

# Senior Experience 2023-2024



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# SENIOR EXPERIENCE OVERVIEW

The Senior Experience is a high school capstone experience that requires students to demonstrate not only what they know, but what they can do. States, school districts, and high schools focusing on restructuring, raising high school standards, and actively engaging Seniors in a challenging and relevant educational process incorporate the Senior Experience.

**The Senior Experience consists of four phases. The first phase includes the preparation of a research paper by each student.** The research paper contains a thesis that the writer proves (supports) or disproves through research evidence. A student should carefully consider a possible product before selecting a research topic. Selection of a topic takes considerable thought. The paper exhibits the acquisition of knowledge through researching, writing, interviewing, and synthesizing an application of the real-world skills of time management, organization, self-discipline, persistence, and problem-solving.

**The second phase includes the creation of a product that is an appropriate and logical extension of the research paper.** The product must demonstrate the application of acquired knowledge through a reflective, physical, and/or intellectual stretch. It is recommended that projects be completed during the school year. However, certain exceptions may be considered. For example, agriculturally related projects may need to begin the summer prior to the Senior year.

**The third phase is the portfolio which includes specific writings throughout the experience period.** These writings will include reflective and informative journals, business letters, brochures, overviews, a copy of the research paper, and a final Senior Experience reflection.

**The fourth phase is a presentation before a Senior Experience panel with a ten to fifteen-minute formal speech on the paper, the project, and personal growth.** A question and answer period will follow the presentation. The portfolio will be provided to the evaluation panel for review. The Senior Experience panel can be composed of teachers, mentors, parents, and community members, preferably with knowledge or background of the experience area. The panel and portfolio experiences provides the student with an opportunity to synthesize the paper, experience, and self-growth using communication skills related to fluency, knowledge depth, listening, explaining, defending, comprehending, and applying real-world skills.

Throughout this process, students will benefit greatly from the expertise of a carefully selected experience mentor and faculty advisor. They will serve as resources to the student during all phases of the Senior Experience.

## ELEMENTS OF A HIGH-QUALITY SENIOR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

1. **Clear and Aligned Purpose**—Student learning outcomes are aligned with school, district, and state mission and goals.
2. **Explicit, Rigorous Criteria**—Performance is assessed by application of established criteria.
3. **Student-Directed Learning and Youth Engagement**—The student takes leadership for selecting, planning, and implementing his/her own learning goals.
4. **Clear Scaffolding of Skills**—Students need instruction and practice for the skills required in the project. Some schools include a culminating project in elementary and middle school levels as well as high school.
5. **Learning Stretch**—The project poses a challenge that requires significant new learning.
6. **Authentic Project**—Students apply core academic knowledge and skills beyond the traditional classroom setting to address a real problem.
7. **Community Involvement**—Members of the broader community play an important role in projects as mentors, panelists, advisors and/or resources.
8. **Authentic Audience**—Expert individuals and community organizations are critical members of the audience to hear and review the project.
9. **Coordination and Comprehensive Communication**—Students, parents, community members, teachers, and administrators understand the purpose and processes of the project.
10. **Adequate Staffing and Supervision**—There is sufficient staff to coordinate the program and provide support to teachers, parents, and community partners.
11. **Mechanism for Training Community Partners**—Community partners are provided training to perform their role as co-educators and authentic partners.
12. **Mechanism for Parent Involvement**—Expectations are developed for parent involvement in the design, implementation, and celebration of the project.
13. **Ongoing Professional Development and Program Improvement**—School leaders and community partners organize formal training sessions, reflection activities, and opportunities to continuously improve the program.
14. **A Plan for Risk Management and Liability**—Schools and communities ensure the project takes place in a safe environment and risk is managed.
15. **Celebration and Recognition**—All collaborators are provided opportunities to be recognized and celebrate the success of the experience.

*Education Commission of the States, 2004*

# Topic Selection





## TOPIC SELECTION GUIDELINES

A Senior Experience is about doing and learning! Choose a topic that will be interesting and worthwhile and will extend your knowledge. However, making the decision may not be easy. Consult with your advisor, and remember to keep your Senior Experience manageable. Carefully choose a product or process that you can build/produce or a community-based service that you can provide. Answer these questions as you decide your topic:

- Is there a clear connection between the research topic and the product/process you want to produce?
- Does the product/process represent significant amounts of time, effort, and appropriate complexity? Does it go beyond what you already know how to do?
- Is the project something you will do outside your regular class or co-curricular requirements?
- Will the product involve tangible evidence of your work—either something physical that can be seen/touched, a community-based service that can be documented as beneficial, or something that can be written, produced, taped, or presented?

**The following guidelines may assist in choosing the subject to be explored and help in your topic selection:**

**1. The research topic should be one in which the student is interested, but not one about which the student is already an expert.**

If a student has been a diabetic for ten years, works closely with the Juvenile Diabetes Association, and has been a volunteer in the children's diabetic ward in a local hospital, he or she probably knows a great deal about the subject of juvenile diabetes. Unless that student pursues a new approach to diabetes, that topic may not yield as much new learning.

**2. The research topic may be one that requires cumulative knowledge across grade levels and content area.**

It should be a natural outgrowth of interest and combined skills of all, or most content areas. For example, a student who researches the changes in the ozone layer is using cumulative knowledge from at least English, math, science, and history.

**3. The research topic 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. The topic should require an academic and creative stretch/risk.

**4. Preliminary research may be helpful**

By reading about a certain topic, the student may expand his/her areas of interest. Possibilities for new areas of exploration may surface. It may be wise, therefore, to explore the possibilities for personal interviews, informal surveys, empirical observations, etc., before making a final topic selection.

**5. Students should avoid choosing topics that might involve expenses they are not prepared to handle**

For example, if the research involves travel or long distance calls, the student may want to make another choice. If the product that grows out of the research will require materials, the student may want to make another choice. Remember, the student is not required, encouraged, or advised to spend money in order to complete the Senior Experience. Expenditures will not enhance the evaluation of the Senior Experience.

**6. Students should avoid choosing topics that might endanger themselves or others.**

For example, experiments which are potential explosive or activities such as handling poisonous snakes are not appropriate. Remember that the student must have an Experience Proposal approved by the Senior Experience Steering Committee and Faculty Advisor prior to beginning the Experience.

**7. The research topic should be one that is broad enough to allow the student access to enough information, yet narrow enough to make the research scope reasonable.**

For example, a student choosing the career cluster *Health Services* would find it impossible to include everything about health science (home remedies, history of emergency services, the treatment of burns, how to stop bleeding, evolution of first aid courses, etc.). On the other hand, a student choosing to research *The Application of Band-Aids to Skin Abrasions* probably will not find enough information. A better choice would be *Bandaging for Sports Injuries*.

**8. The research topic should be related to the student's chosen career cluster**

South Dakota has adopted the following 16 career clusters:

- Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources
- Architecture and Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology and Communications
- Business Management and Administration
- Education and Training
- Finance
- Government and Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality and Tourism
- Information Technology
- Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security
- Manufacturing
- Marketing
- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics
- Transportation, Distribution and Logistics

## TOPIC SELECTION GUIDE EXAMPLES

Senior Experience project are in the following categories: Career Exploration, design a product system or service, Event/activity planning, Investigation, learn a new skills or improve an existing skill, or Research.

