



SENIOR PROJECT
HANDBOOK

2018-2019

Stonington High School
Pawcatuck, CT

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STONINGTON HIGH SCHOOL MISSION

Stonington High School represents a community committed to fostering a lifelong pursuit of learning in a challenging, motivating, and inspiring environment in which each student acquires the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to become a responsible citizen as well as lead a productive, rewarding life.

STONINGTON HIGH SCHOOL: 4 C's



Convince: Use critical thinking skills and a variety of relevant evidence to solve a problem, support a position or an idea.

Communicate: Use content area language clearly to convey ideas as an individual. Communicate with others in a way that facilitates a collaborative process.

Consider: Use all learning to develop innovative and/or creative options to solve challenging situations and/or problems.

Connect: Use technology to find, evaluate, create and/or share information, ethically and legally. Connect all learning to become a participative member in the social and civic community.

SENIOR PROJECT OVERVIEW

Under the guidance of community mentors, teaching staff and the Senior Project Committee, seniors will complete a five-part educational experience determined to be worthy in scope and content. Senior Projects allow Seniors to think beyond conventional academic experiences through fieldwork, research, and communication exercises. This project requires students to demonstrate the ability to convince, communicate, consider, and connect.

Now is the time for students to:

- Immerse themselves in an area of interest to them.
- Explore an academic interest, a social service, a possible career, or a creative project, while thinking beyond the conventional academic experience.
- Develop independent learning techniques and self-direction, application of knowledge outside the classroom, self-reliance, and confidence.
- Critically evaluate their own upcoming transitions from high school to adulthood.
- Make connections in the community through networking and developing essential communication skills.

The five basic program requirements include:

- Communication Exercises (Letter of Intent, Thank You Letter, scheduling)
- Journal Writing (See page 10)
- Developing and Writing a Research Paper (See page 11)
- Assembling a Portfolio (See page 12)
- A Final Presentation (See page 13)

Students will receive an “exceeds standards”, “meets standards”, or “does not meet standards” ranking based on their letter of intent, journals, research paper, portfolio, and presentation.

Students who do not meet the standards of the Senior Project will not qualify for graduation.

SENIOR PROJECT CHECKLIST

MENTOR INFORMATION	
Company Name:	
Mentor Name:	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
Type of Business:	

CHECKLIST	DUE DATE
<input type="checkbox"/> Program Orientation	Parents & Students 4/25/2018
<input type="checkbox"/> Topic Selection & Proposal	Submit Online 09/21/2018
<input type="checkbox"/> Finding a Mentor	Visit the Career Center 09/24/2018
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing the Letter of Intent	One Page; Submit Online 10/05/2018
<input type="checkbox"/> Mentor Form	Get Signed & Submit Online 10/19/2018
<input type="checkbox"/> Parent & Student Form	Get Signed & Submit Online 10/19/2018
Checklist above must be completed prior to Fieldwork Hours	
<input type="checkbox"/> Complete 15 hrs. Fieldwork	Get Signed & Submit Online 01/04/2019
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing 4 Journals	4 pages; Submit Online 02/01/2019
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Research Paper	5 pages; Submit Online 03/15/2019
<input type="checkbox"/> Writing Resume	Submit Online 04/01/2019
<input type="checkbox"/> Portfolio:	Visit the Career Center 04/26/2019
<i>-Cover Page & Table of Contents</i>	
<i>-Letter of Intent</i>	
<i>-Journals</i>	
<i>-Research Paper</i>	
<i>-Forms (Mentor, Student & Parent, Fieldwork Log)</i>	
<i>-Thank You Letter to Mentor</i>	
<i>OPTIONAL: Photos, Recommendations, Workplace Materials</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Presentation:	15-minute Presentation 06/01/2019

SENIOR PROJECT COMPONENTS

Letters of Intent and Thanks

After obtaining Project Proposal approval, students will create an action plan to serve as a map of their Senior Project experience. The action plan must outline how they intend to challenge their current knowledge and how they plan to conduct their fieldwork. After completing their fieldwork, students are also required to send their Mentors a Thank You Letter. ALL community mentors must be approved by parents and the Senior Project Coordinator prior to Fieldwork, (*see pages 9 and 14*).

Fieldwork Journals

Students must complete a **minimum of 15 hours** of fieldwork with an expert in the chosen field of study. To accomplish this, a student must secure a community mentor who has a proven record of success in this field. Reflective journals must be kept on the following topics: Safety, Problems Overcome, Interesting Experience, Overall Experience and 4 C's. Fieldwork must be completed before the Senior Project Portfolio can be submitted, (*see page 10*).

