

Name: _____

**Senior Project
Handbook**

2007-2008

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Essential School**

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What is the Senior Project?

The Senior Project is designed to be the culmination of each student’s academic experience at the Parker School, highlighting the skills that they have learned and their ability to learn for themselves. It is a genuine opportunity for Seniors to merge their various interests, passions, and curiosities with their academic lives at school. Similarly, the project is a vehicle for seniors to demonstrate the fullest extent of the autonomy, complexity, and awareness they have learned throughout their time at Parker.

The Six Tenets of the Senior Project:

- **The Essential Question:** Because a successful and meaningful Senior Project necessarily involves genuine inquiry around a topic of the student’s choosing, each senior will focus their work around a complex, interesting, and sustainable essential question.
- **Benefit to the Larger Community:** Because we are all members of a broader community, each Senior Project must incorporate some aspect of “giving back” to others. In this regard, each senior’s work, time, and energy should result in a contribution that has an impact on individuals or an entity that goes beyond the student or the project itself.
- **Multi-Faceted Approach:** Because of the complex nature of each Senior Project, seniors must incorporate a variety of modes of thinking in the planning, implementation, and exhibiting of their projects.
- **A Research Component:** No Senior Project will be successful without a substantial element of new learning. This learning can take place in many ways, one of which must be research. Research must be both experiential (interviews, internships, surveys, etc.) and text-based (library, internet, etc.), although the degree to which each form is emphasized will vary from student to student.
- **Collaboration:** One of the most important skills in life is the ability to work with and learn from other people. Each Senior Project must incorporate some element of collaboration with individuals outside the immediate Parker community. In many cases, these “outsiders” will serve as secondary mentors for the Senior Project.
- **Academic Rigor:** Each Senior Project must be conceived in a way that challenges the student to think deeply and critically beyond what he/she already knows and is able to do. The topic must be big enough for the student to consider multiple perspectives but not so big that it will lead only to superficial understanding.

There are four assessed components of the project:

- the research
- the process
- the product
- the exhibition

Each of these components is described in detail in the pages that follow. Each component is assessed individually. Upon completion of the project, those assessments are combined for an overall course assessment of meets minimum requirements, satisfactory or exceptional.

Timeline: 2007-2008

9/10	Senior Project Handbooks distributed
9/10-9/21	Topic Search and Preliminary Research
9/21	Project proposal draft Due to senior seminar teacher
9/24-9/28	Proposal conferences and writing
10/1	Project proposal Due; 2nd Quarter Release Time Proposals Due
10/2-10/19	Proposal reviews, feedback to students
Week of 10/22	Conference #1 (preliminary sources, see p. 9) ➤ Reflection paper #1 Due
11/7	Community Feedback Night
Week of 11/19	Conference #2 (calendar, research questions, mentor, see p. 9) ➤ Reflection paper #2 Due
11/22-11/23	<i>Thanksgiving Recess</i>
12/14	Research (Part 1) Due
12/17	3rd Quarter Release Time Proposals Due
12/24-1/3	<i>Holiday Recess</i>
Week of 1/7	Conference #3 (research check, off-campus, benefit, see p. 9) ➤ Reflection paper #3 Due
2/4	Final Research Due
Week of 2/11	Conference #4 (research check, product progress. See p. 9) ➤ Reflection paper #4 Due
2/18-2/22	<i>Winter Recess</i>
3/14	Product Draft Due
4/2	Senior Project Exhibition Night
4/11	Final Product Due
4/21-4/25	<i>Spring Recess</i>
5/5-5/9	Senior Project Exhibitions
5/16	Process Binder Due w/ final reflection #5
5/22	Graduation portfolios Due
6/4	GRADUATION!!

Senior Project Proposal and Description

Draft Due: Friday, Sept. 21

Proposal Due: Monday, October 1

Approved Project Description: Date determined with teacher

Updated Project Description: Due with each conference

The first formal element of the Senior Project is your proposal. After spending some time brainstorming ideas in Senior Seminar, you will create a 1-2 page project proposal that explains how you intend to address each required element of the project. After this proposal is approved, it will become your formal project description, which you will be responsible for keeping current throughout the year. It is expected that elements of your project will shift and be revised as you gain knowledge through the year; however, these revisions must be documented in your project description so that it accurately reflects the work you are doing on your project.

Your Senior Project Proposal/Description should be organized by the headings listed below, in whatever order makes sense for your project. You should explain your intentions for each element in no more than one paragraph.

Project Overview and Statement of Interest (should go first)

Essential Question

Product

Research (text and experiential)

Academic Rigor

Multi-faceted Approach

Benefit to Larger Community

Collaboration

Mentor Plan

The timeline for your proposal is as follows:

Draft: Friday, September 21

Draft is submitted to Senior Seminar teacher, who gives feedback that should be incorporated or addressed for the final proposal.

