Nevada Joint Union High School District

Senior Projects Handbook

A graduation requirement for all Seniors
School Year 2020-2021

Includes overview, dates, and specific element explanations
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Overall Purpose and Explanation of Senior Project

The Senior Project, in keeping with an academic focus on more college- and career-ready curriculum, is designed to give all students an opportunity to explore a career path and move progressively and successfully towards entering the adult world of work. The goal of this project is to help our seniors understand how their own personalities and interests can help them select a career path, gain deeper insight into the types of jobs available, discover specific career training requirements and expectations, and practice the process of getting a job. We partner with many professionals and community members who lead our students in the understanding of specific career paths, offer them mock interview practice, and act as adjudicators for the final project presentations. This truly is a community effort, and, although it is a lot of work, our graduated students are very grateful for the experience.

All senior students in Nevada Joint Union High School schools must complete a Senior Project in order to graduate. The Senior project is MANDATORY for graduation and is a year-long project involving students’ English teachers as well as counselors, intern coordinators, and district-level workers who focus on school-to-career education.

Our new team is very excited about streamlining the process for our seniors, working with all school sites so that the experience is gratifying, edifying, and similar for all NJUHSD students. We are pleased also to be partnering with professionals in our community to help our students successfully make the transition to adulthood.

As always, our community is invaluable in this process. If you would like to be a mentor for a student cohort, take part in Mock Interviews, or attend Final Senior Project Presentations, please let us know.

NOTE: During the 2020-2021 school year, the Job Shadow/Intern experience will look different than in past years, due to Covid-19. Please make note of this. Despite the cancellation of Senior Projects for 2019-2020, Senior Projects will be MANDATORY for 2020-2021 school year.

Wishing our Seniors Success,
NJUHSD Senior Projects Team at Bear River: Sara Noah, snoah@njuhsd.com; Christina Levinson, clevinson@njuhsd.com

Please note you and your student’s receipt and agreement with the Senior Project Handbook by filling out the Google Form
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSddiKZxajohiBdX-EjaCStYzh1V3hBljyKtH2zZIUS0TVB6gJQ/viewform?usp=sf_link
### Senior Project Due Dates 2020-2021

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<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
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<td>Personality/Career Profile tests</td>
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<td>Group Presentation Practice</td>
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<td>GRADUATION!</td>
<td>June 4, 2021</td>
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Personality Test

Students will all be taking a Meyers-Briggs personality test and compare the results with their own conception of their strengths and weaknesses. This personality test will help students to make connections between their unique personalities and how different jobs appeal to different types of people. This is the first step for students to understand possible directions to take in terms of career. Obviously, this test does not completely explain or define one's personality, but it is an interesting activity for students and also can help them begin the process of self-examination for future goals and plans.

https://www.16personalities.com/
Career Profiler Test
Holland Codes (RIASEC)

Students will all take a Career Profiler test, which, in conjunction with their Meyers-Briggs Personality type results, can help them more deeply research possible careers that fit their personalities and strengths. Students will begin by taking the Holland Codes Career Profiler test, which shows student interest in the areas of Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, and Conventional (RIASEC). The California Career Zone website offers students many ideas for exploring jobs, discovering different job sectors and specific jobs, and types of training and education needed for jobs. Students will be able to explore this website more on their own.

https://www.cacareerzone.org/
Career Exploration Cohorts

In order to maximize the time for our local volunteers, students will be working together with a mentor to learn more about specific careers. Students participating in these cohorts will be from all schools in our district, so that we can make sure all students have a strong Career Exploration experience. There will be three deadlines throughout the year for students: first, to fill out the Career Interest form so that students can be organized into cohorts; second, students will attend a 1-hour career presentation with other students which includes a question and answer period; students will submit their project proposal; students will attend a final meeting with their cohort to present their project. This project will also be the focus of the final Senior Project presentation.