### ❖ Career Exploration

- **Research:** Conducts research into required education, professional responsibilities, ethical issues, salary, employment outlook, and opportunities for advancement.
- **Networking:** Develops contacts within the chosen field.
- **Career Plan:** Creates a professional career plan.
- **Application:** Applies the information required about a chosen career to the development of a quality product or activity.

### ❖ Design a Product System or Service

- **Research:** Conducts research into similar work done by others.
- **Fine Tuning:** Makes appropriate adjustments as necessary.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluates the quality of the design by gathering information from sources such as impact studies, product testing, or market research. Identify specified standards of quality and/or safety and make adjustments.

### ❖ Event or Activity Plan

- **Research:** Conducts research into relevant precedents, laws, and/or regulations. Understands what made similar events successful or unsuccessful.
- **Publicity:** Takes appropriate measures to insure that the largest audience takes part in the event or that the event is attended.
- **Efficiency:** Makes efficient use of time, money, people, resources and facilities. Makes contingency plans for unexpected circumstances.
- **Evaluation:** Evaluates the success.

### ❖ Investigation

- **Focus:** Develops a central question.
- **Procedure:** Designs an appropriate procedure to gather information.
- **Objectivity:** Objectively observes, measures, and records results.
- **Generalizations:** Generalizes about the data by comparing and contrasting and noting trends.

### ❖ Learning a New Skill or Improving an Existing Skill

- **Research:** Conducts research into current methods and practices.
- **Documentation:** Determines a way to measure and document progress.
- **Evaluation:** Establishes qualitative measureable standard for skill level based on expert advice.

### ❖ Research

- **Focus:** Develops a central question of social, economic, environmental, political, historical, or scientific significance.
- **Research:** Investigates a variety of primary and secondary resources and formulates a thesis.
- **Writing:** Write a paper building and developing an argument using logical thinking and data from research to support the conclusion.
- **Application:** Applies the information acquired about the topic to the development of a product or activity.

## EXAMPLES OF TOPICS BY CAREER CLUSTERS

The following list is a sample of topics that could be used for Senior Experience. It is not an all-inclusive list, but is intended to serve as a place to begin the process of topic selection.

<b>Career Cluster</b>	<b>Research Paper</b>	<b>Experience</b>
<b>Agricultural &amp; Natural Resources</b>	Animal Abuse	Humane Society volunteer
	Crop	Planting a new crop, measuring yield results
	Deer Population	Wildlife study
	Floral Design	Make floral arrangements & market them
	Horse Training	Train a horse
	Horticulture	Build a greenhouse
	Landscape Design	Create & prepare a landscape design for a house
	Organic Farming	Analyze organic versus regular farming techniques by planting test lots
	Orphan Wild Animals	Animal rehabilitation volunteer
	Veterinary Medicine	Shadow a veterinary doctor
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	Home Building	Help build a Habitat for Humanity's house
	Architecture	Draw blueprints, make a model
<b>Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Communications</b>	Art Show	Organize an art showcase of your photography work
	Cartooning	Design a cartoon character
	Commercial Art	Commercial art advertising
	Impressionist Artists	Paint impressionist art
	Murals	Paint a mural
	Plays	Write a play, coordinate its presentation
	Poetry	Write a selection of poetry for possible publication
	Silent Films	Make a silent movie
	Sports Broadcasting	Announce at a sports event, coordinate broadcasting arrangements with the radio station
	Radio broadcasting	Take part in a radio broadcast
<b>Business &amp; Administration</b>	Business Ownership	Start a small business which markets or produces a product or service
	Marketing & Promotion	Prepare/implement a business marketing plan
	Medical Secretary	Shadow a medical secretary
	Stock market	Chart stock
<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	Coach	Serve as a coach for a sports or fine arts team
	Elementary education	15 hours aiding in a Kindergarten classroom
	Hearing Impaired	Learn sign language, teach it to a group of elementary school students
	Karate skill demonstration	Learn karate, do a demonstration of techniques and a report on the history and origins
<b>Health Science</b>	Children's book	Research & write a children's book on a health topic. Read the book to an elementary school class.
	Crack babies	Community awareness program
	Dentistry	Work at a dental clinic
	Drug testing	Work in a health care facility
	Drugs in Elementary Schools	Present programs in schools
	Emergency Room Medicine	Shadow emergency room doctors
	History of Diseases	Research changes in different types of diseases from the 1900's to present

<b>Health Science, cont.</b>	Nutritional cooking	Prepare and sell a cookbook with recipes of nutritious foods
	Teens & Drugs	Write and perform a one-act play
	Tobacco (Substance Abuse)	Conduct a school awareness program that could include presentations, guest speakers, brochures, posters, etc.
<b>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</b>	Dance	Organize a dance team, prepare a program to present at a Senior Citizens Center or during half time at a sporting event
	Music	Coordinate/present a piano recital, proceeds for charity
	Music arranging	Write a composition for an orchestra
	William Shakespeare	Shakespearean monologues performance
<b>Human Services</b>	Babysitting	Offer a series of classes in babysitting
	Care of Elderly	Volunteer in a retirement/nursing home
	Child abuse	Design a prevention program
	Handicapped housing	Design a barrier-free house
	Homeless	Coordinate a food and/or clothing drive
	Homeless people	Volunteer at a shelter
	Preschool learning	Serve as a student teaching aide for a preschool
	Student Rights When Arrested	Handbook on What to Do
	Teen peer pressure	Write, direct, and perform a play
	Teen Pregnancy	Volunteer at a Crisis Center
<b>Information Technology</b>	Programming	Create a record-keeping program for a business
	Web page	Design and maintain a web page for your school or a community organization
<b>Law &amp; Public Safety</b>	Community safety	Survey/analyze the community for safety issues. Prepare a written analysis to present to the city commission. Select one issue, such as vacant buildings, as the focus of your Experience.
<b>Retail/Wholesale Sales &amp; Service</b>	Design	Research fashion design in history; create a dress/suit for a particular period
	Fashion	Sew a prom dress
	Fashions 1940-1990	Fashion show
	Modeling	Study modeling techniques, model fashions for an event
<b>Scientific Research/ Engineering</b>	Hydropower	Create a model
	Water pollution	Examine & test water nearby, compile statistics, compare to reports from some time ago
	Weather	Study & report on the changing weather patterns for a certain time period or region
<b>Transportation, Distribution, &amp; Logistics</b>	Car Restoration	Restore an antique car
<b>All clusters</b>	Individual career plan	Prepare a career plan for your interest area, arrange for job shadowing in your career area
	Job certification	Select an occupational area & attain certification—child care, computers, nurses' aid, etc.
	State/Community Analysis	Research, analyze & predict the current job/occupational outlook for your community



# Senior Experience Roles





# SENIOR EXPERIENCE ROLES

## Role of Senior:

1. Complete all requirements of the experience checklist following the timetable.
2. Select a senior experience mentor.
3. Maintain copies of all work in progress via paper or electronic copy at all times.
4. Submit a rough draft to your faculty advisor and English teacher, as prescribed by the English teacher.
5. Keep a log or journal of all activities and time spent on each activity.
6. Develop a portfolio to display work
7. Develop copies of the oral presentation outline for the evaluation panel.
8. Write and distribute professional thank-you letters to the mentor, faculty advisor, and Senior Experience evaluation panel.

