



NVCA Senior Capstone Projects – Required for Graduation (1 Credit)

The Senior Capstone Project is a culminating learning activity that encourages critical thinking and research, promotes conversation and problem solving, and results in real life application of prior and acquired knowledge.

Students will concentrate on areas of personal interest. Using an inquiry-based method, they will connect their acquired knowledge to life experiences, thus deepening their awareness of what they learned.

The goal of this learning activity is not only to sharpen and expand the students' method of research but to develop interpersonal and communication skills and to encourage personal growth. Ultimately, the students will learn *how to learn*, and hopefully enjoy the process.

Phase 1: Investigation

Each senior will select an area of interest and investigate her topic during the course of her final year at North Valley Christian Academy. Students will receive support in determining topics and forming “essential questions” about their chosen topics. Under the guidance of mentors, parents, teachers and the Senior Capstone moderator, the student will research, discuss and apply his/her knowledge. This research component requires the students to read a minimum of nine scholarly journal essays and conduct three personal interviews with professionals in their chosen fields. Assignments are due monthly in January, February, and March.

Phase 2: Experiential Learning

During the fourth quarter of senior year, the students will apply their investigated knowledge in a “real life” context. The method is determined by the student with his/her advisor's approval. Possibilities are limitless but generally fall under one of these categories:

- **Job shadowing** experience (minimum 25 hours)
- **Service work** (minimum 25 hours)

Phase 3: Final Report

All students are required to submit the following documentation, regardless of the nature of their project:

- A log book in which all work is recorded and annotated
- A 75 word summary describing the “experiential learning” activity
- A signature sheet indicating that the work was completed satisfactorily
- A two page reflection paper in which the writer considers what the experience has taught him/her and how the experience might influence his/her later thinking and behavior