Research Paper

Students will need to choose a paper topic that will help them learn more about their chosen field. The Senior Project paper will be supported in the senior English classes. The Senior Project paper is required to be at least 5 pages; it can consist entirely of research or a mix of research and fieldwork. The paper must be in the form of an argument or an informative piece, (*see page 11*).

Portfolio

Students' experiences will result in many artifacts they can showcase to other students, faculty, parents and the community. The portfolio includes: Cover Page & Table of Contents; Letter of Intent; Journals; Research Paper; Forms (Mentor/Parent, Parent/Student, Fieldwork Log); Thank You Letter to Mentor. Items such as pictures, lesson plans, drawings and other items should be saved and incorporated into the portfolio, (*see page 12*).

Presentation

The Senior Project presentation is a culminating experience to showcase students' accomplishments. They will make a 15-minute presentation, during which visuals will be used to explain what was learned through the experience with a panel of judges that includes teachers, parents, community members, and juniors from SHS, (*see page 13*).

SENIOR PROJECT SUPPORT

Senior Project Coordinator in the Career Center

The Senior Project Coordinator, Kate Milde, also runs the Career Center, which is available to all students, teachers, and parents who have questions or concerns about the Senior Project. The Career Center is a resource for community contacts, program information, and other needs of participants.

Community Mentor

The community mentor will serve as an expert in the field the student has chosen to explore. The mentor will provide access to fieldwork, workplace materials, and contacts to offer each student a rich and rewarding experience. The mentor does not need to attend meetings or presentations.

Parent/Guardian

Parents/Guardians are highly encouraged to be involved in the Senior Project experience by attending the orientation, informational meetings, and presentations. We also encourage parents/guardians to look at the journals, portfolios, and papers over the course of the year.

SENIOR PROJECT COMPLETION

Students must complete and pass ALL required components of the Senior Project according to the Senior Project timeline. *They cannot move onto the next phase of the project until the prior component is handed in and earns a passing grade.* For example, students cannot hand in their portfolios unless the paper receives a passing grade.

Missed Deadlines

Students who miss any component deadlines noted in the timeline may be subject to late penalties. Penalties include prevention of a student from attaining senior privileges and /or graduating, along with an F on their report cards.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may require accommodations and/or modifications to complete the Senior Project. Student Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) or 504 Plans will detail how each student will meet Senior Project requirements. The plan may include input from the student, parent/guardian(s), Special Education teacher(s), counselor and general education teacher(s) who are familiar with the student's needs. A building administrator will approve all plans.

SENIOR PROJECT TOPIC SELECTION

The selection of a project topic is the most important phase of the Senior Project experience. The topic chosen will affect all components of the Senior Project experience and a student's senior year. The topic selected can be a hobby, career path, or community service. The chosen topic must be of enough magnitude that it requires at least fifteen (15) hours of independent work.

Students must choose a project that is a **stretch** for them. For instance, a senior who has taken dance lessons for several years could not, as a project, choose "dance" if that student had already mastered the art. Such a student would need to **stretch** a little further, perhaps choreograph or teach dance to youth.

Students will submit the proposal to the Senior Project Coordinator for approval. The Coordinator will review the project proposals, approve them, or make suggestions so the student can revise them and resubmit for final approval.

If a student opts to change their project, they must submit a NEW Letter of Intent and get approval.

SENIOR PROJECT MENTOR APPROVAL

Parent/Guardian Approval

Parents/ Guardians are required to sign off on TWO Forms: the Mentor/Parent Form and the Student/Parent Form, certifying that they understand and approve what their son/daughter plans to do for their Senior Project and who the mentor will be.

Students cannot use a staff member at Stonington High School or a relative as a community mentor. Students CANNOT be paid to complete fieldwork.

SENIOR PROJECT LETTER OF INTENT

Students must write a Letter of Intent that outlines their project and explains how their Senior Project experience will align with Stonington High School's 4C's.

The Letter of Intent should be written according to the following format and answer the following questions in detail:

- Letters must be typed and single-spaced using a legible 12-point font.
- Follow Block Style Letter format.
- Letters must be addressed "Dear Senior Project Coordinator" and signed.
- Each paragraph of the letter must address the following questions, answering each question specifically and with as much detail and explanation as possible:

Paragraph 1: What is the topic or area of study on which you will focus your Senior Project? Why did you choose this topic area of study? What previous knowledge or experience do you have in this area?

Paragraph 2: How does this project represent a "learning stretch" for you as an individual? How might this project challenge you?

