



## **Thayer Academy Senior Projects Information for Site Supervisors**

As their final requirement for graduation, Thayer Academy Seniors spend several weeks in May completing an independent project. They are encouraged to focus on an area of interest during this time, particularly something which they would not normally be able to pursue. With the guidance of their academic advisors, parents, teachers and other contacts, Thayer students search for sites where they can gain valuable, practical experience, and volunteer their time while making meaningful contributions. The goal for Thayer Academy is to provide Seniors with the opportunity to take charge of a significant step in their own educational experience before moving on to college.

The Senior Project program gives students a chance to investigate potential careers, to do research in a special area of interest, or to offer their service to the community. In the past, our Seniors have volunteered at hospitals, the American Red Cross, law firms, veterinary practices, museums, the New England Aquarium, courthouses and homeless shelters. While some students choose a local site and return to campus in the afternoon for sports, for many years Thayer has also been able to offer a number of international trips for Senior Projects. Students have studied Marine Biology in the Galapagos Islands, hiked the hills of Peru and visited our French Sister School, Stanislas, in Cannes.

These projects will ideally result in field placements that offer genuine opportunities for mutual benefit. We would like our Seniors to find placements in which they can be of real service and make active contributions to their host setting, while at the same time, receiving worthwhile exposure and instruction for their own challenge and enrichment. Students should be of valuable service at their placements, and agencies, and supervisors should be able to provide them with significant responsibilities and chances to learn. Seniors are not permitted to receive payment for their time. If there is a circumstance where a student is paid then they will be asked to donate their wages to a charitable organization.

There is also an academic component to the project. Seniors are required to read the equivalent of one book to prepare them for their field experience. In some cases, site supervisors may want to specify suitable articles from journals, textbooks or other resources in lieu of a single book. For our Seniors, the project will culminate with a Final Reflection which draws on the students' site experiences and reading, and summarizes what they have both gained and contributed as a result of this project.

**The Senior Project will run this school year from Monday, May 13 through Friday, May 31, 2024.** *Please note: during the first week of the project students may be taking AP exams. They are allowed to not report to their project site on the day(s) they will take the tests. Students should communicate this with you ahead of time.* Students are expected to work 5 hours a day, 5 days a week during this time frame. How and when these hours are completed will vary from site to site.

These projects will be graded as pass/fail. Students will be in touch with their Thayer academic advisors on a regular basis. These Thayer faculty members will also keep in touch with site supervisors regularly to make sure any questions or concerns are addressed. Site supervisors should also feel free to reach out to the Senior Project Directors if any concerns arise or they would like to share any feedback. To help us determine the success of the projects, both for the supervisors and the students, we will ask that site supervisors complete an Evaluation Report with a brief checklist and a few areas for comments at the conclusion of the projects.

Thank you for taking the time to host a Thayer Academy Senior. We appreciate the opportunities you will be providing for them. We hope the experiences they take away from the time spent at their sites will give them tools to use in their futures as they head off to college.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Rando  
[srando@thayer.org](mailto:srando@thayer.org)

Christine Woods  
[cwoods@thayer.org](mailto:cwoods@thayer.org)

Directors, Thayer Academy Senior Projects