Student Requirements

- Topic Choice Career Interest Form: Students will fill out this form expressing their job fields of interest so that cohorts can be formed
- Cohort Initial Meeting: Attend a 1 hour career presentation with prepared questions for question and answer session
- Submit a career project proposal--connected to this would be the hard and soft skills you will be working to gain/improve on through this project. (typical examples of hard skills include computer software, marketing, writing, accounting, finance, or legal skills. In contrast, soft skills are your traits and abilities not unique to any job—think collaboration, time management, empathy, or leadership.)
  Projects could include completing an internship; attending a summer program; learning a skill related to career (using online or on ground sources); building something; job shadowing; an unpaid job experience; a volunteer experience related to the career; a research project/paper; etc.
- Submit something documenting the career project process with a finished product (if student’s project was about creating a product).
- The project should take a minimum of 15 hours.
Personal Essay

Students will write a personal essay, which is helpful for some job applications, military service job placement, or college acceptance. In addition, it helps students to develop an awareness of their strengths, skills, and personality traits that would be beneficial to a college/university/technical school or a particular job.

Students have three choices for the Personal Essay:

1. Respond to the Nevada Joint Union High School District Scholarship Prompt.
2. Answer four of the eight personal questions from the University of California College Admissions Application.
3. Choose a specific prompt (if different from the two above) for a particular college they are applying for, which must be approved and verified by the student’s English teacher.

These essays are process essays in English class. Students will work on brainstorming ideas, putting ideas into concrete form, revising, editing, and creating final drafts.
Career Research Project

Seniors will all create a Career Research Project, which satisfies the English California State Standard for conducting research as well as incorporating findings into a finished project.

The Components of the Research Project include:

1. Student’s individual results and findings of the Meyers-Briggs personality test. Students will make note of the personality type that very strongly fits them and analyze and connect the descriptions to themselves. They will need to make note of and describe the four letter code that is the result of the test.

2. Students will take the Career Interest Profiler. They will make note of their RIASEC score with percentages for all six areas and the three areas of strength. This data will be used to explore careers for the project.

3. Students will brainstorm four different careers that are of interest.

4. For directed research, students will examine careers using the Occupational Outlook Handbook from the Bureau of Labor Statistics; the California Careerzone website, and ONet Online. Students will take note on three careers in three different field areas. One of their researched careers must be the career they are investigating for their senior project.

5. Students will present their findings orally and in writing using one of the following choices:
   a. A research paper
   b. A poster (22X28 or 20X30) *If we are back at school by this time
   c. A slide presentation
Each of these written works must be accompanied by an MLA-formatted Works Cited page.

More details about this assignment will be given in class. The following is a list of elements that will need to be included in the final project.

Students will need to include in their final paper/presentation:

1. Personality type from the Meyers-Briggs test. Give details about the type and how it fits or doesn’t fit the student’s personality rather than just listing the four-letter code.
2. RIASEC score and percentages for each area from the test with a reflection on how this score represents the student’s strengths and weaknesses.
3. Three occupations studied (must be from different fields)
   - For EACH occupation:
     - Title of Job
     - Job Field
     - Related Jobs
     - Salary range
     - Education/training needed
     - Extra Certification needed
     - Job outlook in the future (job growth)
     - Job location/environment
     - Skills/personality needed
     - Work Activities
     - How this job fits with your personality type
     - Which of the three most appeals to student and why
     - Which of the three jobs student is working on for Senior Project
Resume

All students will be required to create a working, usable resume. The different segments of a resume will be covered in English class, and students will be allowed to experiment with a variety of formats and looks for their particular resume.

Students will create a rough draft of a resume, which will be edited for errors and format issues. Students will then create a final draft of their resume, which is expected to be error free. Any final versions of resumes with errors will result in a zero grade, stressing for students the importance of sharing a clean resume with potential employers.

Students will use hard copies of their resumes during our mock interviews so that the interviewer and student can refer to elements in the resume.

NOTE: Because of the uncertainty of the 2020-2021 school year and distance learning, we are still planning to have mock interviews, but they may be remote.
Cover Letter

Although not always required for every job interview, students in NJUHSD will be creating a Cover Letter for their senior project. Skills focused on include using proper language and tone based on the audience (a potential future employer), using proper grammar and word choice for formal writing, and correctly addressing correspondence for business.

Students will create a cover letter for a job they could actually be applying for based on their current skills and experience. This means they would have to research local business addresses and managers in order to address the letter correctly. As with the resume, the letter will go through several edits, rewrites, and is expected to be error free in order to receive points. The idea that many employers throw away resumes and letters that have errors in them will (hopefully) be impressed upon our students. Taking care and time for that first impression may get our students the jobs they seek.

