

Mt. Greylock Regional School District
1781 Cold Spring Road
Williamstown, MA 01267
(413) 458-9582 FAX (413) 458-2856

Mike Powers & Tom Ostheimer
Senior Project Coordinators
mpowers@mgrhs.org x142
tostheimer@mgrhs.org x113

June 22nd, 2005

Dear Parent(s)/Guardians,

On June 7th, as a result of a successful inaugural year of the Senior Project Program, the Mount Greylock Regional School Committee formally approved the Senior Project as a graduation requirement for the class of 2006 and beyond. Students earn three credits toward graduation as they complete the project's stated requirements. Failure to meet the requirements may result in a loss of "Student in Good Standing."

The Senior Project is an innovative program that offers students the opportunity to expand their educational horizons beyond the classroom. Students select a topic of personal interest, craft an "*Essential Question*," perform fieldwork and research (guided by a community mentor) to explore and answer this question, then report their process in both a written and oral form. Faculty members evaluate the project papers; then the junior class, community members and the faculty join in to evaluate the oral presentations. The Senior Project program culminates in a community-wide celebration displaying the interests and expertise of the class of 2006.

The Mount Greylock educational community feels strongly that the Senior Project Program allows students to take control of and have a powerful voice in their education. The program seeks to build a bridge between the skills learned in the classroom and the real world and offers students the opportunity to showcase what they know and are able to do. As project coordinators, we look forward to working with your child and your support in this exciting endeavor.

If you have questions about the Senior Project Program, check out the information available on our web site at www.mgrhs.org or be in touch with any of us.

Sincerely,

Mike Powers
Project Co-Coordinator

Tom Ostheimer
Project Co-Coordinator

Tim Payne
Assistant Principal

Dr. William Travis
Superintendent

The mission of the Mt. Greylock Regional School District is to serve its communities by helping students progress toward responsible citizenship through an educationally challenging environment.

Philosophy and Guiding Principles



A Senior Project is a culminating assessment for seniors that unites faculty and community members to assess and celebrate a student’s mastery of Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies.

A Senior Project is made up of three primary components:

- a **high interest topic** individually selected by a student, framed by an “*Essential Question*,” and guided throughout by a **community mentor**,
- a **Senior Project Portfolio** is a formal documentation consisting of all required forms, a record of (fieldwork/research), a formal written presentation of work (*Project Paper*), **self-evaluations** and a **Debriefing Summary**, and
- a **Senior Project Oral Presentation** that provides an overview of the entire process, an analysis of the project’s content (fieldwork/research) and a personal reflection that illustrates how the project demonstrates a “**learning stretch**” and mastery of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies** shown in the table below:

<p>1. Creative and Practical Problem Solvers Who:</p>	<p>2. Thoughtful and Effective Communicators Who:</p>
<p>1.1 Identify the problem. 1.2 Develop a strategy to solve the problem. 1.3 Gather and organize information. 1.4 Analyze and assess the value of gathered information. 1.5 Select and apply a solution. 1.6 Evaluate the solution and reflect on the process.</p>	<p>2.1 Express ideas clearly and accurately (written, spoken, artistic, etc.). 2.2 Express themselves with a variety of purposes (report, inform, persuade, describe, entertain, explore). 2.3 Capably express themselves with a variety of audiences. 2.4 Comprehend and demonstrate multiple modes of expression.</p>
<p>3. Collaborative and Responsible Community Participants Who:</p>	<p>4. Self-directed Learners Who:</p>
<p>3.1 Work to identify and achieve group goals (school, local, national, global). 3.2 Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills (integrity, respect of self and others, empathy, responsibility, humor). 3.3 Contribute to the well being and effectiveness of the group or community. 3.4 Perform a variety of roles within the group or community.</p>	<p>4.1 Demonstrate an awareness of their own thinking. 4.2 Push the limits of their own knowledge and ability. 4.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of their own actions. 4.4 Show sensitivity to feedback.</p>

The Senior Project strives to provide an academically challenging and personally meaningful intellectual opportunity.

For the student, the Senior Project will provide a unique opportunity to explore a topic of personal interest or concern. For what will likely be one of the first times, students will be asked ‘what are you curious about?’, ‘what do you want to study?’, and then be supported in their efforts to investigate that topic for an entire school year. The work required to complete such a unique and interesting investigation will highlight the skills needed for a productive life beyond Mt. Greylock. The Senior Project will provide meaningful opportunities for the development and use of skills needed for success in college and/or the workplace. As such, the Senior Project should serve as a capstone that provides a sense of closure and completeness to their education at Mt. Greylock.

For the school, the Senior Project will allow us to measure how well we do what we say we do. Have you ever heard the expression ‘judge a tree by its fruit’? Well, the Senior Project would do exactly that. Rather than relying solely on MCAS, SATs or grades in some particular class, the Senior Projects would allow us to look at what students can really do through a final, personally meaningful product. It will bring together ALL faculty and staff to talk about student work in terms of both substance and style.

For the community, the Senior Project will create a window in to our school; a chance for the public to see all of the talents and interests of our students. This will make our neighbors more aware of what neat things are happening in the school and what some of our tax dollars are supporting. The other benefit is that it will allow more students the opportunity to connect with community members. We are confident that as students begin to search within their community for individuals to shape and guide their Senior Projects, they will discover a wealth of talented and willing mentors.

Timeline & Project Overview



June

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

June 10th – Presentation to current junior class to outline expectations of Senior Project and invite exploration and consultation on crafting an “*Essential Question*.”

September

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
X	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

September 9th - Senior Class Meeting to reiterate expectations and suggest meetings with Advisors for “*Essential Question*” support.
September 23rd – Topic Proposals Due (Warnings Sent Home).

October

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
X	11	12	13	14
17	18	19	20	21
24	25	26	27	28
31				

November

M	T	W	T	F
	1	2	3	4
7	8	9	10	X
14	15	16	17	18
21	22	23	X	X
28	29	30		

December

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
X	X	X	X	X

October 11th – Topics Formally Approved by Project Coordinators.

November 1st – Mentor Contract Due.

January

M	T	W	T	F
X	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

February

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
X	X	X	X	X
27	28			

March

M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	31

January 17th – Mentor Progress Reports Due/Portfolios Checked by Project Coordinators.

March 3rd – Project Paper Outlines/Works Cited Page Due.

March 10th - First Draft of Project Papers Due.

March 16th - Peer Review Day.

March 30th – Project Paper Due.

April 3rd – Project Paper Review Day with the Faculty.