Paragraph 3: What will you do for your fieldwork? Who might be a potential community member to serve as your mentor and what is his/her experience or expertise in your chosen field? Describe your fieldwork in as much detail as possible, discussing your plans for the project and the involvement of your mentor.

Paragraph 4: How will you demonstrate all 4C's through the successful completion of your Senior Project? Explain in detail how the work you will do for your project will satisfy each of the 4C's: Convince, Communicate, Consider, and Connect.

SENIOR PROJECT JOURNAL REQUIREMENTS

Student Senior Project Journals are an important component of the Senior Project Portfolios and are weighted heavily for completion and quality. One-page journal entries should be kept throughout the Senior Project experience – including challenges, accomplishments, fieldwork, new contacts/experiences, and other related activities.

Journal I, Safety Journal:

Students' Mentors should explain the precautions, procedures, and emergency plans at the place of their fieldwork. After these lessons, students must write a journal in which you give a detailed explanation of the safety measures you learned.

Journal II, Problems Journal:

Students should answer these questions: What are some problems that you have encountered? Have you tried or thought of possible solutions? Do you have any inquiry ideas for your research paper?

Journal III, Experience Journal:

Describe an interesting or unique situation or experience from the Fieldwork. What insights have you gained?

Journal IV, Reflection Journal:

Students should look back and write a journal to describe their overall experience. What were some of the best parts of your fieldwork, the worst parts, and what would you change if you had to do all over again? How well did you meet the 4Cs' expectations and in what ways did you effectively accomplish them?

Journals	Does Not Meet	Meets	Exceeds
# of Pages	< 4 pages	4 pages	> 4 Pages
Topics	< 4 Journal Topics	4 Journal Topics	> 4 Journal Topics
Quality	Limited explanation of experiences; limited reflection	Explains experiences; shows some growth and reflection	Detailed; reflective; shows growth and future plans
Format	Not in MLA; inadequate spelling, punctuation, & sentence structure	MLA; double-spaced; adequate spelling, punctuation, & sentence structure	MLA; double-spaced; proper spelling, punctuation, & sentence structure
Fieldwork Vocabulary	Includes no terms related to the field of study	Includes some terminology related to the field of study	Includes varied terminology related to the field of study

SENIOR PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER REQUIREMENTS

Through ALL English classes, students will be assigned a Senior Project research paper. They will need to choose a paper topic that will help them learn more about the field they have chosen.

The Senior Project paper will be 6 pages and can consist entirely of research or a mix of research and fieldwork. The paper must be in the form of argumentative or informational writing.

Academic Integrity

Documentation of all sources is important to avoid plagiarism, which is the stealing of another person's ideas, words, writing, or academic work, and implying that it is original. Students who are found cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to the following guidelines:

First offense:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero
- Parent contacted
- Administration notified (by teachers completing a discipline form)

Subsequent offenses:

- Academic penalty up to and including zero
- Parent contacted
- Disciplinary action by administration, which may include office detention or suspension

SENIOR PROJECT PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

The Senior Project Portfolio is designed to help students reflect upon their entire Senior Project journey. From the Letter of Intent to the final paper, the Portfolio is a window through which another person can view any accomplishments over the year.

The Portfolio must be completed in order to proceed to the Senior Project Presentation.

A completed Senior Project Portfolio must include the following documents:

- Cover Page
- Table of Contents
- Letter of Intent
- Journals
- Research Paper
- Forms (Mentor/Parent, Student/Parent, & Fieldwork Log)
- Thank You Letter
- Resume
- Appendix (Recommended)
 - Letter of recommendation
 - Workplace Materials
 - Photographs
 - Press/Articles about your project
 - Products from your senior project (articles, music, awards)

Grading Rubric:

Portfolio	Exceeds (3)	Meets (2)	Below (1)	SCORE
Cover & TOC	Attractive and Logically Organized	Somewhat Attractive and Organized	Bland and Unclear Organization	
Letter of Intent	Organized and Clearly Written Plan of Action	Somewhat Organized and Includes POA	Disorganized, Lacking a POA	
Journals	> 4 pages and Details Experiences	4 pages and Discusses Experiences	< 4 pages and Limited Fieldwork Notes	
Research Paper	Organized and Clearly Written	Somewhat Organized	Disorganized	
Forms	Has all THREE Forms, plus Workplace Forms	Has all THREE Forms	Does Not have all THREE Forms	
TY Letter	Well-written, Specific, Block Letter Format	Well-written, Some Format Issues	Poorly Written, Did Not Follow Instructions	
Resume	Well-organized, Descriptive Verbs	Organized and Clear	Disorganized, Limited Information	
Appendix	All Recommended Items	A Few Recommended Items	No Appendix	
TOTAL				/24

SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION REQUIREMENTS

The final phase of the Senior Project is the oral presentation providing the opportunity to share with the panelists the highlights of the Senior Project experience and to celebrate all that has been accomplished.

