# Chatham County Schools

## Collectively Creating Success

# Graduation Project Handbook

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**NOTE:  This document will be revised and/or altered as needed by Chatham County Schools.**

# Section One:  Introduction to the Graduation Project

Dear Student:

This year you will be participating in a learning experience that will cause you to stretch both intellectually and emotionally.  The Graduation Project is designed to allow you the freedom to select a topic of particular interest to you and present the topic through a paper, product, portfolio, and presentation.  The North Carolina Department of Public of Instruction is requiring all students to complete this very worthwhile process.  Students are required to achieve proficiency on each component in order to receive a high school diploma.

The Graduation Project gives students a chance to become self-directed learners through the process of selecting a challenging topic and reaching out into the community for a mentor. Success will come with self-discipline, good management of time and resources, and a positive attitude.

We have built in a number of resources to assist you in successfully completing the Graduation Project.  With the assistance of various members of your school's faculty, you will have a faculty advisor, who will lead you through the process and assist you with the particulars of writing the paper, completing the project, completing the portfolio, and making the final presentation.  In addition, you will select a mentor from the community who is familiar with the topic you choose, and he or she will assist you in finding the practical knowledge necessary to complete the project.

We wish for each of you a successful journey, as you gain a greater awareness of who you are as a learner and as a person.  As you experience the Graduation Project, please provide feedback that you feel would be beneficial in making the process better for those that follow.

Sincerely,


Graduation Project Team

## Benefits of a Graduation Project

A Graduation Project is a culminating educational experience that provides students an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to research a topic, process information from diverse sources, write a paper, create a product, and make an oral presentation to defend their research.

The Graduation Project:

- Provides students with opportunities to engage in new learning – to stretch and go beyond where they have been before.

- Requires students to assume responsibility for their own learning.

- Ensures all students have had an opportunity to practice and demonstrate such essential workplace skills as time management, presentation, team work, speaking, writing, as well as skills used in accessing information and doing research.

- Results in graduates who are more confident in their abilities and who have an understanding of the academic expectations of the world of work.

- Involves the business sector and the community in communicating to students that they and their learning are important to adults.

### Overview of the Four P's

**Paper:**
- Each student chooses a topic of personal interest such as a career choice, hobby, skill, or a social, environmental, or health issue.
- From this topic, each student writes a 6-8 page (including title page and works cited page) research paper in MLA format.

**Product:**
- Each student completes a physical product, evolving from the research, which involves a minimum of 15 hours of work outside the classroom to be completed during the senior English semester.
- The completion of the product must involve a definite "learning stretch" that slows that the student has had to go beyond her/his current level of knowledge and expertise.

**Portfolio:**
- The portfolio chronicles the student's progress throughout the Graduation Project research paper and actual product.
- Work logs, reflections, a copy of the research paper, photographs, mentor verification, planning guides, and other pertinent items are included in the portfolio as documentation of the journey the student has taken with Graduation Project.

**Presentation**
- Each student prepares and completes a 5-7 minute oral presentation using before a 4-5 member board of teachers and community members.

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC & Portsmouth High School, RI

# Fall Graduation Project Due Dates

*NOTE: Below is a list of criteria to be turned in and initialed by a teacher. The time line for each high school is different; therefore, check the website for the school that your child attends to obtain the timeline. If you have questions regarding the timeline, please contact the graduation coordinator at your student's school.*

**TA Initials**

Letter of Intent Resubmissions due to coordinator.................................................................................................

Ethical Commitment Form due to Teacher Advisor ................................................................................................

First Required Teacher Advisor Meeting................................................................................................................

**Remember to complete a self – reflection at the beginning of the project process**

Begin research paper ..............................................................................................................................................

Note Card Check with English Teacher…………………………Sept. (English Tchr will determine date)…………..

Works Cited list due to English Teacher............................……Sept. (English Tchr. will determine date)……………

Thesis/Outline due to English Teacher………………………..Sept. (Eng. Tchr. will determine date………………

Second Required Teacher Advisor Meeting............................................................................................................

Mentor Consent Form due to Teacher Advisor ......................................................................................................

Rough Draft due to Teacher Advisor to review.......................................................................................................

**Remember to complete a self-reflection about midway through the project process**

Final draft due to English Teacher…………………………….. (Eng. Tchr. will determine)…………………………

Third Required Teacher Advisor Meeting ...............................................................................................................

Fourth Required Teacher Advisor Meeting .............................................................................................................

Mentor and student product verification log due to Teacher Advisor......................................................................

Product assessed by Teacher Advisor .....................................................................................................................

Portfolio due to Teacher Advisor ...........................................................................................................................

Mandatory Equipment Needs Form to designee......................................................................................................

Teacher Advisor Product Evaluation.......................................................................................................................

Presentation Visuals Approved by Teacher Advisor...............................................................................................

**Remember to complete a self-reflection near the end of the project process**

Presentation Night/Day ..........................................................................................................................................

According to the timeline, the minimum number of required Faculty Advisor meetings is **four**. Additional meetings between a student and their Faculty Advisor are encouraged if either party feels it is necessary for success on the Graduation Project. **Self-Reflection Journals: Must have a minimum of three that will be placed in the Portfolio.**

## Graduation Project Spring Timeline

*NOTE: Below is a list of criteria to be turned in and initialed by a teacher. The time line for each high school is different; therefore, check the website for the school that your child attends to obtain the timeline. If you have questions regarding the timeline, please contact the graduation coordinator at your student's school.*

Letter of Intent Resubmissions due to Coordinator ....................................................................................

Ethical Commitment Form due to Teacher Advisor ....................................................................................

First Required Teacher Advisor Meeting ....................................................................................................

### Remember to complete a self – reflection at the beginning of the project process

Begin research paper ................................................................................……………………………

Note Card Check with English Teacher ................................................. (English Tchr will determine date)_____

Works Cited list due to English Teacher................................................ (English Tchr. will determine date)_____

Thesis/Outline due to English Teacher ....................................................... . (Eng. Tchr. will determine date_____

Second Required Teacher Advisor Meeting ...............................................................................................

Mentor Consent Form due to Teacher Advisor ..........................................................................................

Rough Draft due to Teacher Advisor for review ........................................................................................

### Remember to complete a self-reflection about midway through the project process

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Third Required Teacher Advisor Meeting ..................................................................................................

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Mentor and student product verification log due to Teacher Advisor........................................................

Product assessed by Teacher Advisor .......................................................................................................

Portfolio due to Teacher Advisor ..............................................................................................................

Mandatory Equipment Needs Form due to designee .................................................................................

Teacher Advisor Product Evaluation..........................................................................................................

Presentation Visuals Approved by Teacher Advisor..................................................................................

### Remember to complete a self-reflection near the end of the project process

Presentation Night/Day ..............................................................................................................................

According to the timeline, the minimum number of required Faculty Advisor meetings is **four**. Additional meetings between a student and their Faculty Advisor are encouraged if either party feels it is necessary for success on the Graduation Project. **Self-Reflection Journals: Must have a minimum of <u>three</u> that will be placed in the Portfolio**

**Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is defined in the fifth edition of the MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers as using "another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source" (Gibaldi 30) and as "intellectual theft" (30). By failing to cite a source or citing it incorrectly, whether it is intentional or accidental, you may face charges of academic dishonesty, which may cause you to fail your research paper and/or the class. It is imperative that you cite all of your sources accurately for each research paper. Careful note taking and proper documentation throughout the research process will eliminate the possibility of plagiarism.

Plagiarism is not always intentional, but careful research will ensure that you do not plagiarize. "At all times during research and writing, guard against the possibility of inadvertent plagiarism by keeping careful notes that distinguish between your own musings and thoughts and the material you gather from others" (Gibaldi 30).

You must give credit for all ideas that are not your own or that are not common knowledge. This includes paraphrasing or restating someone else's words or ideas as well as directly quoting someone else. To borrow more than three words that are not your own without giving someone else credit is plagiarism.

The following acts will be regarded as plagiarism and will be disciplined, according to the school and county guidelines:

- Copying from published sources without adequate documentation.
- Purchasing a pre-written paper or paying someone to write a paper for you.
- Letting someone else write the paper for you.
- Submitting as your own someone else's unpublished work.
- Carelessly omitting quotation marks around words not your own.
- Failure to acknowledge the original source when paraphrasing.
- Using all or parts of a paper not your own, including any paper obtained via the Internet.

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. Fifth edition. New York:
    The Modern Language Association of America, 1999.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Ethical Commitment and Parent/Guardian Consent to the Graduation Project**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT**
I am aware that my son/daughter must complete the Graduation Project as state a requirement to graduate from high school. I understand that the project includes four (4) phases:

1. Research paper ( 6- 8 pages including title and work cited pages)
2. Product that is clearly connected to the research paper
3. Portfolio
4. Presentation that will be oral and ranging from 5 to 7 minutes about the paper and product

I have read and approved my child's Graduation Project proposal as outlined in the Letter of Intent. I realized that a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours with the community mentor is required.

**ETHICAL COMMITMENT**
I pledge to adhere to the following as a demonstration of my honor and integrity:
5. I, and I alone, will complete the research necessary to write the Research Paper component of the project.
6. I will not use a paper and/or information gathered by another student.
7. I will not purchase or use a "canned" paper off the internet, nor will "cut and paste" parts of Internet sources as if they were my own words or thoughts
8. I will document my paper accurately to avoid plagiarism.
9. I, and I alone, will complete all of the work necessary for the completion of the product/project that evolves from the research paper.
10. I will collect accurate verifications on all the work necessitating signatures. I will NOT forge any verification documents
11. I WILL complete a Project. I will NOT buy or falsify the completion of a Project. I not use all or parts of another person's Graduation Project.
12. I will include only work that I have completed in the Portfolio. I will NOT include any work of any type that belongs to another student.. The Portfolio will reflect the work effort that I, and I alone, have exerted through the completion of the Graduation Project.

As an honorable young adult of integrity, I agree to adhere to the above criteria in completing my Graduation Project. I understand that if I fail to adhere to these standards and submit work that is not my own creation, I will face the penalty of receiving a zero for that particular component of the Graduation Project.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature:_____ Date: _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Interest Inventory**

This inventory is to help guide you towards finding an appropriate and interesting topic for your graduation project. Your answers to these questions should help you narrow down some topic choices for your graduation project.

| Questions | Answers |
| --- | --- |
| What is the most interesting course you have ever taken in school? Why? | |
| What lessons have you learned from your extra-curricular activities? | |
| How did you get introduced to your hobby(ies) and why are you interested in them? | |
| What people or practices influence your opinions? | |
| What life events have changed you as a person and why? | |
| What is your favorite sport? | |
| What is your favorite television show? | |
| Who from history do you identify with and why? | |
| What genre of film or books do you prefer? | |
| What type of music do you listen to? | |
| What current events interest you? | |
| What occupational field would you like to enter? | |
| What elements of your upbringing have shaped the person you have become? | |
| What challenges do you think today's youth face? | |
| What era of history interests you? | |
| Who is your idol? | |
| What activities do you do with your friends and family? | |
| If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Why? | |
| What job do you think is most important to society? | |
| If you could fix any problem in your community, what would you fix? | |
| How do you think the government impacts your life? | |
| What do you consider to be the most controversial issue in the media? | |
| What cause would you be willing to stand up for? | |
| Which historical person do you think had the greatest impact on today's world? Why? | |
| What is the responsibility of the education system? | |
| What is your responsibility as a student? | |
| What do you think are the main problems in your school? | |
| What do you think is the most influential form of media and why? | |

**Choosing a Topic**

Complete the following list of general categories and suggested topics by generating three different ideas that appeal to you for each category.  Utilize the examples in parenthesis as a guideline to brainstorm topics for your research.

1.  fine and performing arts (music, dance)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
2.  health and physical fitness (steroids, diet)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
3.  business (entrepreneurship, advertising)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
4.  travel (vacations, explorations)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
5.  careers (schooling, job market research)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
6.  social issues (poverty, education)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
7.  photography/film (movie making, black and white photography)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
8.  math/science (automation, robotics)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
9.  literature/writing (writing a novel, contemporary writer)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
10. sports/recreation (scuba diving, effect of Title IX)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
11. home/economics (trends in diet/cooking, interior design)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
12. technical arts (cabinetry, metal products)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
13. education (achievement gap, funding)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
14. visual arts (digital art, stained glass)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
15. religion/philosophy (existentialism, religions and war)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
16. specialized hobbies (coins, car restoration)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
17. space  (exploration, space stations)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
18. social studies (historical study, rescue missions)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
19. nature/ecology (global warming, habitats)
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
20. other ideas
    a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

**Analyzing Topic Selections**

One of the most important aspects of choosing a topic for your research and product is that you have a ***learning stretch***.  This stretch means that you must push yourself to go above and beyond what you already know.  This project is an opportunity for you to practice skills in the 'real world' while pursuing a subject of personal interest.  Selecting the idea is a personal challenge; because YOU, *not* your teachers, *not* your parents, but YOU, get to decide.  It is important to find a topic that truly interests YOU.  The best projects – challenging, engaging, meaningful and fun – begin with a compelling personal reason for topic choice.  You must be actively engaged in the entire process and so this is your opportunity to become an explorer, artist, builder, scholar, scientist, or author – whatever YOU want.  Consider the following questions as you prepare to select a topic:

- Within the next five years, what do you hope you have accomplished?
- What things would you like to do better?
- What do you wish you had more time to do?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- List experiences you wish you could have.
- What controversial issues bring about strong feelings in you?
- What is a profession you think about but have not seriously explored?
- What is one think that you think needs to be improved?
- What classes have you taken that you really like?
- What is one hand-crafted item that you wish you could make?
- What do you wish would happen in your life?
- What goal have you avoided?
- What would you like to get others to do?
- What is unique or special about you?
- What community group do you admire?
- What can't you do but would like to do?