April 5th, 6th & 7th – Advisors meet with Students to Review Papers & Faculty Feedback.

April 27th – Paper Resubmissions. Reviewed (depending upon Oral Presentation date.)

***May 3rd or 31st – Oral Presentations and Celebration depending upon SC Approval.**

June 2nd – Complete Portfolios Due.

April

M	T	W	T	F
3	4	5	6	7
10	11	12	13	14
X	X	X	X	X
24	25	26	27	28

May

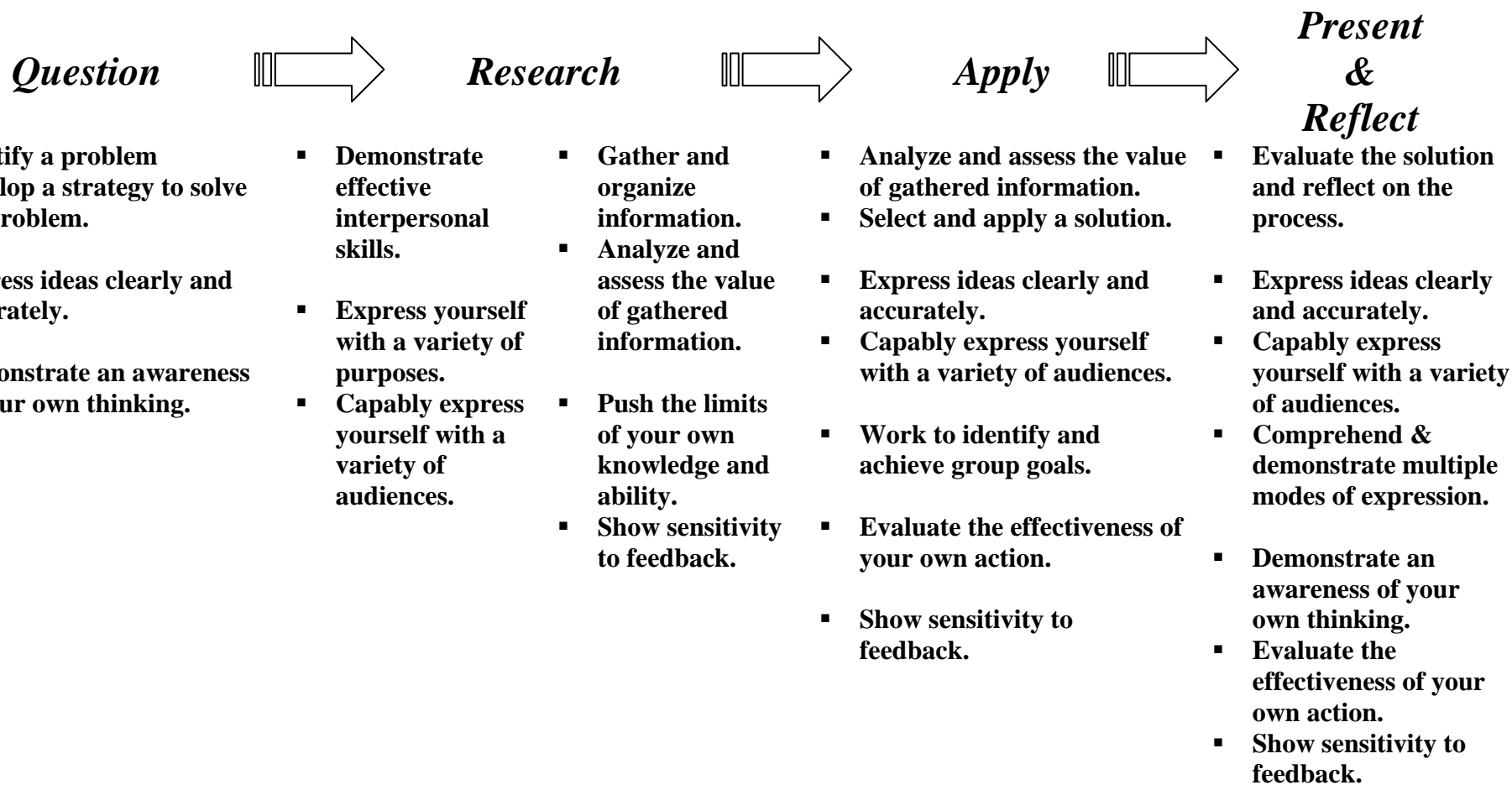
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
X	30	31		

June

M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	X
X	X	X	X	

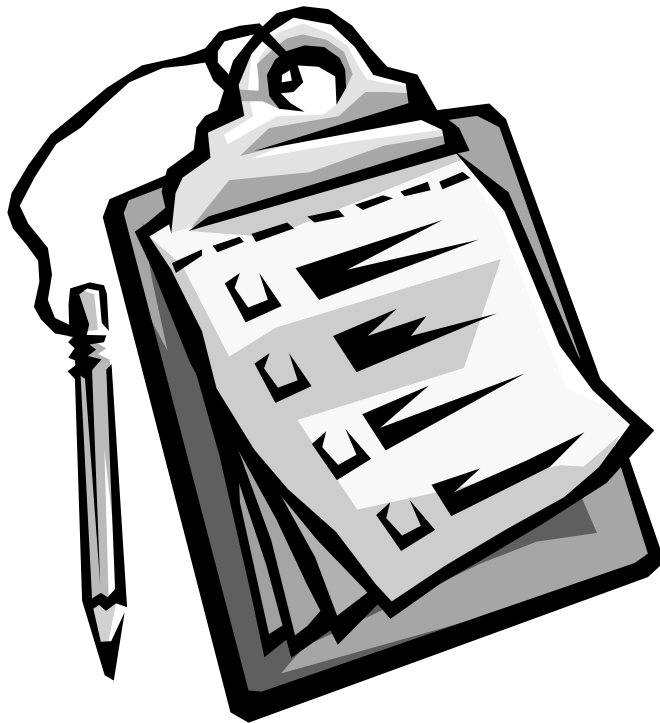
Senior Project Overview

June ⇒ July ⇒ August ⇒ September ⇒ October ⇒ November ⇒ December ⇒ January ⇒ February ⇒ March ⇒ April ⇒ May



Create an “ <i>Essential Question</i> ” Submit Topic Proposal	Contact mentor	Research/Fieldwork	Research/Fieldwork Peer Review Process <u>Project Papers Due</u>	Project Presentations Project Review Self-Evaluation/Reflection <u>Portfolios Due</u>
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Components of the Mt. Greylock Senior Project