## Role of Senior Experience Faculty Advisor:

1. Act as a consultant to the student, providing assistance with selection of experience topic in terms of scope and feasibility.
2. Serve as liaison to mentor, if needed.
3. Oversee student work in accordance with experience guidelines.
4. Review the rough draft of the research paper and advise the student about needed revisions.
5. Evaluate product/process according to the experience guidelines.
6. Coach the student in preparation for the oral presentation
7. Administer an end-of-project student evaluation survey

## Role of the English Teacher: (Monitor the research component of the Experience)

1. Instruct the student in the proper form and process of the research paper.
2. Collect and evaluate all documentation pertaining to the Senior Experience.
3. Review the rough draft of the research paper and advise the student about needed revisions.
4. Evaluate the final draft of the research paper.
5. Discuss with the Faculty Advisor the content of the research paper and integrate evaluations of form and content to final Experience grade.
6. Coach the student in appropriate methods of giving an oral presentation.

## Role of Review/Steering Committee:

1. Provide overall direction of the Senior Experience
2. Create an action plan for implementing the program
3. Consist of administrators and faculty of Faith High School
4. Approval of all Senior Experience topics and projects.

## Role of the Senior Experience Mentor

1. Assist and advise the student in technical aspects of the product/process.
2. Serve as a resource for student in all stages of product/process.
3. Allocate time (approximately one session/meeting per month in the months of October through April) to meet with student.
4. Sign and return mentor agreement form.
5. Provide accurate and honest verification of the student's work.
6. Additional assistance could be provided by: reviewing student research materials, evaluating the product/process, advising the student on planning oral presentation.
7. Attending the oral presentation is encouraged, but not a requirement of Mentors.



# Senior Experience Guidelines



## SENIOR EXPERIENCE GUIDELINES

The Senior Experience can be an integral part of the final year of high school. It integrates skills, knowledge, and concepts learned into one culminating project. Here are some guidelines to use in completing all project phases.

**Topic Selection:** The topic can be developed around a career focus or an area of interest. See "Topic Selections Guidelines" for suggestions to help with the process of determining a project topic.

**Research Paper:** The research paper is a formal document that encourages the student to develop and demonstrate proficiency in conducting research and writing about a chosen topic. Following are some basic criteria for the paper.

1. Research-based with at least five sources; three can be reliable internet sources, one to be an interview, the final to be from another printed source. Example of sources would be periodicals, library references, technical manuals, internet, etc.
2. Word-processed and conforming to either MLA (Modern Language Association) or APA (American Psychological Association) standards. Refer to an MLA or APA handbook for information on this style of writing.
3. Suggested six to eight pages in length, not including the title page and bibliography. An appendix with other supporting information may be included.
4. The paper will also be utilized in English IV. All requirements for English class will be honored and accepted.

**Product/Project:** This is a tangible creation based on choosing, designing, and developing a product related to the research topic. A minimum of 15 hours should be spent outside of class on the project. A Senior Experience Proposal form must be submitted to the Review/Steering Committee for approval. The proposal will explain the project in full, be neatly typed, and signed. A mentor must be identified to assist with the project. A mentor cannot be a relative and must have some experience in your project area.

**Portfolio:** The pages from each of the following entries should be placed individually, in plastic sleeves, and organized in a three-ring binder.

1. Coversheet (inserted in front sleeve of binder)
2. Title page (same as coversheet, placed inside binder)
3. Table of contents
4. Letter of intent
5. Cost analysis
6. Journal
7. Reflection paper
8. Research paper

**Journal:** The journal is part of the portfolio. It should contain the following:

1. A log of the hours spent on the Senior Project
2. Journal entries about experiences and knowledge gained. Forms will be provided.
3. Photographs and other visual documentation

**Presentation:** A formal presentation describing all phases of the Senior Experience is the culminating event, which is done in the spring. An evaluation panel will review and critique the presentation. Speech content should include information about the research paper, the product, and what was learned from this experience. This content should be supported by appropriate presentation media. Examples of presentation media include a slide presentation, a display with a tri-fold board, etc. Following are some basic guidelines for the presentation.

1. 8–10-minute overview of project
2. 5–10-minute question and answer time
3. Multi-media must be included as part of the presentation
4. Product
5. Portfolio

# Letter of Intent & Project Approval





## **LETTER OF INTENT**

Once you have selected your topic, formally declare your paper and process/product in a business letter to the Senior Experience Steering Committee. This letter announces to parents, to teachers, to evaluation panel, and the steering committee exactly what your intentions are.

This activity will benefit you in other areas of your education and in life in general. Knowing how to write a business letter can be very important in establishing a favorable image of you to people who you have never met. There are certain rules that must be followed for basic letter writing skills.

1. The style of letter that you will be using will be block style.
2. The entire letter is typed at the left margin (one inch).
3. Do not indent at the beginning of each paragraph.
4. The body of the letter is single spaced, with double spaces between paragraphs.

Be careful with your spelling and grammar. Pay attention to the format, following it strictly. You will continue to redo your letter until it is perfect for your portfolio, so make it easier on yourself!

The next page includes a template for the Letter of Intent.

## Template for Letter of Intent:

Your street address  
Your city, state, and zip  
code Date

Senior Experience Evaluation  
Panel Faith High School  
Box 619  
Faith, SD 57626

Dear Members of the Senior Experience Approval Committee, **(OR)**  
Ladies and Gentlemen of the Senior Experience Approval Committee,

In the **first paragraph** you are to describe the general area of interest, such as art, communications, social problems, physical fitness, automotive, etc. Explain why you chose this area and what you already know or have accomplished in this area. Identify what you hope to learn or accomplish by doing this experience.

In the **second paragraph**, be specific about what you will be researching, what you hope to gain from your investigation, and any sources you plan to use. Include names of at least one person/authority you plan to interview as primary sources and identify their expertise/background.

The **third paragraph** should describe your project, giving very specific details—what the senior experience will be, what you will actually do, who and what will be involved, and what you will need to consider completing your experience. You should also list possible mentors to help you, estimated cost, and stretch for you that will take you beyond current knowledge and/or current skills. This is not an opportunity to do again something which you already have done using current knowledge. It is here that you can explain the connection between the research paper and the product portion of the Senior Experience.

In the **fourth paragraph**, you should explain what plagiarism is and the consequences of plagiarizing or falsifying information, including the fact that this would result in failing Senior Experience and impacting English IV. Conclude with a clear statement affirming that you will not plagiarize or falsify information in your research, your research narrative, or your experience itself.

Sincerely yours (or other appropriate complimentary close),

*(Four returns to allow for your signature above your typed name)*

Your name (typed)

## PROJECT APPROVAL

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project \_\_\_\_\_

This is attached to the letter of intent.

Other information for the Steering Committee:

Steering Committee Approval (date) \_\_\_\_\_

Signatures:

Faculty Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

HS Principal \_\_\_\_\_

English Teacher \_\_\_\_\_



# Research Paper Rubric



## Senior Experience—Research Paper Rubric

**The first phase of the Senior Experience includes the preparation of a research paper by each student.** The research paper contains a thesis that the writer proves (supports) or disproves through research evidence. A student should carefully consider a possible product before selecting a research topic. Selection of a topic takes considerable thought. The paper exhibits the acquisition of knowledge through researching, writing, interviewing, and synthesizing an application of the real-world skills of time management, organization, self-discipline, persistence, and problem-solving.