The Senior Project presentation must:

- Be 15 minutes in length
- Have a recognizable introduction and conclusion, including information about the decision-making process for the Senior Project topic
- Describe the learning stretch. How was the project a challenge and how did it stretch students' skills and knowledge?
- Include an audio/visual aid (*does not have to be a PowerPoint*) that will serve to help the audience better understand what was done and learned from the Senior Project experience. This audio/visual aid must be integrated into the speech. If the project resulted in an actual product, this product should be part of the presentation.
- Include information about how Senior Project did/might change the student's life and/or professional goals

Grading Rubric:

<u>Presentation</u>	Exceeds (3)	Meets (2)	Below (1)	SCORE
Attire	Professional, Relates to Presentation	Neatly Dressed, May Not Relate to Presentation	Too Casual	
Introduction	Unique Hook, Creatively Informs	Interesting and Informative	Lacks Spark, Unclear Topic	
Learning Stretch	In-depth, New Knowledge Explained	New Knowledge Addressed	No New Knowledge Addressed	
Evidence of Knowledge	Provides a Variety of Supporting Examples	Provides Supporting Examples	Provides No Examples of Knowledge Gained	
Delivery	Relaxed but Enthusiastic, Confident	Calm Delivery, Some Eye Contact	Lacks Enthusiasm, Shows Discomfort	
Focus	Insightful, Clear Connections	Presents Main Idea, Some Connections	Lacks a Main Idea and Focus	
Visual Aid	Multiple, Attractive, Professional Aids	One Visual Aid, Professional	No Visual Aid or is of Poor Quality	
Speech Length	>13 Minutes	10-12 Minutes	<10 Minutes	
Panel Questions	Answers with Ease, Clear Understanding	Answers Questions, Emerging Understanding	Cannot Answer Questions, Limited Understanding	
TOTAL				/24

THANK YOU LETTER SAMPLE

15 First Street
Pawcatuck, CT 06379

April 2, 2018

John Doe
Chief of Ledyard Police Department
737 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, CT, 06339

Dear Chief Rich:

Thank you for being my mentor for my senior project! I am very grateful that you were able to share your expertise with me, that you invited me to the Ledyard Police Department and introduced me to multiple individuals like officer Bailey who was a great help. Also, I am very appreciative that you connected me with Sergeant Alexandre at the crime lab, he really helped me understand the job of a computer forensic analyst.

I benefitted greatly from the field work I did with you; before my project I didn't know the steps I had to take before becoming a computer forensic analyst. If that's something I decide to go into, I know that I will have to first become an officer and work my way up until I am able to apply for that job. I really enjoyed my time at the crime lab, seeing all the equipment they use to decode various technology devices was really intriguing to me. When I went on the ride along with officer Bailey it was incredible that I was able to help process the crime scene with him, and that experience really helped me write my research paper.

Thank you so much for your guidance toward the completion of my project and for the learning experiences and opportunities.

Sincerely,

John Doe

RESUME TEMPLATE

YOUR NAME

Street Address, City State ZIP Code | Email | Telephone

OBJECTIVE | To get started right away, just click any placeholder text (such as this) and start typing to replace it with your own.

SKILLS & ABILITIES | Want to insert a picture from your files or add a shape, text box, or table? You got it! On the Insert tab of the ribbon, just click the option you need.

Find even more easy-to-use tools on the Insert tab, such as to add a hyperlink.

EXPERIENCE | **JOB TITLE** COMPANY NAME
DATES FROM - TO

This is the place for a brief summary of your key responsibilities and most stellar accomplishments.

EDUCATION | **SCHOOL NAME**, LOCATION
DEGREE

You might want to include your GPA here and a brief summary of relevant coursework, awards, and honors.

HONORS & AWARDS | List any academic, athletic, or other honors and awards you have earned.

LEADERSHIP | Are you president of your fraternity, head of the condo board, or a team lead for your favorite charity? You're a natural leader—tell it like it is!

REFERENCES | **REFERENCE NAME**, TITLE
COMPANY

Contact Information

PARENT/STUDENT FORM

Your son/daughter will be engaged in the Stonington High School Senior Project during the course of the school year. This project will provide many benefits to your son/daughter, both now and in the future. It also will be a valuable tool in determining his/her mastery of our graduation expectations in the areas of knowledge, communication, problem solving, and responsibility.

