portfolio may also contain:

- Letters, printed e-mail/on-line conversations
- Flyers and business cards
- Diagrams, sketches, and drawings
- Research evidence
- Pamphlets, newspaper, magazine, or Internet articles

The compilation of this portfolio should be an ongoing process. Do not wait until the last minute to assemble and/or reconstruct the necessary elements.



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## Senior Project Commitment Form

### Student Commitment

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Project Name \_\_\_\_\_

Projected Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Projected Completion Date:  Dec  Apr/May

**I am committed to completing my Senior Project (per my approved proposal) no later than the completion date listed above AND to presenting my exhibition at the assigned time.**

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Parent Permission

Name of Parent \_\_\_\_\_

**I have discussed the senior project topic and proposal with my child. I have read the *Senior Project Handbook* and am aware that my child has the primary responsibility for successful completion of this project within the required timeline. I give permission for my child to work on the senior project off campus when necessary.**

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ethical Behavior

Plagiarism is intellectually dishonest and, therefore, a form of stealing. It is a serious offense and can result in severe penalties, including no credit for the course being taken. The following forms of plagiarism are the most common:

1. Failure to document with quotation marks any material copied directly from other sources.
2. Failure to acknowledge paraphrased material (someone else's ideas).
3. Failure to provide a bibliography.
4. Use of others' work, as one's own, particularly in the creative arts.
5. Use of others' ideas, as one's own for themes, poems, musical compositions or artwork

\*Joy Littell, ed., Building English Skills (Sacramento: McDougal, Littell & Co., 1983), p.210.

**My parent and I realize the importance of honesty and integrity in the senior project. Therefore, we agree that I will complete all required work. I will graciously acknowledge the contributions of others and provide citations for any work or ideas that are not mine.**

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Planning Your Senior Project

Consider these questions as you prepare for your senior project. You will write a formal Letter of Intent describing your project plans, and discuss your proposal with the senior project proposal panel. The panel will offer feedback that you can use to make your project the best it can be.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What is your topic? Describe why this topic is important to you. How will it challenge you?
2. What are your post-secondary goals? List specific ways your project might relate to these goals.
3. What are your goals for this project? Describe what you intend to accomplish or learn.
4. What do you already know about your topic? Briefly summarize what you've learned about your topic from at least two expert sources (i.e., printed materials, websites, conversations).
5. Have you selected a community consultant (mentor)? If yes, share highlights from discussions that you and your consultant have had about your project. If no, what are some qualities you are looking for in a community consultant?
6. What kinds of activities and experiences are you planning to help you complete your project? Outline these activities on the following timeline; include activities only in the months that apply to your project.

Month	Activities
June	
July	
August	
September	
October	
November	
December	
January	
February	
March	
April	
May	

7. Do you anticipate any costs associated with your project? If so, how will you cover those expenses?
8. What problems might you face as you pursue your project? Describe how you might overcome these problems.



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# Senior Project Letter of Intent

Use the information from *Planning Your Senior Project* (p. 9) to write your letter of intent. This is a formal letter that will introduce your project to a panel of adults who will give you suggestions about how to make your project the best it can be. Include the following:

- A bit about yourself
- Your topic of focus for your project and how it connects to your Career Major and post-secondary goals
- Your experience and interest in the area
- Explanation of what you intend to learn or accomplish and how this is a stretch for you, including the 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills you hope to develop
- Mentor name and qualifications (if known)
- Sources you hope to use and any potential costs
- A paragraph clearly indicating you understand the ethical expectations for the senior project and penalties for any violations and your obligation to consult regularly with your mentor.

Your letter should be typed and in correct business format which includes specific margins, spacing, and organization. This format includes

- Your return (home) address
- Appropriate salutation
- Introduction
- Body
- Conclusion
- Complimentary close
- Signature space
- Signature line

## Meeting with the Proposal Panel

You will meet with 3 adults to share your ideas for your Senior Project. Please bring 4 copies of your Letter of Intent for the Senior Project Proposal Panel to read, as well as any notes from your initial planning for your own use. You will have about 5-10 minutes to explain your proposal, and the group of adults will give you written and oral feedback about the changes you might need to make before you begin the bulk of your project. (See the *Proposal Feedback Form* p. 11)



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## Senior Project Proposal Feedback Form

To the Reviewer: Please provide the student with feedback using a ✓ and/or comments in the appropriate cells.

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Reviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Needs Major Changes	Needs Minor Changes	Ready to Go – No Changes Required
Topic Choice			
Relevance to Post-Secondary Goals			
Project Goals			
Current Knowledge			
Community Consultant			
Activities / Experiences Planned			
21 <sup>st</sup> Century Skills			
Timeline			
Anticipated Problems, with Solutions			
Effective communication of ideas			

Reviewer comments:

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Questions for the student to consider? Remaining steps that need to be taken?

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Brownsburg High School Senior Academy  
School to Career Program  
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## Brownsburg High School Senior Project Community Consultant Information Form

The following information is used in matching community consultants with Brownsburg High School students who are pursuing senior projects. Please provide contact information and relevant background information in the sections below. You must be 25 years of age or older to be a community consultant. Return this form with the student who has contacted you, or send it to the address above.

Consultant Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a criminal history check on file with your employer? \_\_\_\_\_

1. What kinds of knowledge and skills can you share with the student?

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2. How can you assure that you and your BHS student can communicate on a regular basis?

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3. What insights related to project design can you provide as your student develops the project proposal?

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4. What information related to project costs can you provide as your student develops a budget?

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Signature of Community Consultant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Senior Project Topic: \_\_\_\_\_



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# Evaluation of the Senior Project

There are two important facets to the evaluation of your Senior Project experience: first, a **self-evaluation** done with the guidance of your community consultant; second, a **formal multi-media presentation** to the Senior Projects Evaluation Panel who provides detailed feedback and assigns your project a grade.

### Self-Evaluation

As you conclude your project, discuss your experience in person with your community consultant. Use the *BHS Senior Project Presentation Score Sheet* (p. 14-15) to guide your discussion. Ask your community consultant to respond in writing to your dialogue; for example, he or she could write a letter of recommendation to the Senior Project Evaluation Panel about working with you on your senior project.

In addition, you will write an extended reflective essay regarding the completed project and describing how you benefited from the experience. This paper will help guide your comments to the Senior Project Evaluation Panel, and you should include it in your Senior Portfolio.

Address the following points in the reflection. Use your notes from your meeting with your community consultant and the *BHS Senior Project 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Rubric* to help you respond.

- Which 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills did you master during your project? What have you learned about the project topic?
- What have you learned about yourself?
- What was the best experience you had? Why?
- What was the worst experience you had? Why?
- To what extent did your experience differ from your expectations?
- How would you evaluate your future in this area? Perhaps you have decided this area is not for you. Why?

### Senior Project Presentation

The culminating activity for your Senior Project is a formal multimedia presentation. This will be your opportunity to show a panel of community members and educators your knowledge and expertise. Use the *BHS Senior Project Presentation Score Sheet* as you prepare your presentation.

Your Senior Project should meet these expectations:

- 8-10 minute presentation
- competency in the use of multi-media. These may include, but are not limited to,
  - presentation software, such as PowerPoint
  - video editing software
  - integrated use of computer software and/or electronic devices
- limited use of notes
- knowledge of content
- logical organization
- highlights from your self-evaluation, with an emphasis on your development of 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills
- professional attire, demeanor, and delivery



Brownsburg High School  
 Senior Projects  
 Presentation Score Sheet • 2009-2010

Student Name •

Panelist Name •

**Directions:** Please clearly evaluate the student's presentation based on the criteria below. Please make constructive comments. The BHS students and staff appreciate your time and feedback. *Thank you!*

PRESENTATION	Criteria	Incomplete/Novice 1 pt	C Progressing 2 pts	B Proficient (meets standards) 3 pts	A Advanced (exceeds expectations) 4 pts	A+ Professional 5 pts	Score
	<b>Introduction</b> <i>Attention Getter</i>	Attention getter lacks spark; minimal effort	Attention getter needs improvement	Attention getter adequately written	Well-written and interesting	Superb introduction	
	<b>Vocal Quality</b> <b>Poise/Delivery</b>	Difficult to hear and understand; nervous body language, lacks enthusiasm	Low volume at times and uneven pace; minor signs of nervousness, little eye contact and enthusiasm	Appropriate pace, inflection, and volume; good posture, calm delivery, solid eye contact	Expressive voice, even pace and appropriate volume; relaxed body language, enthusiastic, effective eye contact	Skillfully uses voice, projects well; clear articulation; enthusiastic, confident, poised and well-prepared	
	<b>Conclusion</b>	Conclusion unclear; minimal effort	Conclusion needs improvement	Conclusion adequately written	Well-written conclusion	Excellent closure to a well-written speech	
<b>Total Presentation Score</b>							

21 <sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS	<b>Communication &amp; Collaboration</b>	Worked in isolation	Little or no interaction with community consultant	Demonstrated teamwork; worked with others including community consultant	Demonstrated teamwork and leadership; worked productively with others including community consultant	Demonstrated teamwork and leadership; worked productively with others including community consultant; exercised empathy; respected diverse perspectives	
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21 <sup>st</sup> CENTURY SKILLS	Criteria	Incomplete/Novice 1 pt	C Progressing 2 pts	R Proficient 3 pts	A Advanced (exceeds expectations) 4 pts	A+ Professional 5 pts	Score
	<b>Creativity &amp; Innovation</b>	No creativity exhibited	Developed and communicated ideas	Developed, implemented, and communicated ideas to others	Developed, implemented, and communicated new ideas to others	Developed, implemented, and communicated new ideas to others that solve real-world problems in the professional world	
	<b>Leadership &amp; Responsibility</b>	Lacked ethical behavior	Did not outwardly act on the interests of the larger community	Acted on the interests of the larger community; demonstrated ethical behavior	Acted on the interests of the community; demonstrated ethical behavior in a variety of ways	Acted as a leader in the community; demonstrated exemplary ethical behavior	
	<b>Flexibility &amp; Adaptability</b>	Showed inflexibility in personal and community contexts	Showed some flexibility in personal and community contexts	Showed flexibility in personal and community contexts	Showed a high level of flexibility in personal and community contexts	Demonstrated exceptional flexibility and adaptability	
	<b>Critical Thinking &amp; Problem Solving</b>	Did not identify problems, lack of creativity	Had difficulty identifying problems and possible solutions	Identified and solved problems	Framed, identified, and solved problems creatively	Framed, identified, and solved problems with creative, well-developed solutions	
	<b>Information &amp; Media Literacy Skills</b>	Did not identify resources; no used of technology	Used one resource; little use of technology	Used at least two resources; used technology	Utilized a variety of resources; multimedia used	Analyzed and created information in a variety of forms; professional multimedia skills	
	<b>Productivity &amp; Accountability</b>	Lack of accountability; no goals or standards	Unclear goals, lack of standards	Demonstrated accountability; set and met goals	Demonstrated accountability; set and met high standards and goals	Student set and met exemplary standards and goals; complete accountability	
COMMENTS TO STUDENT:					<b>Total 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills Score</b>		
					<b>Overall Senior Project Score</b>		

Rubric based on Learning in the 21st Century-Assessing Projects by Intel Teach Program