Formal Proposal: Monday, October 1

Proposal will be reviewed by committee and returned with approval and/or areas for revision (using rubric on next page).

Approved Project Description: Due date determined with senior seminar teacher

Once the formal proposal has been reviewed by the committee and feedback given, you will revise where necessary until you have a full project description that satisfactorily addresses each of the project components. This will be the document that you and your advisor use to discuss the status of your project during formal and informal conferences.

Project Status updates: Ongoing, due with each conference

For each formal conference with your teacher, you will update your project description with a dated addendum to each section stating if and how it has changed since the last update.

Senior Project Proposal Feedback Sheet

Essential Question	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Product	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Benefit to a Larger Community	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Academic Rigor	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Preliminary Research	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Multi-Faceted Approach	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Mentor Plan	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>
Timeline	<input type="checkbox"/> Okay <input type="checkbox"/> Needs Revision	<u>Suggestions:</u>

Secondary Mentors

While your advisor serves as your primary mentor, you will also have a Secondary Mentor. This is an internal (Parker faculty) or external (parent, community member, internship contact, etc.) adult who serves as a support (and potentially content expert) for your senior project. *You will receive an informational packet at the outset of your topic search to share with potential secondary mentors. The packet will spell out the details of their responsibilities to you and to the school.*

What are the secondary mentors' responsibilities?

Secondary mentors will receive an information packet prior to the start of a student's internship and/or Senior Project. The packet will contain the following items:

- Information about Parker and the Senior Project/internship guidelines
- Expectations of students and mentors
- Letter of commitment to be signed by mentors
- Notification about the student's Senior Project Exhibition
- Guidelines for the assessment of the final product

Mentors should be willing to support the goals of the Senior Project as a unique learning experience for students and a chance to be engaged in self-invested and relevant work.

What is Parker's responsibility to secondary mentors?

Parker must supply secondary mentors with appropriate background information about the Senior Project and the objectives of off-site internships and the Senior Project. The Senior Seminar teacher will work to ensure that students contribute positively to the work of their mentors.

Internships

Internships are an optional element of your senior project, intended for students who wish to immerse themselves in a formal experience outside of the Parker community. Any time away from Parker must be approved through the release time policy.

How do I get started on an internship?

While your senior seminar teacher will assist and support you in finding an internship, you are ultimately responsible for making the arrangements for and following through on your internship. We have access to resources which you might find helpful in your search for an internship. In order for an internship/release time request to be approved, it must be clear that your internship directly connects to the essential question you pose in your Senior Project. In addition, your ideas for an internship must be incorporated into your Senior Project proposal.

How will my internship be assessed?

Your internship will be assessed as part of your Senior Project. While conducting your internship, you must document all work and progress in a log that your supervisor/mentor should approve and which will be reviewed by your advisor. As appropriate, your mentor/supervisor will comment upon your work and this feedback will be incorporated into your final assessments.

Are students eligible for financial compensation?

You may not personally profit from your internship. If you are paid for your work, you must donate that money to the school or another appropriate organization or use it to directly offset expenses related to the internship.

Release Time Policy

Only Seniors who already have evidence of proficiency in the majority of the 9 Parker skill areas are eligible to petition for sustained Senior Project-related release time (leave of absence, one day a week away or an hour a day options). Other students may petition for single days away (day away option), subject to their being in good academic standing (having no late or missing work and not being in danger of not completing a course) and the approval of their advisor. Seniors petitioning for second quarter release time must demonstrate proficiency in 5 of the skill areas, whereas those petitioning for release time in the third quarter must demonstrate 7. For the purposes of release-time, “proficiency” is defined as at least one piece of work that meets the Division Three/Graduation expectations. There are four different release time options:

- **“Leave of Absence” option:**

This option is defined by an extended period of time away from Parker, up to but not to exceed two quarters. This option is ideal for seniors who wish to immerse themselves in a full-time experience away from the Parker School. Seniors can petition for extended leaves of absence during the second *and/or* third quarters. Arrangements for accountability to all academic courses (in the form of an exit and re-entry contract) must be made before the student gets final approval to leave campus. **Seniors who are still in Division Two Spanish are not eligible for this option.** In rare circumstances, 4th quarter leaves may be approved. (See Alternate Course of Study Guidelines.)

- **“One Day a Week” option:**

This option is defined by taking one “Senior Project Day” per week away from Parker. This option is designed for seniors who wish to work on internships and other project-related commitments on a substantial and regular basis without too much disruption to their academic lives. Seniors can petition for the “One Day a Week” option during the second and/or third quarters of the school year. Arrangements for accountability to academic courses (including Senior Seminar) and Service (in the form of an exit and re-entry contract) must be made beforehand and included as part of the release time proposal. [Note: Wednesday is the *recommended* day for this option to minimize academic disruptions.]