Now that you have generated several ideas that you might possibly pursue, you need to begin evaluating your lists for how they lend themselves to different aspects of the Graduation Project.  Circle/highlight any topic that:

1. Will have a **good supply of information and variety of resources** (interview, books, articles in periodicals, websites, etc.).
2. Will lend itself to a **product that is valid, useful, and relevant –** jot down product ideas as they occur to you!
3. Will be affordable – consider both time and money.
4. Will **stretch** your knowledge and experience.  ("You will never grow unless you go beyond what you have already mastered")
5. Will give you a taste of a possible career.
6. Will maintain your interest from the end of your junior year to the end of the semester when you have senior English.
7. Will allow you to take a stand on the topic (you have to decide whether or not the topic has a negative/positive impact, insignificant/great influence, etc.)
8. You will know someone who can mentor you through this research.

### Selecting and Narrowing a Topic

Listed below are a few guidelines to help you select and narrow Graduation Project topics

1. Select topics of interest to you.
2. Make sure the topic will stretch you.  You are required to learn something new or something on your own and really demonstrate what you are capable of learning and doing.
3. Talk with your teachers to get ideas IMMEDIATELY.
4. Read articles, books, and search the Internet on the topic.  Consult media center resources to make sure the information you will need is readily available.
5. Limit your topic in time.  Do not cover too long a time period.
6. Limit your topic in space.  Do not cover too broad an area.  Limit your research to your community.
7. Limit your topic in extent.  Do not cover every element of the topic; instead cover one element.
8. Limit your topic in score (not too many elements to cover.) [How to narrow:  Recycling Programs / Recycling Programs in NC / How to Design and Implement a Recycling Program for your high school]
9. Quickly find a mentor **who is over 21, not a relative, and a reliable expert** in her/his field.
10. Interview your mentor as a primary source for your paper.
11. Decide on a project and product that you can AFFORD – financially and time-wise.
12. Take pictures while you are working on your product.
13. Keep a detailed log of your efforts, meetings, and time while working on the product.
14. Think and rethink your topic.  Will the topic hold your interest for the entire semester?
15. Consider the cost of your product when choosing a topic.
16. **Be pro-active not procrastinating!**

Example of narrowing a topic:

- Broad:  Battered Women
  - Narrow the space:  Battered Women in Chatham County
    - Narrow the extent:  Services Available to Battered Women in Chatham County

    - Product Examples:

      - Plan activity for children of battered women
      - Collect Christmas gifts and food to give battered women's shelter
      - Do a fundraiser to help the battered women's shelter

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC & Portsmouth High School, RI

**GETTING STARTED – TOPIC SELECTION GUIDELINES**
The following are guidelines that should assist you in the selection of a subject to be explored.

- **The research topic should be one in which the student is interested, but not one in which the student is an expert.**
  If a student has been battling Sickle Cell Anemia all of his/her life and has had to have direct contact with the Sickle Cell Association to help fight the diseased or has been a volunteer, he/she probably knows a great deal about he disease. Unless the student pursues a new angle about the disease, that topic will not bring about much new knowledge to the student. Therefore, the topic will be deemed inappropriate because it doesn't indicate a "learning stretch".

- **The research topic should be one that is broad enough to allow the student access to enough information, yet specific enough to make the research scope reasonable.**
  In the instance that a student decides to research the drug Ritalin, including everything about the drug in a research paper would be almost impossible. Therefore, the student may want to pursue a topic such as The Effects of Ritalin in Children Who Have Been Diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder.

- **The research topic should be one that is challenging to the student academically and creatively.**
  The student should take care not to choose a topic that is limited to relatively simple ideas or one that has little application or extension possibilities. Making such a choice would make the paper, product and presentation uninteresting for the student and evaluators alike. The topic should require an academic and creative stretch for the student.

- **Students should avoid choosing topics that might involve expenses that they are not prepared to handle.**
  For example, if the research requires a lot of travel or long distance calls, the student may want to make another choice. If the product that grows out of the research will require expensive materials, the student may want to make another choice. Remember, the student is not expected to spend money in order to complete the project. Going to great expense will not enhance the evaluation of a project.

- **Students should avoid topics that might endanger themselves or others.**
  For example, experiments that are potentially explosive or involve handling dangerous animals are not appropriate.

- **Primary research is one requirement of the product.**
  Students may be wise to explore possibilities for personal interviews, informal surveys, etc. before making a final selection of a topic.

- **Some preliminary research may be helpful to the student.**
  By reading about a certain topic, the student may expand his/her areas of interest, and possibilities for new areas of exploration may surface.

- **Students should use good judgment to be certain the topics they choose are appropriate for presentation to a panel of judges and the general public.**
  Remember that each student will have to get project proposal approval prior to beginning the project.

**Broad Topics
That Might Help Your Selection**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Aeronautics | Drama | Industrial Arts | Performing Arts |
| Agriculture | Economics | Insurance | Personal Services |
| Animal Sciences | Education | Journalism | Photography |
| Anthropology | Electronics | Languages | Physics |
| Archaeology | Energy | Law | Psychology |
| Architecture | Fashion | Manufacturing | Radio |
| Arts/Crafts | Film | Marketing | Recreation |
| Astronomy | Finance | Mathematics | Religion |
| Biology | Genetics | Mechanical | Social Services |
| Botany | Geography | Medicine | Sociology |
| Business | Geology | Military | Sports |
| Climatology | Government | Music | Technology |
| Communication | Graphic Arts | Natural Resources | Tourism |
| Controversial Issues | Health | Nutrition | Transportation |
| Culinary Arts | History | Oceanography | Visual Arts |

## Typical product types and examples:

- **Physical Products**
  Create stained glass window, create a computer program, rebuild an engine, build a cabinet, and create an efficient and economic recycling plan
- **Written Products**
  Short story, book of poetry, novelette, newspaper, children's book, journal of reflective essays
- **Performance Products**
  Dance, instrumental or singing recital, drama show, musical video, magic show, fashion show, formal speech/debate
- **Teaching or Leadership Experience Products**
  Teach middle school health classes about teen alcoholism, teach about knights and armor to a 5th grade class, coach a little league team, set up a neighborhood action team
- **Career-Related Products**
  Shadow a police officer and write or speak about an experience to a specific audience, view and document medical procedures, volunteer time at a local veterinarian's office
- **Service Products**
  Organize a food drive, develop and implement an exercise program at a local senior center, volunteer at a hospital

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

# Combining a Product and the Research Topic

The Product occurs when the student works independently outside of class applying knowledge gained during the research paper phase. The product phase of the Graduation Project requires the student with the assistance of a mentor to create a product that is logically connected to the research. This Product requires a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours with a mentor.

**The product:**

1. should be student-generated and should be based on the research paper.

2. should provide tangible evidence reflecting the "academic learning stretch" experience by the student.

3. can be oriented around the performance of a skill, the creation of a product, the study of a profession or a project/experiment conducted.

NOTE: During phases of construction, students should photograph their products to document their creation. Performances must be evaluated by an audience before Graduation Project presentations occur. Other fields of study must be documented appropriately. Visual aids must accompany each student's Graduation Project process on presentation night.

Keep in mind that certain products submitted in the Letter of Intent to the advisory committee could result in an approval pending that additional steps are taken by the student during the product portion of the product.

**Example:** Project that involves coaching and/or athletic officiating requires students to attend a minimum of one officials meeting that is required of all officials in our county.

**Example products are listed below:**

| General Topic | Research Paper Topic | Physical Product |
|---|---|---|
| Oral Hygiene | Gum Disease | Teaching good hygiene to preschoolers |
| Pottery | Cherokee Pottery | Learn how to make pottery |
| Homelessness | Homeless Children | Volunteer at homeless shelter |
| Sewing | Fashions of the 1800s | Design and sew own costume |
| Filmmaking | Orson Welles | Make a short film |
| Calligraphy | Ancient Writing Styles | Learn to write calligraphy |
| Canines | Origins of Dog Training | Attend obedience school with own dog |
| Folktales | Popularity of Folktales | Learn and deliver folktales to an audience |
| Ghosts | Ghosts of Asheville | Create ghost tour for Halloween |
| Automobile | Henry Ford | Assist in restoration of Mustang |
| Fly-Fishing | Saltwater Fly-Fishing | Learn to make own fly rod |

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School and Columbus County Schools

# List of Suggested Topics

**Please note: These are some of the possibilities for graduation project topics. This list should not be construed as all-inclusive.**

## Academic Projects

1. Develop a science fair project
2. Statistical projects
3. Math/Computer projects (Web Page projects must be coded in HTML)
4. Architectural design
5. Engineering project
6. Compose foreign language short story or poem
7. Develop a theoretical trip abroad with all components
8. Devise foreign language software
9. Dramatic interpretation in foreign language
10. Fashion show in foreign language
11. Clothing or craft project
12. Plan preschool activities
13. Refinishing project
14. Home decorating and interior design
15. Weaving fabric and construction clothing
16. Novel project
17. Visual interpretation of major literary work
18. Intensive study of major literary work
19. Intensive study of major author and work
20. Life-skills portfolio (consumer related – income tax, job application, resume, budget)
21. Multi-disciplinary research project
22. Write, perform and evaluate original dramatic production
23. Research and critique dietary guidelines of local health care facility
24. History day project
25. Instrumental/musical recitals
26. Videotape/photograph historical architecture of a community.

## Personal Projects

1. Research and create a thorough visual representation of a personal family tree and teach others the same
2. Develop an individualized diet and exercise program to help in the health classes
3. Learn, master, and demonstrate a new skill and teach it to others in a structured setting

## Practical Arts Projects

1. Build a piece of furniture and donate it
2. Cater a social function for the community, local firemen, etc.
3. Demonstrate carpentry skills by remodeling or enhancing an area in the community
4. Design and redecorate a room for a women's shelter
5. Build an addition to an existing structure for a community organization

**Internships**

1. Intern with a business firm in entry level or higher position
2. Intern with an elementary teacher/subject area teacher
3. Intern in a health related career
4. Intern with a government or private industry
5. Intern with a newspaper or publishing entity
6. Intern with a designing firm/local/theater/art association
7. Internship at a day care center
8. Apprentice with seamstress or tailor
9. Intern with a general contractor and design something for the school grounds
10. Intern with a skilled tradesman and donate work to a worthy cause
11. Restore a car/other transportation for someone in the American Association of Retired Persons (AART)
12. Develop an investment portfolio and track the earnings

**School Improvement**

1. Develop and execute math tutoring program
2. Write computer program for administration
3. Design and publish newsletter/brochure for local company using Desktop Publishing
4. Develop pamphlet describing research on careers or college
5. Organize a career day
6. Design Business Education Department of the future
7. Create a district pamphlet
8. Cater a school event
9. Create a video about physical fitness and health issues
10. Work with elementary classes to reinforce wellness
11. Work as student trainer
12. Develop intramural program
13. Design aesthetic projects, murals, landscaping
14. Research current policies and recommend improvements
15. Design a playground
16. Organize and maintain a club or an activity
17. Organize and execute a school clean up
18. Design and create a piece of art for public display at the school
19. Plan the district-wide art show
20. Work with a sports team and collect and produce video clips of the season's best, funniest, most exciting plays and moments, etc.

**Entrepreneur Projects**

1. Set up small business and keep all records
2. Operate expanded student store
3. Student contracted project
4. Form a company and design, develop and produce a product
5. Organize fundraiser
6. Establish catering business
7. Establish coffee shop

### Community Projects

1. Prepare income taxes for elderly/disadvantaged
2. Coordinate service project for philanthropic organization
3. Perform service project
4. Create advertisement brochures for foreign speakers in area
5. Volunteer at homeless shelter
6. Volunteer at geriatric facility to district employees
7. Organize wellness program for district employees
8. Participate in health related fund-raisers
9. Participate in health screen day
10. Volunteer by planning activities at a hospital/nursing home
11. Develop an environmental improvement project
12. Examine community needs and implement improvement project
13. Refurbish historical site
14. Design golf course or miniature golf course
15. Build or renovate a house
16. Design and build a fitness trail
17. Perform service for a senior citizen community
18. Organize a community festival (i.e. arts, music, foods, multicultural heritage, etc.)
19. Plan and supervise an elementary school bicycle safety program
20. Coach a community sports team
21. Teach religious instruction classes
22. Work with and for a political candidate during a primary or general election campaign

### Fine Arts and Creative Projects

1. Compose and perform a piece of music for a senior citizen home
2. Organize a student concert
3. Organize a student art show
4. Edit and produce a magazine for a school/community organization
5. Edit and produce a school newspaper
6. Write and publish a short story or book of poems
7. Design and paint a mural for display somewhere in the community
8. Plan and conduct a showing of your personal artwork or writings
9. Design and dress a display area for a department in the high school
10. Write and illustrate a children's book in English or foreign language
11. Choreograph and direct a dance performance
12. Make a video for public service announcements

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School

**The following are examples of paper topics and products that have been completed in North Carolina:**

| PAPER TOPIC | PRODUCT |
|---|---|
| Body Conditioning | Created fitness program for obese children |
| Car Care | Established car detailing business |
| Car Maintenance | Established a car maintenance service for low income elderly people |
| Physical Therapy | Developed portfolio of patient's progress |
| Modern Fashion | Organized fashion show with original designs |
| Computer Art | Created an animated CD |
| Auction Business | Organized and conducted charity auction |
| Oceanography | After-school tutoring/taught high school classes |
| Domestic Violence | Wrote and published children's book for guidance office |
| Coaching | Organized and coached girl's softball team |
| Country Music | Created original CD |
| Christian Music | Created Music Video/Organized charity concert |
| Rhythm and Blues Music | Wrote and produced script dramatizing featured artists |
| Interior Design | Completed interior design projects/demonstrated techniques |
| Emotional Problems of Teenage Adolescent Girls | Spoke to church youth group/organized school prayer group |
| Effects of Smoking | Spoke to middle school/organized a fund raiser for the American Cancer Society |
| Sailing | Demonstrated proper sailing techniques to middle school class |
| Children's Literature | Wrote and presented children's book to daycare class |
| Television Advertising | Produced television commercial |
| Study of Magic | Designed and implemented magic show at elementary school |
| Study of Homeless and Transient Population | Produced local version of live aid concert |
| Fly Fishing | Produced demonstration video/taught lessons |
| Vietnam Veterans | Worked with post-traumatic stress syndrome veterans/taught high school history class |
| Aluminum Welding | Constructed a river boat |
| Robotics | Constructed a robotic hand |
| Archeology | Participate in an archeological dig |
| Egyptian, Renaissance, Impressionistic Art | Created an displayed three self-portraits in each style |

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

## The Letter of Intent/Product Proposal

After you have selected the research topic, the next step is to write a personal business letter to the Graduation Project Advisory Committee. The letter will identify the topic you intend to study, the reason you chose the topic, the method you will use to research the topic, the product you plan to create, and your awareness of the consequences of plagiarizing.

