

# **NOTRE DAME JR./SR. HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR GRADUATION PROJECT**

(Updated 2/20/2024)

## **Purpose**

The Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School Graduation Project is intended to be a comprehensive learning activity of the highest quality both in scope and depth.

The completed project should demonstrate the achievement of Notre Dame's standard for outstanding student performance and preparedness for college. Through self-directed learning, students will have the opportunity to witness their Catholic faith while exhibiting problem-solving, decision-making, and independent research skills in the investigation of a specialized area of interest.

The Notre Dame High School Graduation Project applies to all students. This project is designed to...

- Provide a challenging learning experience, allowing students to create a uniquely personal product.
- Encourage enterprise and personal ownership of a task.
- Support diversity of learning styles and interests.
- Promote accountability and responsibility as well as a curiosity for discovery.
- Promote self-confidence through the accomplishment of investigative goals.
- Explore an appropriate area of study approved by a faculty mentor and Notre Dame High School administration.

## **Requirements**

The Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School Graduation Project will require student work encompassing the following components:

1. 40 hours to be completed by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of Senior year
2. Research Paper
3. Oral Presentation

### **The Role of the Mentor**

Students will be randomly assigned a mentor during their freshman year. The mentor will be a member of the high school faculty or administration.

The mentor will...

- Meet with assigned students individually or as a group at pre-arranged times.
- Review the requirements with the students to ensure their understanding of all expectations and procedures necessary for successful completion of the project.
- Ensure each student's project demonstrates a learning stretch within his/her individual capabilities.
- Provide support to the students as necessary for the successful completion of projects.
- Track students' submissions of forms as dictated by the timeline.
- Keep each student's graduation project file current and accurate.
- Review assessment forms with each student.
- Grade the student on a Pass/Incomplete scale when required.
- Conduct practice sessions with students for their oral presentations.
- Serve as a member of the evaluation panel for each assigned student's presentation.

### **The Role of the Senior Project Committee**

- Introduce the project to the freshmen class
- Approve all projects
- Provide consultation for any questions
- Issue the final grade for each student's oral presentation
- Issue the final grade for each student's Senior Graduation Project

## Detailed Time Line

### Freshman Year

- Introduction to the graduation project
- Introduction to randomly-assigned mentor
- Choose a project topic (due to the Senior Project Committee) by the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.
- Parents and students sign the **Acknowledgement Form** by May 1<sup>st</sup>.

### Sophomore Year

- **Written Proposal Form** is due at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.
- Begin to work on Project and fill in the Time Log.
- **Progress Report #1** is due at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
- **Progress Report #2** is due at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

### Junior Year

- **One-Time events** (e.g., a race for a cause/organization; a soccer clinic; a fashion show) must be completed **before** senior year begins.
- **Interim Report #1** (with accurate time log) is due at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.
- The **second Monday in** January is the last opportunity to switch a Senior Project. Any student who chooses to change the focus of his/her Project will be required to complete an "Appeal to Switch Projects" form and personally present his/her appeal before the committee.
- **Interim Report #2** (with accurate time log) is due at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
- **Interim Report #3** (with accurate time log) is due at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter.

### Senior Year

- **40 hours must be completed before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.**
- A **Research Paper** is due to the Senior English instructor by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
- The **Project Reflection Paper** is due by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter.
- All seniors will practice the **Oral Presentation** twice with his/her mentor; this will be completed by the last day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.

## **Types of Projects**

The following projects are intended to serve as examples. Students are not limited to these ideas.

### **I. Curriculum Related Project**

*Students may elect to extend research previously completed in a high school course.*

- Design educational software.
- Study a particular species and chronicle its evolution.
- Create an architectural design with computer technology.
- Author an adaptive screenplay for a classic novel. (Do not infringe on copyright laws.)

### **II. School/Community Involvement Project**

*Students may elect a project to provide a service to school or community.*

- Plan and design a recreational park.
- Organize a fundraiser for a charitable organization. (One-time events must be completed BEFORE senior year begins.)
- Serve an internship at a community youth program. (This project would need an adult advisor. Please see the Internship Project Consent Form.)
- Organize a parade/community event.
- Design and execute an Eagle Scout project.
- Coordinate and implement a philanthropic project to earn a Girl Scout Gold Award
- Pursue an interest in sports, like serving as an assistant coach or earning a referee certification. (Aspects of this project would need an adult advisor. Please see the Internship Project Consent Form.)
- Pursue and interest in education, like serving as a CCD teacher. (It must be noted that students may not miss their own classes to work with school students.)

### **III. Internship Project**

Students wishing to pursue an internship project must contact the adult supervisor and have the Internship Project Consent Form signed by the adult and his/her parent before the committee reviews the project.

*Students may elect to pursue an apprenticeship in a professional capacity.*

- Business/Corporation
- Politics – an internship with local, state or federal legislators such as: School Board, County Commissioner, Mayor, State Representative
- Legal Community and Criminal Justice: Lawyer, Probation Officer, Firefighter, Police Officers
- Medical Community: Nurse, Doctor, Physical Therapist, Radiologist, Medical Technician

#### **IV. Entrepreneurial Project**

*Students may elect a marketing or business venture.*

- Create and chart the progress of an investment portfolio.
- Develop and market a new concept or product.
- Research the potential and requirements of a start-up business.

