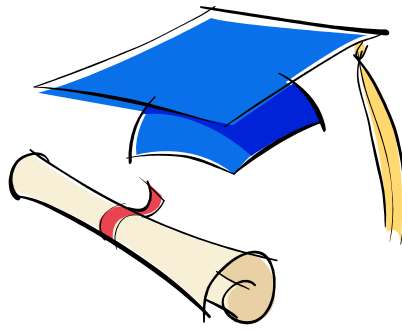


**North Schuylkill Junior-Senior
High School
Graduation Project
Student Booklet**



2009-2010

**North Schuylkill High School
15 Academy Lane
Ashland, PA 17921**

Introduction

The North Schuylkill Graduation Project illustrates a learning experience that completes on requirement in a student's educational career. The project provides the student with the opportunity for in-depth study, creative endeavor, and/or community service. Students will select a topic of their choice involving research and development.

After a student identifies a topic of interest, a faculty advisor and the principal will approve it. The Graduation Project will require students to identify concerns, select resources, conduct research, develop a written report, and prepare and present an oral presentation.

A successfully completed graduation project ensures that all students have applied, analyzed, synthesized, and evaluated information and communicated significant knowledge and understanding of their chosen topic.

Businesses require workers who possess the following: oral communication skills, written communication skills, personal initiative, and reliability in completing tasks on time. The graduation project requires the student to develop and demonstrate these important skills.

In order to complete the graduation project, students will need to demonstrate self-initiative. **The project is entirely student driven.** Advisors, resource people, and teachers are available to assist students, but the students must initiate the request for support. The graduation project is designed to prepare students for life after high school, whether that may be post-secondary education or work.

Graduation Project Categories

1) Expanded Research Topic

- The body of the research paper will consist of 10-12 typewritten pages.
- The research paper will have a cover page with your name and topic.
- The paper should consist of numerous scholarly sources using MLA style only.
- If done in a group, there may be no more than two students in a group.
- Each student in the group must submit an individual research paper. You should have three copies presented to the panel prior to your presentation.

2) Self-Directed Project

a) Community

- i) Students will design an original community based project.

- ii) Students must document the project from start to finish and provide a journal detailing the project and submit the journal; photos are required as well.
- iii) Project must total 40 hours.
- iv) Student will submit a paper explaining the project to the panel prior to the presentation date. Three copies are to be submitted.
- v) Your presentation will document the process of the project.
- vi) The paper will consist of 8-10 pages.

b) Creative

- Student will design/create a project.
- Students are required to keep a journal detailing the project from start to finish and then generate a report based upon the journal.
- No more than three students to a group.
- The paper will consist of 8-10 pages, which will be submitted prior to the presentation.
- Presentation should reflect the process of your creation of the project.

3) Career Pathway

- Student will choose a career pathway.
- Student will develop an interview questionnaire.
- Student will interview people in their chosen career pathway.
- Student will job shadow.
- Student will conduct a review of educational institutions that offer training in the chosen career pathway.
- Student will research present/future job markets, chances for advancement, etc.
- Report will be 8-10 pages.
- Presentation will reflect all of the above information.

Choosing a Graduation Project Topic

Hopefully, you have given considerable thought to selecting a topic that reflects your varied interests and personality. There is no “one size fits all” when selecting a graduation project. To help you with your brainstorming, the following questions have been provided for you to narrow your initial choices to the topic most appropriate for you.

What area/interest is of greatest importance to me?

What area/interest is most reflective of my talents?

What area/interest will I most likely use following graduation?

What area/interest will most contribute to my future career?

What area/interest will give me access to the most resources for my research?

What area/interest is most original?

In what area/interest will I most likely find an advisor/mentor?

What area/interest will enable me to be comfortable in my topic presentation?

Important Notice Regarding Graduation Projects

- **Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor.**
- **Faculty advisor will act as a “guide” and assist you in meeting the timelines and benchmarks designed to make the process more efficient.**
- **ALL PROJECTS AND PRESENTATIONS MUST BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE SEMESTER BREAK.**
- **There should be evidence of preparation and planning towards the evolution of the project.**
- **STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO MEET THE TIMELINES AND BENCHMARKS**

Points to Ponder

There are two main sections of the Graduation Project:

- **A written research/exploration component**
- **An Oral Presentation component**
- **Oral presentation must include a power-point component**