Following are some basic criteria for the paper.

- Research-based with at least **five** sources; **three** can be reliable internet sources, **one** to be from a printed source. Example of sources would be periodicals, library references, technical manuals, etc.
- Word-processed and conforming to MLA (Modern Language Association) standards. Suggested six to eight pages in length, not including the title page and works cited. An appendix with other supporting information may be included.
- The paper will also be utilized in English IV. All requirements for English class will be honored and accepted.

Grading Criteria	Attempted—1	Acceptable—2	Proficient—3	Distinguished—4	Score
<b>Content</b> *Purpose *Introduction & thesis	Purpose of writing is unclear or off topic; no introduction is provided	Purpose of writing may be somewhat unclear & partly off topic; introduction is minimal or unclear	Purpose of writing is discernible & reflects assignment; introduction is provided	Purpose of writing is clear & reflects assignment; introduction engages reader	X5
<b>Content</b> *Idea development *Support &/or evidence *Conclusion	Ideas are not developed or supported; no conclusion is provided.	Ideas are only partially developed & minimally supported; conclusion is lacking.	Ideas are developed and elaborated with detail and evidence where appropriate; conclusion is provided.	Ideas are well developed & elaborated with substantial detail & evidence where appropriate; conclusion is strong.	X6
<b>Organization</b> *Structure *Introduction & Conclusion included *Construction of paragraphs & sentences	Structure is largely unclear, inappropriate, or lacking; introduction or conclusion is missing; there are significant flaws in the organization of paragraphs or construction of sentences.	Structure may be partially unclear, inappropriate, or lacking; introduction or conclusion is lacking or minimal; organization of paragraphs or construction of sentences is flawed.	Structure is generally clear & appropriate to writing type; includes introduction, body & conclusion; writing is organized into paragraphs & sentences with transitions.	Structure is clear & appropriate to writing type; includes clear introduction, well-developed body, and clear conclusion; writing is organized logically into paragraphs & sentences with transitions.	X4
<b>Mechanics</b>	Significant spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors; poor sentence structure.	Careless spelling, punctuation, or grammar errors; repetitive sentence structure.	Some minor spelling, punctuation or grammar errors; somewhat varied sentence structure.	Flawless spelling, punctuation, and grammar; varied sentence structure	X3
<b>Sources</b>	-----	All sources are accurately documented, but many are not in desired format.	All sources are accurately documented, but few are not in desired format.	All sources are accurately documented in desired format.	X2
Final Score					/80





# The Product



## **GUIDELINES FOR THE PRODUCT**

1. The product must be student-generated. It must be a showcase of the student's skills—not a parent's, friend's, or Mentor's.
2. The product should show evidence of application and synthesis of the research paper.
3. The product should be tangible evidence that reflects the academic stretch/risk, which the student has experienced during completion of the Experience.
4. Students are not expected to spend a lot of money in order to complete the Experience. Expenditures will not enhance the evaluation of the Experience.
5. Research for the product should reflect one or more of four primary areas: personal experience, experiment, survey and/or interview.
6. The product can be community service oriented.
7. A group/community could benefit from the product.
8. There will be no pairing or sharing of products.
9. The Senior Experience Review/Steering Committee must approve the product.
10. The product may include one or more of the following media:
  - a. Audio/visual aids—playing original music, sounds, etc.
  - b. Charts/graphs—visual graph of surveys, experiment results, etc.
  - c. Video of process—video steps to final product such as building a barn
  - d. How-to demonstration—step-by-step video of product/process such as grooming a pet
  - e. Visual product—showing the final creation of a dress or a painting, etc.
  - f. Slideshow presentation—PowerPoint, I-Movie, Prezi—physical record of an experiment or experience such as growing wheat
  - g. Work of fiction—collection of poems, stories, interview, bibliography
  - h. Non-fiction work about an individual, historic writings, etc.
  - i. Other—as approved by the Review/Steering Committee
11. All products must be completed and have proof-of-experience. Journals are due to the Faculty Advisor per instruction
12. The product should be related to the student's chosen career path.

## **SENIOR EXPERIENCE: 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 career you have researched for your paper. For this reason, the product may take on many different forms. It will be important for you to consider the product you would like to create while you are determining the topic of your research paper.

Remember that the Senior Experience 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, the resources that are available through your mentor, and contacts you may make in the community to assist you with your product.

You will find examples below of other products students have completed. Do not use this as a list to stifle your creativity, but rather to open your mind to the possibilities awaiting you!

- Teach an elementary class
- Conduct a fundraiser for a local charity
- Rebuild an engine
- Restore an antique automobile
- Develop a brochure introducing our school to visitors
- Develop a fitness plan for teens

This list could go on and on! The possibilities are endless!

### **Senior Experience Review**

Parents must sign topic/product plans prior to review by the Review/Steering Committee. These plans should be attached to your letter of intent. The signature will be an indication of parental knowledge and support of the topic/product. The approved plans will be kept in the portfolio. The Review/Steering Committee must review detailed plans before you begin work on the research paper portion. The Review/Steering Committee will be made up of members of the Faith High School faculty and administration.

### **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 seven (7) hours working on your product. All the time you spend working on your product should be documented on your product log. The mentor documents, with signature, the actual time he/she works with you. The "activity" column will be 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 your Product and will aid you in your planning. You will find the "next step" especially helpful when you have lapses of time between your work sessions. The Product Log requires your signature.

# PRODUCT LOG

Date	Activity	Time	Next Step	Student Initial

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

Student Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Senior Experience Portfolio





# SENIOR EXPERIENCE PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

A portfolio is required as part of your Senior Experience and submitted as part of the presentation. The portfolio includes all documentation acquired during the Senior Experience.

## Required Portfolio Components

### ❖ **Binder and Paper**

- Portfolio Cover
  - Create a portfolio cover page that includes: Experience title, Student name, School name, Presentation date, Optional: graphic related to project
- Title Page
  - Organize similar to your Cover Page
- Table of Contents Page
  - Organize it similar to checklist below.

### ❖ **Section One: Proposal** (divider label)

- Senior Experience Approval form and signatures with original approved proposal
- Letter of Intent (found on page 26)
- Letter to Evaluation Panel (found on page 43)

### ❖ **Section Two: Mentor (Field Expert) Forms** (divider labeled)

- Information/Confirmation Form
- Biography of Mentor (explained on page 59)
- Experience Progress (include mentor logs)
- Mentor Evaluation Form
- Copy of Thank You letter

### ❖ **Section Three: Experience Journal** (divider labeled)

- Completed Experience journal
- Completed project log

### ❖ **Section Four: Research** (divider labeled)

- Research Paper
- All research documents gathered regarding the Senior Experience are included in this section.

### ❖ **Section Five: Appendix** (divider labeled)

- Photos showing progress and completion of your Experience
- Other Senior Experience documentation created, such as project notes, conclusions, graphs, charts, etc.
- Budget page with a list of expenditures and the total cost of your Experience
- Concluding statement/reflection of project
- Optional: rough drafts, outlines, etc.