Portfolio

All work related to your Senior Project including:

- A Senior Project Abstract
- All required forms and evaluations
- A **Record** of Senior Project Research/Fieldwork
- Project Paper
- Debriefing Summary

Project Paper

A 6-10 page paper that

- chronicles the selection and genesis of your topic as framed by an “*Essential Question*” and influenced by your research/fieldwork and the guidance of your advisor and mentor,
- responds to your “*Essential Question*” and is appropriately supported by your research/fieldwork, and
- reflects on how your efforts demonstrate a “**learning stretch**” and mastery of Mt. Greylock’s Proficiencies

Oral Presentation

A 6-10 minute presentation that

- discusses your interest in the topic and its evolution,
- articulates the significance of the content (fieldwork/research) of your Senior Project and how it addresses your “*Essential Question,*” and
- reflects on how your efforts demonstrate a “**learning stretch**” and mastery of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies.**

A 3-5 minute question and answer period will follow.

Your presentation **MUST** include an audio/visual display.

Portfolio

The Portfolio is your documentation of all work related to the Senior Project. Your Portfolio MUST be submitted in a 3-ring binder with your name and topic on the front cover containing the ingredients below in the following prescribed order:

- A Table of Contents
- **A Senior Project Abstract**
An abstract is a concise (one-page maximum) summary of the main points of your paper.
- all required forms
 - *Topic Proposal,*
 - *Topic Approval,*
 - *Mentor Contract,*
 - *Mentor Progress Report,*
 - *Mentor Final Evaluation,*
 - *A Self-Evaluation of your **Senior Project Paper,***
 - *A Self-Evaluation of your Oral Presentation,*
- A **Record** of your Senior Project Fieldwork/Research,
- a clean, final draft of your **Senior Project Paper**, and
- a one-page **Debriefing Summary** of the Senior Project as a whole.

Evaluation of the depth and thoroughness of your **Portfolio** will be performed by the Senior Project Coordinators.

A committee of faculty members and administrators will evaluate the form and substance of the **Senior Project Paper**.

Research/Fieldwork

The Senior Project defines research as a focused pursuit of the answer to your “*Essential Question.*” This can include all of the following:

- preliminary out-of-school efforts in clarifying your question,
- consultation and focusing time with your mentor,
- data based research (internet, text or interviews), and
- all experimentation or practice performed in addressing the all-important “*Essential Question.*”

When compiling and justifying your **minimum of 15 hours**, the following guidelines must be adhered to:

- **NO LESS THAN 5 hours** should be attributed to meeting time with your mentor,
- **NO LESS THAN 5 hours** should be attributed to research, and
- **NO LESS THAN 5 hours** should be attributed to experimentation or practice needed to answer your “*Essential Question.*”

The research/fieldwork component of your Senior Project will be evaluated in two ways:

- As part of the **Mentor Progress Report** (due January 17th), your mentor will be asked to comment on both the quantity and quality of your interactions. Again at the end of your project, your mentor will contribute their perspective on the merit of both your process and conclusions (as an almost content-expert in the field).
- As part of your **Portfolio**, you will provide a **Record** of your fieldwork/research that presents, describes and defends the time that you’ve invested as well as the knowledge/experience gathered in answering your “*Essential Question.*”

The substance and consequence of your research/fieldwork will also be considered in evaluating both your Project Paper and your Oral Presentation.

Project Paper

The **Project Paper** is composed of three distinct components:

- your thoughts in choosing a topic that you feel passionate about, then framing that interest in an “*Essential Question*” (including your process in selecting a mentor and the location of your fieldwork),
- a reply to your “*Essential Question*” appropriately supported by research / fieldwork (including a *Works-Cited* page in MLA format), and
- a reflective review describing how your Senior Project was a “**learning stretch,**” and how and to what degree you satisfied **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies.**

The **Project Paper** should be 6-10 pages in length (12 pt Times New Roman or equivalent font, 1” margins, double-spaced).

A **Self-Evaluation** of your paper is due after your paper has passed the faculty review process.

Oral Presentation

The **Oral Presentation** is composed of three components woven around a required audio/visual display:

- discussion of your interest in the topic and its evolution,
- articulation of the significance of the content (fieldwork/research) of your Senior Project and how it addresses your “*Essential Question,*” and
- a personal reflection of how your efforts demonstrate a “**learning stretch**” and mastery of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies**.

The **Oral Presentation** should consist of a 6-10 minute presentation followed by an opportunity for your review committee to ask clarification or background questions (3 to 5 minutes). Remember, your thoroughness, charisma and confidence will be what defines this assessment.

- A **Self-Evaluation** of your **Oral Presentation** is due after your presentation has passed the review process.

Debriefing Summary

A one-page **Debriefing Summary** that provides thoughtful feedback on the Senior Project process as a whole.

- ✓ *A **Self-Evaluation** of your **Oral Presentation** and a one-page **Debriefing Summary** are the final ingredients of your Portfolio.*

Expectations & Tips



Expectations to have of yourself:

- Have a positive attitude. If you need help, politely ask for it. Your assigned advisor, your mentor, the Senior Project Coordinators, teachers and classmates can be valuable resources, but you must make sure that you've exerted energy first, and that you're asking a question that can be answered.
- Take advantage of the expertise and willingness of your mentor, but keep in mind that it is YOUR Senior Project. Take ownership of your work! Part of the process is to demonstrate that you are a SELF-DIRECTED learner. Push yourself, and be proud of what you are accomplishing.
- Strive for excellence and thoroughness in everything that you do. Think things through deeply and carefully. Express yourself with clarity and purpose. Pay careful attention to the details (get a friend or family member to read your documents before you submit or send them – use a word processor to ensure a professional presentation that is free of spelling errors). The Senior Project that you create is a reflection of you. You select your topic. You guide your research/fieldwork. You draw your own conclusions. Take pride in this work.
- Be appreciative to those who support you. Your Senior Project is yours and yours alone, but you'll get support along the way, and you should let those people know how much you appreciate their effort on your behalf.
- Treat your advisor and mentor well. He/she are an integral part of your Senior Project experience. Be certain that you schedule and attend an appropriate number of meetings. Be on time and well prepared (your interactions with him/her may have an impact on your advisor's/mentor's willingness to work with our seniors in the future). And above all else, share your excitement and enthusiasm for your topic.