Before discussing actual topics with your adviser, you should make use of this section of the Graduation Project handbook as it contains suggestions for possible project topics and ideas, and discuss the project and possible topics of personal interest with your parent(s)/guardian(s), select a topic and complete the agreement form found in the document section of the handbook. **Clearly describe your proposal, complete all of the necessary information, and promptly return your agreement form to your adviser. After you complete your agreement form, be prepared to explain and discuss the following with your adviser:**

- **Project goals and objectives**
- **Relationship to self**
- **Completion strategies**
- **Resources and materials**
- **The form of the project**

After you have chosen a topic and a project, identify appropriate resources and begin to gather, organize, and interpret information. Whether you have decided to complete a project in the community, landscape an area, teach a class, make a movie, or take part in a multitude of other projects, it is essential that you form a plan. A plan of action is a comprehensive tool. To formulate this plan, ask yourself the following questions:

- What is it that I wish to do with the information that I have gathered?
- Who will I involve in my project?
- What do I need to do to complete this project on time?
- How will I go about organizing and maximizing the resources I have identified?

After you have formed your plan, take action and fulfill your objectives. Be sure to apply your research to the actions you taking and keep a record of your activities. It may be a good idea to keep a log book. As you near the end of the project itself, analyze and evaluate its importance, value, and impact. You should begin to draw conclusions from the investigation, research, and “hands on” experience you have completed.

Requirements for the written report

I have:

- Used MLA style presentation and documentation methods
- Submitted a properly formatted title page and outline
- Submitted an MLA style works cited page
- Used properly formatted MLA parenthetical citations
- Shown evidence of organization
- Completed 8-10 pages of double spaced word processed text
- Used an effective introduction and conclusion
- Made sure that the paper and paragraphs are unified
- Provided a coherent sequence of thought
- Researched my topic well and followed a logical plan
- Used a minimum of five reliable and varied sources
- Followed conventions of Standard English
- Used grammatically correct sentences
- Made use of computer technology in the production of report
- Consulted and met with faculty advisor regarding the research report

Writing A Thesis Statement

What is a Thesis?

A thesis statement declares what the author believes and what they intend to prove. A preliminary thesis statement helps the writer focus the information search. The thesis statement is typically located at the end of the opening paragraph, but it can be placed in the second paragraph after the introductory paragraph. Make the thesis statement clear, strong, and easy to find.

A good thesis statement:

- Is usually one sentence that tells the reader the central focus of the paper
- Takes a stand and proposes an arguable point with which people could disagree
- Is specific and focused: not too general and not too vague
- Avoids the first person (“I believe”, In my opinion”)
- Covers a topic that can be adequately covered in the assignment format (10 pages)
- Arouses interest and inspires the reader to ask “How?” and “Why?”

Be flexible. A thesis statement is often times changed based on the author’s research.

Examples of Average and Excellent Thesis Statements

Average: Education reform must occur in the United States for the good of the future.

Excellent: Secondary education of special needs students in the United States must be reformed in order for these students to achieve maximum potential as adults.

Average: Drug abuse has profound mental, physical, family, and psychological effects.

Excellent: Drug abuse profoundly affects the individual’s physical and psychological well-being. In addition to the individual effects of drug abuse, the family is equally at risk.

Average: The media coverage United States citizens view is very controlled and biased.

Excellent: The media coverage of American wars and the extent to which the government controls the media coverage has a great effect on the American public’s opinion.

Average: Nurses who provide good care to children will help them to be happier.

Excellent: Quality of nursing care to the pediatric patient is vital to the patient’s emotional well-being.

For more help creating a quality thesis statement, contact your English teacher.

Preliminary Outline

A topic outline is a listing of topics to be covered in the paper. Topics are stated in words and phrases rather than in complete sentences.

I. Introduction

A. Statement of Purpose

Explain what the paper will discuss, the main purpose of the paper, and why the topic was chosen.

B. Thesis Statement

State the thesis.

C. Method of Presentation

Explain how the research will be presented. (Example if it is a research paper) This project is a ten-page research paper followed by an oral presentation to the panel.