Guidelines when composing your letter include:

- The letter needs a one-inch top, bottom, left and right margin.

- The body of the letter is single-spaced and double-spaced between paragraphs.

- Follow the spacing and format guidelines found in the example letter of intent on the next two pages.

**In the Letter of Intent you should briefly describe:**

1. The topic of your research
2. The reason you chose the topic
3. The methods you will use to research the topic
4. The current level of your expertise on this topic
5. The learning you intend to master (the learning stretch)
6. The product you plan to create to demonstrate what you have learned
7. A statement of your understanding and compliance with the honor code regarding plagiarism.

The outline on the following page provides a paragraph-by-paragraph framework for the Letter of Intent as well as a sample Letter of Intent.

Approval of the Letter of Intent from the Advisory Committee means you may begin your Graduation Project work. In the event that the approval of your letter of intent is pending or declined, you will be required to resubmit the document to the Advisory Committee for further review.

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Format of the Letter of Intent**
Click on File, Page, Setup, Margins
Make your top margin 1" and bottom, left and right margins 1" each
Begin the letter 2" from the top of the page


Student Street Address (begin 2" from top of page)
Student City, State Zip Code (all words are spelled out)
Date (spelled out) (hit enter 4 times)



Graduation Advisory Committee
School Name
School Street Address
City, State Zip Code (hit enter twice)

Dear Advisory Committee Members: (hit enter twice)

Paragraph 1: Give an introduction to the topic of research you have chosen. Explain the reason you have chosen this research and the knowledge you have of the area before you actually begin the research. (hit enter twice)

Paragraph 2: Explain what you specifically intend to study about your topic and the learning stretch involved (a narrow focus) and what methods of research you will use (Internet, books, periodicals, interviews, etc.). (hit enter twice)

Paragraph 3: Describe the product or performance you intend to create. (hit enter twice)

Paragraph 4: State that you understand the definition of plagiarism and its consequences and that you do not intend to plagiarize. (hit enter twice)

Sincerely, (hit enter four times)


Your typed name (exactly as you sign it)


Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Sample Letter of Intent**

000 Easy Street.
Pitfall NN   11111
August 26, 2008


Graduation Project Advisory Committee
_____ High School
1234 Chatham County Street
Anywhere, NC  00000

Graduation Project Advisory Committee Members:

Last year I had to go through two weeks of testing of leukemia.  Fortunately, the test results were normal, but during this time I became extremely interested in oncology research and treatment.  For my Graduation Project, I have chosen to focus on oncology treatment and its effects on leukemia patients.  Since the time that I had to undergo testing, I have wanted to work with cancer patients, for I can relate to their experiences because I have been there myself.

In my paper, I will explore the history of leukemia research and treatment as well as the physical and emotional effects on patients.  I will also investigate career options in this field.  I intend to use the Internet, videos, print materials, as well as interviews with local oncologists.

For my Product, I will become a volunteer at Camp Carefree, a camp for terminally ill children in Guilford County.  During my training and service at Camp Carefree, I will produce a video to be used for recruiting and training future volunteers.

I understand the definition and consequences of plagiarism. I intend to be accurate and honest in all phases of the Graduation Project.

Sincerely,


Susan M. Jones



Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

# Letter of Intent Review

Student_____ Faculty Advisor_____

Topic of Research_____

## YOUR GRADUATION PROJECT PROPOSAL HAS BEEN:

_____**ACCEPTED**

Comments:_____

_____

_____ Place a copy of the letter in your GP Portfolio

_____ Correct errors and place a copy in your GP portfolio

Congratulations!  You may begin working on components of your Graduation Project at this time.  Components will not be accepted until they are due according to the time lines that each student will be provided at a later date.  Be sure to review the Graduation Project Handbook to ensure that all components of your project meet the guidelines and rubrics indicated by the State of North Carolina.

_____**REJECTED…choose another research topic and product and write a new letter of intent.**

Comments:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____**APPROVED PENDING:  Not there yet…revise and re-submit.**

**Reason:**
_____There is no apparent "Learning Stretch" for you in this project.
_____This project closely resembles one that is already part of the high school curriculum.
_____This proposal has elements which violate school district policies and/or is potentially dangerous
_____This project involves too much expense.
_____Product needs revision
_____Paper topic needs revision
_____Other:_____

*All letters have been reviewed by the Graduation Project Committee.  All decisions are final.*

# Section Two - Research Paper Component

**Research Paper Rationale**

Graduation is more than just a cap and gown. Truly, the Graduation Project is more than just another requirement on the road to graduation. From the paper to the presentation, the student will be engaging in a meaningful, challenging, and ultimately rewarding learning experience that will benefit him/her for many years beyond graduation day.

Because the Graduation Project is more meaningful than just another assignment, Chatham County wants the Research Paper component to be just as beneficial. The student will select and refine a topic of interest to research. Throughout the research process, the student will be compiling and evaluating sources of information, gathering notes, and organizing the paper. As the student begins to synthesize all his/her ideas, he/she will be involved in the important process of documenting and drafting the paper.

The final copy will be a culmination of a variety of essential real-life skills: writing, thinking, analyzing, researching, evaluating, synthesizing, documenting, and revising. In one paper, the student will demonstrate competence in all the necessary job skills for today's market. Whether in the college classroom or on the job, these skills are a must for today's high school graduate.

## Guidelines to Research

1. The Research Paper is more meaningful than a "term paper." It is likely to cross disciplines and will require interviews, as well as written material.

2. The first step involves researching. Research may take a variety of forms, both primary and secondary, traditional and non-traditional. Primary sources of information may include interviews and surveys, an expert's actual notes, and autobiography, letter, or on-line databases. You may use more than one primary source, but one must be an interview. You must provide a written or recorded transcript. Secondary sources are textbooks, reference books, periodical articles, literary criticism, and/or written material discussing any primary information.

3. The Research Paper must cite a minimum of four different sources. Students should seek a variety and balance in their selections. Sources should include at least one primary source because primary sources add immediacy and relevance to the research.

4. Students must carefully document all research information cited in their papers. This should include parenthetical documentation within the paper and a list of works cited at the end of the paper. Likewise, the student should be thoroughly informed of research ethics and the serious consequences of plagiarism.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Using the Essential Questions to Move from Research Topic to Thesis Statement**

Once you have selected and limited your topic, the **Essential Question** becomes the foundation for the entire graduation project – the questions that you will ultimately answer through your research.

**The paper, product, and presentation all live and die with the quality of the Essential Question!**

1. **A good essential question is…**
   - **Clearly limited** in scope; it sets boundaries on the breadth and depth of your research. If your topic is too broad, it will lack depth.
   - **Open-ended**; it asks what requires an involved, in-depth response, not a simple answer. If the answer is obvious, throw away the question and try again.
   - **A clear, direct, and precise sentence.** The essential question (interrogative) will become the declarative thesis of your research paper.
   - **Evaluative** in nature; you are not writing a research report. You are investigating an idea and presenting an interpretation of your findings, drawing conclusions from the data you research.
   - **Uses evaluative** key words and phrases:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Affect/effect | Emergence | Initiate | Relate |
| Align | Engender | Inspire | Revolve |
| Alter | Evolve | Instigate | Significance |
| Bring about | Facilitate | Involve | Support |
| Cause | Force | Link | |
| Concern | Generate | Mold | |
| Consideration | Have an effect on… | Motivate | |
| Continue to… | Impact | Necessitate | |
| Contribute to… | Importance | Parallel | |
| Create | Influence | Produce | |
| Develop | Inform | Prompt | |

II.   **Developing your Essential Question**
   a.   Begin with your selected topic
       **Example 1:** Oppression of Jews and other minorities by the Nazi Party during WWII
       **Example 2**: Women's sports

   b.   Narrow the topic
       **Example 1:** What techniques did Hitler use to establish superiority and "brainwash" the general public?
       **Example 2:** How have events in the past 25 years led to more women pursuing careers in athletics?

c.    Establish Linking Ideas:  Cause/Effect

| Cause:  Use of propaganda | Effect:  Created a power base for the Nazi Party |
|---|---|
| Cause:  Implementation of Title IX | Effect:  More women are playing sports |

d.    Framing your question – use the words listed above to frame an Essential Question that can be used as the basis of your research project.
**Example 1:**  What modes of propaganda were employed by the Nazi Party to **facilitate** the participation of others in their actions and in pursuing their objective of "The Final Solution?"
**Example 2:**  What **impact** did Title IX have on the current status of women's professional sports?

e.    On a separate sheet of paper, work through the above process to develop a working Essential Question based on your topic.

III.    A good thesis statement **makes the difference between a thoughtful research paper and a simple "regurgitation of facts."**
a.    A thesis statement declares what you believe (based on your research) and what you intend to prove.
b.    The thesis statement is your Essential Question restated in a simple declarative sentence and is essentially, the answer to your question.
c.    Each point you make in your paper must support your thesis.

IV.    **A good thesis will…**
a.    Propose an arguable point and take a stand.
b.    Lend itself to being adequately developed in the required length and format of the project.  It is not too broad or too narrow.
c.    Be specific and focused.
d.    Be based on and can be supported by evidence you have found.
e.    Inspire the reader to ask "how?" or "why?"
f.    Lead the reader toward logical subtopics.
g.    Avoid general or extreme words or phrases.

V.    **Writing a thesis using your Essential Question**
Restate the Essential Question in the form of a simple, declarative sentence

| **Example 1:** EQ – What modes of propaganda were employed by the Nazi Party to facilitate the participation for others in their actions and in pursuing their objective of "The Final Solution"? | **Thesis** – The Nazi Party employed a variety of propaganda techniques to ensure the participation of the general population as they pursued their objective of achieving "The Final Solution". |
|---|---|
| **Example 2:** EQ – What impact did Title IX have on the current status of women's professional sports? | **Thesis** – The implementation of Title IX legislation created an environment that encourages and allows young girls and women to participate in competitive athletics at both the amateur and professional levels. |

**Practice** – Restate the following Essential Questions into a good thesis statement.

1.  EQ:  How has the evolution of the automobile changed people's lives?
    Thesis:

2.  EQ:  How has technology impacted the production and editing techniques in modern broadcasting?
    Thesis:

3.  EQ:  What factors must be in place for a franchise to become a successful business venture?
    Thesis:

VI:  **As you proceed through your research**
    A.  Read thoroughly; ask your mentor for help interpreting the research documents
    B.  Take copious notes from credible sources
    C.  Be flexible – revise as you go
    D.  Focus on facts that support your thesis and answer your Essential Question

**Research Paper Specifications**

**Format Specifications**
Refer to the following websites for additional examples:

1. Diana Hacker's Style Guide http://dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c08_o.html
2. The Purdue Online Writing Lab http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

Style:              All papers must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font, double-spaced in black ink.

Length:             All students:  6-8 pages (includes the title page, outline page, or works cited pages) **The number of written pages must be  from 4-6.**

Margins:            Margins must be set at 1" top, bottom and right; 1.5" left

Title Page:         Title is one third of the way down from the top of the page.  Do not underline, quote, italicize, or bold the title.  Type must be in 12 pt. font and double space the title.  Author information is two-thirds of the way down the page.  It must include the author's name, senior English teacher's name (P. Thornhill), course and block (English IV – 4), and date (month day year)  August 26, 2008.

Outline page:       Outline must be at the front of the paper.  Center the title one inch from the top of the page.  Double space throughout the outline.  The content of the outline must be organized and follow the paper.

Heading:            The  heading should be in the upper left-hand corner of the first page in the header with the following information double-spaced:
    1. Student Name
    2. Senior English Teacher Name (first initial and last name)
    3. Course and block (English IV-4)
    4. Date (month day year) August 26, 2008

Paper Title:        The title for the paper must follow these guidelines:
    1. First page centered
    2. Double-space after the last line of the heading
    3. Use initial caps only
    4. No underlining, quotation marks, or bold print.

Page Numbers:       The pages must be numbered in the top, right hand corner of the header, ½" from top on page 1.  Your last name and the page # appear in this corner. Ex:  (Davis 1, Davis 2)
Continue numbering through Works Cited page.

Paper Citations:    The paper must incorporate parenthetical documentation.

Works Cited:        The title of Works Cited title is centered at the top of the page.
The document must be double-spaced.