- **“Hour a Day” option:**

This option exists in two forms: a) Seniors who wish to be exempted from one of their four academic courses, or b) Seniors who wish to be away from Parker during the same hour each day (either first hour in the morning or last hour in the afternoon). In both cases, this option works for seniors who wish to work on internships and other project-related endeavors on a substantial and regular basis without too much disruption to their academic lives. Seniors can petition for the “Hour a Day” option during the second and/or third quarters of the school year. Arrangements for accountability to academic courses (including Senior Seminar) and Service (in the form of an exit and re-entry contract) must be made beforehand and included as part of the release time proposal.

▪ “Day Away” option:

This option is for seniors who need one day or part of a day away from school to complete work related to their project beyond the normal workload. Students might use this option to attend workshops or lectures, to gain access to art studios or darkrooms, to travel to meet with a mentor who lives farther away, etc. This type of release time is granted on a day-by-day basis. Seniors may request more than one single day away throughout the course of their projects, but each day must be approved by the student’s advisor separately and based on the criteria explained above.

Release Time Proposal Guidelines:

In order to qualify for any or all of the sustained release time options, seniors must submit a completed ‘Graduation Portfolio Status Chart’ along with a proposal that addresses the questions below. The proposals will be reviewed by a committee (comprised of the Senior Seminar teachers and the principal) and approved, denied, or sent back to the student for revision.

- For which option are you applying (“Leave of Absence,” “One Day a Week,” or “Hour Away”)? Why does this option specifically meet your needs?
- How do your release time plans relate directly to your Senior Project and your essential question?
- How exactly will you be spending your release time? What responsibilities will you have? With whom will you be working? Please give a detailed plan of how you will spend your time away from school.
- How can you justify your release time plans as a “substantially different and essential experience” which is central to the completion of your Senior Project?

October 1, 2007:	Second Quarter Release Time Proposals Due (Second Quarter begins Monday, October 29, 2007) (Second Quarter ends Friday, January 25, 2008)
December 17, 2007:	Third Quarter Release Time Proposals Due (Third Quarter begins Tuesday, January 29, 2008) (Third Quarter ends Friday, April 4, 2008)

Other Requirements:

- Students must satisfactorily complete all courses from the prior semester to be eligible for release time.
- Students must complete an exit/re-entry contact and remain up-to-date with all current course work agreed upon in this contract in order to continue with release time. Release time will be revoked for all students who fail to adhere to this requirement.
- Students must thoroughly document all release time-related work on the Senior Project (in logs or journals).

Process Assessment

Your process will be assessed by your advisor, in consultation with your secondary mentor, as appropriate. Your advisor will use the assessments from your conferences, reflection papers and the materials that you have compiled in your process binder to assess your work. While you cannot revise your process, you can get progressively better over the course of the project. In order to receive an Exceptional on the Senior Project as a whole, you must “meet” the process expectations.

Progress Conferences

You will have periodic conferences with your advisor to assess the progress and depth of your project. **These conferences inform your final process assessment and the purpose of them is for you to show your senior seminar teacher the progress you are making and what you are learning.** You are responsible for bringing the appropriate materials and leading the conference in order to present a clear picture of the state of your project.

For **each** conference, you are expected to bring and/or discuss the following:

- Reflection paper
- Updated project description and dated addendum describing any changes
- Process binder
- Updated monthly timeline (prior and upcoming month), addressing the following:
 - Who have you talked to? What have you done?
 - What have you read (observed, studied, meditated on, etc.)?
 - What progress have you made?
 - What have you done to document your work and learning?
 - What’s next for your project?
- Significant new learning

Additionally, for each conference, there are some specific benchmarks that you are expected to address at that point in the project, as listed below.

Conference #1 Benchmarks and Expectations

Week of 10/22

- Preliminary sources; initial bibliography

Conference #2 Benchmarks and Expectations

Week of 11/19

- Year-long project breakdown
- Research questions
- Mentor letter

Conference #3 Benchmarks and Expectations

Week of 1/7

- Research check
- Off-campus plans, as applicable
- Benefit progress, as applicable