II. Main Body (facts to support the thesis statement)

A. Paper recycling big business

1. Industry involved
2. Recyclable paper plentiful
3. Countries buy wastepaper

B. Simple process

1. Collect and sort paper
2. Form a pulp
3. Dry pulp to make paper
4. New paper used in many ways

C. Some papers not recyclable

1. Glossy, envelopes, glued papers
2. Must be sorted out
3. New process coming for glossy paper

III. Conclusion

A. Summary of Information

Restatement of Thesis

Graduation Project Written Presentation Evaluation

Name: _____

Date: _____

Topic: _____

4 Excellent

Thorough research
Organization-well thought out
Presentation in a logical sequence
Project shows evidence of originality and creative thinking

3 Very Good

Project meets stated requirements
Thorough research
Organization-planned and in a logical sequence
Research is accurate

2 Acceptable/Satisfactory

Project has minimally met all of the requirements
Research is accurate, but lacks detail and explanation
There is basic organization, but reasoning is not always clear or logical
Final project demonstrates an adequate understanding of data information

1 Unacceptable/Not Yet Satisfactory

Project has not yet met all of the requirements
Research lacks detail
Final product is poorly organized
Written materials have many errors

0 Unacceptable/Unsatisfactory

Student has not completed project requirements
Student has shown no evidence of completing project
Student fails to turn in completed project by deadline dates

North Schuylkill Junior-Senior High School
Senior Project Written Report Evaluation

Student: _____ **Evaluator** _____

Date: _____ **Subject** _____

Criteria

Objective	1	2	3	4	Points
Focus	Minimal evidence of a topic.	No apparent point but evidence of a specific topic.	Apparent point made about a single topic with sufficient awareness of task.	Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task.	_____
Content	Superficial and/or minimal content.	Limited content with inadequate elaboration or explanation.	Sufficiently developed content with adequate elaboration or explanation.	Substantial, specific and/or illustrative content demonstrating strong development and sophisticated ideas.	_____
Organization	Minimal control of content agreement.	Confused or inconsistent arrangement of content with or without attempts at transition.	Functional arrangement of content that sustains a logical order with some evidence of transitions.	Sophisticated arrangement of content with evident and/or subtle transitions.	_____
Style	Minimal variety in word choice and minimal control of sentence structure.	Limited word choice and control of sentence structures that inhibit voice and tone.	Generic use of a variety of words and sentence structures that may or may not create writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience.	Precise, illustrative use of a variety of words and sentence structures to create consistent writer's voice and tone appropriate to audience.	_____
Conventions	Minimal control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	Limited control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	Sufficient control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	Evident control of grammar, mechanics, spelling, usage and sentence formation.	_____
				Total	_____

Oral Presentation

I have:

- An effective introduction and conclusion
- Ideas that flow smoothly from one to the other
- Organized information to maximize presentation
- Prepared effective use of required media or performance
- Established an effective way to communicate significant information or data in a precise and accurate fashion
- Chosen and practiced using my media format
- Timed my presentation to be sure that it is the proper length
- Practiced appropriate body language
- Practiced maintaining consistent eye contact
- Practiced enunciating words clearly
- Practiced varying tone, volume, and rate of speech
- Practiced giving my presentation with poise and confidence

The Oral Presentation:

An integral part of the Senior Project is the requirement of a final speech. The presentation should communicate clearly the importance of the Senior Project.

On the following page is a rubric for the speech. Carefully review the requirements for a highly successful presentation. In order to prepare for the speech, time should be set aside to practice your speech or oral presentation.

A committee of teachers and administrators will be in attendance at your oral presentation. Students are encouraged to schedule their presentation as soon as possible. If a date and time are not scheduled by the student, a time and date will be assigned by the project coordinator.

- All speeches are required to be at least five (5) minutes. If your speech is shorter than five minutes it will not qualify as a valid speech. Another speech will be required on a date to be determined by the Project Coordinator.
- You must have at least one visual aid (besides the power-point) for your presentation.
- Students must use the visual and integrate it into their speeches.
- Examples of acceptable visuals are posters, photographs, sketches, cutouts from magazines, overhead transparencies, Power Point programs, models, videos, actual items, etc.

- Visuals should be neatly designed and produced. Spelling should be correct on visuals, and students are expected to spend time preparing the visual to help them illustrate their points.
- All instruments must be played during the oral presentation.

Any videos must be given to the Project Coordinator to view prior to the presentation.