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All entries must be in alphabetical order by the author's last name or the first word in the citation.
Put periods at the end of each citation.
Do not number entries

Sources:
At least four sources must be used
One source must be an interview
No general encyclopedias may be used. (World Book, Compton's)
No internet or CD-ROM general encyclopedias may be used
No more than two internet sites

Citations:
All citations must be incorporated into sentence.
If a source is listed on the Works Cited page, it must be used in the paper either in a direct quote or a paraphrase with proper parenthetical documentation.

Paper Order:
The paper must follow this order:
1. Title Page
2. Outline
3. Paper
4. Works Cited Page(s)

NOTE:  Teacher will require all preliminary notes and rough drafts.  DO NOT THROW ANYTHING AWAY.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

## Models for Parenthetical Documentation

For additional information, please refer to:
- Diana Hacker's Style Guide http://dianahacker.com/resdoc/p04_c08_o.html - or -
- The Purdue Online Writing Lab http://owl.english.purdue.edu/

Each reference has only two parts:
1. The name of the source's author
2. The page number on which the information is found.

These are written in parentheses, in the body of the paper, directly after the information to be credited.
> **Example**:  **(Pearson 153).**

**The same form is used for books, newspaper articles, and articles in periodicals.**

If a source has more than one author, the following forms are used:
> **Example**:  **(Young and Weeks 278).**
> **Example:  (Wymer et al. 49). Et al. indicates there are three or more authors/editors.**

If more than one source by the author is cited, an abbreviated form of the title is also given.
> **Example:  (Hemingway, <u>Old Man</u> 71).**

When no author is given for a source, use a shortened form of the title in the parentheses.
> **Example**:  **("Young Again" 21).**

For complete titles and publication data, readers can turn to the Works Cited at the end of the research paper.

If the author's name is used to introduce a quotation or other reference, only the page number is cited.
> **Example**:  **Edgerton claims that students find the new MLA reference form "less complicated and easier to type" (32).**

Sentence punctuation follows parenthetical documentation.  (See above example.)

End quotation marks, however, are placed before the parentheses (See above).

For internet citations, put the author's name and the paragraph number of the information found in parentheses.
> **Example:  (Wilkison ¶4).**

If there is no author listed for the internet site, put the first word from the bibliographic entry.
> **Example**:  **("Young" ¶4).**

For indented quotations (quotes that consist of four or more lines of text), place the reference after the final punctuation mark.
> **Example**:  **Morse maintains that a good education is essential for career success:**
> **Gone are the days when an eighth grade education was sufficient.  Most employers now require a high school diploma, and some even demand a bachelor's degree for entry-level jobs.  (313)**

For Internet and CD-ROM sources, use the first word in the entry on the works cited page.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Evaluating Internet Sources**

1. **Authorship**
   - Who wrote the site?
   - What are the author's credentials?
   - Is the web information within the author's specialty?

2. **Publishing body**
   - Is this an official organizational site or a personal web page?
   - Is the sponsoring organization credible?

3. **Content**
   - What is the purpose of the web page?
   - Is there evidence of bias?
   - What is the source and date of the information?

4. **Context of the work**
   - Does the site include a bibliography?

5. **Accuracy of credibility**
   - What are some of the links listed at the site?

6. **Source**
   - What is the full URL address?

7. **Scope**
   - What is the depth of the context (i.e. number of pages)?

**Guides to evaluating Internet sources**

http://www.sccu.edu/faculty/R_Harris/evalu8i t.htm
http://milton.mse.jhu.edu;8001/research/education/net.html#1
http://www.vuw.as.nz/~agsmith/evaln.evaln.html
http://www.cyberbee.com/guide1.html
http://www.science.wudener.edu/~witheer/examples.htm

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Research Paper "Yes Test"**

Student _____ Senior English Teacher_____

Teacher Advisor_____ Date Completed_____

The following requirements must be present for the teacher advisor to evaluate the rough draft of the research paper before final submission to the senior English teacher:

**Yes**          **No**

____          ____          Outline included

____          ____          Within page range (6-8 which includes title and work cited pages)

____          ____          Correct format, double-spaced

____          ____          Thesis-clear, concise, relates to paper

____          ____          Paper written in 3rd person-not personal essay but non-biased research

____          ____          Evidence of consistent & conscientious editing

____          ____          Introduction engaging & clearly defined thesis

____          ____          Information in paper connects & develops thesis

____          ____          Content reflects thorough research

____          ____          Conclusion thoughtful, engaging, and clear with original information (expands on thesis without simply repeating it)

____          ____          Proper citations within paper-direct quotes & paraphrases documented

____          ____          Minimum 4 sources-primary and secondary, no encyclopedias

____          ____          Works Cited page-accurate and correctly formatted

Remarks:

Teacher Advisor Signature: _____

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**State-Endorsed North Carolina Graduation Project**
**Rubrics and Descriptors**
**Paper Component**

Rubrics are evaluation tools used to score/grade an assignment or task. The four components of the Graduation Project will be scored using the rubrics included in this document for both formative and summative evaluations. Rubrics provide an objective method of evaluating the components of the graduation project. Each of the four levels of performance included in the rubrics is identified, along with descriptors of the level. The description given for each level of performance indicates what is expected based on specific criteria for the various categories of the research paper, the product, the portfolio, and the oral presentation. **It is extremely important that all stakeholders be familiar with the rubrics, especially, parents and students.**

**EXEMPLARY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency. Exemplar work implies that the student has exceeded expectations in every way and has presented a model Graduation Project worthy of showcasing and emulating.

**SATISFACTORY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency. Satisfactory work implies that the student has worked diligently to do strong work on all components and has presented a worthy Graduation Project.

**DEVELOPING/EMERGING** – Students performing at this level not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.
Developing/emerging work implies that the student has more work to do to present satisfactory work in order to complete the Graduation Project.

**RESUBMISSION NECESSARY** – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project. Resubmission implies that the student has considerable work to do to complete the Graduation Project and is in need of coaching in order to do so.

**NOT SUBMITTED** – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

# North Carolina Public Schools' Graduation Project - Paper Rubric

| | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Focus** | Presents an insightful and focused thesis statement.<br>10        9 | Presents a thesis statement with adequate insight and focus.<br>8        7 | Presents a thesis statement with minimal insight and focus.<br>6 | Presents a thesis statement with no insight or focus.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| | Shows proof and draws strong and clear connections between the outline, thesis and significant related ideas.<br>10        9 | Shows proof and draws adequate connections between the outline, thesis and significant related ideas.<br>8        7 | Shows proof and draws insufficient connections between the outline, thesis and related ideas.<br>6 | Shows no proof or understanding of connections between the outline, thesis and related ideas.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| | Strong and clear restatement of thesis in conclusion.<br>10        9 | Adequate restatement of thesis in conclusion.<br>8        7 | Insufficient restatement of thesis in conclusion.<br>6 | Does not restate thesis in conclusion<br>5 | Failed to submit a paper.<br><br>0 |
| **Organization** | Effectively provides a logical progression of related ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.<br>10        9 | Adequately provides a progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.<br>8        7 | Provides a poorly organize progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.<br>6 | Does not provide a progression of ideas and supporting information in the paper.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| | Effectively uses transitions to connect supporting information clearly.<br>10        9 | Adequately uses transitions to connect supporting information.<br>8        7 | Ineffectively uses transitions to connect supporting information.<br>6 | Does not use transitions to connect supporting information.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| | Arrives at a well-documented, logical conclusion, involving critical thinking.<br>10        9 | Arrives at an adequately-documented conclusion.<br>8        7 | Arrives at an insufficiently documented conclusion.<br>6 | Does not arrive at a documented conclusion.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| **Support/ Elaboration** | Effectively synthesizes complex ideas from research sources.<br>10        9 | Sufficiently synthesizes ideas from research sources.<br>8        7 | Ineffectively synthesizes ideas from research sources.<br>6 | No evidence of synthesizing ideas from research sources.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates exceptional selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas.<br>10        9 | Demonstrates sufficient selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas.<br>8        7 | Demonstrates insufficient selection of supporting information clearly relevant to the thesis and its related ideas.<br>6 | Lacks supporting information clearly relevant to thesis and its related ideas.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br>0 |

|  | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Support/ Elaboration Continued** | Provides a meaningful presentation of multiple perspectives.<br>10      9 | Provides an adequate presentation of multiple perspectives.<br><br>8      7 | Provides a limited presentation of multiple perspectives.<br><br>6 | Does not present multiple perspectives.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br>0 |
|  | Effectively balances us of quotations and student paraphrasing.<br>10      9 | Adequately balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing.<br><br>8      7 | Insufficiently balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing.<br>6 | Does not balance use of quotations and student paraphrasing.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br>0 |
|  | Skillfully integrates student-generated visual aids as appendices (i.e. diagrams, charts, graphs, pictures, graphic organizers) to emphasize important content.<br>10      9 | Effectively integrates student-generated visual aids as appendices (i.e. diagrams, charts, graphs, pictures, graphic organizers) to clarify content.<br>8      7 | Includes student-generated visual aids as appendices (i.e. diagrams, charts, graphs, pictures, graphic organizers) to clarify content.<br>6 | Shows no use of student-generated visual aids as appendices (i.e. diagrams, charts, graphs, pictures, graphic organizers) to clarify content.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |
| **Style** | Exhibits skillful use of language, including effective word choice, clarity, and consistent voice.<br><br>10      9 | Exhibits good use of language, including some mastery of word choice, clarity, and consistent voice.<br><br>8      7 | Exhibits ineffective use of language, including weak word choice, limited clarity, and inconsistent voice.<br>6 | Exhibits severely flawed use of language, including weak word choice, no clarity, and no voice.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |
|  | Demonstrates exceptional fluency through varied sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.<br>6 | Lacks fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br>0 |
| **Conventions** | Demonstrates a sophisticated use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. RCS uses MLA only.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates adequate use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. RCS uses MLA only.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. RCS uses MLA only.<br>6 | Demonstrates no use of the prescribed format (MLA or APA), including title page, pagination, and citations. RCS uses MLA only.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |

| | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Conventions Continued** | Consistently uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.<br><br>10      9 | Generally uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling capitalization, punctuation, and usage.<br><br>8      7 | Minimally uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.<br>6 | Does not use standard writing convention in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |
| | Length of paper falls between 6 and 8 full pages which includes title page and works cited page<br>10      9 | Length of paper falls between 6 and 8 full pages which includes title page and works cited page<br>8      7 | Exceeds or does not meet requirements.<br><br><br><br><br>6 | Exceeds or does not meet requirements.<br><br><br><br><br>5 | Failed to submit a paper.<br><br><br><br><br>0 |
| **Information Literacy** | Conscientiously and consistently demonstrates integrity in citing practices.<br>10      9 | Generally demonstrates integrity in citing practices.<br><br><br>8      7 | Inconsistently demonstrates integrity in citing practices.<br><br>6 | Does not demonstrate integrity in citing practices.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br>0 |
| | Effectively employs an extensive variety of primary and secondary sources, including a significant amount of current information.<br>10      9 | Adequately employs a sufficient variety of primary and secondary sources including a sufficient amount of current information.<br><br><br>8      7 | Employs a limited variety of primary and secondary sources including an insufficient amount of current information.<br><br><br>6 | Does not employ a variety of primary and secondary sources and/or does not include current information.<br><br><br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates strong evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.<br><br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.<br>6 | Demonstrates no evaluation skills to determine resource credibility and reliability.<br>5 | Failed to submit paper.<br><br><br><br><br>0 |

# Section Three - Product Component

**The Product**

The Product will be a physical extension of your Research Paper, which will allow you to use your creativity and personal interests to learn more about the topic you have researched for your paper. For this reason, the Product will take on many different forms. It will be important for you to consider the product you would like to create as you are determining the topic for your research paper.

Remember that the Graduation Project should be a stretch and stimulate intellectual growth. This is true for the product you will be developing. When considering the product think about the resources that you currently have available to you. For instance, the resources that are available through your mentor and/or contacts you may make in the community to assist you with your product.

**Product Log**

The Product Log will be used to document the time you spend working on your Product. You are required to spend a **minimum of 15 hours** working on your Product. All the time you spend working on your Product should be documented on the Product Log, not just the hours spent working with the mentor (**minimum 12 contact hours**). In addition, you should take pictures of you working on your product (to serve as your visual representation). The mentor documents, with a signature, the actual time s/he works with you. Your faculty advisor will periodically verify the time. The activity is a brief description of what you did during the work session. The next step column will specifically list the next activity to be done toward completing the Product and will aid in your planning. You will find the next step column especially helpful when you have lapses of time between your work sessions. The Product Log requires your signature.

**Sample Script for Mentor Request**

Hello, my name is _____, and I'm a student at (name of high school). I'm involved in a program called Graduation Project that includes writing a research paper on a topic of my choice and completing a product that is related to my topic. My topic is _____ and for my product I was thinking of _____. I have been asked to find someone in the community who would be willing to assist me in my product. I was wondering whether you might be interested in mentoring me? (Wait for her/his response.) (Explain the duties and responsibilities of a mentor if s/he is interested.) (Answer any questions the person may have.) Thank you so much for your time. (if applicable…say: I'll see you on _____ (date) at _____ (time) then, thanks again.)

# Mentoring Guidelines

**The requirements of the Graduation Project mentors are as follows:**

- ➢ The mentor may not be a member of the student's family and must be 21 or older. ***Any faculty and staff in the school in which the student is enrolled may not serve as a mentor.***

- ➢ The mentor will assist the student in designing a product in the area of study for the Graduation Project. The product must logically connect to the research. The Product need not be solely based upon the research, as the paper is designed to be very limited, but the two should be clearly related. The Product could be something tangible or something abstract such as time spent volunteering in the community. <u>A visual aid is required to be produced to document the completion of the product.</u>

- ➢ The mentor will assist the student in establishing objectives and keeping a log of activities completed on the Product. The student is required to spend a **minimum of twelve (12) contact hours** with the mentor.

