



THE
BEAR CREEK
SCHOOL

Senior Capstone Project Packet

Class of 2025

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DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

I. Purpose Statement

The purpose of Bear Creek's Senior Capstone Project is to provide each senior with the opportunity to develop and pursue a challenging, meaningful, and self-directed project in an area of personal interest during the last weeks of the spring semester. Successful senior projects share a number of important attributes: they demonstrate a depth of investment and insight, exhibit a significant level of personal challenge, connect a student to a larger community, and advance a student's ability to articulate how his or her worldview has been explored, challenged, or changed by the project experience.

II. Choosing a Capstone Project

In February, each senior develops a project concept that outlines a particular experience, goal, area of service, or creative pursuit that will stretch their abilities, offer a venture into new territory, or significantly stretch their understanding of an area of personal passion, curiosity, or calling. The following questions are important aspects of successfully designing a project proposal:

Essential Questions

- How will the project present a significant challenge to you?
- Why is the project worth doing? Why does this project matter or hold intrinsic worth to you or others?
- Does the project infuse lasting meaning into your life and the lives of others?
- How does the project enlarge your preparedness for the future?
- What connections can you draw between a Christian worldview and your project experience?
- How does it connect to the broader community?
- Can the project be realistically completed within the allotted three-week time period?
- Do you have access to the resources needed to complete the project?
- Are you physically able and prepared to complete the project, without advanced preparation or training?

III. Submitting the Project Proposal

Students identify a project concept and complete the project proposal. The proposal is submitted electronically to the Worldview Capstone faculty by the proposal deadline. *See Senior Capstone Project Schedule.*

The proposal must include a well-thought-out description of the project, details of how the student will accomplish the project, and an explanation of how the project will meet the essential questions, including worldview reflection. The proposal will also require students to identify resources that are needed, a field expert for certain project types and a list of preferred faculty advisors.

Students may consult with Worldview Capstone faculty, Capstone Project faculty, other faculty, staff, and content field experts during the proposal design phase to fully develop the intent and construct overall scope of the project prior to submission. The project review panel may require adjustments to your proposal if concerns arise or if more information or clarification is needed regarding design or implementation.

Any project proposal that does not affirm the standards and guiding principles of The Bear Creek School or poses a risk to self or others will be returned to the student for revision or resubmission.

IV. The Faculty Advisor

The role of the faculty advisor is incredibly important for the success of the project. Your advisor is one of the most important contacts that you will have during the project weeks and will also be responsible for grading your ongoing work during the project, which will be calculated into your final project grade.

Students will be paired with a faculty advisor based on a combination of the following factors:

- the preference of the student
- the compatibility of the project with the expertise of the faculty member
- the availability of the faculty member (generally, faculty only advise one project)

The faculty advisor will:

- give advice and counsel
- collect and monitor the student's timeline
- regularly assess the student's progress and provide feedback for project completion
- regularly assess the student's journal and provide feedback for improvement
- participate in the assessment panel

Each student is expected to meet with their advisor **at least two times per week during the span of project weeks**. In addition to a faculty advisor, a *subject expert* is usually required or strongly encouraged. Students who make use of subject experts generally produce better projects.

V. The Capstone Assessment Panel

The Capstone panel is likely to be comprised of the following individuals:

- Carol Miller, Upper School Division Head
- Dave Urban, Upper School Dean of Students
- Katie Gomulkiewicz, Dean of College and Academic Advising
- Rob Sorensen, Capstone Project Coordinator
- Ryan Summers, Dave Urban, and Phil Higley, Capstone faculty

VI. Worldview Articulation

Much has been made of the importance of worldview during the students' education at Bear Creek. To successfully complete the project, students must demonstrate a robust understanding of worldview and how it relates to their topics. During the presentation and project defense, students should include a reflection of how their worldview has been confirmed, stretched, or challenged by their projects.

Reflections on worldview may take place either from within the Christian worldview perspective or from without. That is, students should express their true worldview, Christian or not. And yet, since the mission of The Bear Creek School is distinctly Christian, all students should draw connections to the Christian perspective, even if by way of contrast. Students are encouraged to use the eight worldview categories taught in the Christianity and Culture class and the Senior Honors English class as they explore and explain their worldview considerations:

1. Anthropology
2. Axiology
3. Cosmology
4. Epistemology
5. Sociology
6. Soteriology
7. Teleology
8. Theology

VII. The Oral Presentation and Defense

The project culminates in a presentation to peers and a defense of the project before the Capstone panel. The presentation should be no less than twenty minutes and no more than thirty minutes in length, including time for questions and answers.