Speaking Techniques to remember:

- Eye contact-This is extremely important. Practice often. Look at your audience. True communication happens with the eyes.
- Posture- Stand proud. You have the right to be. You have accomplished a great deal.
- Voice- Your voice needs to be loud enough to be heard. Vary appropriately in pitch and tone.
- Gesture- Use your hands to help make your point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous.
- Plan and practice using any props you will need.
- **Clothing- Wear Appropriate Attire- No Jeans-(Suggested that young men wear a shirt and tie and young ladies wear a business suit or skirt).**

North Schuylkill Junior-Senior High School
Senior Project Oral Presentation

Student: _____

Evaluator: _____

Date: _____

Subject: _____

Criteria

Objective	0	1	2	3	4	Points
Organization	No planning of presentation- student demonstrated a lack of effort	Audience cannot understand presentation because there is no sequence of information	Audience cannot understand presentation because the student jumps from topic to topic	Student presents information in a logical sequence that the audience can follow	Student presents information in a logical interesting sequence that the audience can easily follow	
Content Knowledge	Major errors- no grasp of topic and a great deal of inaccuracies	Student does not have a grasp of information: inaccurate information used	Student is uncomfortable with the information and presents some significant inaccuracies	Student is at ease with content but fails to elaborate; few inaccuracies	Student demonstrates full knowledge with explanations; accurate and verifiable	
Visuals	Student used no visuals	Student occasionally used visuals	Student occasionally used visuals; visuals did not support text and presentation; Visuals had little if any impact	Visuals related to text and presentation; visuals had an impact	Student used visuals to reinforce text and presentation; product had dramatic intended impact	
Mechanics	Numerous grammatical errors; student seemed totally unprepared; poor use of English language skills	Student's presentation had many grammatical errors; poor use of the English language skills	Presentation had some grammatical errors; demonstrates fair but consistent use of English language skills	Presentation has few grammatical errors; demonstrates good use of English language skills	Presentation has no grammatical errors; demonstrates excellent English language skills	
Delivery	Student mumbles; inaudible, lack of preparation is evident.	Student inaudible; incorrectly pronounces terms, uses many verbal fillers and speaks too quietly for the audience to hear	Student incorrectly pronounces terms, uses verbal fillers, audience has difficulty hearing the presenter	Student's voice is clear. Student pronounces most of the words correctly and uses verbal fillers; good conversational speaking rate	Student uses a clear voice and correct precise pronunciation of terms. No verbal fillers are present; excellent conversational speaking rate.	
					Total	

PowerPoint Guidelines

Most of these guidelines can also be applied to posters as visual aids!

- The PowerPoint should be an overview of the topic-not your entire presentation. The slides are only an illustration for your oral presentation.
- One topic per slide.
Use the 5 x 5 rule. Five lines of text. Five words per line. Less is more!
- Allow plenty of room around borders and illustrations. White space is good!
- Readable Type Size
Minimum 36 point font for titles
Minimum 24 for body text
- Readable Type Font-no fancy fonts that are hard to read
- Don't mix fonts on the same slide-use size, color, bold or italics to make a point and for emphasis.
- Chose color carefully. Be consistent with colors throughout the presentation. Be sure font color and background color are a good contrast.
- Are your slides readable? Print them out and hold them up to the light. Can you read them?
- Add clipart only if appropriate-not for decoration!
- Be consistent and sparing in your use of transitions and animations. One transition and one animation for the entire presentation.
- Be consistent with the use of bullets, fonts, colors.
- Choose fonts, graphics and colors appropriate for your topic.
- Left justify body text; do not center lines. We read left to right. Titles may be centered.
- Check your grammar, punctuation, capitalization and spelling!

When presenting:

- **Remember YOU are the presentation the slide show is only your visual aid!**
- **DO NOT JUST READ WHAT IS ON THE SLIDES. You should have additional information for the audience.**
- **Rehearse several times. Know when to move to the next slide and some sense of the time required.**

**Graduation Project
Student-Teacher Documentation Log Sheet**

Student Name: _____

Topic: _____

Name	Date	Discussion	Advisor/Student Initials

Student Responsibilities

- 1) The Student will:
 - a) Receive instructions regarding the project from senior high school officials.
 - b) Adhere to the formats and timelines that have been established for the project.
 - c) Get advisor approval for each phase of the project.
 - d) Conduct research that will support the project.
 - e) Submit the research as requested by the advisor.
 - f) Complete the graduation project contract.

- 2) For the project contract the student will:
 - a) Describe the focus and the purpose for the selection of the project.
 - b) Describe the project issues and topics.
 - c) Be approved by signature of parent/guardian and faculty advisor.

- 3) In the investigation and research component, the student will:
 - a) Identify appropriate resources.
 - b) Gather, organize, interpret and present information or data.
 - c) Analyze and evaluate the importance, value or impact of the project.
 - d) Draw conclusions from the information or data gathered.

- 4) In the written presentation. The student will:
 - a) Explain the importance, value, and impact of the study.
 - b) Provide supporting information or data.
 - c) Draw conclusions from the research.
 - d) Select an appropriate writing style reflective of the project.
 - e) Cite references in appropriate bibliographic format.
 - f) Submit written materials according to deadlines.