- ➢ The mentor needs to meet with the student until the Product is complete, but **a minimum of five (5) different times.** This time is to be spent discussing, assisting, and providing guidance on the Product. The purpose is not to waste time or materials, but to gain some "real world" experience and knowledge before leaving high school. Please contact the student's project advisor if the student is not keeping appointments.

- ➢ The student's Product completion date is _____.

- ➢ In order to determine the student's grade for the Product, the mentor will provide feedback about both the student and the Product. The mentor will complete the **Mentor's Product evaluation form and mail it to the student's English teacher before _____. Since this evaluation is a very important component of the student's entire graduation projection grade, the student may not return this form herself/himself.**

Mentors are asked to contact the advisor with any questions or concerns. The advisor may periodically call you to check student's progress and your reaction as the validity of the student's work. **Thank you again for agreeing to assist our student(s) in this exciting and meaningful endeavor**.

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

Revised 8/24/09

# Mentor Consent Form

I, _____ have read the Mentoring Guidelines and agree to serve as a mentor to _____ as he/she produces a product or performance on the topic of _____. I understand that the student needs to spend a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours with the mentor. I will meet with the student until the product or performance is completed which equals a **minimum of five (5) different times**. I will complete and return the Mentor Product Evaluation to the student's Teacher Advisor at his/her school. I am aware that I will be contacted during the semester for information concerning the student's progress and will disclose pertinent information at that time.

Age_____ Relationship to Student_____

Place of business (if applicable)_____

Address_____

Phone Number_____ Cell Phone_____

Fax Number _____Best time for contact_____

E-mail Address_____

Signature of Mentor_____ Date_____

**Student Contract**
I understand that I am responsible for making and keeping all appointments that we make. I also understand that I am responsible for keeping a log of my work and of our contracts, and that you will sign a verification of our time together and will complete a final evaluation of my Product. Thank you in advance for your willingness to be a part of my education and preparation for graduation.

Student Signature_____ Date_____

**Parent/Guardian Consent**
I give permission for my child _____ to participate in this mentoring relationship with _____.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

# Mentor Verification Log

Student Name_____ Product _____

**Mentors** should record all activities necessary to complete your product.  It will help you to pace yourself.  Remember a minimum of 12 hours is required with your mentor.  There is a separate log that must be completed by the student each time he/she works on the Product whether it is with the mentor or on their own time.

| Date | Time Spent | Activity | Mentor Initials |
|---|---|---|---|
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|  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL HOURS** |  |  |  |

*Mentor must initial each meeting.

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School

## Student Product Verification Log

Student Name _____

In addition to the Mentor Verification Log, the student must indicate the time spent and activity completed while working to complete the Product portion of the Graduation Project.  The student should log time spent with the mentor as well as the time spent on the Product outside of the supervision of the mentor.

| Date | Activity | Time Spent | Next Step | Your Initials |
|------|----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
|      |          |           |           |               |
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|      |          |           |           |               |

This is a truthful account of the time I worked on my Product

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

## Mentor Thank-You Letter

A letter should be sent to your mentor thanking him or her for the time he or she spent with you in working on your product. It should be set up in the same style as the other business letters you have done in the Graduation Project. See the instructions for the Letter of Intent as to format, placement, and style.

The letter should include at least three paragraphs. The first paragraph should state why you are writing.

The second paragraph should include specific details as to your experience with your mentor. Perhaps share a favorite memory or anecdote about your work with your mentor. This paragraph should be the main part of the message - the meat and potatoes of the letter.

The third and final paragraph should be short and sweet – just like dessert. This paragraph should simply restate how thankful you are for the help your mentor provided.

You must provide a stamped, addressed envelope along with this letter to your to faculty advisor, who will review the letter and mail it.

## Faculty Advisor Thank-You Letter

This note may be much less formal and business-like than the mentor thank-you letter. You may handwrite a personal note (not on notebook paper). You may use appropriate stationery or a purchased thank you card for this note. Avoid "teen speak" and e-mail style shortcuts or emoticons.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**State-Endorsed North Carolina Graduation Project**
**Rubrics and Descriptors**
**Product Component**

Rubrics are evaluation tools used to score/grade an assignment or task. The four components of the Graduation Project will be scored using the rubrics included in this document for both formative and summative evaluations. Rubrics provide an objective method of evaluating the components of the Graduation Project. Each of the four levels of performance included in the rubrics is identified, along with descriptors of the level. The description given for each level of performance indicates what is expected based on specific criteria for the various categories of the Research Paper, the Product, the Portfolio, and the Oral Presentation. **It is extremely important that all stakeholders be familiar with the rubrics, especially, parents and students.**

**EXEMPLARY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency. Exemplar work implies that the student has exceeded expectations in every way and has presented a model Graduation Project worthy of showcasing and emulating.

**SATISFACTORY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency. Satisfactory work implies that the student has worked diligently to do strong work on all components and has presented a worthy Graduation Project.

**DEVELOPING/EMERGING** – Students performing at this level not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency. Developing/emerging work implies that the student has more work to do to present satisfactory work in order to complete the Graduation Project.

**RESUBMISSION NECESSARY** – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project. Resubmission implies that the student has considerable work to do to complete the Graduation Project and is in need of coaching in order to do so.

**NOT SUBMITTED** – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

## North Carolina Public Schools' Graduation Project - Product Rubric

| | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Time** (A minimum of fifteen (15) hours is required by RCS.) | Exceeds number of required hours.<br><br>10      9 | Meets number of required hours.<br><br>8      7 | Does not meet number of required hours.<br>6 | Shows evidence of little to no hours invested.<br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates effective time management.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient use of time management.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates minimum use of time management.<br>6 | Demonstrates no use of time management.<br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| **Learning Over Time and Depth of Knowledge** | Chooses a challenging product representing a significant learning over time.<br>10      9 | Chooses a product representing a sufficient learning over time.<br><br>8      7 | Chooses a product representing limited learning over time.<br><br>6 | Chooses a product with no learning over time.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates a logical and relevant link to the research topic.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates an adequate and relevant link to the research topic.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates a minimal link to research topic.<br><br>6 | Shows no link to the research topic.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates critical analysis of research/student preparation in producing an original product.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates reasonable evaluation of research/student preparation in producing an original product.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited understanding of research/student preparation in producing original product.<br>6 | Demonstrates no understanding of research/student preparation in producing original product.<br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates significant creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem solving.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem solving.<br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem solving.<br>6 | Demonstrates no evidence of creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem solving.<br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates extensive connection to real-world situations.<br><br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient connection to real-world situations.<br><br>8      7 | Demonstrates limited connection to real-world situations.<br>6 | Demonstrates no connection to real-world situations.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| **Quality of Work/Effort** | Exhibits creative and exceptional results using talents, abilities and varied resources.<br>10      9 | Exhibits adequate results using talents, abilities and varied resources.<br><br>8      7 | Exhibits ineffective results using talents, abilities and varied resources.<br>6 | Exhibits unacceptable or no results.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| | Displays extensive use of detail.<br><br>10      9 | Displays sufficient use of detail.<br><br>8      7 | Displays minimum use of detail.<br><br>6 | Lacks use of detail.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |

|  | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Quality of Work/Effort Continued** | Shows evidence of consistent self-directed actions.<br><br>10       9 | Shows evidence of requiring some prompting for self-directed actions.<br><br>8       7 | Shows evidence of requiring continuous prompting for actions.<br>6 | Shows no evidence of self-directed actions.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
|  | Displays evidence of exceptional technical/practical skills.<br>10       9 | Displays evidence of competent technical/practical skills.<br>8       7 | Displays evidence of minimal technical/practical skills.<br>6 | Displays no evidence of technical/practical skills.<br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br>0 |
| **Ethics** | Consistently demonstrates ethical standards in product development.<br><br><br>10       9 | Generally demonstrates ethical standards in product development.<br><br><br>8       7 | Demonstrates limited understanding and application of ethical standards in product development.<br>6 | Demonstrates unethical standards in product development.<br><br>5 | Failed to submit product.<br><br><br>0 |

# Section Four – Portfolio Component

## The Portfolio

Students are required to complete a Portfolio in which they keep records and materials relating to all aspects of the Graduation Project requirements. A copy of all required forms, research paper, mentor/teacher documentation and any additional artifacts should be included. Use the checklist below to arrange the Portfolio.

### PORFOLIO CHECKLIST

1) Title Page - Captures the spirit of the project. The style, information, graphics and layout are your choice!

2) Table of Contents - Reflects your ability to arrange and organize in a logical sequence. It should be accurate and useable. You must have page numbers!

3) Graduation Project Approval Sheet – Marks the beginning of your Graduation Project endeavor and the approval to begin work towards the four P's.

4) Ethical Agreement and Parent Consent Form – Demonstrates your pledge to abide by the rule of ethics in all aspects of your project.

5) Letter of Intent – Demonstrates letter-writing skills, and gives a brief introduction to your project and shows its evolution.

6) Resume and Cover Letter – Provides a brief formal history about you. Shows you can organize, evaluate and synthesize your experience.

7) Reflective Journals – Shows your ability to be consistent in documenting the progress of the product and shows that process is as important as outcome. Shows your thoughts and reflections about your process/product. Demonstrates reflective and narrative writing strategies.

8) Research Paper – Demonstrates your ability to narrow and define a topic, access information from a variety of sources, select, sort, and organize appropriate information, properly cite texts, use MLA format, activity use library and research skills, and demonstrate knowledge or proper writing skills.

9) Mentor Verification Log – Provides the faculty and judges with insight as to your progress and commitment in creating your product and communicating with your mentor.

10) Pictorial with Captions – Shows your ability to organize a minimum of five captioned photos to document your product from start to finish – editing skills and writing skills combined!

11) Student Product Verification Log – Focus on self-assessment, time management, and shows perspective.

12) Thank You Letter to Mentor & Teacher Advisor - Shows your sense of homage and respect for those who helped your journey and also yet more letter-writing skills!

13) Wild Card – awards, letters of praise, original work, art, charts, graphs, diagrams, letters from those involved in the project. Ask your teacher for further possibilities or check with her/him if you have an idea!

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC & Portsmouth High School, RI

**Portfolio Evaluation Form**
**To be Completed by Teacher Advisor**

**Student Name** _____ **Date** _____

1)      Title Page (5 points)                                                          _____

2)      Table of Contents (5 points)                                          _____

3)      Graduation Project Approval Sheet (5 points)              _____

4)      Ethical Agreement and Parent Consent Form (5 points)    _____

5)      Letter of Intent (5 points)                                             _____

6)      Resume and Cover Letter (10 points)                            _____

7)      Weekly Reflections (10 points)                                     _____

8)      Research Paper (10 points)                                           _____

9)      Mentor Verification Log (10 points)                             _____

10)     Pictorial with Captions (10 points)                              _____

11)     Student Product Verification Log (10 points)              _____

12)     Thank You Letter to Mentor and Teacher Advisor (5 points)_____

13)     Overall Appearance (10 points)                                    _____

**Portfolio Grade**                                      _____

**Comments:** _____

_____

_____

_____

**Teacher Advisor Signature** _____ **Date** _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Self Reflection Journal**

One of the key practices in your Graduation Project will be keeping a Reflection Journal. The Reflection Journal provides a place where you can "think aloud" about your work as you describe the work you have done and help you make decisions about what you plan to do on your project. In the Reflection Journal, you should describe the strengths and weaknesses of your work, the problems or difficulties you encountered, and possible solutions to help solve those problems or to improve your work.

The Reflections are an important part of your assessed work, and will be read and reviewed by your Teacher Advisor, who will use the Reflection Journal along with the other forms as a basis of conferring and co-planning with you about your plans, work, and the problems you encounter as you attempt to complete the Graduation Project.

**Reflection journals should be made every time you work on your project, if possible**. You should have at least 3-5 journal entries of some length (half to full page), but you may include more if appropriate for your project. Your Teacher Advisor will assist you in determining when you have met this requirement. Although informal and unedited, your responses should be as neat and as legible as possible. Putting a date on each entry will be both important and useful as you track your learning and progress over time.

**Graduation Project Reflection Journal**

In your Reflection Journals, simply describe the work you are doing for your project and how that work is progressing. Listed below are some ideas that you might opt to include.  These include thoughts about:

- Meetings with your mentor
- Interviews you have with experts in the field
- Time spent researching or time spent completing your product
- Time spend making and/or securing materials
- Difficulties that were encountered
- Unexpected successes and surprises in your research or product
- Reminders to yourself about what you need to do/get/calls to make, etc.
- What work have you done on your project? Be specific in describing the actions and steps you have taken.
- What decisions did you make about your project and activities? Explain why you made the choices you did.
- What do you think went well on the work you did? Explain why you feel it went well.
- What difficulties or problems did you encounter? How did you solve those problems or how might you solve those problems?
- What can you do to improve your work?
- What are you next steps? Do you need help at this stage? What people or resources do you need in order to continue your work?

Adapted from Pittsburgh Public Schools

# RESUME WRITING

A good resume is one of the most important tools in your job search and is a component that must be a part of the final Portfolio. Its purpose is to entice the employer to want to know more about you and call you for an interview. It is usually the first impression you make. Make is fabulous!

A good resume presents
- ❖ Who you are.
- ❖ What position you want.
- ❖ What skills you possess.
- ❖ What accomplishment you have made.
- ❖ What jobs you have held previously.