Parent Acknowledgement:

I have read the Senior Project handbook and I am aware of the expectations and that my son/daughter must complete all phases of the project – proposal, project paper, fieldwork, portfolio and oral presentation – in order to meet the requirements at Stonington High School.

I/We fully understand that students and parents select the project but this selection must be approved by the staff and/or administration of the high school. I/We further understand that the chosen community mentor cannot be a family member and my son/daughter cannot be paid for the Senior Project fieldwork. I/We understand that my son/daughter must complete a minimum of ten hours of fieldwork with a Community Mentor.

Parent Phone #: _____ Email: _____

Printed Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

Student Acknowledgement:

I understand that I represent myself, my parents, and my school in my behavior; that I must dress appropriately for my Senior Project environment; that I must conform to all school policies and regulations; and that I must assume the responsibilities of a regular employee and observe employment regulations in regard to reporting to my fieldwork.

If I am not able to attend a scheduled fieldwork session because of illness or emergency, I understand that I must call my Mentor. It is my responsibility to rearrange my schedule in order to meet the required hours. If there are concerns about my Mentor, fieldwork or project, I will inform the Coordinator immediately. I understand that I must spend a minimum of 15 hours doing field work for my Senior Project and that my Mentor must sign off on those hours, and that my Mentor cannot be a family member and I cannot get paid. I have read the Senior Project Handbook.

Print Student Name: _____

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

***** STUDENTS: PRINT, SCAN, & THEN UPLOAD VIA GOOGLE CLASSROOM *****

MENTOR/PARENT FORM

Print Student Name: _____

Print Mentor's Name: _____

Mentor's Organization: _____

Mentor's Position/Title: _____

Nature of Business: _____

Mentor's Phone Number: _____

Mentor's Address: _____

Mentor's Email: _____

Type of work the mentee will be doing:

I, _____, Mentor to _____, agree to abide by the Mentor Code of Conduct. Date: _____

Parent Acknowledgement

Project (be specific):

Parent Name (Printed):

Parent Signature*:

**Signature represents parent acknowledgement & approval of student's mentor choice*

***** STUDENTS: PRINT, SCAN, & THEN UPLOAD VIA GOOGLE CLASSROOM *****

FIELDWORK TIME LOG

Student Name: _____

Mentor Name: _____

Mentor Organization & Role: _____

Date	Hours Worked	Description of Work	Mentor Initials

As a mentor, I assure the Senior Project Committee that the student spent a minimum of 15 hours on the fieldwork.

Mentor Signature: _____ Date: _____

***** STUDENTS: PRINT, SCAN, & THEN UPLOAD VIA GOOGLE CLASSROOM *****

ADVISORY SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Tasks</u>	
09/12/18	1	Senior Project Intro & Handbook Distribution
09/26/18	2	Letters of Intent Overview
10/10/18	3	Distribute Mentor & Permission Forms, Overview
10/24/18	4	Mentor Check-in
11/07/18	5	Fieldwork Overview
11/21/18	6	Journals Overview & Fieldwork Check-in
12/05/18	7	Journals & Fieldwork Check-in
01/09/19	8	Research Paper Brainstorming
01/23/19		CAREER CENTER EVENT
02/06/19	9	Journals Sharing
02/20/19	10	Research Paper Check-in
03/06/19	11	Research Paper Sharing
03/20/19	12	Portfolio Introduction & Binder Distribution
04/03/19		CAREER CENTER EVENT
04/17/19	13	Assembling Portfolios
05/01/19	14	Presentations Introduction
05/15/19	15	Mock Presentations
05/29/19	16	Senior Project Reflections

SENIOR PROJECT ABSENCE FORM

To be completed at least one week prior to requested date.

Please excuse _____ (name of senior) from classes on _____ (date of shadowing). They will be shadowing their mentor, and is able to do so only during school hours. The student understands that he/she must make up all work, and must do so within **two days** following the absence. This absence is an excused field trip and should not count against the Attendance Policy.

Reason for shadowing:

Why this cannot be done outside of school hours:

(1) PARENT PERMISSION:

Parent Signature

Date

(2) TEACHERS: Please sign below to verify that you have been notified of this absence:

Period 1: _____

Period 2: _____

Period 3: _____

Period 4: _____

Period 5: _____

Period 6: _____

Period 7: _____

Period 8: _____

(3) ADMINISTRATOR PERMISSION:

Signature

Date

(4) MENTOR CONFIRMATION:

I affirm that _____ (student name) shadowed _____ (community mentor) on the date noted above from _____ to _____ (indicate times).

Mentor Signature

Date