Expectations to have of your Advisor and Mentor:

Your advisor should

- support your development of an appropriately rich and challenging “*Essential Question,*”
- help with your selection of a community - mentor,
- help to reflect on and improve a plan for researching and responding to your “*Essential Question,*”
- review and guide the submission of your **Senior Project Paper,**
- excite and inspire you to deliver a dynamic **Oral Presentation,**
- finally, support you in compiling and submitting your **Portfolio.**

Your mentor should

- help fine-tune your “*Essential Question,*”
- assist you in developing a research/fieldwork strategy,
- assist you in locating and utilizing resources,
- assess your progress, and
- assist you in developing your **Senior Project Paper** and **Oral Presentation.**

A productive relationship between you, your advisor and your mentor will help ensure a meaningful and successful Senior Project experience.

Tips for Selecting and Analyzing a Topic

WITHOUT A DOUBT, THIS IS THE SINGLE MOST IMPORTANT STEP OF YOUR SENIOR PROJECT PROCESS.

IT IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL THAT YOU SELECT A TOPIC IN AN AREA OF SUSTAINABLE PASSION, AND THAT YOU MOLD THAT TOPIC INTO AN ENGAGING “ESSENTIAL QUESTION.”

Brainstorming Process

- Identify your area of interest (something you want to know more about, something you enjoy, a career interest or a skill that you want to develop)
- Make a list of possible interests that could become your topic.
- Narrow your list to 2 or 3 topics; choose 1.

Topic Analysis

As you think about your *topic*, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is it possible to research this topic? Will I be able to find an adequate amount of information?
- Is the topic of interest? Is it something different? Will it provide opportunities for investigation for the next nine months?
- Will the topic challenge me to expand my knowledge and skills?
- Will the topic help me to explore possible career interests? Does it have personal value?
- Will the topic be of interest and value to others?
- Will I be able to complete the project requirements on time?
- Do I have adequate resources to complete the project? Anticipate difficulties and obstacles now!

Tips for Writing an “Essential Question”

Essential questions are questions that require you to **make a decision** or **plan a course of action**. Good “*Essential Questions*” have no one, obvious answer, and require far more than a “yes” or “no” response. They are sometimes difficult to develop. Your Advisor and Mentor will help you to develop your “*Essential Question*.” Though this probably sounds like a lot of work, a good “*Essential Question*” will provide meaningful direction and clear objectives that will guide your entire Senior Project process.

When writing essential questions, avoid "What is" questions such as "What is music therapy," or "What is acid rain." While these are important questions, they do not require that you make a decision or plan a course of action. Instead ask, "How can music therapy be used to reduce stress?" (this requires a **plan of action** to reduce levels of stress) or "To what extent is this particular strategy for reducing the impact of acid rain within the United States the best plan?" (this requires a **decision** among various plans).

Working with the first example, "How can music therapy be used to reduce stress?", we can identify a number of “sub” questions that could guide fieldwork/research:

- What is music therapy?
- What are the stress factors of a given population?
- How can a music therapy plan be created and implemented?

Remember that an “Essential Question” is an open-ended and active question that is of high and sustainable interest.

Once you have composed an “*Essential Question*,” written some sub questions, identified a potential mentor or two, and mapped out an initial plan for how you hope to research then reply to your question, you’re ready to submit your **Topic Proposal** form.

After your advisor has reviewed your **Topic Proposal** the content of this form on page 25, should be submitted electronically (as an attached file) to mjpowers@mgrhs.org or tostheimer@mgrhs.org.

Once the form has been reviewed by the Senior Project coordinators, they will return a hard copy of a **Topic Approval** form (including their signatures and requesting the signature of your parent/guardian, advisor and mentor).

The Topic Approval form will be provided by the Senior Project Coordinators and will become an essential part of your Portfolio.

*Remember that your “**Essential Question**” is likely to evolve as you consult with your advisor and mentor and dive deeper into your fieldwork/research. As long as you don’t make drastic changes, your **Topic Approval** form will continue to be valid. If you make significant changes, please notify your advisor immediately.*

Tips for Contacting a Mentor

We recommend that you

- first contact your mentor via the telephone to express your interest and needs
- follow up your initial contact with a formal letter or E-mail that states your “**Essential Question**” and your expectations of your mentor as well as your desire to meet directly to discuss your ideas further. If all goes well, have your mentor sign a **Mentor Contract**.

Remember to...

- be respectful
- be appreciative
- be enthusiastic yet open to their opinions and expertise
- be organized and thoughtful
- be hardworking, efficient and
- be responsible in meeting all scheduled appointments

Tips for Research/Fieldwork

- research n.*, 1. Scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry.
2. Close careful study. *v.* 1. To study something thoroughly so as to present in a detailed, accurate manner.

American Heritage College Dictionary, Third Edition

Research/Fieldwork must include all of the following components:

1. **Personal Experience**: interviews, study or investigation within your topic field, consultation with your mentor, site visits, observations, practice or experience within your topic field.
2. **Printed Resources**: books, technical literature, literature, articles from reputable and relevant sources.
(primary resources would be OUTSTANDING if relevant and available)
3. **Electronic Research**: current information from reputable and relevant websites or other electronic resources.

All research should be woven into your Project Paper, and cited according to MLA format (please consult with your advisor).

All Senior Projects require formal research (printed, electronic) in addition to your personal experiences. A Works Cited Page and properly formatted internal citations, where necessary, is required as well.

Tips for Senior Project Abstract

An abstract is a concise (one-page) summary of the main points of an article or paper. Abstracts often appear at the beginning of a scholarly or technical article. An abstract is used to encourage an audience to read the entire document.

The Project Abstract should begin with your name, school name, date, your “***Essential Question***” and “sub” questions. The body of the abstract should be a stimulating but brief description of your Senior Project.

Tips for Recording Senior Project Fieldwork/Research

This personal record is the evidence and evolution of your Project. It should include the focusing of your topic, the development of your “***Essential Question***,” a record of your contact with your mentor, and a descriptive account of your research/fieldwork (with the last two serving as the prescribed anecdotal evidence that will enrich your paper). It may be creative and varied in format. The following are some possible format choices for recording your fieldwork and research:

- Example #1 – A written journal entry that chronicles your experiences
- Example #2 – A boxed log indicating time, location, description of experience/activity, thoughts and reflections.
- Example #3 – A non-written entry (such as an audio/visual record)

If done in a detailed and thoughtful manner, your Recordings will directly guide the writing of your Project Paper.