## SENIOR EXPERIENCE PORTFOLIO RUBRIC

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

	Minimal (0-1)	Attempted/ Adequate (2-3)	Exemplary (4-5)	Points Earned
Cover sheets				
Letter of Intent & Approval Form				
Journal Entries				
Product Log(s)				
Letter to Evaluation Panel				
Research Paper				
Reaction/Reflection Paper				
Mentor Form (& Biography)				
Mentor Evaluation				
Mentor Log(s)				
Mentor Thank-You Letter				
Photos & miscellaneous information				
Total Points				/60

## LETTER TO THE EVALUATION PANEL

The first page following the table of contents in your portfolio will be a reflective letter to the Evaluation Panel. This letter will serve as your first contact with the panel who will be evaluating you on your Senior Experience presentation of your experience. Use this letter to make the best first impression you can. You will use the following format in preparing this letter.

Your street address  
Your city, state, and zip code  
Date

Senior Experience Evaluation Panel  
Faith High School  
Box 619  
Faith, SD 57626

Dear Panel Members,

Discuss in the **first paragraph** what you learned while completing this experience.

Use the **second paragraph** to tell the members more about yourself and your school life.

In the **third paragraph**, explain to the panel why you chose the topic you did.

In the **fourth paragraph**, touch on the easiest and most difficult areas of the experience, and the way you predict this experience will benefit you later in life.

In the **last paragraph**, thank them for their time.

Sincerely,

*(Four returns to allow for your signature)*

Your name (typed)



# Senior Experience Journal



## THE SENIOR EXPERIENCE JOURNAL

All students must complete a Journal as part of their Senior Experience. The Journal is a component of the Experience Portfolio.

Students should record a minimum of one entry per week during the experience period.

Include the following information at the top of each Journal page:

- The date
- The number of hours that you worked on the experience during that particular week

### **Each entry should cover the following:**

- Describe what you did on the Senior Experience during that week.
- Write your personal reaction or evaluation of what you did that week. Some things you may wish to include:
  - Did you like what you were doing? Why or why not?
  - Did everything happen exactly as you expected, or were there some surprises?
  - How will you benefit from what you are learning?
  - What frustrations did you experience?
  - What successes did you achieve?
- Please note: even if your experience is repetitive in nature, your Journal must meet these minimum requirements.

*Remember that your Journal will be read by your Faculty Advisor and the evaluation panel.*

It is your responsibility to have your Faculty Advisor check your Journal each week.

## **FAQ's (Frequently Asked Questions)**

Keeping a Journal will help you record important questions, ideas, and discoveries as you develop your Experience.

### **What should I write in my Journal?**

1. Experience ideas, plans, reflections, questions
2. Informal notes and bits of information
3. Accounts of conversations with your Mentor and others
4. Things you are thinking about in relation to the Experience

### **When should I write?**

1. At least once or twice a week
2. Whenever you have a problem to solve, a decision to make, etc.
3. Whenever you need to think something out

### **How should I write?**

1. Quickly and freely, getting lots of ideas on paper
2. In any form that makes sense to you
3. In your own voice

### **Who will read my Journal?**

1. Your Faculty Advisor will review your journal
2. No one will read entries that you prefer to keep private—mark them as such for your Advisor to see
3. You may be asked to share your Journal entries with the panel at presentation, as they are included in your portfolio

### **Suggestions:**

1. Date each entry and start a new entry on a new page
2. Write often; regular writing is what makes a useful Journal
3. Whenever you can, write long enough to develop ideas fully



# Senior Experience Presentation



# SENIOR EXPERIENCE PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

The Senior Experience Presentation is a culmination of their work to an evaluation panel. The student will speak about the research paper, the product application, the lessons learned, and the problems encountered while doing the experience. When the ten to fifteen-minute presentation is over, the student must be prepared to answer questions about the different phases of the experience from the panel. In essence, the presentation is an oral self-evaluation that enables the student to reflect on what he/she has accomplished.

The members of the panel will review the portfolio to the presentation to obtain an understanding of what has been accomplished. The portfolio will contain the research paper, verification of the experience, and additional materials that will support the presentation.

## **The Presentation requires the following:**

- The student will present orally, using any resources for support.
- The student will speak for eight to ten minutes.
- The student will use an audio-visual aid, not including a portfolio.
- The student will dress appropriately.
- The student will be prepared for a question/answer session with the evaluation panel.

## **Student Guidelines for the Presentation**

The Senior Experience presentation is a culminating event. It should reflect elements of the research, project, and the portfolio.

1. Plan the presentation carefully. Check the speech itself—Do you have an introduction (attention-getting device)? Is your outline complete? How are you going to conclude your presentation?
2. Prepare audio/visual materials you will need. Check the technology to make sure it's working and ready to use.
3. Practice and time the presentation using the audio/visual materials.
4. Keep these tips in mind when answering questions following your presentation:
  - a. Answer with confidence
  - b. Request clarification when necessary
  - c. Admit when you don't know the answer
  - d. Pack up and remove product/presentation materials
5. Send Thank You notes to your Mentor(s), advisors, and the evaluation panel.
6. Dress according to business standards. If you are not sure what constitutes appropriate dress, consult your advisor.
7. Do not chew gum
8. Be aware of your body language. Avoid nervous gestures that may adversely affect your presentation.
9. Maintain eye contact with the panel.
10. Do not read your presentation.
11. Practice your presentation several times until you feel comfortable with its format and content.
12. Try to anticipate what questions the evaluation panel might ask and plan the answers you would give.

## **I. Presentation of the Senior Paper and Experience Activity**

- a. Describe thesis research paper
- b. Connect content of paper to Experience activity
- c. Explain what you learned about the overall topic and about yourself
- d. Describe whether the Experience affects your future plans and how you can use what you learned from their Experience later on in life

## **II. Professional Development Portfolio**

- a. Personal Statement
- b. Best works: Highlight sections of the portfolios as evidence of both academic and employability skills that support the Personal Statement including but not limited to the following areas:
  - i. Investigate Planning/Problem Solving
  - ii. Technology Information
  - iii. Teamwork
  - iv. Written Communication
- c. Accomplishments and activities highlights
- d. Post High-School Plan

## **III. Time**

- a. Formal presentation of research paper and experience activity (8-10 minutes)
- b. Question and answer session (5 minutes)
- c. Panel scoring (5 minutes)
- d. An audio/visual aid is required

## **IV. Presentation Performance Evaluation**

- a. Audience: Community Members and Teachers
- b. Areas to be evaluated with feedback:
  - i. Content
  - ii. Organization
  - iii. Delivery and Professionalism
  - iv. Impromptu Skills

## Speech Preparation (A few hints...)

### Step One: What are you going to talk about? Answer the following questions:

1. How do your paper and project connect?
2. What emotions did you experience as you worked through the paper and product/process? (i.e. anger, excitement, pride, frustration)
3. What problems did you encounter? (money, time management, skill) Explain.
4. What personal growth did you gain from the paper and product/process? What self-knowledge did you gain? What knowledge of the topic did you gain?
5. How did the Experience relate to your career cluster?
6. How did the Experience affect your plans for the future? Explain.
7. What Experience advice would you pass on to the next year's seniors?