Conference #4 Benchmarks and Expectations

Week of 2/11

- Product progress
- Research check

Senior Project Conference Rubric *TO BE REVISED FOR 2007-2008*

You come to your conference prepared, with materials needed to demonstrate progress.	Need-----Strength		
You direct your own conference.	Need-----Strength		
Your project description reflects the current status of your project.	Need-----Strength		
Your process binder is organized and contains the relevant documentation for your project thus far.	Need-----Strength		
You have updated monthly documentation (logs, calendar, research evidence, etc.) that shows your recent progress and upcoming plans, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who have you talked to? What have you done? • What have you read (observed, studied, meditated on, etc.)? • What progress have you made? • What have you done to document your work and learning? • What's next for your project? 	Need-----Strength		
You can demonstrate or discuss significant new learning about your project.	Need-----Strength		
You meet the benchmarks for this conference: <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Conference #1 Preliminary list of sources</p> <p>Conference #2 Year-long calendar Research questions Mentor letter</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Conference #3 Research check Off-campus plans Benefit progress</p> <p>Conference #4 Research check Product progress</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Conference #1 Preliminary list of sources</p> <p>Conference #2 Year-long calendar Research questions Mentor letter</p>	<p>Conference #3 Research check Off-campus plans Benefit progress</p> <p>Conference #4 Research check Product progress</p>	Need-----Strength
<p>Conference #1 Preliminary list of sources</p> <p>Conference #2 Year-long calendar Research questions Mentor letter</p>	<p>Conference #3 Research check Off-campus plans Benefit progress</p> <p>Conference #4 Research check Product progress</p>		
You accept and incorporate feedback from appropriate sources.	Need-----Strength		
You use your Senior Seminar time appropriately.	Need-----Strength		

Conference Comments:

Reflection Paper

Your reflection paper reflects synthesis, personal growth, and/or personal learning.

Need-----Strength

Project Requirements:

You generate an essential question that drives your project. Need-----Strength

You explore your question with formal academic research. Need-----Strength

You benefit from collaboration. Need-----Strength

You use your findings or project to benefit a larger community. Need-----Strength

You apply skills and knowledge from several disciplines. Need-----Strength

Your project is academically rigorous & requires you to think in new ways. Need-----Strength

You are using your mentor appropriately. Need-----Strength

Reflection Paper Guidelines

Part of the process assessment for your senior project is based on your reflection on your work. **Periodically, you will complete a 1-2 page, typed reflection** consisting reflecting on your work, growth and learning about your project and yourself.

Reflection paper due dates 2007-2008

Reflection papers are due on the day of your conference. The last reflection paper is due, along with your process binder, on 5/16.

This reflection is generally at your conference. In the reflection, you should synthesize, reflect upon, and discuss your work and learning. You can use the prompts below to guide your reflection, but please feel free to address other topics relevant to your project as well. You may be asked to revise your reflection paper after your conference with your advisor.

- How and when are you working effectively on this project? If you had last month to do over again, what would you do differently? Why?
- What kinds of decisions have you found yourself making recently? Have they been good decisions? What are you learning about how you make decisions and what kind of effect these decisions have on your learning?
- What did you learn about yourself—your working style, your interests, etc?
- What new questions do you have now (about yourself, the project, your topic)?
- What did you learn about your topic/subjects that you didn't know before? What connections among the various things you have studied and researched do you see? Have you had any “aha” moments? What were they and how did they affect you?

Process Documentation and Assessment

Process Binder Guidelines:

Documentation of your senior project work over the course of the year must be organized in a binder or accordion file. This organizational system is assessed at each conference and turned in at the end of the project for final assessment. The following items/categories are expected to be represented, although there may be additional materials in your process binder as appropriate to your project.

Proposal/Project Description

- All drafts
- Feedback
- Monthly updates of project description

Conferences/Reflection

- Conference notes
- Conference Assessments
- Flag letters (if any) and documentation of addressing the problem
- Reflection papers

Mentor

- Copy of signed mentor agreement
- Contact information (phone, email, etc.)
- Notes/records from mentor meetings, calls, emails, etc.

Research

- Phone log
- Research log
- Research questions and sub-questions
- Notes
- Research summaries—parts 1 and 2
- Annotated bibliography, appropriately formatted

Timeline

- All drafts, with most recent revision on top
- Monthly goal-setting
- Daily log, as applicable

Internship (as applicable)

- Off-campus proposal
- Work contract for missed classes
- Site log of hours/work completed at internship

Product drafts and feedback, as appropriate

Benefit to the Community

A benefit to the community can be one of two types. It can either be a direct benefit, one through which you are working with the people (or animals or other living organisms) you are helping, or it can be an indirect benefit, one through which you are working with an organization or person that gives direct assistance to others.

Doing free labor is not, in and of itself, a benefit, nor is your work a benefit if it is solely about your learning and not about helping others. The assistance your benefit offers should fill a need or provide access to something otherwise unavailable to the person or entity you are helping.

The effects or evidence of your benefit should be tangible; your benefit should exist now and not be something that might happen in a year or five years as a result of what you do now. Ideally, your benefit should have a lasting and/or widespread impact. If you are creating a publication, website, curriculum unit, etc., your work becomes a benefit when you target and access your audience. You should also get and incorporate feedback from that audience so that your work is truly useful and beneficial as you intended.