Tips for Senior Project Paper

***You must submit SIX copies of your Project Paper with NO NAME ON IT.
The Coordinators will assign you a student number.***

Remember, the **Project Paper** must consist of four distinct components:

- your thoughts in choosing a topic that you feel passionate about, then framing that interest in an “***Essential Question***” (including your process in selecting a mentor and the location of your fieldwork),
- a reply to your “***Essential Question***” appropriately supported by research / fieldwork (including a *Works Cited* page in MLA format), and
- a reflective review describing how your Senior Project was a “**learning stretch**,” and how and to what degree you satisfied **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies**.
- A *Works Cited* page with proper internal citations.

Paper structure requires a balance of styles.

For the first section, be very aware of your audience. How much do people really want to hear? Last year a number of judges felt that seniors went on and on about what they picked and how hard it was to work on it, at the expense of writing more of the ‘meat’ of the paper. In other words it felt like they were filling space or rambling. The other idea that you need to be warned about is your tone. Some people like a very freestyle form of

writing that flows like a conversation. Others (some of whom may be judging your paper) prefer a more formal approach. This will be a tough call for you. Emphatically, we want to encourage you to write in your ‘voice’, but be aware that your judges will be reading this with an eye towards your ability to effectively communicate. If you exercise appropriate use of grammar and punctuation, structure your prose appropriately and use an engaging tone, then you’ll be fine. If you revert to a writing that is more slang or colloquial, then you’re likely to have trouble with this portion of the Project.

In the reply to your “*Essential Question*,” be sure to unravel a complete and engaging response to your question. Your ‘sub’ questions guided your research, defining a series of easier questions to answer to lead you to your bigger question. Use those questions and answers to guide your writing. What you’re trying to do is explain or justify the conclusions that you’ve drawn. Engaging the reader on the same path that you traveled may be the best way to achieve that. Your evaluation will be dependent on your ability to communicate your thoughts.

The reflective review will have a tone more similar to your first section. In fact you might want to compose both your first section and your review section independent of your reply to the “*Essential Question*” that you posed. Finally, you want to clearly focus on how your work demonstrates a “*learning stretch*” and mastery of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies**.

Articulation of your “*learning stretch*” should be highly personal, introspective, and open-ended. Your reflection on your “*learning stretch*” could include responses to the following prompts:

- Did it stretch previous knowledge or experience?
- Was it a new venture or exploration?
- Did it pose an emotional, physical (skills), and/or intellectual challenge?
- Was it the nature and demands of the Project itself that resulted in the “*learning stretch*?”

When analyzing **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies**, first try to get the “big picture” by focusing on the four main categories. Next, refer to the specific indicators of the Graduation Proficiencies that apply. “Less may be more” here. A focused response to some of the indicators is better than a cursory laundry-list reaction to all of the indicators.

Reflect on and address the following questions:

- How has the completion of your Senior Project demonstrated your abilities to *creatively and practically solve problems*?
- How has your rapport with your advisor and mentor (and maybe your Project itself) presented you as a *collaborative and responsible community participant*?

- How has your commitment to this Project, the process of working on the Project, and the depth of your conclusions illustrated how much of a *self-directed learner* you are?
- How has your ability to *communicate effectively* evidenced in the composition of your Project Paper as well as your Oral Presentation?

All papers will be checked for authenticity.

A member of our English department offers the following general writing suggestions...

Prewriting

- Review the “*Essential Question*” and “sub” questions that have driven your research and fieldwork.
- Use index cards to organize the evidence (anecdotal if available) of your fieldwork and research. Be certain to include full documentation of sources (books, articles, websites, names of human beings and the dates and times you interviewed them...) on cards so that this information can be easily transferred to the body of your paper and your *Works Cited* page.
- Solidify your reply to your “*Essential Question.*” Have you thoroughly addressed the “sub” questions? Does your reply reflect what you’ve learned in your research and fieldwork?
- Create an outline based on the major questions that have driven your research and fieldwork. Assign appropriate references (experience, practice, anecdotes, research, evidence, etc) to the various sections of your outline.

Writing Your Paper

- Remember that the introduction must engage your reader’s attention. Consider using an anecdote or a piece of startling evidence to personally involve you reader in your “*Essential Question.*” Be certain to clearly define your reply within your introduction. Think of your reply to your “*Essential Question*” as almost a thesis. (Many writers prefer to place their thesis in the final sentence of their introduction. You don’t need to adhere to this convention, but you should NOT begin your introduction with a reply to your question.)
- Make certain that the paragraphs that form the body of your paper flow smoothly and logically into one another.
- Be certain to clearly cite all sources within the body of your paper using MLA format.
- Self-check along the way: is there a clear connection between what you are writing and your response to your “*Essential Question?*” Will the connection between the evidence you share and your solution (to your “*Essential Question*”) become clear within the course of the paper? Should you adjust your “*Essential Question*” in light of conclusions that you’ve drawn?
- The conclusion should leave the reader satisfied that you have offered a reply to your “*Essential Question.*” It is an opportunity to pull together the key points of the paper and to reflect on how your experience was a “*learning stretch*” and how you mastered **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies**.
- Prepare a *Works Cited* page according to MLA format (see a member of the English department if support is needed).

Revision

- It is a good idea to print out a hard copy of your paper for proofreading purposes. You will find that many errors not obvious on the computer screen leap out from the printed page. Mark up your proofreading copy freely then incorporate the changes you decide to make in the original document.
- After you check your paper for errors of grammar, punctuation and style, consider asking a friend or relative to read over a clean copy. Often a second pair of eyes will catch mistakes the writer is unable to see.

A Peer Review Day scheduled for March 16th, 2006 will also assist you in the revision process.

Tips for Senior Project Oral Presentation

This is your final major hurdle of the Senior Project Program. This presentation is your opportunity to publicly demonstrate and articulate your experience exploring your topic through your fieldwork and research.

- Dress appropriately
 - Attire requirements for females include: pantsuit, dress or skirt.
 - Attire requirements for males include: dress shirt, tie and pants.
- Make sure your Portfolio is complete and available for the judges to preview before your Oral Presentation.
- Familiarize yourself with the judge's rubric that will be used to evaluate your presentation. Be aware of the 3 major categories of evaluation: organization and content, delivery, and the Q&A period criteria.
- Make sure you have the necessary technology for your audio/visual aid.
- Rehearse your presentation so you adhere to the time restrictions (6-10 minutes) and adhere to the delivery suggestions in the rubric. An outline or notes for reference may also help you feel comfortable and confident.
- Introduce yourself to the panel of judges.
- Anticipate questions that may be asked by the judges.
- Be yourself. Be confident, charismatic and have fun.
- And be sure to thank the judges after you've finished.