Remember
- ❖ A resume is not an autobiography; is it a sales brochure.
- ❖ Only 2 out of 100 resumes result in an interview.
- ❖ Keep it short; make it sizzle.
- ❖ A resume needs to be 1 page to pass the 10-second test.

While writing Do
- ❖ Be concise.
- ❖ List in reverse chronological order.
- ❖ Stress skills and accomplishments.
- ❖ Use job-related key words.
- ❖ Use one-inch margins all around.
- ❖ Use good white, ivory or gray bond paper.
- ❖ Make your resume attractive and neat.
- ❖ Proofread, proofread, proofread, and then have someone else proofread!
- ❖ Always include cover letter.
- ❖ Include references. This needs to be on a second page use an identical heading and style as used on the resume.

While writing Don't
- ❖ Lie or exaggerate
- ❖ Include salary history.
- ❖ Use pronouns or abbreviations.
- ❖ Overdo use of bold or italics or fancy fonts.
- ❖ Use small type or overcrowd.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**SUGGESTIONS FOR SECTIONS ON YOUR RESUME**

1. HEADING:   Include name; complete address with street address, city, state and zip code; phone number; email address.

2. OBJECTIVE: List the position you are seeking or hope to obtain, level of job you are looking for and the skills you bring.

3. EDUCATION:   List complete name, address, and phone number of last high school you attended.  List years you attended.

4. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY:   List dates worked, job title, complete name, address and phone number of places of employment, as well as supervisor's name and title.

5. EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS:   List academic, technical, performing, and community service experiences and any special skills.

6. HONORS AND AWARDS:   Indicate years in clubs, offices held, scholarships earned.


**SUGGESTIONS FOR REFERENCE LIST**

1. Can be a separate sheet of paper from the resume

2. Same heading including your name, address, phone number, and email centered as on resume

3. List of references including

   1. Name
   2. Occupation
   3. Complete Address
   4. Phone Number
   5. Years Known

4. Same style as resume

Always have extra copies of your resume when going to a job interview. You may be interviewed by more than one person and wish to present a copy to the interviewer.  You also may be asked to complete a job application and will need a copy for yourself to use while filling it out.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Joseph T. Schmoe**
200 Main Street
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-555-5555
Joeschmoe@aol.com

**OBJECTIVE**            To obtain an entry-level position as a data-entry clerk using my 80 wpm
keyboarding skills.

**EDUCATION  Northwood High School**
310 Northwood High School Rd.
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-542-4181
Anticipated Graduation:  June 2010

**RELEVANT**            **Food Lion, June 2008–present**
**EXPEREIENCE**         **Cashier**
10105 West Street
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-555-5500

**Bill and Kathy Smith Family, 2007-present**
**Child Care and Landscaping**
200 South Hillsboro St.
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-555-0066

**AWARDS**              Interact Club Member, 2008 - present
**AND HONORS**          Football Team, Wide Receiver, 2007-present
DECA Club, 2007-present
        President of DECA, 2009
National Honor Society, 2007-present
A Honor Roll, 2007-present

**REFERENCES**          Mr. John Doe, Assistant Principal
Northwood High School
310 Northwood High School Rd.
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-542-4181

Miss Helen Smith, Yearbook Advisor
Northwood High School
310 Northwood High School Rd.
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-542-4181

Mrs. Kathy Smith
200 South Hillsboro St.
Pittsboro, NC  27312
919-555-0066

Adapted from Clayton High School

**Resume Cover Letter**

A cover letter is used to accompany any resume mailed to a prospective employer. Its purpose is to summarize briefly what you can offer to the employer.  This letter should be carefully planned, written and possibly rewritten until you are satisfied that it is as effective as possible. The following guidelines will be helpful in writing your cover letter.

Use the same spacing and format guidelines specified in the letter of intent directions.

**The Heading**

Your return address and date

**The Inside Address**

The name of the person to whom you are writing
The name of the company and its correct mailing address

**Salutation or Greeting**

If possible, address the letter to a specific person by name such as "Miss Johnson:"
If you do not know who will receive the letter address it by stating "Dear Sir/Madam"  or "To Whom It May Concern"

**The Body of the Letter**

The body of the letter should include three paragraphs.

> **Opening Paragraph:**
>
> Indicate the name of the position of which you are applying and how you found out about the opening.

> **Middle Paragraph:**
>
> Explain what you have to offer this company based on specific work history and/or past experiences in your life.  Be positive and confident; sell yourself.

> **Closing Paragraph:**
> Thank the employer for their time and request an interview at a later date.

**Signature**

Include a complimentary close such as Sincerely,
Type your name and sign the letter above your typed name.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**State-Endorsed North Carolina Graduation Project**
**Rubrics and Descriptors**
**Portfolio Component**

Rubrics are evaluation tools used to score/grade an assignment or task. The four components of the Graduation Project will be scored using the rubrics included in this document for both formative and summative evaluations. Rubrics provide an objective method of evaluating the components of the Graduation Project. Each of the four levels of performance included in the rubrics is identified, along with descriptors of the level. The description given for each level of performance indicates what is expected based on specific criteria for the various categories of the Research Paper, the Product, the Portfolio, and the Oral Presentation. **It is extremely important that all stakeholders be familiar with the rubrics, especially, parents and students.**

**EXEMPLARY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency. Exemplar work implies that the student has exceeded expectations in every way and has presented a model Graduation Project worthy of showcasing and emulating.

**SATISFACTORY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency. Satisfactory work implies that the student has worked diligently to do strong work on all components and has presented a worthy Graduation Project.

**DEVELOPING/EMERGING** – Students performing at this level not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.
Developing/emerging work implies that the student has more work to do to present satisfactory work in order to complete the Graduation Project.

**RESUBMISSION NECESSARY** – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project. Resubmission implies that the student has considerable work to do to complete the Graduation Project and is in need of coaching in order to do so.

**NOT SUBMITTED** – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

# North Carolina Public Schools' Graduation Project
## Portfolio Rubric

| | Successful Completion | | | Has Not Completed | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Format/ Appearance** | Adheres to all guidelines for portfolio appearance.<br>10    9 | Adheres to most guidelines for portfolio appearance.<br>8    7 | | Adheres to some guidelines for portfolio appearance.<br>6 | Does not adhere to guidelines for portfolio appearance.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br>0 |
| **Organization** | Exhibits exceptional organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.<br>10    9 | Exhibits sufficient organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.<br>8    7 | | Exhibits minimal organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.<br>6 | Exhibits no organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br>0 |
| **Completeness** | Meets all requirements for portfolio contents. *See attached Form.<br>10    9 | Meets most requirements for portfolio contents.<br>8    7 | | Meets some requirements for portfolio contents.<br>6 | Does not meet requirements for portfolio contents.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br>0 |
| | Title Page, Table of Contents, Timeline<br>5 | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio.<br>0 |
| | Letter to Judges, Letter of Intent.<br>5 | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio.<br>0 |
| | Student/parent ethical agreement (plagiarism statement)<br>5 | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio.<br>0 |
| | Research Paper: Outline, Final Draft, Works Cited, Appendices.<br>10 | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio.<br>0 |
| **Mentor Consent = 2 Pts**<br><br>**Product Plan = 3 Pts**<br><br>**Product Log = 3 Pts**<br><br>**Work Samples and Photos =4 Pts**<br><br>**Mentor/Product** | Project Information: Mentor Consent, Product Log, Self-Evaluation, Work Samples and photos (5-7 pictures with typed captions at least one with mentor and student together). Mentor/product evaluation.<br>20 | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br><br><br><br><br><br>0 |

| Evaluation = 5 Pts | Resume | | | | | Failed to submit portfolio. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 5 | | | | | 0 |

| | Successful Completion | | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Student Growth** | Demonstrates exceptional depth in academic and/or personal growth.<br>10      9 | Demonstrates sufficient depth in academic and/or personal growth.<br>8      7 | | Demonstrates limited depth in academic and/or personal growth.<br>6 | Does not demonstrate depth in academic and/or personal growth.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br>0 |
| **Student Reflection** | Reveals exceptional insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.<br>10      9 | Reveals sufficient insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.<br>8      7 | | Reveals limited insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.<br>6 | Reveals no insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br><br>0 |
| **Information, Technology and Communications Literacy** | Effectively employs technology in construction of portfolio.<br>10      9 | Sufficiently employs technology in construction of portfolio.<br>8      7 | | Minimally employs technology in construction of portfolio.<br>6 | Employs no technology in construction of portfolio.<br>5 | Failed to submit portfolio.<br><br>0 |

55

# Section Five – Presentation Component

## The Presentation

The Presentation is the ultimate step in the Graduation Project process.  It is a self-evaluation and reflection by the student of all that s/he has accomplished.  It consists of a <u>five to seven</u> (5-7) minute presentation, followed by a five-minute question and answer period.  The panel is referred to as the "Judges Panel."  The Presentation describes what has been learned from conducting research, writing the paper, and fulfilling the requirements of the project.  Of special importance is a description of what was learned from the total experience.

Students are evaluated on their preparedness, their ability to communicate and think on their feet, and the overall quality of their research project.

The members of the panel will review the Portfolio prior to the Presentation to obtain an understanding of what has been accomplished.  The Portfolio will contain the research paper, verification of the Product, and additional materials that will help to support the Presentation.

A visual component must also be prepared by the student on a tri-fold cardboard backboard to illustrate the overall experience of completing the student's chosen topic.  Visuals will be displayed in order for judges to review prior to the presentation.

The student's selection of proper attire for the panel presentation is considered very important. Impeccable grooming, including combed hair and clean clothes, is decidedly important.  These decisions, like numerous others since beginning the project process, should be made with success in mind.  The panel will consist of adults who have become expected to demonstrate a learning stretch and therefore will provide a polished, organized, and effective overview of the project.

A maximum of 30 seconds of a video is allowed in which the speaker is not necessarily directly interacting with the audience.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

## Presentation Delivery Checklist

### Verbal Elements of Speaking:

**Volume**        Speak loudly enough to be heard without shouting.

**Pitch**         When you speak, vary your pitch.

**Pace**          Do not speak too slowly or too quickly.

**Stress**        Emphasize important ideas by saying them with force.

**Tone**          Match the emotion in your voice to the message you wish to convey to your audience.

**Enunciation**   Pronounce each word clearly and correctly.  Do not use slang or "teen speak." Do not drop the ends of words or sentences.

**Variety**       Vary your volume, pitch, pace, stress, and tone to suit parts of your message.


### Nonverbal Elements of Speaking:

**Eye Contact**        Look at your audience as you speak.

**Facial Expressions**   Display emotions that match your message.

**Body Language**      Use good posture.

**Gestures**           Use hand gestures sparingly to emphasize points that you make.

**Proximity**          Stay at a comfortable distance from your audience, neither too far nor too close.

**Clothing**           **Dress for success and refer to the Dress Code Policy on page 57.**

### Rehearsal

- Refrain from memorizing items during rehearsal.  Instead become familiar with your material and ideas.
- Write key word prompts on note cards so that you can stay on track during your presentation.
- Practice your actual delivery.  Remember, six to eight (6-8) minutes is your target time.
- Have friends or family view or even videotape your presentation so that you can recognize and correct distracting mannerisms or verbal fillers (ummmm, you know, like, etc).

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

## Presenting:

- Remember two cardinal rules:  Know your facts and be natural.
- The audience is on your side; they want you to do well.
- Greet each judge with a smile, a look in the eye, a firm handshake, and an introduction.
- Once you set up your props on the day of your presentation, don't forget to introduce yourself to the judges.
- Get "set" before speaking allowing time for judges to begin paying attention to you.
- Decide on the exact words you will use to begin your presentation:

  - **Example:** *Good evening.  I would like to tell you about my Graduation Project-how I chose my research topic, what led me to my product, the work I did with my mentor, the challenges I had, and what I got out of the process.*

- Know how you want to end your presentation; know your closing statement.

  - **Example:** *Graduation Project has taught me about time-management, planning, perseverance, and problem-solving.  Although it has caused me a lot of stress, I am glad that I did it.*

- Be confident and let your body language demonstrate your assurance.
- State clearly and precisely.
- Keep your eyes on the audience.
- Use an occasional question, especially in introducing a new point.
- Check your presentation room for equipment function and compatibility.  Check with the appropriate faculty members at your school to load files onto a computer for your presentation at least one week in advance of the presentation night.

## Manners:

- Be quiet and behave maturely as you wait in the holding area and hallways between presentations.
- Thank the judges before you leave the room.

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Dress Code for Presentation Night**

Professional dress acceptable for presentation night includes:

**For Young Men**

- Business suit with collar dress shirt, and necktie or
- Sport coat, dress slacks, collar shirt, and necktie or
- Dress slacks, collar shirt, necktie
- Banded collar shirt may be worn only if sport coat or business suit is worn.
- Dress shoes and socks

**For Young Women**

- Business suit with blouse or
- Business pantsuit with blouse or
- Skirt or dress slacks with blouse or sweater or
- Business dress
- Dress Shoes
- Nylons when wearing skirts and dresses

*Many women's two-piece suits are currently designed so that they do not require a blouse. Therefore, this will be accepted. In addition, sling-back shoes, open-toe shoes are accepted.*

**Inappropriate attire includes:**
(for both men and women)

- Jewelry in visible body piercing, other than ears
- Denim or chambray fabric clothing or any kind, overalls, shorts, skirts, stretch or stirrup pants, exercise or bike shorts
- Backless, see-through, tight-fitting, spaghetti straps, strapless, extremely short, or low-cut blouses/tops/dresses/skirts
- T-shirts, Lycra, spandex, midriff tops, tank tops, bathing suites
- Sandals, athletic shoes, industrial work shoes, hiking boots, bare feet, or over-the-knee-boots
- Athletic wear, including sneakers
- Hats
- Flannel fabric clothing
- Bolo ties
- Visible foundation garments

In the event that the presentation requires the student to dress as a character or to portray a role due to the research topic and product, the dress code does not apply.