The oral presentation should include the following:

- an explanation of why the project was chosen
- an explanation of the project itself
- the challenges faced in the process of producing the project and how they were overcome
- a description of how your knowledge base was expanded
- an explanation of the intrinsic worth of the project experience
- an analysis of the worldviews related to the project

A question-and-answer period led by the Capstone panel will follow each presentation. The audience may also have an opportunity to ask questions of each presenter. This is considered the oral defense.

At the close of the defense, a recess will occur allowing the panel time to discuss and evaluate the project, the journal, advisor feedback, the presentation, and the quality of the defense. The overall project will be evaluated as a totality, measured by the rubric included in this packet.

The project is a component of the school's graduation requirements and will be given the mark of *pass*, *fail*, or *pass with honors*. Seniors who receive the project distinction of *pass with honors* will be recognized at An Evening of Honors. Students who do not pass will need to satisfactorily complete all requirements before transcripts are finalized.

VIII. Work Time During the Project Weeks

The three weeks between May 19 and June 6 are intended to be devoted fully to the Senior Capstone Project. Students are discouraged from adding other activities to their schedules during these weeks. We expect students to devote approximately **100 hours** of work to their projects. Students who anticipate their project may require work outside of the assigned weeks will need to review their project and work schedule with the Upper School Division Head prior to the start of project weeks.

SCHEDULE

January 21	Capstone Project packet (this document) distributed
February 14	Capstone Project proposal due
March 3	Capstone Project proposals returned to students for revision and faculty advisors assigned
March 10	Capstone Project proposal re-submissions due (if required because your initial proposal was denied)
March 17	Capstone Project proposal revisions due
March 24 – April 11	First meeting with Capstone Project Advisor
April 22 – May 2	Second meeting with Capstone Project Advisor
April 28 – May 2	Senior final exams (during regular class time)
May 16	Capstone Project kick-off lunch (attendance <u>required</u>)
May 19 – June 6	Capstone Project weeks
June 9 – 12	Capstone Project presentations

COMPONENTS OF THE PROJECT

IX. Class Notebook in OneNote

All seniors will be added to the 24-25 Senior Capstone Project Team and Class Notebook. All the written components of the Capstone Project should be uploaded as printouts to the corresponding tab in this Class Notebook. Students are responsible for keeping their material up to date. Your Class Notebook folder should ultimately contain all the following:

- Your original project proposal, as well as all subsequent revisions
- Your parent acknowledgement
- All the logs from your advisor meetings
- Your complete journal (see details in section X below)
- Your final comprehensive assessment (see details in section XI below)

You are also welcome to use the Class Notebook to keep other notes, records, forms, or material as is appropriate to your particular project.

X. Capstone Project Journal

The project journal chronicles students' daily experiences and personal reflections during the project weeks. Each daily entry should consist of at least two paragraphs of 100 words each. Each entry should be headed by the date and the number of hours spent that day on the project. For example:

May 25, 2024. 7.5 hours.

After the heading, the two 100-word body paragraphs should follow this format:

Paragraph 1: Procedure. Consider answering questions like the following:

- What did I do today for the project?
- What operational problems did I encounter and how did I reposition or revise?
- Am I on track to accomplish my project's goals?

Paragraph 2: Reflection. Consider answering questions like the following:

- What has been personally significant today?
- How are you doing: emotionally, spiritually, relationally?
- What am I learning about myself, about life, about managing a project?
- What worldview connections are emerging as the project progresses?

Your journal should be maintained within the Class Notebook and may include photos, artifacts, screenshots, videos, etc. Your journal will count for 10% of your final score for the project as assessed by your advisor.

You will review your journal with your advisor during *each meeting*.

XI. Comprehensive Assessment of the Project

On the last day or two of your project, reflect on your project and evaluate yourself based on the goals you set for yourself and your actual experience. Make a clear heading for final assessment and address the following questions:

- How was my project valuable or meaningful to me? How does my project leave a legacy to others?
- How did this project stretch my knowledge base, my imagination, or my character?
- How has this project enhanced my worldview? What values are being communicated by way of my project?
- Did this project reflect my unique abilities and passions?
- Did I have fun?

XII. Capstone Project Presentation

Important Considerations

- PowerPoint or some other visual presentation is recommended for your presentation, although a similar media application may also be acceptable. You need to include photographs, pictures, and possibly video clips or other media elements.
- Make sure you check that the format of your presentation works properly in the room in which you are scheduled to present. In all cases, check electronic compatibility **well in advance** of your presentation time. Typically, IT staff members are made available to help test your technology on the mock presentation days.
- You should be prepared for a presentation of 20 minutes, followed by 10 minutes of questions.
- After you have practiced your presentation alone, a **practice presentation with your faculty advisor is required**. This must be scheduled in advance with your advisor. Your faculty advisor will counsel you on “finishing touches” and offer recommendations to strengthen your presentation.
- The presentation must be done solely by you. It is not appropriate for friends, parents, or any others to contribute once the presentation has begun.
- Be punctual and fully prepared for your time slot.
- Dress in either professional business style dress or, if your project has a specific type of clothing associated with it, such subject-specific attire is also appropriate, however please check in with Capstone faculty on specific attire requests.
- Be sure to invite your advisor and your parents to your presentation and spend time thanking people at the end of your presentation!

Presentation Format

The panel recommends this presentation format. If you have a different idea, please review it with your faculty advisor.

Recommended # of minutes	Presentation Section and Recommended Content
2 – 3 minutes	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ ‘Hook’ (startling fact or statistic; provocative question, anecdote, or famous quotation) ▪ Introduce yourself. ▪ Tie in the hook to your project. ▪ State the topic of your project and the aim. (What did you set out to accomplish?)
4 – 5 minutes	<p>Brief Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What were the principal project activities? ▪ What was the process or product? ▪ Who were your mentors (your “subject experts”), or which agencies were involved? ▪ Where/When did the major action take place? ▪ Consider covering the 5 Ws: Who, What, When, Where, Why/How of your project.
8 – 10 minutes	<p>The Close-Up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expand on some aspects of your project in depth. Some suggestions for elaboration are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explain a problem you encountered and how you dealt with it. ○ Describe a day in the life of your project – focus on one process which took several hours to complete. This should be a key aspect of your project. ○ Describe a day in the life of an expert you shadowed.
4 – 6 minutes	<p>The Home Stretch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Summarize what you have learned. ▪ How has this project challenged you and caused you to grow? What have you learned about yourself? How will this be useful as you head to college or into your professional career? ▪ Has the project changed the way you think of, feel, or experience God or the way you relate to others? What is/are your Christian worldview connection(s)? ▪ How were you stretched in knowledge and character? ▪ Remember to thank your team (your adviser, experts, family, friends, and mentors).

Questions the Panel May Ask During Your Project Defense

Personal Growth

- Why did you choose this particular project?
- Did this experience change you in any way? How?
- Did your project help your understanding of worldview? How?
- Did you see God at work in your project? How?

Challenges

- What was the most difficult part of your project? Why was it so difficult?
- What part of the project brought you the most joy? Why?
- How did the project require you to step outside your comfort zone?
- How was the actual project different from your original expectations?
- What surprised you about your project?
- If you could start the senior project over, what would you do differently?
- Did you meet your original goal? If not, why? Was it too ambitious? Were there forces outside your control?

Lasting Value

- In five years, what will you remember most about your project experience?
- How will you follow up on what you have learned?
- Would you recommend your project to future seniors at Bear Creek? Why or why not?
- How do you see this experience impacting your future (not the project per se but the experience)? What lessons from this project experience do you foresee that you will carry with you to college and into your professional future?

Worldview

- How does your project authentically reflect your worldview?
- How does your project accurately, substantively, and/or meaningfully reflect the Christian worldview?
- What elements of your project do you see communicating values about the individual or community, or to the individual or community?
- What gives your project lasting significance?

EVALUATING THE PROJECT (Copy of the Rubric for Students)

XIII. Capstone Project Evaluation and Rubric

Student: _____ Panel Member: _____

Project: _____

Presentation Evaluation: (25 points)

Indicate TOTAL Points (out of 25): _____

Student Preparedness (Indicate points: _____ out of 10):

Some points to consider before assigning a grade:

- Pre-Project Preparation: All preliminary project paperwork (i.e., proposal, acknowledgement of responsibilities, revisions, and timeline) was submitted on time to the Capstone class teachers and to the project advisor.
- The student arrives promptly with notes, materials, handouts, and technological needs prepared.
- The student has invited appropriate guests and faculty.
- The student is professionally dressed.
- The student's behavior is appropriate (good attitude, no gum, etc.).

Presentation Content (Indicate points: _____ out of 10):

Some points to consider before assigning a grade:

- The student uses visual material effectively to enhance communication.
- The student uses examples or anecdotes as illustrations.
- The student includes introduction and pertinent general information.
- The student demonstrated how his/her knowledge was enhanced and broadened through the effort required of the project.
- The student presents well-organized, cogently developed, and compelling points.
- The student concludes presentation appropriately.
- The student clearly integrates and articulates the development of the project and the intrinsic worth that impacted him/her as he/she worked on this project.

Overall impression of the presentation (Indicate points: _____ out of 5):

Some points to consider before assigning a grade:

- The student speaks clearly and articulates well.
- The student makes eye contact with the audience; does not read the slides.
- The student answers questions intelligently and sufficiently generalizes the importance of the experience into the larger scope of his/her life.
- The presentation demonstrates sufficient effort and preparation on the part of the student – in content, materials, and preparation and rehearsal.

Project Evaluation: (75 points)

Indicate TOTAL Points (out of 75): _____

Worldview component (Indicate points: _____ out of 15):

The student masterfully demonstrates the implications of Christian worldview for his/her project or can make real and relevant connections to it through the mechanisms learned at Bear Creek.

- (13 – 15 points) Worldview concepts are substantively addressed both by implicitly shaping understanding of the project and discussing application of worldview frameworks and related issues.
- (10 – 12 points) Worldview concepts are adequately addressed with some discussion of worldview frameworks and related issues.
- (0 – 9 points) Worldview concepts are minimally addressed, if at all, with little or no discussion of worldview frameworks and related issues.

The value of the project to the student – intrinsic value (Indicate points: _____ out of 10):

- (9 – 10 points) The intrinsic worth developed and addressed is a convincing and organic extension of the student’s learning experience.
- (7 – 8 points) The intrinsic worth is superficially addressed and applied to the project in order to fulfill the requirement.
- (0 – 6 points) The intrinsic worth is minimally addressed, if at all, and is not convincingly developed as an extension of the project.

The value of the project to the community – extrinsic value (Indicate points: _____ out of 10):

- (9 – 10 points) The student clearly demonstrates an engagement with a larger community relevant to his/her project. The student also clearly articulates the importance of this project to the community at large.
- (7 – 8 points) The student marginally demonstrates an engagement with a larger community relevant to his/her project. The student also marginally articulates the importance of this project to the community at large.
- (0 – 6 points) The student does not demonstrate an engagement with a larger community relevant to his/her project. The student also does not articulate the importance of this project to the community at large.

The learning effected by the project (Indicate points: _____ out of 10):

- (9 – 10 points) Through the project, the student extended him/herself in a new way.
- (7 – 8 points) The student has stayed in a familiar area but has examined the subject in a new way.
- (0 – 6 points) The student has not gone beyond the knowledge and subject he/she already knew.

The project implementation, interaction with the Project Advisor, and the strength of the Journal (Indicate points: _____ out of 30):

- Final points out of 30 is reflected on the Project Advisor’s final assessment, included with this rubric

Capstone Project Overall Evaluation

OVERALL TOTAL Points (out of 100): _____

Note: Projects receiving 90 or more points will be considered for Honors distinction.

Panel Member Comments:

XIV. Advisor Meeting Log

Complete this two-page meeting log each time you meet with your advisor. The official form is in the class notebook. The copy below has been provided for your reference.

Capstone Project Progress Report

Date: _____

Part I – To be filled out by the student *before* the advisor meeting.

List and briefly describe the work you have done on your project since the last meeting.

Briefly describe the goals you have for your project over the next week.

What can your advisor help you with moving forward?

Part II – To be filled out by the student and advisor together during the advisor meeting.

Briefly rate and comment on each of the following areas:

Project Implementation

😊 - 😐 - 😞

Is the student making excellent progress on the project?

Does the student demonstrate an excellent use of time?

Does the student demonstrate autonomy at a high level?

Comments:

Worldview Integration

😊 - 😐 - 😞

Is the student able to make organic, authentic worldview connections?

Does worldview reflection shape the student's approach to the project?

Comments:

Journal

😊 - 😐 - 😞

Is the student keeping regular entries in the journal?

Does the journal indicate how the student's time has been spent?

Does the journal evidence a deep level of reflection?

Comments:

Overall Progress

😊 - 😐 - 😞

Comments:

What should the student be working on in the coming week(s)?

Student Signature

Advisor Signature

XVII. Project Advisor's Final Assessment

Student: _____ Advisor: _____

Project: _____

Please rate and briefly comment on the following aspects of your student's Capstone Project process.

Project Implementation from Start to Finish.

Goal: The project demonstrates excellent use of time. The student was resourceful and demonstrated autonomy to an excellent level.

Comment

Grade (1 – 10): _____

Christian Worldview Integration

Goal: Student expertly addresses worldview concepts. Worldview reflection grows organically from the project.

Comment

Grade (1 – 10): _____

Journal

Goal: Journal is neatly prepared, follows the directions laid out in the packet, and contains both a record of the student’s time and substantive self-reflection.

Comment

Grade (1 – 10): _____

Practice Presentation

Goal: Student gives a complete practice presentation before the project weeks. Student works with advisor to prepare an excellent project presentation.

Comment

Please write some brief **feedback** (both praise and constructive criticism) for your student. This will be included in the letter that is sent to your student over the summer.

Feedback

TOTAL Points (out of 30): _____