- 5) In oral presentation/performance/demonstration, the student may:
 - a) Comprehensively present the content of the study.
 - b) Deliver an organized presentation.
 - c) Demonstrate effective speaking skills.
 - d) Utilize visual material to enhance the presentation.
 - e) Answer questions posed by the teachers/peers concerning the project.

- 6) A student will receive an evaluation from a faculty evaluation team on the written, oral, and performance based presentations.

Advisor Information

At the beginning of the year, all teachers, guidance counselors, and administrators will be assigned two to four senior advisees and two to four junior advisees. The advisor is assigned randomly and provided as “guide” to assist the students in the completion of the graduation projects.

Timeline for Senior Projects 2009-2010

Monday September 7, 2009

Students must submit an application for their graduation projects by 3:00 p.m.

Monday September 21, 2009

Students must submit to their advisor a written outline of paper and three of the sources that will be used in the final paper.

Tuesday October 13, 2009

Any Senior ready to present will be scheduled for this date-if necessary we will also conduct presentations on Wednesday October 14, 2009.

Tuesday October 13, 2009

Each student should have met with his/her advisor at **least two times** by this date.

Monday October 26, 2009

Student should submit a rough draft of paper to advisor, who will examine paper for sources, relevance, and grammatical errors. Paper will be returned to the student with an evaluation of progress.

Monday November 9, 2009

Student should submit a second draft of paper, which should have addressed the issues that the advisor had with the rough draft.

Tuesday December 1, 2009

Project Presentations scheduled-Faculty panel will observe projects for members of the Senior Class and any Junior Class member ready to present.

Wednesday December 2, 2009

Project Presentations scheduled-Faculty panel will observe projects for members of the Senior Class and any Junior Class member ready to present.

Thursday December 3, 2009

Project Presentations scheduled-Faculty panel will observe projects for members of the Senior Class and any Junior Class member ready to present

All Senior Class members are required to present prior to the semester vacation-NO EXCEPTIONS.

Topic Suggestions

Government and Public Affairs

Computer crime
Crime prevention
Criminal justice
Elections
Freedom of speech
Juvenile justice
Local history
Military
Politics

Family Connections and Concerns

Child abuse
Divorce
Domestic violence
School and community violence
Families
Marriage
Parenting

History and Heritage

Cultures of the world
International development
Political prisoners
Popular culture
Refugees and Illegal aliens
World Religions

Careers and Work

Career choices
Career development
Employment

Arts and Entertainment

Advertising
Effects of television on children
Media
Music

Performing Arts
Sports
Television violence
Theater
Travel and recreation

Social Issues

Animal Rights
Consumer Affairs
Homelessness
Hunger
Literacy
Poverty

Health and Personal Concerns

Eating disorders
Fitness
Mental health
Nutrition
Steroid abuse and effects
Substance abuse

Science, Technology and Environment

Animals
Earthquakes
Electric cars
Endangered species
Future technology
Inventors and inventions
Natural disasters
Nuclear energy
Pollution
Rain forests
Recycling
Weather

Education

Further education and careers

Career and technical education

Plan of Action Checklist

	Date Completed	Student Initials	Adviser Initials
Introduce Project	_____	_____	_____
Distribute Handbook	_____	_____	_____
First Advisor Meeting	_____	_____	_____
Review of signed agreement And Written Proposal	_____	_____	_____
Advisor Meeting	_____	_____	_____
Collect written report	_____	_____	_____
Collect and review Rough draft	_____	_____	_____
Advisor Meeting (return rough draft)	_____	_____	_____
Meet with Faculty Panel for Oral Presentation	_____	_____	_____

**GRADUATION PROJECT SIGN UP
2009-2010**

Student Name: _____

Advisor: _____

Home Room Teacher: _____

Room Number: _____

Partner: _____

Topic Proposal: _____

PROJECT CATEGORY CHECK ONE

_____ **EXPANDED RESEARCH TOPIC**

_____ **SELF DIRECTED PROJECT**

_____ **CAREER PATHWAY**

DESCRIPTION:

**GRADUATION PROJECT APPROVAL FORM
2009 – 2010**

STUDENT NAME: _____

TOPIC: _____

ADVISOR: _____

YOUR GRADUATION PROJECT HAS BEEN APPROVED

DATE: _____

YOUR GRADUATION PROJECT HAS BEEN DENIED

DATE: _____