Warning Flags

As you know, you are responsible for organizing your time and work for the senior project. If you are not making sufficient progress on your project, you may be “flagged.” If you are flagged, the following will occur:

- Your advisor will inform you of this verbally and in writing.
- You will need to make a schedule with your advisor to get back on track.
- Your off-campus privileges will be revoked until you are again in good standing.
- A letter will be sent home to your parents/guardians informing them of your status. [See Appendix A.]
- If, by the date established by you and your advisor, you have not yet returned to good standing, your advisor will arrange a follow-up meeting with you and your parents/guardians.
- If you are flagged twice in one semester and the second incident is unresolved by the deadline established, your advisor will schedule a meeting with you, your parents/guardians, and the principal of the school.
- If you have two unresolved flags in one semester, you will receive an unsatisfactory in Senior Seminar for that semester. This may also jeopardize your opportunity to do an internship and/or to graduate.

Research Assessment
Research, Part 1 Due: Friday, December 14
Final Research Due: Monday, February 4

Each Senior Project must be informed and supported by a solid foundation of research. All your research (whether it comes from books and articles or from interviews, films, observations, or other types of sources) needs to be documented well. This research will then be turned in to your advisor and formally assessed as a required component of the project. Though every project is different, some general guidelines for sources include:

- **your research should be based on 10-15 sources, of at least 4-5 types (including but not limited to books, articles, handbooks, interviews and the internet)**
- **at least 3 of those sources should be books or academic journal articles**
- **at least 1 of those sources should be an experiential form of research (interview, shadowing, internship, etc.)**

After you do some preliminary research, your first step is to create research questions (due at your November conference) to guide your research process. As you gather sources and do the research, it is expected that you will keep notes and an annotated bibliography of all sources. Your research will be handed in in two parts, one in December and another in February, and there are two major components you will hand in each time: the evidence of research (notes, annotated bibliography, etc.) and the research summary.

In December, you will hand in a research process check, and your advisor will tell you one of three things:

- You are on track. Keep doing what you are doing. Turn in all your research in February.
- You are doing certain things well, but there are some other questions to consider and some more sources to gather, etc. Keep going, fix what needs fixing and turn in all of your work for February.
- Your research is insufficient or incomplete for this point in your project. It must be revised now and resubmitted in January and however many times necessary after that to demonstrate you are on track.

You will then continue to work on your research to finalize it for the February deadline. At this time, your research component will be formally assessed with the rubric.

What do I hand in?

In December:

- Evidence of research, organized, labeled and including (at least):
 - Notes from sources (books, interviews, observations, etc.) you have already utilized
 - Evidence should be from a variety and range of sources—not only books or only websites; information related to the various aspects of your project
 - An annotated bibliography, properly formatted, containing all sources you have used to date
 - A list of sources for which you are still looking or planning to use
- A typed 2-3 page **research summary** that explains what you have learned so far.
 - summarize major trends and findings in your research (3rd person)
 - note any questions the research raises for you and explain their relevance (1st person)
 - discuss how your research so far informs the future direction of your research, product, benefit, timeline, etc. (1st person)

In February:

- Evidence of research, organized, labeled and including (at least):
 - Notes from all sources (books, interviews, observations, etc.) you have utilized
 - Evidence should be from a variety and range of sources
 - An annotated bibliography, properly formatted, containing all sources you used
- A typed 2-3 page **research summary** that explains major findings from research.
 - summarize major trends and findings in your research (may repeat some information from the first summary, but should include new and final findings) (3rd person)
 - note any questions the research raises for you and explain their relevance (1st person)
 - discuss how your research informs your answer to your Essential Question, the creation of your product, and the completion of your project (1st person)

Revision policy: If you receive an assessment below Meets on your research, you must revise until your research does meet standards. In order to successfully complete the Senior Project (and graduate!), the research component must meet standards. As you revise, you should check regularly with your advisor to address all elements of his or her initial feedback as well as to get further feedback as needed.

Student:

Senior Project Research Rubric

Criteria	JB	A	M	E	
<p>Sources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You use a variety of sources. • You use sources that are relevant to your topic and that further your knowledge base about your topic. • You assess the nature, reliability, and usefulness of your sources. • You document your sources and experiences and compile a properly formatted, annotated bibliography and record of events. 					
<p>Documentation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have a reliable, systematic, labeled, complete and clear organizational system for your research notes and materials. • You have a record of the major sources, people and texts consulted during your research process. • You classify, group, and label your information. 					
<p>Research Summary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your research summary demonstrates a solid and rigorous foundation of new learning and knowledge about your topic. • Your research summary clearly connects your findings to your essential question. • You explain how your research findings will influence your decisions about and creation of your final product. • Your research summary synthesizes and summarizes the major ideas in the field/s you have researched and notes significant deviations. • Your summary is conventionally sound, following the rules of grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. 					