Tips for Debriefing Paper

This is the final step of the **Senior Project** program. Your one-page **Debriefing Summary** asks for reflective and thoughtful feedback on the Senior Project as a whole (What went well? What went poorly? What would you recommend we change in the future?).

Forms



Topic Proposal

“Essential Question-”

“Sub” Questions (3 or 4)-

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Possible Mentors:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Potential Research/Fieldwork (what’s your plan?)-

Mentor Contract:

As the Mentor for a Mt. Greylock senior participating in the Senior Project Program, you will provide the student with valuable insight and expertise, guidance, direction, and inspiration. The Senior Project is a unique opportunity for students to select a topic that demonstrates a “**learning stretch**” and their mastery of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies:** creative and practical problem solving, thoughtful and effective communicating, collaborative and responsible community participation and self-directed learning.

Specific obligations include

- formally assessing your student’s progress,
- fine-tuning his/her “*Essential Question*,”
- developing a research/fieldwork strategy,
- locating and utilizing resources, and
- designing his/her Senior Project Paper, Presentation and audio/visual display.

If possible, we would also appreciate it if you could act as a Senior Project Oral Presentation judge in May (May 3rd or 31st depending upon School Committee approval).

Timeline

Submit Topic Proposal	September 23 rd
Acceptance of Proposal	October 11 th
Submit completed copy of Mentor Contract	November 1 st
Mentor Progress Report/Portfolios Checked	January 17 th
Project Paper Outlines /Works Cited Page Due	March 3 rd
Project Paper Drafts Due	March 10 th
Peer Review Day	March 16 th
Project Papers Due	March 30 th
Project Papers Reviewed	April 3 rd
Project Paper Resubmissions (as needed)	April 27 th
Senior Project Oral Presentations/Celebration	May 3 rd or 31 st
Portfolios Due	June 2 nd

Mentor Name

Student Name

Mentor Signature

Date

Address

Phone Number

E-mail

Mount Greylock Regional School District

1781 Cold Spring Road
Williamstown, MA 01267
Dr. William Travis, Superintendent
Tel: 413-458-9582 Fax: 413-458-2856

Mount Greylock Regional School District has been certified by the Criminal History Systems Board for access to all conviction and pending data. As an applicant/employee/candidate for the position of **Senior Project Mentor** for (Student Name) _____, I understand that a criminal record check will be conducted for the conviction and pending information only and that it will not necessarily disqualify me.

Applicant/Employee/Senior Project Signature

APPLICANT/EMPLOYEE/SENIOR PROJECT MENTOR INFORMATION (PLEASE PRINT)

LAST NAME FIRST NAME MIDDLE NAME

MAIDEN NAME OR ALIAS (IF APPLICABLE) PLACE OF BIRTH

DATE OF BIRTH SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER MOTHER'S MAIDEN NAME
(Requested but not required)

FORMER ADDRESSES: _____

SEX: _____ **HEIGHT:** ____ft. ____in. **WEIGHT:** _____ **EYE COLOR:** _____

STATE DRIVER'S LICENSE NUMBER: _____

*****THE ABOVE INFORMATION WAS VERIFIED BY REVIEWING THE FOLLOWING FORM OF GOVERNMENT ISSUED PHOTOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:**

REQUESTED BY: _____
SIGNATURE OF CORI AUTHORIZED EMPLOYEE

Mentor Evaluation Form

A primary role of the Mt. Greylock Senior Project is to assess our student’s level of mastery of our Graduation Proficiencies. Below is a list of **Mt. Greylock’s Graduation Proficiencies** including the indicators (please refer to www.mgrhs.org for additional explanation if needed). Though some items might be difficult for you to assess, we would appreciate your efforts to provide an evaluation in each of the included categories. In addition to these items, we would appreciate a brief “free-response” comment regarding our student’s effectiveness in the student/mentor relationship.

Creative and Practical Problem Solvers Who: Outstanding Proficient Limited Not Observed

Identify the problem				
Develop a strategy to solve the problem				
Gather and organize information				
Select and apply a solution				
Evaluate the solution and reflect on the process				

Thoughtful and Effective Communicators

Who:

Express ideas clearly and accurately				
Express themselves with a variety of purposes				
Capably express themselves with a variety of audiences				
Comprehend and demonstrate multiple modes of expression				

Collaborative and Responsible Community

Participants Who:

Work to identify and achieve group goals				
Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills				
Contribute to the well-being and effectiveness of the group or community				
Perform a variety of roles within the group or community				

Self-Directed Learners Who:

Demonstrate an awareness of their own thinking				
Push the limits of their own knowledge and ability				
Evaluate the effectiveness of their own actions				
Show sensitivity to feedback				

Mentor Signature

Date

Senior Project Paper Self-Evaluation Scoring Form

Student Name _____

	Outstanding (4)	Proficient (3)	Limited (2)	Insufficient (1)
Mechanics/ Format				
Organization/ Content				
Voice				
Reflection				

COMMENTS:

Passing Score = Total of 11 or higher, with NO insufficient scores

Mechanics/Format	Organization/Content	Voice	Reflection	Total
+2●	+	+	=	

Senior Project Oral Presentation Self-Evaluation Scoring Form

Student Name _____

	Outstanding (4)	Proficient (3)	Limited (2)	Insufficient (1)
Organization/ Content				
Communication/ Delivery				
Q & A Period				
Dress/Time				

COMMENTS:

Passing Score = Total of 14 or higher, with NO insufficient scores. Failure to meet the Time & Dress requirement will result in an automatic failure.