**Presentation Equipment Needs**

Student _____ Teacher Advisor _____

Date _____

In order to prepare for Graduation Project Presentation night, please check below all of the equipment necessary for your individual presentation and stipulate the quantity needed where appropriate. *Turn this in to your teacher advisor at least two weeks prior to the night of presentations even if NO EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED.*

| | EQUIPMENT | QUANTITY |
|---|---|---|
| \_\_\_\_ | TV/VCR | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | TV/DVD | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Computer | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Speakers | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Data Projector/Computer PowerPoint Equipment | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Slide Projector | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Overhead Projector | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Cassette Player | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | CD Player | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Easel | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Table | _____ |
| \_\_\_\_ | Extension Cord | _____ |

List any additional equipment or room requirements:

_____

_____

**In order to schedule presentations, we need to know of any conflicts. For example, if you have a 3:30 pm appointment, you probably do not want to be scheduled for a 4:30 pm presentation time. If you have an elaborate set-up, you may want to be scheduled for the first time slot. List any conflicts or specific circumstances that need to be considered when we schedule your presentation.**

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School and Clayton High School, NC

**State-Endorsed North Carolina Graduation Project**
**Rubrics and Descriptors**
**Presentation Component**

Rubrics are evaluation tools used to score/grade an assignment or task.  The four components of the Graduation Project will be scored using the rubrics included in this document for both formative and summative evaluations.  Rubrics provide an objective method of evaluating the components of the Graduation Project.  Each of the four levels of performance included in the rubrics is identified, along with descriptors of the level.  The description given for each level of performance indicates what is expected based on specific criteria for the various categories of the Research Paper, the Product, the Portfolio, and the Oral Presentation.  **It is extremely important that all stakeholders be familiar with the rubrics, especially, parents and students.**

**EXEMPLARY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency.  Exemplar work implies that the student has exceeded expectations in every way and has presented a model Graduation Project worthy of showcasing and emulating.

**SATISFACTORY** – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency.  Satisfactory work implies that the student has worked diligently to do strong work on all components and has presented a worthy Graduation Project.

**DEVELOPING/EMERGING** – Students performing at this level not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.
Developing/emerging work implies that the student has more work to do to present satisfactory work in order to complete the Graduation Project.

**RESUBMISSION NECESSARY** – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project.  Resubmission implies that the student has considerable work to do to complete the Graduation Project and is in need of coaching in order to do so.

**NOT SUBMITTED** – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

# North Carolina Public Schools' Graduation Project
## Presentation Rubric

| | Successful Completion | | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Communication Skills** | Consistently speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. <br> 10    9 | Generally speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. <br><br> 8    7 | Has difficulty speaking with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. <br> 6 | Does not speak with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br><br> 0 |
| | Consistently employs appropriate eye contact and posture. <br> 10    9 | Frequently employs appropriate eye contact and posture. <br><br> 8    7 | Employs infrequent eye contact and/or poor posture. <br><br> 6 | Makes no eye contact. <br><br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br><br> 0 |
| | Consistently employs appropriate nonverbal communication techniques. <br> 10    9 | Adequately employs appropriate nonverbal communication techniques. <br><br> 8    7 | Employs limited nonverbal communication techniques. <br><br> 6 | Does not employ nonverbal communication techniques. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br><br> 0 |
| | Consistently exhibits poise, enthusiasm, and confidence. <br> 10    9 | Generally exhibits poise, enthusiasm, and confidence. <br><br> 8    7 | Exhibits limited poise, enthusiasm, and confidence. <br> 6 | Lacks poise, enthusiasm, and confidence. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |
| | Consistently employs standard grammar. <br><br> 10    9 | Generally employs standard grammar. <br><br> 8    7 | Infrequently employs standard grammar. <br> 6 | Does not employ standard grammar. <br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |
| | Adheres to prescribed time guidelines. (5-7 minutes) <br> 10    9 | Adheres to prescribed time guidelines. <br><br> 8    7 | Violates prescribed time guidelines. <br><br> 6 | Violates prescribed time guidelines. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |
| | Wears appropriate professional or authentic attire. <br> 10    9 | <br><br><br> 8    7 | Wears inappropriate attire. <br> 6 | <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |
| | Employs creative use of visual aids that enrich or reinforce presentation. <br> 10    9 | Employs appropriate visual aids that relate to presentation. <br><br> 8    7 | Employs ineffective visual aid. <br><br> 6 | Uses no visual aids. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |
| **Content and Coherence** | Effectively defines a main idea and clearly adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. <br> 10    9 | Adequately defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. <br><br> 8    7 | Insufficiently defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation. <br> 6 | Does not define a main idea or adhere to its purpose. <br><br> 5 | Failed to make presentation. <br><br> 0 |

| | Successful Completion | | Has Not Completed | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Exemplary** | **Satisfactory** | **Developing/ Emerging** | **Resubmission Necessary** | **Not Submitted** |
| **Content and Coherence Continued** | Employs a logical and engaging sequence which the audience can follow.<br>10    9 | Employs a logical sequence which the audience can follow.<br><br>8    7 | Employs an ineffective sequence confusing to the audience.<br>6 | Lacks an organizational sequence.<br><br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br>0 |
| | Demonstrates exceptional use of supporting details/evidence.<br>10    9 | Demonstrates sufficient use of supporting details/evidence.<br>8    7 | Demonstrates insufficient supporting details/evidence.<br>6 | Demonstrates no supporting details/evidence.<br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br>0 |
| **Self Reflection** | Offers an insightful evaluation of the project process.<br>10    9 | Offers a clear evaluation of the project process.<br><br>8    7 | Offers an evaluation of the project process.<br><br>6 | Fails to offer an evaluation of the project process.<br><br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br>0 |
| | Reflects on successes and challenges with exceptional depth and insight.<br>10    9 | Reflects on successes and challenges with sufficient depth and insight.<br>8    7 | Reflects on successes and challenges with limited depth and insight.<br>6 | Does not reflect on successes and challenges with depth or insight.<br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br><br>0 |
| | Extensively reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.<br>10    9 | Generally reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.<br><br>8    7 | Minimally reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.<br>6 | Fails to reflect on the collaboration with the mentor.<br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br>0 |
| **Extemporaneous Responses** | Confidently, and politely, responds to judges' questions and comments.<br>10    9 | Politely responds to judges' questions and comments.<br><br><br>8    7 | Ineffectively responds to judges' questions and comments.<br>6 | Unacceptably responds/does not respond to judges' questions and comments.<br>5 | Failed to make presentation.<br><br><br>0 |
| | Responds to judges' questions effectively to demonstrate a knowledge of topic.<br>10    9 | Responds to judges' questions adequately to demonstrate a knowledge of topic.<br>8    7 | Responses to judges' questions demonstrate minimal knowledge of topic.<br>6 | Responses to judges' questions fail to demonstrate knowledge of topic.<br>5 | Failed to answer questions.<br><br><br>0 |

# Section Six - Appendix A - Teacher Advisor

**Faculty Advisor Contract**

I, _____, as a faculty advisor for
_____, agree to spend time working with him/her on
his/her Graduation Project by doing the following:

- Reading the final draft of his/her Research Paper making constructive comments to help improve it before submission to the English Teacher.
- Discussing possibilities or Community Mentor to work on his/her Product.
- Call advisee's mentor to complete the Mentor Evaluation Form in order to confirm that in fact the student has been putting in the required number of hours and return this form to the Graduation Project Coordinator by the due date.
- Checking his/her Portfolio for completeness and accuracy making sure all corrections to documents have been made so they are in final form. Offering suggestions for improvement before it is submitted for judging and presentation.
- Allowing advisee to practice presentation for me so I can make suggestions for improvement.

Faculty Advisor Signature _____ Date_____

I, _____, a Senior English student will cooperate with my
Faculty Advisor,_____, by doing the following:

- Interviewing at least one appropriate source at the beginning of the research process to get ideas for my Research Paper and Product.
- Attending all required meetings with Faculty Advisor on the days scheduled.
- Submitting the final draft of my Research Paper to my faculty advisor after being read by a peer, as well as being proofread and corrected by me at least two days before the final copy is due to my English Teacher.
- Contacting suggested mentor during the Research Paper portion of the Graduation Project and scheduling days and times to meet with them well in advance of deadlines.
- Taking my Portfolio to my Faculty Advisor at least two days before the due date and give him/her enough time to thoroughly check the contents and accuracy.
- Taking my Product to my Faculty Advisor periodically during the grading period and at least two days before the due date for final approval and suggestions for improvement.
- Practicing my Presentation for my class, my parents, my faculty advisor, and anyone else who will listen so I can use their suggestions to have the best presentation possible.

Student Signature_____ Date_____

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**The Role of Teacher Advisor in Graduation Project**

A Graduation Project Advisor is a faculty member at a school who assists with feedback, encouragement, time management, and stress management while providing support to accomplish the four components of the Graduation Project.

## Graduation Project Advisor Checklist

€ **Meet for introduction**

**Comments:**_____
_____
_____

**Advisor Signature:**_____  **Date:**_____

€ **Check rough draft of Research Paper**
**Comments:**_____
_____
_____

**Advisor Signature:** _____  **Date:**
_____

€ **Check on Product progress and check on Mentor Verification Log for adequate progress**
**Comments:**

_____
_____
_____

**Advisor Signature:** _____  **Date:**_____

€ **Check for completion and validity of product according to a specific rubric. Complete the Advisor Product Evaluation and return to Coordinator**
**Comments:** _____
_____
_____

€ **Schedule bimonthly meetings, at minimum, during the senior English semester with advisee to check for project progress on all four components: paper, product, portfolio, and presentation**
**Comments:**_____
_____
_____

**Advisor Signature:** _____  **Date:** _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Advisor/Mentor Contact Form**

Advisor _____

**Advisors are asked to return this form to the Graduation Project Coordinator by the due date.  Please indicate the dates and times contacts were made.**

Advisors are asked to contact the mentor of each student you are advising.  This is a check to ensure the credibility of the student's product, completion of work hours with the mentor, and as a public relations contact from the school to community leaders who are volunteering their time. The checklist includes the questions you should ask in order to get the needed information.

Student Name:  _____

Topic/Product:  _____

Mentor Name:  _____

Telephone/Cell Phone/Fax Number:  _____

Email Address:  _____

Dates and Times of Contacts:  _____   _____

_____   _____

# Checklist

_____  Have you met the student you are mentoring?

_____  Did you receive a copy of the Mentor Guidelines?

_____  Are you aware of the fact that the student is to meet with you no less than 5 times for a total of 12 hours.

_____  Have you discussed the student's product?

_____  Do you think this is a credible product (too simple, too complicated)?

_____  What is the progress with the product?

_____  Is the student working?  Coming on time to appointments?  Fulfilling his end of the arrangement?

_____  Do you have any questions?

_____  Please contact the advisor (your name) at the school's number (provide) with any concerns.

Advisor Comments:

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

**Graduation Project Grading Sheet**
**PASS/FAIL**

Student _____    Teacher Advisor _____

Senior English Teacher _____    Block _____

| Component | Score | Total |
|---|---|---|
| Paper | | |
| | | |
| Product | | |
| | | |
| Presentation | | |
| | | |
| Portfolio | | |
| | | |
| Total | | |

_____    This student has **MET** the Graduation Project Requirement.

_____    This student has **NOT MET** the Graduation Project Requirement.  The following
components will need to be revised and resubmitted based on the requirements identified:

_____ Paper

_____ Product

_____ Presentation

_____ Portfolio

# Section Seven - Appendix B - Student Forms

**Ethical Commitment and Parent/Guardian Consent to the Graduation Project**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT**

I am aware that my son/daughter must complete the Graduation Project as a requirement to graduate from Northwood High School. I understand that the project includes four (4) phases:

1. Research paper ( 6-8 pages –with title page and works cited page – 4-6 written pages)
2. Product that is clearly connected to the research paper
3. Portfolio
4. Presentation will be oral ranging from five to seven (5-7) minutes about the paper and the product.

I have read and approved my child's Graduation Project proposal as outlined in the Letter of Intent. I realized that a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours with the community mentor is required.

**ETHICAL COMMITMENT**

As a participant in the Northwood High School Graduation Project, I pledge to adhere to the following as a demonstration of my honor and integrity:

5. I, and I alone, will complete the research necessary to write the Research Paper component of the project.
6. I will not use a paper and/or information gathered by another student.
7. I will not purchase or use a "canned" paper off the internet, nor will "cut and paste" parts of Internet sources as if they were my own words or thoughts.
8. I will document my paper accurately to avoid plagiarism.
9. I, and I alone, will complete all of the work necessary for the completion of the product/project that evolves from the Research Paper.
10. I will collect accurate verifications on all the work necessitating signatures. I will NOT forge any verification documents.
11. I WILL complete a Project. I will NOT buy or falsify the completion of a Project. I will not use all or parts of another person's Graduation Project.
12. I will include only work that I have completed in the Portfolio. I will NOT include any work of any type that belongs to another student. The Portfolio will reflect the work and effort that I, and I alone, have exerted through the completion of the Graduation Project.

As an honorable young adult of integrity, I agree to adhere to the above criteria in completing my Graduation Project. I understand that if I fail to adhere to these standards and submit work that is not my own creation, I will face the penalty of receiving a zero for that particular component of the Graduation Project.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent Signature:_____ Date: _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

## Interest Inventory

This inventory is to help guide you towards finding an appropriate and interesting topic for your graduation project. Your answers to these questions should help you narrow down some topic choices for your graduation project.

| Questions | Answers |
|---|---|
| What is the most interesting course you have ever taken in school? Why? | |
| What lessons have you learned from your extra-curricular activities? | |
| How did you get introduced to your hobby(ies) and why are you interested in them? | |
| What people or practices influence your opinions? | |
| What life events have changed you as a person and why? | |
| What is your favorite sport? | |
| What is your favorite television show? | |
| Who from history do you identify with and why? | |
| What genre of film or books do you prefer? | |
| What type of music do you listen to? | |
| What current events interest you? | |
| What occupational field would you like to enter? | |
| What elements of your upbringing have shaped the person you have become? | |
| What challenges do you think today's youth face? | |
| What era of history interests you? | |
| Who is your idol? | |
| What activities do you do with your friends and family? | |
| If you could travel anywhere, where would you go? Why? | |
| What job do you think is most important to society? | |
| If you could fix any problem in your community, what would you fix? | |
| How do you think the government impacts your life? | |
| What do you consider to be the most controversial issue in the media? | |
| What cause would you be willing to stand up for? | |
| Which historical person do you think had the greatest impact on today's world? Why? | |
| What is the responsibility of the education system? | |
| What is your responsibility as a student? | |
| What do you think are the main problems in your school? | |
| What do you think is the most influential form of media and why? | |

**Choosing a Topic**

Complete the following list of general categories and suggested topics by generating three different ideas that appeal to you for each category. Utilize the examples in parenthesis as a guideline to brainstorm topics for your research.

21. fine and performing arts (music, dance)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
22. health and physical fitness (steroids, diet)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
23. business (entrepreneurship, advertising)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
24. travel (vacations, explorations)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
25. careers (schooling, job market research)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
26. social issues (poverty, education)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
27. photography/film (movie making, black and white photography)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
28. math/science (automation, robotics)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
29. literature/writing (writing a novel, contemporary writer)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
30. sports/recreation (scuba diving, effect of Title IX)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
31. home/economics (trends in diet/cooking, interior design)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
32. technical arts (cabinetry, metal products)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
33. education (achievement gap, funding)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
34. visual arts (digital art, stained glass)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
35. religion/philosophy (existentialism, religions and war)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
36. specialized hobbies (coins, car restoration)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
37. space (exploration, space stations)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
38. social studies (historical study, rescue missions)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
39. nature/ecology (global warming, habitats)
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____
40. other ideas
   a. _____ b. _____ c. _____

**Analyzing Topic Selections**

One of the most important aspects of choosing a topic for your research and product is that you have a *learning stretch*. This stretch means that you must push yourself to go above and beyond what you already know. This project is an opportunity for you to practice skills in the 'real world' while pursuing a subject of personal interest. Selecting the idea is a personal challenge; because YOU, *not* your teachers, *not* your parents, but YOU, get to decide. It is important to find a topic that truly interests YOU. The best projects – challenging, engaging, meaningful and fun – begin with a compelling personal reason for topic choice. You must be actively engaged in the entire process and so this is your opportunity to become an explorer, artist, builder, scholar, scientist, or author – whatever YOU want. Consider the following questions as you prepare to select a topic:

- Within the next five years, what do you hope you have accomplished?
- What things would you like to do better?
- What do you wish you had more time to do?
- What would you like to learn more about?
- List experiences you wish you could have.
- What controversial issues bring about strong feelings in you?
- What is a profession you think about but have not seriously explored?
- What is one think that you think needs to be improved?
- What classes have you taken that you really like?
- What is one hand-crafted item that you wish you could make?
- What do you wish would happen in your life?
- What goal have you avoided?
- What would you like to get others to do?
- What is unique or special about you?
- What community group do you admire?
- What can't you do but would like to do?

Now that you have generated several ideas that you might possibly pursue, you need to begin evaluating your lists for how they lend themselves to different aspects of the Graduation Project. Circle/highlight any topic that:

9. Will have a **good supply of information and variety of resources** (interview, books, articles in periodicals, websites, etc.).
10. Will lend itself to a **product that is valid, useful, and relevant –** jot down product ideas as they occur to you!
11. Will be affordable – consider both time and money.
12. Will **stretch** your knowledge and experience. ("You will never grow unless you go beyond what you have already mastered")
13. Will give you a taste of a possible career.
14. Will maintain your interest from the end of your junior year to the end of the semester when you have senior English.
15. Will allow you to take a stand on the topic (you have to decide whether or not the topic has a negative/positive impact, insignificant/great influence, etc.)
16. You will know someone who can mentor you through this research.

## Letter of Intent Review

Student_____ Faculty Advisor_____

Topic of Research_____

## YOUR GRADUATION PROJECT PROPOSAL HAS BEEN:

**_____ACCEPTED**

Comments:_____

_____

_____ Place a copy of the letter in your GP Portfolio

_____ Correct errors and place a copy in your GP portfolio

Congratulations!  You may begin working on components of your Graduation Project at this time.  Components will not be accepted until they are due according to the time lines that each student will be provided at a later date.  Be sure to review the Graduation Project Handbook to ensure that all components of your project meet the guidelines and rubrics indicated by the State of North Carolina.

**_____REJECTED…choose another research topic and product and write a new letter of intent.**

Comments:_____

_____

_____

_____

**_____APPROVED PENDING:  Not there yet…revise and re-submit.**

**Reason:**
_____There is no apparent "Learning Stretch" for you in this project.
_____This project closely resembles one that is already part of the high school curriculum.
_____This proposal has elements which violate school district policies and/or is potentially dangerous
_____This project involves too much expense.
_____Product needs revision
_____Paper topic needs revision
_____Other:_____

*All letters have been reviewed by the Graduation Project Committee.  All decisions are final.*

**Research Paper "Yes Test"**

Student _____ Senior English Teacher_____

Teacher Advisor_____ Date Completed_____

The following requirements must be present for the teacher advisor to evaluate the rough draft of the research paper before final submission to the senior English teacher:

**Yes**       **No**

_____      _____          Outline included

_____      _____          Within page range (6-8–with title page and works cited page – 4-6 written pages)

_____      _____          Correct format, double-spaced

_____      _____          Thesis-clear, concise, relates to paper

_____      _____          Paper written in 3rd person-not personal essay but non-biased research

_____      _____          Evidence of consistent & conscientious editing

_____      _____          Introduction engaging & clearly defined thesis

_____      _____          Information in paper connects & develops thesis

_____      _____          Content reflects thorough research

_____      _____          Conclusion thoughtful, engaging, and clear with original information (expands on thesis without simply repeating it)

_____      _____          Proper citations within paper-direct quotes & paraphrases documented

_____      _____          Minimum 4 sources-primary and secondary, no encyclopedias

_____      _____          Works Cited page-accurate and correctly formatted

Remarks:

Teacher Advisor Signature: _____

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Mentoring Guidelines**

**The requirements of the Graduation Project mentors are as follows:**

- ➢ The mentor may not be a member of the student's family and must be 21 or older. ***Any faculty and staff in the school in which the student is enrolled may not serve as a mentor.***

- ➢ The mentor will assist the student in designing a product in the area of study for the Graduation Project. The product must logically connect to the research. The Product need not be solely based upon the research, as the paper is designed to be very limited, but the two should be clearly related. The Product could be something tangible or something abstract such as time spent volunteering in the community. <u>A visual aid is required to be produced to document the completion of the product.</u>

- ➢ The mentor will assist the student in establishing objectives and keeping a log of activities completed on the Product. The student is required to spend a **minimum of twelve (12) contact hours** with the mentor.

- ➢ The mentor needs to meet with the student until the product is complete - - **a minimum of five (5) different times.** This time is to be spent discussing, assisting, and providing guidance on the Product. The purpose is not to waste time or materials, but to gain some "real world" experience and knowledge before leaving high school. Please contact the student's project advisor if the student is not keeping appointments.

- ➢ The student's product completion date is _____.

- ➢ In order to determine the student's grade for the Product, the mentor will provide feedback about both the student and the Product. The mentor will complete the **Mentor's Product evaluation form and mail it to the student's English teacher before _____. Since this evaluation is a very important component of the student's entire graduation projection grade, the student may not return this form herself/himself.**

Mentors are asked to contact the advisor with any questions or concerns. The advisor may periodically call you to check student's progress and your reaction as the validity of the student's work. **Thank you again for agreeing to assist our student(s) in this exciting and meaningful endeavor**.

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

# Mentor Consent Form

I, _____ have read the Mentoring Guidelines and agree to serve as a mentor to _____ as he/she produces a product or performance on the topic of _____. I understand that the student needs to spend a minimum of twelve (12) contact hours with the mentor. I will meet with the student until the product or performance is completed which equals a **minimum of five (5) different times**. I will complete and return the Mentor Product Evaluation to the student's Teacher Advisor at his/her school. I am aware that I will be contacted during the semester for information concerning the student's progress and will disclose pertinent information at that time.

Age_____ Relationship to Student_____

Place of business (if applicable)_____

Address_____

Phone Number_____ Cell Phone_____

Fax Number _____ Best time for contact_____

E-mail Address_____

Signature of Mentor_____ Date_____

## Student Contract

I understand that I am responsible for making and keeping all appointments that we make. I also understand that I am responsible for keeping a log of my work and of our contracts, and that you will sign a verification of our time together and will complete a final evaluation of my product. Thank you in advance for your willingness to be a part of my education and preparation for graduation.

Student Signature_____ Date_____

## Parent/Guardian Consent

I give permission for my child _____ to participate in this mentoring relationship with _____.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC

## Mentor Verification Log

Student Name_____ Product _____

**Mentors** should record all activities necessary to complete your product. It will help you to pace yourself. Remember a minimum of 12 hours is required with your mentor. There is a separate log that must be completed by the student each time he/she works on the Product whether it is with the mentor or on their own time.

| Date | Time Spent | Activity | Mentor Initials |
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| **TOTAL HOURS** |  |  |  |

*Mentor must initial each meeting.

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School

**Student Product Verification Log**

Student Name _____

In addition to the Mentor Verification Log, the student must indicate the time spent and activity completed while working to complete the Product portion of the Graduation Project.  The student should log time spent with the mentor as well as the time spent on the Product outside of the supervision of the mentor.

| Date | Activity | Time Spent | Next Step | Your Initials |
|------|----------|------------|-----------|---------------|
|      |          |            |           |               |
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This is a truthful account of the time I worked on my Product

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Clayton High School, NC

**Portfolio Evaluation Form**
**To be Completed by Teacher Advisor**

**Student Name** _____ **Date**_____

Title Page (5 points)  _____

14) Table of Contents (5 points)  _____

15) Graduation Project Approval Sheet (5 points)  _____

16) Ethical Agreement and Parent Consent Form (5 points)  _____

17) Letter of Intent (5 points)  _____

18) Resume and Cover Letter (10 points)  _____

19) Weekly Reflections (10 points)  _____

20) Research Paper (10 points)  _____

21) Mentor Verification Log (10 points)  _____

22) Pictorial with Captions (10 points)  _____

23) Student Product Verification Log (10 points)  _____

24) Thank You Letter to Mentor and Teacher Advisor (5 points)  _____

25) Overall Appearance (10 points)  _____

**Portfolio Grade**  _____

**Comments:** _____

_____

_____

_____

**Teacher Advisor Signature** _____ **Date** _____

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School, NC & Portsmouth High School, RI

**Presentation Equipment Needs**

Student _____ Teacher Advisor _____

Date _____

In order to prepare for Graduation Project Presentation night, please check below all of the equipment necessary for your individual presentation and stipulate the quantity needed where appropriate. ***Turn this in to your teacher advisor at least two weeks prior to the night of presentations even if NO EQUIPMENT IS NEEDED.***

| | EQUIPMENT | QUANTITY |
|---|---|---|
| ____ | TV/VCR | _____ |
| ____ | TV/DVD | _____ |
| ____ | Computer | _____ |
| ____ | Speakers | _____ |
| ____ | Data Projector/Computer PowerPoint Equipment | _____ |
| ____ | Slide Projector | _____ |
| ____ | Overhead Projector | _____ |
| ____ | Cassette Player | _____ |
| ____ | CD Player | _____ |
| ____ | Easel | _____ |
| ____ | Table | _____ |
| ____ | Extension Cord | _____ |

List any additional equipment or room requirements:

_____

_____

**In order to schedule presentations, we need to know of any conflicts. For example, if you have a 3:30 pm appointment, you probably do not want to be scheduled for a 4:30 pm presentation time. If you have an elaborate set-up, you may want to be scheduled for the first time slot. List any conflicts or specific circumstances that need to be considered when we schedule your presentation.**

Adapted from Eastern Randolph High School and Clayton High School, NC

## Petition to Graduation Project Advisory Committee

This form should be used to petition the Graduation Project Advisory Committee for **deadline extensions.  It must be submitted two weeks prior to deadline.**

**Development Stage:**
- Early start for your Graduation Project (summer prior to senior year)
- Change of your Graduation Project Topic
- Appeal of Graduation Project topic denial
- Appeal of Grade(s)

**Final State:**
- Appeal of Graduation Project failure

This form should be completed and returned to your Graduation Project Coordinator as soon as possible.  The Graduation Project Advisory Committee will notify student of action taken.

Student Name (printed) _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Name (printed) _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Graduation Project Coordinator Initials _____ Date _____

On the reverse side, please state the nature of your appeal and the reasons for thinking your appeal should be granted.  Evidence of significant hardship should be demonstrated.
Attach supporting documentation.
A personal appearance before the Graduation Project Advisory Committee will only be arranged when the circumstances require a personal presentation.

Applicant's Signature _____

Graduation Project Advisory Committee Recommendation:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Advisory Committee Rep. Signature _____ Date _____

Adapted from Portsmouth High School, RI