Students will also bring hard copies of their cover letters to their mock interview.

NOTE: Because of the uncertainty of the 2020-2021 school year and distance learning, we are still planning to have mock interviews, but they may be remote.
Mock Interviews

This is another element of the Senior Project that includes our staff and broader community. Students will take part in a mock interview, meeting one-on-one with a member of staff or community to discuss their resumes, their goals for the future, and their plans for after graduation. The ability to interview well is a great skill, and it is hoped that this practice interview will help our students understand the importance of this crucial element for getting a job.

Students will be expected to dress and speak professionally during this interview and will spend some time practicing common interview techniques and questions in their English classes.

Interviewees will be given a list of potential questions to ask our students and will be grading students on their appearance, poise, and communication skills.

NOTE: Because of the uncertainty of the 2020-2021 school year and distance learning, we are still planning to have mock interviews, but they may be remote.
Thank you Letter/Email

Students will all write and send a thank you letter or email to the person who interviewed them for the mock interviews. This experience is vital in the current job market as well, as it will keep the interviewee's name at the forefront and also shows good manners and appreciation for those on our staff and community who take the time to interview our students.
Evidence of Project

Throughout this project, students will be expected to turn in specific updates to their English teacher, which will be due on particular dates. Students will document what they are doing, successes and failures they encounter along the way, and what they have learned by doing this project.

Before beginning the project, all students, with the help of their mentor, will choose a plan for what type of specific evidence they will be using to document their project, which will depend on each student’s individual project (i.e., spreadsheets, photos, videos, timelines, journals). As students work through their project as approved by their cohort mentor, they will need to keep accurate and detailed records of what the project is, the work they do on the project, the dates worked and the time it takes to complete the project. It is also advised that they document the project according to the project evidence plan they have agreed on with their mentor and turn work in to their teachers according to set deadlines.
Final Slide Presentation

Students will create a slide presentation that will be used when they present their project orally at the end of the year. This slide presentation will serve as the basis for the student's final presentation.

Students will learn the importance of visuals in presentation, use of text in presentations, and how to make their information interesting and engaging.

Students will need to include the following slides in their final presentation:

- **Title Slide**: including student's name, teacher, class period and topic
- **Resume**: A slide of the student's resume (personal information can be blocked out)
- **Personal Essay**: Highlights of the student's response (not a picture of the paper) using brief statements and connection to the Meyers-Briggs test and main points of their personal essay
- **Career Research Slides**: at least three slides showing the detailed research students did for the career they are following for their project. This information will come from the Career Research Project.
- **Cohort Project**: at least four slides showing a description of the project and student's progress along with dates of work.
- **Future Plans/Goals**: student will create a slide to share what they hope to do in the future and any current concrete plans
- **Reflection on the project**: students will create a slide to highlight successes and challenges with this project
- **Works Cited List**: This list should include all research conducted by the student for their Career Research Project and Cohort project.
- **Question Slide**: Offer an opportunity for members of the community to ask questions after student has presented.
Group Presentation Practice

Public Speaking is one of humanity’s greatest fears, and we hope that with both the Mock Interview, group practice, and the Final Presentation, students will gain confidence for the future, as most jobs involve at least an interview and many workers in all sectors will, at some time or another, be expected to present information to larger groups.

Students will have an opportunity to practice their Senior Project presentation as part of their English class. They will view and analyze a variety of presentation styles, discuss effective methods of speaking/presenting, and learn and practice how to communicate clearly using body language, vocal projection and enunciation, and eye contact.

Students will have time to practice their presentation in front of the class, allowing them opportunity to give and receive feedback.
Final Presentation Expectations and Presentation

Students will be giving their Final Presentations to a group of community and staff members as well as a small group of students. The community and staff members will be grading students on their presentation, which will be part of their English grade as well as a requirement for graduation.

Students will be expected to dress professionally, treat the panel with respect, speak loudly and clearly, and be prepared to answer questions after their presentations.

We welcome members of the community who are willing to take part in this important event for our seniors. Senior Project panels will be given sample questions to ask, or may ask their own questions of each of the participants. We value the input of our broader community in the growth and development of our seniors.