Project Overview

This year you will get to choose what and how you want to learn! Senior Project is designed to encourage lifelong learning, and your project should be as fun, challenging, and stimulating as possible. The final reward is knowing you did a great job on a great project.

Goals for the Senior Project

- To encourage you to be an independent, organized, lifelong learner.
- To promote your interests, career choices, and writing, speaking, and research abilities.
- To promote persistence, time-management skills, and goal setting.
- To support a collaborative environment in which students are mentored and coached by school officials and teachers while the community is involved as mentors and board members.

Requirements

The Senior Project has three parts: a research **paper**, a physical **project** and a **presentation**. You must show proficiency in all three areas to graduate.

1. **The MLA Analytical Research Paper**
   The research paper showcases your research, analysis and MLA formatting skills, and encourages you to become an expert on your topic. A proficient paper is 3000-3500 words long, while a potentially excellent paper has 4000-4500 words. This paper will earn you a grade in English as well, so your senior English teacher will guide you through the writing process

2. **The Physical Project**
   The physical project involves a minimum of 20 hours of documented extracurricular work. The project forges a link between you, the school, and the community, as you work with a mentor to complete your project. A potentially excellent project is a minimum of 40 documented hours.

3. **The Board Presentation**
   The presentation is your chance to show four to eight faculty and community members what you learned while completing the project. Proficient board speeches are 7 to 11 minutes long; a potentially excellent speech is 8 to 10 minutes. You must also have proficient speaking techniques and present information in an organized way using at least one self-created visual.

Timeline: 2016-2017

Assignment	Due Date	Comments
Parent Awareness Form due	Wed., Oct. 5th	
Senior Project Proposal due	Wed., Oct. 5th	
Checkpoint #1: Minimum of 5 project hours logged	Fri., Jan. 6th	All hours must be signed by a supervisor or parent/guardian
Checkpoint #2: Minimum of 15 project hours logged	Fri., Mar. 3rd	All hours must be signed by a supervisor or parent/guardian
Project **finished** on or before this date • Signed Log of Hours • Reflection and Self-Assessment form	Fri., Apr. 14th	No additional hours will be counted after this date
Presentation practice with required visual		
Portfolio: • **Your portfolio should reflect pride in yourself and your project.** • Cover shows name and project title • See the Portfolio Checklist for the list of required and optional components specific to your project • **Correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting on all documents**	Fri., April 28th	Seniors must turn in complete portfolios in order to be scheduled for presentations
Senior Presentations	Fri., May 5th and 12th	
Graduation	Thurs. June 1st	Congratulations!

Senior Project Proposal

Type out a complete and thorough response to each question. At the top of the paper, please include your name, date, and title of your project. (See Example Proposal Form on the following page)

1. **Project Description:** Identify your project and its goal(s). Be as specific and concrete as you can.

2. **Project Task Analysis:** List at least five specific steps necessary to complete your project:

3. **Final Product:** What will you show your board to demonstrate successful completion of your project? Create a checklist of artifacts or evidence you will show your board.

4. **Prior Experience:** What is your previous experience in this area?

5. **Challenge:** In what specific ways will this project be a challenge for you? How will this experience push you?

At the bottom of your page include two areas for signatures. It will be exactly as follows:

Approval of Senior Advisor: _____   Date: _____
Approval of Administrator: _____   Date: _____

Example Proposal Form

Jane Doe
October 4, 2015

Recycling at TCPCS

1. **Project Description:**

    I plan to improve the student and staff involvement in recycling at Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School. I will promote school-wide involvement in recycling, hopefully initiating a "recycling system" in classrooms and commons areas with bulletin notices and posters. I will make the recycling of various materials (paper, glass, plastic, etc) easier with more recycling bins. I will also attempt to reduce waste production by initiating programs to reuse paper. The success of the project can be measured by data I collect from garbage audits, in which the school's garbage is sorted and the amounts of specific types of waste are measured. I will compare data from garbage audits conducted before and after initiating my project. I hope the data from the final waste audit will show fewer discarded materials and more recycled materials.

2. **Project Task Analysis:**

    1. Inform and involve the entire student body and staff for the need to recycle and recycling options via posters, video bulletin announcements, etc.
    2. Arrange and take part in at least two waste audits and calculate data.
    3. Measure before and after classroom and commons involvement in recycling.
    4. Contact waste-collection facilities for advice about solid waste recycling programs.
    5. Make graphs that display my results.

3. **Final Product:**

    I will create a PowerPoint to show my board photos of my process as well as graphs to show changes in recycling behavior. I will provide photos that show bulletin boards and posters I created for advertising. I will show a clip from the video bulletin announcement I create to support the recycling efforts.

4. **Prior Experience:**

    I have always recycled and tried to encourage friends and peers to do so too. I have tried to start a TCPCS Recycle Club every year but there is not enough interest.

5. **Challenge:**

    I have never organized any kind of school-wide campaign or activity. Designing the posters will challenge my artistic skills. Motivating people to increase their recycling will be difficult since it's not a glamorous cause and I will have to try to change their habits permanently. The math part will also be a challenge for me.

Approval of Senior Advisor: _____   Date: _____
Approval of Administrator: _____   Date: _____

Proposal Checklist

Student: _____   Editor: _____   Date: _____

Conventions/Sentence structure/fluency:

YES   NO   Grammar, spelling, punctuation, and formatting are perfect and sentences are complete.

1) Project Description: The more detail the better.

YES   NO   Is the project safe and school appropriate?

YES   NO   Is the project description clearly stated and described?

YES   NO   Does the student clearly explain any terminology?

YES   NO   Does the student address confidentiality or any legal issues? For example, hospital job-shadows or police ride-along projects require prior contact with a person in charge. What forms/training will need to be completed?

YES   NO   Does the project seem substantial enough to require a minimum of 20 hours?

2) Project Task Analysis:

YES   NO   The student lists at least five detailed steps for his/her project.

YES   NO   The steps are not simply listing the checklist items for the final portfolio

3) Final Product:

YES   NO   Is the final product something tangible the student will actually show the board? (It may be something physically created. It may be a job shadow/volunteer notebook. It may be a slide show, or a tri-fold poster, etc.)

4) Previous Experience:

YES   NO   If the student has had background experience in this area, does he or she explain how this project is at least "one step beyond" the prior experience?

5) The Challenge:

YES   NO   Does the student clearly explain how the project will be a challenge?

        Project denied_____   Project needs revision_____   Project approved_____

Comments:

Parent Awareness Form

Dear Parent or Guardian,

In compliance with Idaho State Education Department requirements, Taylor's Crossing Public Charter School mandates that all senior students successfully complete a Senior Project to earn a graduation certificate. The requirements are explained on the Project Overview form. You are asked to thoroughly read the overview. After reading the overview, **please initial** each statement below. Then **sign** and date the bottom of the page signifying your understanding of the expectations.

Student Name: _____

1. _____ I understand that a passing grade on all aspects of the Senior Project is a requirement of the State of Idaho and for graduation from Taylors Crossing Public Charter School.

2. _____ I understand that any part of the project that is submitted after the identified due date will receive no credit and jeopardize my student's graduation.

3. _____ I understand that all scores assessed at the end of the Senior Project Presentation are final and cannot be changed or made up.

4. _____ I understand that my student needs to pass the **physical project**, the **research paper**, and the **oral presentation** with an excellent or proficient score in order to graduate.

5. _____ I have discussed this project with my student and will help him/her successfully complete all aspects.

Parent/guardian signature _____

Student signature _____   Date _____

Project Modules

There are many options for what you can complete for your Senior Project. These are the main modules or categories that they tend to fall under to hopefully help give you some ideas:

A Job Shadow Experience

In a Job Shadow, you attend a supervisor's workplace for a minimum of twenty hours, observing their work and documenting your experience. Select a Job Shadow experience in a profession or occupation you might consider for your own future in order to make the experience most worthwhile. At least 20 hours must be completed with your supervisor on the job site(s).

A Volunteer or Service Experience

Many organizations function with the volunteer efforts of community members. Volunteerism can be incredibly rewarding and even life-changing. If there is a social, political, environmental or other cause that you find inspiring, consider finding a way to volunteer your time and energy for that cause. At least 20 hours must be completed with an organization leader or supervisor at the volunteer site(s).

Construct or Create Something (General)

If your idea does not fit into any of the above categories, then consider it a "General" project. Typically, a "General" project will involve constructing or creating something, but do not be limited by those concepts. Talk to your Senior Advisor if you have trouble thinking about the details of your project.

Project Evaluation Form

Student Name: _____   **Overall Score:**   E   P   D

	EXCELLENT	PROFICIENT	DEVELOPING	COMMENTS
USE OF TIME	• A minimum of 40 hours • Demonstrates consistent, efficient, thoughtful use of time	• Meets or exceeds minimum requirement of 20 hours • Demonstrates time management skill	• Has fewer than 20 hours • Lacks evidence of time management	
VERIFICATION	• Student is self-directed and turns in all verification items on time • Met deadlines for all required Senior Project assignments	• Student turns in items after a reminder or a few reminders from the instructor	• Student does not turn in verification items unless constantly reminded by the instructor • Student does not turn in verification items	
QUALITY	• Superior effort or craftsmanship, and attention to detail • The project is well organized and reflects pride • A challenge is evident	• Good effort and attention to detail • The project is organized • A challenge is evident	• Little or no effort evident • Student overlooks details • The project is disorganized • No challenge is evident	
PROBLEM SOLVING	• Uses appropriate problem-solving skills to overcome difficulties • Persists until problems are solved • Seeks advice or help when needed • Explores new ideas or creative solutions	• Uses problem-solving skills to overcome difficulties • Tries to solve a problem several times before quitting • Seeks advice or help when needed • Tries to consider new ideas or creative solutions	• Has little or no understanding of difficulties and no plans to overcome them • Quits immediately • Fails to seek advice or help • Fails to consider new ideas or creative solutions	
PORTFOLIO/PROJECT MODULE MATERIALS	• All required documents are present according to appropriate checklist • Documents are ordered according to the checklist provided • Superior effort or craftsmanship, and attention to detail is demonstrated • All text is neat and easy to read • Additional features such as graphics/illustrations, photos, etc., add to the overall presentation of the portfolio and are relevant to the project • No errors in spelling, capitalization, or punctuation • All documents are final, edited drafts without comments and/or marks	• All required documents are present according to appropriate checklist • Documents are ordered according to the checklist provided • Overall look is professional and well-crafted • Good effort and attention to detail is demonstrated • All text is neat and easy to read • Additional features such as graphics/ illustrations, photos, etc., are included • Very minor errors in spelling, capitalization, or punctuation are present in documents • Almost all documents are final, edited drafts without comments and/or marks	• One or more required documents are missing according to appropriate checklist • Documents are not ordered according to the checklist provided • Overall look is messy or unprofessional, little effort and attention to detail is demonstrated • Some text is not neat or easy to read • No additional features are included • Multiple or serious errors in spelling, capitalization, or punctuation are present in documents • Some documents are not final, edited drafts or include those with comments and/or marks	

Reflection and Self-Assessment

Type out your responses to these questions. Be thorough, thoughtful, and specific.

1. In at least 25 words describe your project and your paper. Summarize your project experience, including the following details: Total hours spend on the project, an overview of the critical steps involved in the completion of your project and the date range of your project (starting date and finishing date).

2. What was the picture in your mind of your project before you started working on it? How does the outcome of your project compare with your first perception of your project?

3. Describe the problems and/or challenges you encountered as you completed this project. Consider physical, time management, emotional, and intellectual challenges.

4. How did you handle these problems and/or challenges?

5. List at least three personal satisfactions or knowledge you gained from this project.

6. Would you recommend your project area for future seniors? Would you consider having your paper, project and portfolio on file as a model for next year's seniors? Explain.

7. What comments about your project have you heard from students, parents, teachers, or community members?

8. Is your project original or creative in any way? If yes, explain how.

9. If given the opportunity, what would you do differently now that you speak from experience?

10. Beyond the project itself, what did you learn about yourself?

11. Using language from the Teacher Project Evaluation rubric, explain the grade you believe you deserve for your project. Justify why you think you deserve the grade (Excellent, Proficient, or Developing) in each category with evidence.

12. What are you planning to do next year? How is your project related (if at all)? What have you done (taking certain classes, applying to colleges, choosing your particular senior project) to realize your plan?

Senior Research Paper Rubric

	EXCELLENT: Writer excels in trait.	PROFICIENT: Shows control and confidence. Paper may need very little revision.	DEVELOPING: Writer begins to take shape. Paper needs more revision.	VERY BASIC: Writer shows little control. Needs many revisions.	BEGINNING: Writer is just starting.
EVIDENCE OF RESEARCH					
CONVENTIONS					
SENTENCE FLUENCY					
WORD CHOICE					
VOICE					
ORGANIZATION					
IDEAS AND CONTENT					

Boards Presentation Requirements

Requirement	Explanation
Time	The entire presentation, not including the impromptu question and answer period: - To qualify for an "excellent" the time must be **between 8 and 10 minutes.** - To qualify for a "proficient" the time must be **between 7 and 11 minutes.** **Under 7 minutes or over 11 minutes** are unsatisfactory
Impromptu Q&A	Following your presentation, your board will have the opportunity to ask you a variety of questions. To prepare, consider brainstorming: - If you were a judge listening to your speech, what would you want to know? - How is this project a culmination of your high school experience? - What unusual qualities does your project have that might spark interest? - What controversial topics, if any, do you touch on? - What inspired you to choose this topic? - Who helped and how? - How did you finance it?
Attire	You will be assessed on the professionalism of your attire, just as would be the case in a job interview. **Gentlemen should wear** - nice slacks and button-down shirts with ties or sweaters - sports jackets or suits - clean, professional footwear **Gentlemen should not wear** - jeans or pants which sag - headwear **Ladies should wear** - dresses - dressy slacks - pant suits or dress suits **Ladies should not wear** - skirts shorter than school policy - tight or revealing clothing
Visual Aid	You are required to have some form of visual aid. Your visual must be fluidly integrated into the content of your speech. **Your visual should not be an outline of your speech content** (as some PowerPoint presentations tend to be). Rather, your visual aid should be what the name suggests: a visual which aids your audience in understanding your project. A few pointers: - Avoid passing objects around during your presentation, as this can be distracting. - Focus on pictures, charts or graphs rather than text. The board should be listening to you, not reading a screen. **Slides should have large scale images and titles only.** - Make sure your visual has a purpose, and plan where it will serve your speech (illustrating a point rather than being an "add on" to the end). - Remember that the goal of your visual is to help your audience understand and "visualize" the experience you underwent in your project. Options may include: - PowerPoint **(remember-very little text!)** - Foam-core or tri-fold board (print photos large enough to see from a distance!) - If your project included creating something, make sure to bring that item to share with the board.

Boards Presentation Rubric

Student: _____ Project: _____ Date: _____

CONTENT	Excellent	Proficient	Developing
Time limit: 8-10 minutes for excellence; 7-11 for proficiency			
Introduction: The Speaker is in control. Opening statement is engaging, content is focused, and purpose is clear.			
Research, expertise and application of learning are apparent through clear main points and appropriate supporting details. Terminology is used and explained. Self-discovery statements such as "I learned" and "I never knew" reflect the speaker's growth.			
Organization: Speech is logically ordered and transitions linking various parts make the speech easy to follow.			
Conclusion: Major points reviewed, emphasis on student learning, final sentences make the speech seem complete.			

DELIVERY			
Language Usage: Word choice is mature and precise.			
Greeting and Eye Contact: Speaker shakes hands or greets the board and makes eye contact throughout the speech.			
Effective Speech Techniques: Speaker is poised. Rate, volume and gestures make speech easy to listen to. Filler words are minimal.			
Dress and Appearance: Speaker's dress is professional.			
Visual/Audio aid(s): Smoothly integrated into presentation, easily visible or audible, relevant, and professional. Focuses primarily on images, is not overly wordy.			

IMPROMPTU			
Impromptu skills: Answers are fluent and confident.			
Quality of response: Answers reflect expertise.			

COMMENTS are greatly appreciated by the students, especially if the "developing" column is marked. Students need to understand their strengths and weaknesses.