Overall Assessment:

JB-----A-----M-----E

Comments and Suggestions:

Assessor:

Date:

Senior Project Product

Each Senior Project will result in a product of some sort. This product should be a logical and clear manifestation of your research, investigation, thinking, and work. A product could be anything from a paper to a performance to a painting. The product of each Senior Project will be assessed using the general criteria on the rubric. Some students complete a journal as product if they are doing a particularly experiential project. Please see Appendix C for more information. In addition, the input of secondary mentors will be solicited and incorporated into the final assessment of your product.

Revision policy: If you receive an assessment below Meets on your product, you must revise until your product does meet standards. In order to successfully complete the Senior Project, the product must meet standards. As you revise, you should check regularly with your advisor to address all elements of her or his initial feedback as well as to get further feedback as needed. Your advisor will set revision deadlines on an individual basis, but it is expected that your product will meet expectations before your exhibition.

Student:

Senior Project Final Product Rubric

Criteria	JB	A	M	E	
<p>Your product demonstrates a clear focus and purpose.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your product is an authentic outgrowth of your EQ • Your message/intention/goal is clear. 					
<p>Your product is informed by your research and experience</p>					
<p>Your product is rich, deep, complex and original</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You place your work in a larger intellectual context • You understand and interpret the meaning(s) of your findings. 					
<p>You made wise, deliberate, informed decisions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your research informs the design/shape of your work. • You understand the conventions used in your field of study. • You can describe your work and respond to questions about the choices you made. 					
<p>Your final product is coherent and demonstrates quality work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your work is complete. • Your final product shows good craftsmanship and attention to detail. 					

Overall Assessment:

JB-----A-----M-----E

Comments and Suggestions:

Assessor:

Date:

Senior Project Exhibition

The purpose of the Senior Project Exhibition is to provide an opportunity for you to:

- explain the learning you did over the course of the project
- explain the product of your year-long project and
- explain the process you used to complete the work

You will conduct a 30-60 minute presentation of your Senior Project to a panel (as well as other invited audience members). This panel is responsible for assessing both the substance and the style (the content and the delivery) of the exhibition. There will also be a question and answer component to the exhibition. Students are expected to be able to answer difficult questions from members of the panel on demand. An inability to answer relevant questions sufficiently will impact the assessment of the exhibition as a whole. *Please note, this exhibition is assessed on its own merits separate from the product and the process.*

Each panel will have the following five positions represented: the advisor, secondary mentor, one outside community member – can be a topic “expert” or other friend of Parker (visitors, non-Parker teachers, parents, etc.), one additional Parker faculty member, and one Division Three, non-senior student. The panel must come to consensus about whether the exhibition is Just Beginning, Approaching, Meeting or Exceeding the expectations. Exhibitions cannot be revised.

Preparing for the Senior Project Exhibition

Unlike your Gateway exhibitions of previous years, your Senior Project Exhibition *will be assessed* by a jury of panelists. Because this exhibition is more high-stakes, it is imperative that you are well-prepared and organized.

Your exhibition is an opportunity for you to tell the story of the learning you have done throughout the course of your project. In doing that, you should make sure that you answer your essential question, describe your process and discuss your product. How you do that, and how much time you will devote to each, will depend on your individual project. Some of the topics which you might choose to address are:

- How you arrived at your topic/essential question
- Your answer to your essential question
- The major trends and findings of your research
- How your research and process helped you reach that answer
- What your product is
- How you chose and created the actual product
- What your process was
- The highs and lows of your process
- What worked well and what you’d do differently
- How you addressed the different components of the Senior Project (see p. 1)
- What you would do next if you were to continue your project

Your 30-60 minute presentation will be followed by questions and answers by the jury and then, time permitting, the audience.

When preparing for your exhibition, you should consider the needs of your audience in deciding what to include and how to convey that information. Your goal is to distill down and convey to your audience the fundamentals of what you learned throughout the course of your project. What will help an outsider

understand your work and learning? You should work to include visual aids such as pictures, video, a powerpoint presentation, etc. If you created a website, wrote a song or learned how to juggle, consider showing that to your jury. As you prepare for your exhibition, you should develop and fine-tune your outline and the organization of your presentation, seeking help and asking questions of your senior seminar teacher as needed. You should also practice your presentation, including using the required technology. Your exhibition is assessed on content as well as delivery and so it is important to pay attention to both aspects as you prepare.