Organization/Content	Communication/ Delivery	Q & A Period	Dress/Time	Total
2●	+2●	+	+	=

Graduation Proficiencies and the Graduation Rubrics



1. Creative and Practical Problem Solvers Who:

	4	3	2	1
1.1 Identify the problem(s).	Independently and insightfully identifies all components of the problem.	Effectively identifies most components of the problem.	Identifies some of the components of the problem.	Does not identify or misidentifies the problem and its components.
1.2 Develop a strategy to solve the problem.	Independently and insightfully develops strategies and considers alternatives impartially and rationally.	Develops an effective strategy to solve the problem.	Identifies some of the steps of a strategy.	Identifies few, if any, of the steps of a strategy.
1.3 Gather and organize information.	Demonstrates an extensive knowledge of information-gathering resources and techniques. Demonstrates creativity and resourcefulness in gathering and organizing information.	Demonstrates a knowledge of information-gathering resources and techniques and effectively gathers and organizes information.	Demonstrates a limited knowledge of information-gathering resources and techniques and exhibits limited ability to gather and organize information.	Demonstrates a limited knowledge of information-gathering resources and techniques and exhibits limited ability to gather and organize information.
1.4 Analyze and assess the value of gathered information.	Consistently analyzes and assesses the information in detail, accurately and insightfully determining whether the data is credible and relevant to tasks. Is open to introducing a valuable and unrepresented perspective.	Effectively analyzes and assesses whether information is credible and relevant to tasks. Supports a valuable and unrepresented perspective.	Sporadically determines whether information is credible and relevant to tasks.	Rarely, if ever, determines whether information is credible and relevant to tasks.
1.5 Select and apply a solution.	Selects and creatively applies solutions to the problem. Insightfully identifies broader connections.	Effectively selects and applies solutions.	Selects and applies solution with limited success.	Demonstrates little, if any, ability to select or apply a solution.
1.6 Evaluate the solution and reflect on the process.	Independently evaluates problem solving process, insightfully identifies potential areas of improvement, and states how to approach problems more creatively in the future.	Effectively evaluates the process and identifies potential areas of improvement and recognizes some future applications.	Evaluates the process but has limited ability to improve the solution and make future applications.	Demonstrates little, if any, ability to evaluate the strategy or solution.

2. Thoughtful and Effective Communicators who:

	4	3	2	1
2.1 Express ideas clearly and accurately (written, spoken, artistic, etc.).	Consistently and dynamically communicates information by providing a clear main idea or theme supported by rich, vivid, and powerful detail.	Consistently and dynamically communicates information by providing a clear main idea or theme supported by sufficient detail.	Sporadically communicates information by providing a clear main idea or theme supported by limited detail.	Rarely, if ever, communicates information by providing a clear main idea or theme supported by detail.
2.2 Express themselves with a variety of purposes (report, inform, persuade, describe, entertain, explore).	Successfully communicates a purpose in a highly creative and insightful manner.	Uses effective techniques to communicate a clear purpose.	Demonstrates an attempt to communicate for a specific purpose with limited effectiveness that may be due to errors or omissions.	Demonstrates no central purpose in the communication or makes no attempt to articulate a purpose.
2.3 Express themselves with a variety of audiences.	Demonstrates an ability to insightfully adjust tone and style to a highly diverse range of audiences.	Demonstrates the ability to adjust tone and style to different audiences.	Demonstrates the ability to adjust tone and style with a limited range of audiences.	Rarely, if ever, demonstrates the ability to adjust tone or style for different audiences.
2.4 Comprehend and demonstrate multiple modes of expression.	Comprehends and demonstrates the ability to creatively and dynamically use diverse methods of communication.	Comprehends and demonstrates an ability to use diverse methods of communication effectively.	Comprehends and demonstrates the ability to use only a few methods of communication.	Comprehends and demonstrates an ability to use only one or two methods of communication.

3. Collaborative and Responsible Community Participants who:

	4	3	2	1
3.1 Work to identify and achieve group goals (school, local, national, global).	Consistently and actively committed to identifying and achieving group goals.	Effectively committed to identifying and achieving group goals.	Sporadically committed to identifying and achieving group goals.	Rarely, if ever, committed to identifying and achieving group goals.
3.2 Demonstrate effective interpersonal skills (integrity, respect of self and others, empathy, responsibility, humor).	Consistently and actively helps promote meaningful interaction and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others.	Effectively participates in group interaction and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others.	Sporadically participates in group interaction and expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others.	Rarely, if ever, participates in group interaction without prompting or expresses ideas and opinions in ways that are sensitive to the feelings and knowledge base of others.
3.3 Contribute to the well-being and effectiveness of the group or community.	Consistently and actively helps the group identify changes or modifications necessary in group processes and works toward carrying out those changes.	Effectively helps identify changes or modifications necessary in group processes and works toward carrying out those changes.	Sporadically helps identify changes or modifications necessary in group processes and works toward carrying out those changes.	Rarely, if ever, helps identify changes or modifications necessary in group processes and seldom works toward carrying out those changes.
3.4 Perform a variety of roles within the group or community.	Demonstrates the flexibility and willingness to perform a wide range of roles within a group.	Demonstrates a willingness and ability to perform different roles within a group.	Demonstrates a limited ability to perform different roles within a group.	Rarely, if ever, demonstrates an ability to change roles within a group.

4. Self-Directed Learners Who:

	4	3	2	1
4.1 Demonstrate an awareness of their own thinking.	Explains in detail the sequence of thoughts used when facing a task or problem. Provides a detailed analysis of how an awareness of thinking has enhanced performance.	Describes the process of thinking through a task or problem. Provides some ideas about how an awareness of thinking has enhanced performance.	Provides a vague and/or incomplete description of the process of thinking through a task or problem. Provides few ideas about how an awareness of thinking has enhanced performance.	Provides a confusing and/or incomplete report of the thinking through or completion of a task or problem. Cannot describe how performance has been improved.
4.2 Pushes the limits of own knowledge and ability.	Seeks out a highly challenging task and works on the task until it is completed or until attaining significant understanding from the task.	Accepts the challenge presented and works on the task until it is completed or until attaining significant understanding from the task.	Accepts the challenge presented and makes an initial attempt to complete the task, but quits before completing it or attaining significant understanding.	Rarely, if ever, accepts the challenge.
4.3 Evaluate the effectiveness of their actions.	Reviews actions thoroughly and from as many points of view as is useful for both immediate and long-term effects. Finds value in lessons learned from both success and failure.	Reviews actions from a reasonably objective perspective. Considers short-term effects. Finds lessons in what worked well.	Reviews actions from a subjective perspective. Sometimes considers the effects of actions. Gleans some lessons from task.	Makes little, if any, effort to review actions. Gleans few lessons from task.
4.4 Shows sensitivity to feedback.	Shows sensitivity to a wide variety of feedback. Responds and adjusts promptly when the current approach is clearly not working. Seeks out advice and responses from knowledgeable sources.	Shows awareness of major sources of feedback. Responds and adjusts promptly when correction is needed. Listens to the advice of others.	Shows awareness of some important sources of feedback. Responds and adjusts sometimes when correction is needed. Sometimes listens to advice.	Ignores major sources of feedback. Has difficulty listening to advice.