### Step Two: How am I going to say this? Use the answers to the questions above as references.

1. Organization—Jot down your ideas on separate 3x5 index cards and arrange them into order that is logical.
2. Slip blank cards into spaces when a visual aid is needed or would be appreciated.
3. Add blank cards for the introduction and conclusion.
4. If you have a product that can be displayed, jot down your ideas for the display on another card, e.g. photographs.
5. Plan your introduction. The introduction should:
  - a. Grab the audience's attention
  - b. Make the topic's thesis clear (be sure to mention both paper and product/process)
  - c. Take no more than 60 seconds.
6. Plan your conclusion. A good conclusion should:
  - a. Restate topic/thesis
  - b. Leave the audience thinking
  - c. Take no more than 30 seconds.
7. Plan the display of your Experience. Will it be an on-going, integral part of your speech, such as a slide show? Part of your introduction? Happen after your conclusion? Will you wear it? Sit on it? Serve as samples? (Avoid distributing items during your speech—this causes too much distraction.)
8. Plan your visual aids. Two types should be included.
9. Make sure your advisor knows what equipment you will need.
10. Look at each idea card and fill in details, colorful anecdotes, and factual information.
11. Place all cards back in order and begin practicing your speech.

### Step Three: Speech techniques to remember:

1. Eye contact—This is extremely important. Practice often enough so that you rarely need to look at your cards. Remember this is a friendly audience. Your peers and the evaluation panel are pulling for you. You need the reinforcement that their encouraging expression will give you. Look at them. True communication happens with the eyes. A speech without eye contact is only half a speech.
2. Posture—Stand proud. You have a right to be. You have accomplished a great deal. Avoid:
  - a. Gripping the podium (if one is available)
  - b. Locking your knees—you've come too far to faint.
  - c. Twitching, wiggling, and/or shaking.
3. Voice—Your voice needs to:
  - a. Be loud enough to be heard
  - b. Vary appropriately in pitch and tone
4. Gesture—use your hands to help you make your point. Gestures should be natural and spontaneous, not choreographed and mechanical.
5. Props (audio/visuals)—Plan & practice using props you will need during the presentation.

#### **Step 4: Prepare for questions:**

Of course, there is no way to know for sure what the panel members will ask you, but you can make some educated guesses and that process will provide you with the confidence and clear-headedness to take on any question. Answer the following brainstorming questions:

1. If you were a member of the evaluation panel listening to your speech, what would you want to know?
2. What would you like people to ask?
3. What unusual qualities does your Experience have that might spark interest?
4. What part of your paper might make people curious?
5. What controversial topics, if any, do you touch on?
6. What possessed you to choose this topic?
7. Who helped?
8. How did you finance it?
9. How much time did you spend?
10. Does the Experience double as credit for another class?

### **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 carefully. 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 you make.
- Proximity—Stay at a comfortable distance from your audience, neither too far nor too close.
- Clothing—Dress for success. Your attire should be appropriate for a job interview. Since dress/appearance is one of the items that panel members mark on the evaluation form, it would benefit you to give the panel members a favorable impression by dressing in a manner that demonstrates maturity and professionalism. No jeans, T-shirts, bare midriffs, tennis shoes, or excessive jewelry should be worn. Keep the school dress code in mind.

# Presentation—Poise

## 1. Posture

- a. Stand up straight but no stiff
- b. Point your feet toward the audience with your weight evenly distributed. c. Don't place your weight on one hip and then shift to the other
- d. Shifting can distract the audience

## 2. Movement

- a. Move to the side or in front of a podium to get nearer the audience b. When no podium is available, stay within 4-8 feet of the front row
- c. Don't stay in one spot but don't pace either. An occasional step to either side, or even a half step towards the audience for emphasis, can enhance your presentation.
- d. Stay close, stay direct, and stay involved with your audience

## 3. Shoulder Orientation

- a. Keep your shoulders oriented toward the audience. This becomes critical when using visual aids.
- b. You will have to angle away from the audience sometimes, but it should not be more than 45 degrees.
- c. Don't speak unless you have eye contact with the audience d. Don't talk to your visual aid

## 4. Gestures

- a. Learn to gesture in front of an audience exactly as you would if you were having an animated conversation with a friend—nothing more, nothing less.
- b. Using natural gestures will not distract from a presentation; however, doing one of the following certainly will; so avoid:
  - i. Keeping your hands in your pocket
  - ii. Keeping your hands handcuffed behind your back iii. Keeping your arms crossed or flapping
  - iv. Wringing your hands nervously

## 5. Eye Contact

- a. The rule of thumb for eye contact is 1-3 seconds per person. Try not to let your eyes dart around the room.
- b. Try to focus on one person, but not long enough to make that individual feel uncomfortable, but long enough to pull him or her into your presentation. Then move on to another person.
- c. Good eye contact helps establish and build rapport. It involves the audience and reduces the speaker's feelings of isolation

## 6. Voice

- a. Learn to listen to yourself; stay aware not only of what you are saying but also how you are saying it. A suggestion would be to videotape and critique your presentation
- b. Monotone: Anxiety usually causes monotone voices. The muscles in the chest and throat tighten up and become less flexible, and airflow is restricted. The voice then loses its natural animation and monotone results. You must relax and release tension. Upper and lower body movement is vital.
- c. Talking too fast: When you become anxious, the rate of speech usually increases. Articulation is what is important. Sometimes when you talk too fast you trip over words. Breathe and slow down. Listen for the last word of a sentence, and then proceed to your next sentence. Pausing can be very effective in a presentation. This allows important points to sink in. Sometimes the audience needs a period of silence to digest what you are saying.
- d. Volume: Practice will solve most problems in volume. Have a person who will give you a straight answer listen to your presentation from the back of the room. Ask that person if you can be heard, if you trail off the end of a sentence, if lack of volume makes you sound insecure, or if you are speaking too loudly.

Excerpts from: Mandel, Steve. *Effective Presentation Skills: A Practical Guide for Better Speaking*. Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, Inc., 1993.



# Senior Experience Mentor



## CHOOSING A MENTOR

A Senior Experience Mentor is someone who has experience and an understanding of the student's topic and will take a sincere interest in guiding the student to successful completion of the project.

### ❖ **Mentors**

- Provide expertise in the product area
- Gives suggestions and advice
- Supports your efforts
- Gives you feedback

### ❖ **Preparation to share with the perspective Mentor**

- Clearly defined product
- Specific expectations from the Mentor, including time commitments
- Mentors benefits in assisting the student

### ❖ **Choosing a Mentor**

- Brainstorm possible experts within your chosen field of study
- Talk to parents, friends, and teachers about possibilities
- Look for someone who has the expertise and is interested in mentoring you through completion of your product/process

### ❖ **Next steps after the Mentor is identified**

- Meet with your Mentor
- Determine how often you will meet with your Mentor
- Decide what areas of your Experience the Mentor will assist with (i.e. project details, review speech, etc.)

### ❖ **Interview the Mentor (over the course of the project)**

- You will need to write a short biography of your mentor for the portfolio.
- Include why you chose him/her to be your mentor in this project.
- Include why this person is an "expert" in the area he/she is mentoring you.

### ❖ **Thank You Letter (after Project completion)**

- You will need to write a Thank You letter to your mentor to show your appreciation for the help he/she had given you over the course of the project.
- A copy of this letter will be included in your portfolio.

# MENTOR ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## It is common to hear Mentors described as:

- Teachers
- Trainers
- Sponsors
- Role models
- Advocates
- Coaches
- Openers of doors
- Friends

## What are the benefits of having a personal Mentor?

- Skills and knowledge relating to careers
- Positive role model of a professional in the field
- Connections with other professionals in the industry
- Knowledge of how school and work interrelate
- Learn what it takes to be successful in the industry
- Expanded resources to help advance your care

## What is the role of the learner in the mentorship?

(The following information has been adapted from the General Motors AYES Mentor and Student Handbook.)

- Learners participate in a mentorship in order to gain experience and knowledge from the “experts”. Learners are expected to reflect regularly on the experience of the mentorship.
- The mentorship provides students with the opportunity to take what they have learned and are learning at school and be able to “practice” or apply what they have learned in a “real world” setting.
- Learners need to receive immediate direction, feedback, and evaluation on the application of their skills.
- The intern development plan must be a valuable and progressive one. It should:
  - Provide opportunities to apply what the student learns in school
  - Complement his/her school curriculum
  - Include varied tasks and duties
  - Not consist of “bottom-feeder” tasks
  - Be structured (it should start with the basics and become increasingly more challenging over the life of the internship)

## What will your Mentor expect from you?

- Good work habits
- Punctuality—be on time
- Dress appropriately
- Good hygiene
- Do not eat while working
- Maintain and demonstrate a positive attitude
- Come prepared
- Be alert and enthusiastic, try to make a good impression
- Be willing and eager to talk; be willing and eager to listen
- Be honest. Don’t brag or exaggerate
- Look at the mentor and other adults when speaking to them

## Challenges you will face:

- You will be in the “real world” and using “real world” rules
- Working as an intern is quite different from what you have experienced in school
- The typical day is very fast paced and very demanding
- You will need to learn the expectations of your Mentor quickly
- Listen to your Mentor and follow his/her directions

## **SENIOR EXPERIENCE MENTOR GUIDELINES AND CONFIRMATION FORM**

**This page is to be given to the Experience Mentor at the time you discuss with him/her what his/her duties will be. Be sure that your Mentor reads your finished written proposal and understands the commitment before signing the proposal.**

The role of the Senior Experience Mentor is essential to the success of the Senior Experience at Faith High School. As responsible men and women of the community, the mentors play an active part in the student's learning experience that is essential to the process.

### **The Role of the Senior Experience Mentor**

1. Assist and advise the student in technical aspects of the product/process.
2. Serve as a resource for student in all stages of product/process.
3. Allocate time (approximately one session/meeting per month in the months of October through April) to meet with student.
4. Sign and return mentor agreement form.
5. Provide accurate and honest verification of the student's work.
6. Additional assistance could be provided by: reviewing student research materials, evaluating the product/process, advising the student on planning oral presentation.
7. Attending the oral presentation is encouraged, but not a requirement of Mentors.

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mentor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship to Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

### **As Experience Mentor, you will be asked to accept the following responsibilities:**

1. To help the student organize his/her Experience and then indicate approval by signing the appropriate statement at the bottom of the proposal form.
2. To supervise the student as he/she follows through on his/her Experience proposal.
3. To sign time sheets to indicate that he/she has completed the required hours.
4. To complete an evaluation form at the close of the Experience.

**Additional Information that you will find useful:**

1. The Senior Experience begins on the first day of class and continues through completion. Students are to work with you for a minimum of 15 contact hours between the months of October through April.
2. A student may NOT be paid for his/her Experience work.
3. No relative may be in a direct line of supervision for the student. The student may not work at a relative's place of business or in a position in which he/she has been previously employed.
4. Each student also has a Faculty Advisor within the Faith School District who acts as a consultant for writing the research paper and again during the process/product development. The Faculty Advisor can also act as liaison between the school and the Experience Mentor. Your contacts with the school can be made through this person.
5. The student is bound by a set of guidelines that he/she should share with you.
6. The student will keep a journal and write a final evaluation of his/her experience. These are NOT to be done during meetings with you. Your meetings should pertain to the product/process of your expertise.
7. In a pre-Experience conference with the student, please establish a mutual understanding of what will be expected during Experience time.
8. Mentor must be approved by the Steering Committee.

We have asked each student to discuss with their Experience Mentor the rationale and guidelines of the Faith District Senior Experience. If the student has not done so, please ask him/her to clarify these items with you.

We trust that the student's work will be beneficial not only to him/her, but also to you as the Experience Mentor. Thank you for your interest in the Senior Experience at Faith and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the Faith High School Office for more information.

Sincerely,

*Kasey Hale, Principal*

*Deanna Fischbach, Senior Experience Coordinator*

I understand my responsibilities as a Senior Experience Mentor and will share my expertise with the student during this experience during the 20\_\_\_\_ - 20\_\_\_\_ school year.

**Signature of Experience Mentor:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

As a senior at Faith, I understand that it is my responsibility to meet all due dates for my senior experience and my mentor is there to only oversee my progress and offer advice.

**Signature of Senior:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## MENTOR LOG

[illegible]

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

Student Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentor Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## SENIOR EXPERIENCE MENTOR EVALUATION

The mentor evaluation is a very important part of the Culminating Experience. We would greatly appreciate your honest appraisal of the student including any other information you may feel may be helpful to this student. This evaluation will become part of the student's portfolio. Thank you so much for your time commitment to our student's personal growth.

**Mentor Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Did the student spend fifteen (15) or more hours with you on his/her experience?

Yes\_\_ No \_\_

Did you meet with the student to provide input, feedback, make suggestions and determine if the student was applying the feedback? Yes \_\_ No \_\_

What are the first words that come to your mind to describe the student? \_\_\_\_\_

Briefly describe the project goals and benefits to your organization. \_\_\_\_\_

### Student Performance Evaluation

(Please place a check mark in the appropriate column listed below.)

	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Exemplary
Attendance			
Promptness			
Attitude			
Effort			
Efficiency			
Follow Through			
Appearance (appropriate for job)			
Respectful and Courteous			
Communication Skills			
Shows Initiative			
Overall Performance			

Additional Comments (include description of jobs performed). If you would like to attach an additional page, feel free to do so. \_\_\_\_\_

I recommend this student: \_\_with reservation \_\_fairly strongly \_\_strongly \_\_enthusiastically

**Mentor Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_



# Guidelines for Evaluation Panel



## GUIDELINES FOR EVALUATION PANEL

Thank you for volunteering your time as a panel member for the Senior Experience. You have been asked to evaluate the presentation component of this Experience. The student is required to speak on his or her topic for eight to ten minutes using presentation notes. Students should not read from their notes. He or she should address the following issues:

- An explanation and defense of the research paper (this constitutes 75-80% of the presentation)
- The subject of the physical product
- The connection between the paper and the product
- The **stretch/risk** for the student
- A self-evaluation

At the end of the speech, each panel member should have at least one question about an aspect of the student's project. Final scores include an assessment of the student's ability to field questions as well.

You will use the Evaluation Form to evaluate the oral presentation part of the Student Experience. The checklist includes a point system of evaluation. Listed below are a few suggestions for the panel.

1. Watch your body language—Students receive feedback from your facial expressions, level of attention, and posture.
2. You will be asked to introduce yourself
3. Do not ask questions until the end of the presentation. When asking questions, do not challenge the student's selection of the topic or personal beliefs. Do not argue with the student or ask personal questions.
4. As a panel member, you should write comments to the students concerning their strengths and weaknesses.

## Presentation Evaluation

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluation Panel Member: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Content</b>					
<i>Introduction of Self</i> *personal introduction, reason for choosing the topic	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Introduction</i> *purpose of project clearly stated or implied, attracts attention	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Body</i> *clearly states main points *accurate, appropriate & supporting details	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Organization</i> *logical flow of ideas	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Conclusion</i> *summarizes, reflects personal growth and learning	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Language</i> *uses transitions, avoids slang, and uses appropriate word choices	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Relation to Learning</i> *relates research to project, and project to the presentation	1	2	3	4	5
Content Total				/35	
<b>Delivery of Speech</b>					
<i>Non-verbal</i> *eye contact, poise, posture, appropriate/natural gestures	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Verbal</i> *volume, rate, clarity of speech	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Dress/Appearance</i> *neat, appropriate dress	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Audio/Visual (props)</i> *supports speech & enhances presentation	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Time Length</i> *8-10 minutes (no maximum)	If not 8 minutes (minimum), no points given				5
Delivery of Speech Total				/25	
<b>Question &amp; Answer Session</b>					
<i>Impromptu Skills</i> *fluent, confident, answers questions easily	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Quality of Responses</i> *evidence of knowledge, responds directly to questions	1	2	3	4	5
Question & Answer Session Total				/10	
<b>Product</b>					
<i>Well-Constructed</i> *visually attractive, shows evidence of time spent in product, written, model or visual form	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Evidence of Research</i> *product relates to research and presentation	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Portfolio</i> *organized & visually appealing	1	2	3	4	5
Product Total				/15	
Comments:					
Total:				/85	

# Timeline & Point Distribution



## **SENIOR EXPERIENCE TIMELINE**

(This is a rough timeline; may vary slightly.)

### **August-September**

- Topic selected & approved
- Mentor selected & approved
- Applicable permission forms turned in
- Letter of intent written & submitted
- Begin looking for resources
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **October**

- Work on project (if applicable)
- Meetings with mentor
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **November**

- Work on project (if applicable)
- Continued contact with mentor
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **December**

- Work on project (if applicable)
- Continued contact with mentor
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **January**

- Work on research paper
- Compile information for presentation/portfolio
- Continued contact with mentor
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **February**

- Continue/Finish research paper
- Work on presentation/portfolio
- Continued contact with mentor
- Journal
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **March**

- Complete presentation & portfolio
- Prepare a concluding statement/reflection
- Journal (to the bitter end)
- Record keeping: photographs, receipts, etc.

### **April**

- Complete presentation & portfolio
- Present to a panel of judges

### **May**

- Complete self-evaluation
- Write & Send Thank you notes to EVERYONE has helped you!

## SENIOR EXPERIENCE POINT DISTRIBUTION

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First Semester: Finalize topic for research paper & project.  
: Work on project (as applicable)

<b>Second Semester</b>		
Research Paper—80pts	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter	/80
Journal Entries	1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup> Quarters Update (Added to 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter grade)	/20
Journal Entries—5pts each	3 <sup>rd</sup> Quarter (8 weeks)	/40
	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter (6 weeks)	/30
Portfolio	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	/60
Presentation	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	/85
Self-Evaluation	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	/20
2 <sup>nd</sup> Semester Totals		/335

3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter→80+20+40=140

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter→30+60+85+20=195

### Deadlines:

	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter</b>	<b>4<sup>th</sup> Quarter</b>
Research Paper	TBD	
Journal Entries (weekly) <i>*1<sup>st</sup> semester update due Jan 11</i>	Jan 18, 25 Feb 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 Mar 7	Mar 14, 21, 28 Apr 4, 11, 18
Portfolio		Apr 25
Presentation		Week of May 6



# Parent Information



## LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This is a momentous year for your Senior. You have learned by now that our school has set high expectations for our students. We believe students should have the opportunity to display his/her skills through a Senior Experience. As your student completes this Experience, he/she will demonstrate the following skills: reading, writing, speaking, accessing and processing information, thinking, self-discipline, problem-solving, organization, and implementing technology. These skills will be showcased through a four-phase process to include:

- a word process research paper
- a related physical product to demonstrate an aspect of the research and/or service to the community
- a portfolio, and
- a presentation given before a review panel composed of educators and community members

The Senior Experience topic is based on new knowledge and provides growth through a new learning experience.

The Senior Experience involves parental and teacher support as well as student initiative and self-discipline. Attached is a copy of the due dates for the Experience components.

The Senior Experience Mentor must be approved by the Steering/Review Committee one month after the project is approved.

Thank you for joining us in this exciting journey. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call the school at 967-2152 to speak with the Senior Experience teacher.

Sincerely,

*Faith High School Faculty*

# SENIOR EXPERIENCE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

## Student

I agree:

- To adhere to the schedule and objectives which I have set for myself
- To make progress reports at the times and in the form designated by my Faculty Advisor
- To follow all the guidelines (which I have read and understand) established for my Senior Project

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Signature of Student

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Date

## Parent/Guardian

I have read the rationale, guidelines, and Project proposal information and have discussed them with my son/daughter. I realize that the school cannot directly supervise him/her and understand that the school assumes no liability for any injuries that he/she may sustain as a result of their project of choice. I understand that it is my son's/daughter's responsibility to inform me of any changes made to the proposal after my signature. I support my son's/daughter's efforts in this project.

---

Signature of Parent/Guardian

---

Date

## SENIOR EXPERIENCE PARENT PERMISSION FORM

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

I have read through the Senior Experience information and understand the requirements of all phases of the Senior Experience. I acknowledge and give permission for my son/daughter to participate.

My son/daughter will do the following as his/her project: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

My son/daughter will write a research paper on the following topic: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Senior Experience Self- Evaluation



## SENIOR EXPERIENCE: SELF-EVALUATION

1. Describe your Experience in at least 25 words.

2. Answer the following:

a. Estimated total hours spent on your Experience

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b. Estimated number of steps to your Experience

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List the steps:

c. Date started

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d. Date completed

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e. Materials used:

f. List every type of resource (including people)

3. Circle the appropriate response

a. Did community resources help?

Yes      No      N/A

b. Have you asked for advice/comments about your Experience from other people?

Yes      No      N/A

c. Did you utilize task analysis and time management principles?

Yes      No      N/A

d. Have you ever done a project like this before?

Yes      No      N/A

e. Would you recommend your experience area for future Senior Experience?

Yes      No      N/A



4. Answer in 25 words or less:
- a. Would you feel intimidated to show your Experience to an expert for evaluation?
  - b. List three things that you now know after completing your Senior Experience.
  - c. List the personal satisfaction you gained from this Experience.
  - d. Describe what risks you took in completing this Experience. Consider not only a physical risk, but also an emotional or intellectual challenge.
  - e. How do you feel your Experience would compare to other similar Experiences? Explain.
  - f. How did your Experience allow you to learn more about your career cluster?