Senior Project Exhibition Rubric

Student Name: _____

Date: _____

Juror Name: _____

Exhibition Criteria	JB	A	M	E	Comments
<p>You exhibit your learning in a way that allows the audience to understand your experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You choose a clear, coherent and appropriate structure for your presentation. ▪ You use your time effectively. ▪ You successfully utilize presentation aids and other supporting materials. ▪ You understand, anticipate, and fulfill your technological needs. 					
You shed unique, interesting, and relevant insight on your essential question.					
You demonstrate expertise in your topic, supported by a solid foundation of knowledge.					
You clearly explain your product.					
You clearly explain your process.					
You answer questions knowledgeably and thoroughly.					
<p>You use the conventions of delivery well in your exhibition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ You speak clearly, loudly, and at an appropriate pace. ▪ Your tone and language are suitable. ▪ You make effective eye contact with your audience. ▪ You demonstrate enthusiasm and confidence about material/subject. ▪ Your presentation style is engaging. 					

Overall Assessment: JB-----A-----M-----E

Final Assessment

The Senior Project will receive an overall assessment that takes into account all the components (as revised if necessary). This is the formal and final assessment. The overall project must meet minimum requirements, be satisfactory or exceptional in order for a student to graduate. Advisors who feel that a student has completed exceptional work will bring that work forward to be reviewed by all Senior Seminar teachers. It is not possible to receive an Exceeds designation on the Senior Project without meeting on the process and exhibition. If a necessary component of the project (such as the benefit, collaboration, use of a secondary mentor, etc.) goes unaddressed, a student can only meet minimum requirements.

Appendix A

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Sample Warning Flag Letter

FRANCIS W. PARKER CHARTER ESSENTIAL SCHOOL
& REGIONAL TEACHERS CENTER

49 ANTIETAM ST., DEVENS, MA 01434
TELEPHONE (978) 772-3293 FAX (978) 772-3295 PARKERSCHOOL@PARKER.ORG

_____, 2007

Dear _____ and Parents/Guardians,

This letter is to inform you that as of _____, you have not demonstrated adequate progress with your Senior Project. You are therefore being “flagged,” as we are concerned about your performance to date. Specifically, you have not shown sufficient progress on the following expectations:

Please realize that while we are worried about where you currently stand with your Project, you still have sufficient time to get back on track. Between now and _____, you must complete both the aforementioned missing components *and* move forward with evidence of tangible progress. Failure to do this may seriously jeopardize your graduation status.

Again, because the successful completion of the Senior Project is a graduation requirement, it is imperative that you take this letter seriously. Accordingly, you will lose your off-campus privileges until you are again in good standing. We also encourage you to make better use of your already-allotted Senior Project work time during school and your discretionary time. With the support you are provided through Senior Seminar, as well as a regular and purposeful commitment at home, you should be able to catch up and move forward; still it is your responsibility to do so.

If you have any questions, please see your Senior Seminar teacher as soon as possible. We wish you the best of luck in regaining the necessary momentum for your Senior Project.

Sincerely,

Work to be completed:

Date by which it must be completed:

Appendix B

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Guidelines for Senior Seminar

- Management/use of time in school will be an integral in the final process assessment for the Senior Project.
- Seniors must come prepared to Senior Seminar with appropriate and relevant materials.
- Senior Seminar is *not* study hall or discretionary time.
- Consistent misuse of Senior Seminar time will result in a closer monitoring of process.
- Seniors are expected to be willing recipients and providers of feedback.
- Seniors are expected to be in their Seminar rooms during Senior Seminar.
- Senior Seminar rooms must remain appropriately quiet during Senior Project work time.
- Only those seniors who have a compelling reason (i.e., computers, reference books, a phone call related to their project, etc.) should go to other rooms (including the school library) during Senior Seminar and then only with permission from their advisor.

Appendix C

Journal as Product Guidelines

Journal as Product

For a project that has a significant experiential component, it is extremely important to keep a careful, thorough, and thoughtful record of your experiences as they relate to your investigation of your essential question. For many such projects, it will make sense for the product to be an ongoing journal that documents the exploration of the essential question over the course of the project. The purpose of this journal is to document not only what you do but also what you are learning and thinking.

Such a journal is really very different from, and much more than, those with which most of you are familiar. It is probably better to call it a process portfolio, which is closer to what it really is. Your process portfolio tells the story of your project. Each artifact or piece of data should be related to the learning you describe.

There are some very specific and important aspects of this portfolio to which you should pay careful attention. Your particular project will of course impact which of the following things are included in your portfolio and what form they take, but here are some guidelines for what a journal as product should contain and how it should be organized.

Components of a journal as product

- **Clearly labeled sections with dates, names and other relevant data**
 - It is of fundamental importance that your portfolio be very detailed and highly organized
- **Observation notes or logs**
 - You should be using consistent observation protocols and use a template to document your observations. These would be included in your portfolio
- **Interview notes/transcripts**
 - Here, too, you should have a standard format and set of questions or protocol that you use for all your interviews included in your portfolio
- **A journal of personal experiences**
 - Such journal entries should be focused by a set of prompts that are followed in each entry and that are related to your essential question
- **Notes on conversations with your Mentor**
 - These are a very important component of your project and should be carefully documented
- **Artifacts**
 - Through the course of your project you will undoubtedly come across references, articles, photographs, or other artifacts that are relevant to your essential question. These should be documented and included in your portfolio
 - This could also include flyers, programs, handouts, etc. that you may create as part of your project
- **Photographs**
 - In many cases you will be documenting some of your process through photographs. These photographs should be included in your portfolio, and a standard format should be used to record what the photo is and how it relates to your project or essential question
- **Data collection methods**

- This would include any surveys you design, questionnaires you hand out, etc.
- **Data collected**
 - You should include completed surveys, questionnaires, etc.
 - You should also compile and analyze your data and include that in your portfolio
- **Reflections on experiences**
 - You should have a standard set of prompts that you use after each experience (observation, interview, personal experience, etc.) to document and reflect upon that experience as it pertains to your essential question
- **Periodic check-in with EQ**
 - Since the basis for the senior project is the essential question, you should be reflecting on a regular basis on your current view of the answer to your essential question. For example, if the question is, “What are the most significant challenges involved in teaching beginners how to ski?” in your journal you should reflect every week or so on the thing that you are currently thinking about in answer to this question. Based on what you have gathered, what are these challenges?
 - Your answer should evolve, deepen, or change as you proceed through the project.
 - You should refer to specific examples from your research and experiences in this periodic answer to your question
- **Final synthesis**
 - The final journal entry in this portfolio should be a synthesis of the contents focused by an attempt to answer the essential question
 - This should include specific references to the important milestones and components of the project as documented in the portfolio
 - You should also refer to the development of your own thinking as seen in your periodic answering of the essential question

It is these last three components that make this journal different from and more than just your process binder. Although your process binder or certain artifacts from it might be part of your journal as product, this journal must also include reflection, check-ins with your essential question and a final synthesis of your learning to be complete.

Appendix C

Youth Venture & Senior Project: A possible extension

Youth Venture and the opportunities it provides may be an opportunity for seniors to expand their “Benefit to the Community” portion of their project. While the following Youth Venture application may require some cutting and pasting from your Senior Project proposal, it should require little new work. It DOES require, however, that your benefit to the community be **sustainable**, something that is not required of the Senior Project.

Additionally, please keep in mind that the funds provided by Youth Venture are intended to be start-up costs only; if your organization will need ongoing financial resources, your application will need to account for these.

Good luck! Please see your advisor with any questions.

A potential Venture must...

- Be youth-created and youth-led
- Have a positive community benefit
- Be sustainable
- Be a new program or initiative
- Focus on clear, attainable goals with a detailed budget
- Have a supportive Ally (like a mentor)

What will Youth Venture look like at Parker?

* Matt is here to help you do this!! There will be a choice block, probably every semester, to support you through the application process. HOWEVER you do NOT have to take this choice block to be “Venturers.” There will also be 1 day a week of after school drop-in time in order to support you.

* There will be at least 2 application nights during the year where all the teams that are applying will go before a panel and receive/not receive support. They will be like gateways, except that if you do a really good one, you might get money to help launch your venture.

* Each proposed “Venture” must have an ally, or mentor, to support you. This will probably be your senior project mentor.

Want more info? Their website is great: www.youthventure.org

Application on next page.

Youth Venture Application:

This is the entire application, though there is a separate form for budget and timeline, which can be obtained from Janice.

1. What is your venture's name?
2. What is your venture idea? What need or dream does your venture address?
3. What is the purpose of your venture? Who will benefit from the solution you identified? How will your venture benefit your community, your school or your peers?
4. Is anyone else already providing this service/product or similar solutions to the need you identified? Are they doing a good job? Can you learn from their strengths or weaknesses?
5. What are the first steps you will take if you become a Youth Venturer? Please use the enclosed Activity & Budget Timeline template to detail the tasks and activities necessary to launch and run your Youth Venture in the first year of operations. Be specific.
6. Using the same template, estimate the costs associated with each of the activities you plan, as well as the expected income from fundraising activities or any sale of products/services.
7. Are you requesting financial support from Youth Venture? How much are you requesting?
8. a) Tell us about your team and the tasks and responsibilities of each member.

b) Who will be responsible for spending the money, keeping the receipts, and reporting back to Youth Venture? Why did you choose this person?
9. How will your venture be an ongoing organization? What are your ideas for involving your peers or those younger than you as volunteers and/or as the next generation of leaders?
10. How will you evaluate your work and make changes to ensure that you make progress toward your goals, as well as a significant and lasting community benefit?
11. Who will be your Ally? Why did you choose this person?
12. What kinds of support do you need from Youth Venture?

If approved by the selection panel, a Youth Venture will receive up to \$1,000 for first-year costs.