#### **V. Personal Interest Project**

*Students may elect to examine potential careers, expand upon hobbies, or pursue academic studies of a particular interest.*

- Write and illustrate a children's book.
- Create and perform an original musical composition.
- Create an original art portfolio.

#### **VI. Product Invention Project**

*Students may elect to develop their ideas or concepts by drafting, building, and/or demonstrating an invention.*

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

Due by May 1<sup>st</sup> of student’s freshman year.

**Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School  
Senior Graduation Project Proposal**

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

My signature below indicates...

1. I have read and understand the Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School Senior Graduation Project Requirements.
2. I acknowledge my son/daughter is responsible to meet all of these requirements to graduate from Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School and have discussed this responsibility with him/her.
3. I understand my student’s progress and timely submission of forms will appear on his/her report card with a Pass/Fail grade.
4. If the student is pursuing a topic that necessitates adult participation, that student needs to submit the **Internship Project Consent Form** (next page).

I have approved the following possible project chosen by my son/ daughter:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent/ Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Signature of Sr. Project Committee \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School**  
**Senior Graduation Project**  
**INTERNSHIP PROJECT CONSENT FORM**

Students who propose a Senior Graduation Project that requires the participation of an adult as a sponsor, or wish to pursue an internship with an adult, must contact that person and acquire his/her signature for the consent form below.

I understand that \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to pursue an interest in the field of \_\_\_\_\_. I agree to sponsor this student in this endeavor, and I understand that one of the requirements is forty hours of work on the project over three years of high school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title of Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**WRITTEN PROPOSAL FORM**

Due by the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of student’s Sophomore year.

**Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School  
Senior Graduation Project**

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

Directions:

Type your responses to the following questions on a separate piece of paper, in paragraph form. Number your responses. This form must accompany your proposal.

1. What “type” of project (as outlined in the **Senior Graduation Project Requirements**) have you chosen to pursue?
2. Describe your proposed project in detail.
3. What impacted your decision to pursue this particular project?
4. What new knowledge do you expect to gain as you work on your project?
5. How does this project present a challenge to you?
6. What aspect(s) of your project will be supported by research?
7. What aspect(s) of your project will be experiential/physical?

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Mentor Commentary/Recommendations:

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## **RESEARCH PAPER GUIDELINES**

Due to the Senior English instructor by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter

The research paper connected to the Senior Project is an investigation of some aspect relating to the graduation project. It is not a description of the project itself, but rather an extension of the project through learning more about the topic. The student may include documented material that he or she has discovered in working on the project. The student may use an interview with a professional in the field as a source. Personal interviews are limited to two.

- The research paper must have a clearly identifiable thesis, supported by research.
- The paper should be a minimum of 6 pages in length.
- At least six current, professional sources must be utilized. Plot summaries, encyclopedia articles, and computer software are not considered professional sources. Only two internet sources and two personal interview sources may be used.
- Writing should be articulate and demonstrate proper English grammar, mechanics, and usage.
- The research paper should be in 12 font, Times New Roman, double spaced, with a Works Cited Page.
- All information referenced for the research paper must be accurate, verifiable, and properly documented. Documentation is expected to follow the MLA guidelines for parenthetical, internal documentation. All information not considered general knowledge must be cited. Therefore, even paraphrased information must be cited.
- The heading on the paper should include: Senior Graduation Project Research Paper, Name, Date, English Teacher's Name, and Mentor's Name
- The research paper is due to the Senior English instructor as instructed.
- The research paper will be graded with a letter grade for Senior English and with a Pass/Fail grade for the Senior Graduation Project.

## **ORAL PRESENTATION GUIDELINES**

In order to be best prepared for their oral presentations, seniors will follow these guidelines.

1. Students will practice the Oral Presentation twice with his/her mentor; this will be completed by the last day of the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter.
2. Students will show their presentation to three faculty members.
3. Oral presentations should be between 8 and 10 minutes, 10 being the maximum.
4. Oral presentations need to be accompanied by at least 2 visual aids.
5. Students are expected to dress in professional, business attire for their presentations.
6. Students will arrive 15 minutes prior to their assigned presentation time.
7. Students using any of the school's technology equipment for their presentation must complete a **Technology Usage Form and return it to Miss Olmstead 2 weeks before the scheduled oral presentations.**
8. Students should not read any part of their presentation. A topic outline on note cards may be used provided each topic is expressed in no more than two words.
9. Conclusions expressed during the presentation should be supported with strong data and/or research.



**Appeal to Switch Senior Project**  
**(before the second Monday in January of Junior Year)**

**Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School**  
**Senior Graduation Project**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Type your responses to the following questions on a separate piece of paper, in paragraph form. Number your responses. This form must accompany your proposal.

1. Explain why you wish to switch your senior project.
2. Explain your new proposal.
3. If your proposal is approved, what can you do to accomplish the 40 hours needed to complete the project successfully?

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

**Appeal to Switch Senior Project**  
**(after the second Monday in January of Junior Year)**

**Notre Dame Jr./Sr. High School**  
**Senior Graduation Project**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Directions: Type your responses to the following questions on a separate piece of paper, in paragraph form. Number your responses. This form must accompany your proposal.

1. Explain why you wish to switch your senior project.
2. Explain your new proposal.
3. If your proposal is approved, what can you do to accomplish the 40 hours needed to complete the project successfully?

I understand that I, the student, in addition to completing this form, will personally appear before the Senior Project Committee to present my appeal.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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