Senior Project Rubrics



Rubric for Senior Project Paper

	4	3	2	1
Mechanics / Format	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clean and clear. 0-6 spelling, typos, punctuation, grammar errors. (2.1) Paper follows MLA format with appropriate citations. <i>Works Cited</i> page clear and accurate. (2.1) Adheres to requirements: 6-10 pages, 12 pt font (Times New Roman), 1” margins, double-spaced. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7-15 spelling, typos, punctuation, grammar errors. 1 or 2 errors on <i>Works Cited</i> page. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 16-20 spelling, typos, punctuation, grammar errors. 3 to 5 errors on <i>Works Cited</i> page. MINOR issue with the defined requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More than 20 spelling, typos, punctuation, grammar errors. 3 to 5 errors on <i>Works Cited</i> page. Paper fails to meet defined requirements.
Organization / Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Well-crafted introduction that explains topic genesis and is framed by “Essential Question.” (1.1, 2.1, 2.2) Clearly defined strategy/plan for how to explore and reply to “Essential Question.” (1.1, 1.2, 4.3) Paper/reply is well supported by extensive fieldwork/research that is clear, accurate, and relevant. (1.2, 1.4, 2.1) Cohesive paper characterized by smooth transitions and logical flow of ideas and information. (2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction explains topic genesis and is framed by “Essential Question.” Strategy/plan for exploration and reply is evident. Paper/reply is well supported by clear, accurate fieldwork/research. Transitions are clear and flow is logical. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some reference to topic genesis and “Essential Question” in introduction. Some evidence of strategy/plan for exploration and reply. Some reference to fieldwork/research or issues regarding clarity or accuracy in references. Transitions or flow are unclear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate reference to topic genesis and “Essential Question” in introduction. Inadequate evidence of strategy/plan for exploration and reply. Inadequate reference to or accuracy issues with fieldwork/research. Poor transitions and illogical flow
Voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal experience with mentor, fieldwork/research highlighted by anecdotal evidence. (1.3, 1.4, 3.2, 4.4) Dynamic and creative expression establishes an appropriate and accessible tone and style. (2.3, 2.4, 4.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some personal experience and anecdotal evidence but lacking in depth. Tone and style is clear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little anecdotal evidence or personal experience evident. Tone and style is inconsistent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No anecdotal evidence or personal experience evident. Tone and style does not attempt to connect reader.
Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strong evidence of “learning stretch.” (4.1, 4.2, 4.3) Thoughtful analysis of how student has demonstrated mastery of Graduation Proficiencies. (4.1, 4.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear evidence of “learning stretch.” Clear analysis of how student has mastered Grad Proficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some evidence of “learning stretch.” Some analysis of how student has mastered Grad Proficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate evidence of “learning stretch.” Inadequate analysis of mastery of Grad Proficiencies.

Student Number _____

	OUTSTANDING (4)	PROFICIENT (3)	LIMITED (2)	INSUFFICIENT (1)
Mechanics / Format				
Organization / Content				
Voice				
Reflection				

COMMENTS:

Passing Score = TOTAL of 11 or higher, with NO Insufficient scores.

Mechanics / Format	Organization / Content	Voice	Reflection	<u>TOTAL</u>
+2 ●	+	+	=	

Rubric for Senior Project Oral Presentation

	4	3	2	1
Organization / Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction stimulates strong interest in project. (2.2, 2.3) • Introduction explicitly describes topic genesis and explains interest. (1.2, 2.2, 3.2, 4.1) • Topic framed by a thought-provoking, open-ended “Essential Question.” (1.1, 4.1) • “Essential Question” addressed by relevant and thorough evidence. (1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 2.2, 4.3) • Conclusion summarizes results and effectively answers “Essential Question.” (1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.2) • Conclusion explicitly analyzes “learning stretch.” (4.1, 4.2) • Conclusion clearly states/illustrates mastery of Grad Proficiencies. (4.1, 4.2) • Well-crafted audio/visual aid used to support project and maintain interest. (2.1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction stimulates interest. • Introduction explains interest & topic genesis. • Topic framed by “EQ.” • Clear evidence is apparent. • Conclusion offers some summary. • Conclusion analyzes “learning stretch.” • Conclusion states mastery of Grad Prof. • Audio/visual aid effectively used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction stimulates some interest. • Introduction partially explains interest & topic genesis. • Marginal reference to “EQ.” • Some evidence provided. • Conclusion offered but lacks clarity. • Some reference to “learning stretch.” • Mastery of 1 or 2 Grad Prof. described. • Ineffective use of audio/visual aid. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction fails to stimulate interest. • Introduction fails to explain interest & topic genesis. • Topic not framed by “EQ.” • No evidence provided. • Results and answer unclear. • No reference to “learning stretch.” • No mention of Grad Prof. • No Audio/visual aid.
Delivery / Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas clearly expressed (volume & rate). (2.1, 2.3, 3.2) • Meaningful eye contact established and maintained. (3.2) • Student establishes engaging and accessible tone and style of communication. (2.3, 3.2) • Student maintains enthusiasm and confidence. (2.3, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 4.3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate volume & rate. • Consistent eye contact used. • Tone and style promotes some engagement. • Some enthusiasm and confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistent volume & rate. • Some eye contact used. • Inconsistent tone and style. • Little enthusiasm and confidence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate volume & rate. • No meaningful eye contact. • Inappropriate tone and style. • No enthusiasm or confidence.
Q&A Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers questions clearly, confidently, coherently, and completely. (1.3, 1.5, 2.3, 3.2) • Answers demonstrate extensive knowledge of subject. (1.3, 4.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers are clear and thorough. • Answers show appropriate knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answers lack clarity and thoroughness. • Answers show some knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unclear/evasive replies to questions. • Replies suggest inadequate knowledge.
Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adhered to time limit of 6-10 minutes. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Did NOT adhere to time limit of 6-10 minutes. 	
Dress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Males: shirt, tie, and pants • Females: pantsuit, dress or skirt 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failed to meet dress code expectation. 	

Student Name _____

	OUTSTANDING (4)	PROFICIENT (3)	LIMITED (2)	INSUFFICIENT (1)
Organization / Content				
Delivery / Communication				
Q&A Period				
Time Dress				

COMMENTS:

*Passing Score = TOTAL of 14 or higher, with NO Insufficient scores.
Failure to meet the **Time and Dress** requirement will result in an automatic failure.*

Organization / Content	Delivery / Communication	Q&A Period	Dress Time	<u>TOTAL</u>
2 ●	+ 2 ●	+	+	=

NOTES: