



Coeur d'Alene Charter Academy Senior Project Overview

According to the Idaho State Department of Education, "Senior Projects are required to include a written report and an oral presentation by the end of grade 12 with guidelines set at the district level."

Starting with the class of 2013, the Academy included Senior Project as a part of its graduation requirement. "Senior Project" will be denoted on the student's high school transcript with a grade of Pass (P) or Fail (F), along with the earned percentage grade. A student receiving a grade of "F" will not graduate with his or her class and will not participate in graduation activities. **Seniors will earn .5 credit upon passing all phases of Senior Project.**

Overview and Timeline for Senior Project

Seniors will choose a research topic that is related to their planned or potential college field of study and secure a mentor teacher to oversee the project.

- **Guardrails for Project Topics:** Topics must be academically-based and have a foundation of academic, peer-reviewed research to explore. **Topics that are highly-specialized, esoteric, or are fueled by religious, political, ideological, and/or personal beliefs will not be allowed.**
- **August / Early September:** Seniors will secure a mentor and complete a mentor form. Mentor request forms are available at the high school counseling office.
 - Mentors may only accept a maximum of 2 students
 - Junior and senior English teachers cannot serve as mentors
- **Quarter 1 of senior year:** The paper and all preliminary elements will be assigned, completed, and graded in senior English class. *Seniors who were enrolled in CCA as juniors completed several facets of Senior Project during their time in junior English class. They may continue to use that previously-compiled work, or they may choose to start with a fresh topic if they prefer.
 - **End of Quarter 1:** The overseeing English teacher will submit a scored rubric and copy of the senior's final draft paper to the Senior Project Coordinator. Papers must pass with at least a 70% before the senior can move on to the presentation phase.
 - **By November 19th :** All papers that do not pass by the end of Quarter 1 must pass with at least a 70% before the senior can move on to the presentation phase. Please refer to the last section of this document for an explanation of the "Revision Phase" of Senior Project for papers that do not meet the November 19th deadline.
- **Quarter 2 of senior year:** Presentations are prepared and reviewed with the assistance of the Senior Project mentor
 - **December:** Presentation Night will be scheduled prior to winter break.
- **By the end of Semester 1:** All facets of Senior Project must be completed with at least a 70%. ***Any senior who has not successfully met this final deadline will not graduate.**

Senior Student Responsibilities

- **September:** Find a mentor. Students should schedule a meeting with their prospective mentor to discuss their topic and planned research. Mentors will sign the mentor agreement form and students will submit those to the Senior Project Coordinator.
- **Quarter 1:** Complete all deadlines associated with the argumentative research paper and submit a final draft of the essay to mentors and overseeing English teachers. Mentors will not grade these papers but need the final draft to read and use as a basis for advising students on how to strengthen their presentations.
- **November-December:** Meet in-person with the mentor a minimum of 2 times. In these meetings, students will practice their presentation with the mentor. Mentors will score these practice sessions using the presentation rubric; these scored rubrics must be passed to the Senior Project Coordinator. Students must have two scored rubrics and a passing paper to become eligible to present on Senior Project Presentation Night.

Junior & Senior English Teacher Responsibilities

Grades associated with Senior Project will be included in the English class gradebook

- **Junior English Teachers:** As part of regular classwork and instruction, preliminary work associated with the argumentative research paper will be conducted with guidance in junior English classes throughout the year and will include:
 - Practicing research, gathering / reading sources, note-taking, and creating a Works Consulted Page, outline, rough draft, etc.
 - Supervising, guiding, and grading the work for each required deadline
 - *For any seniors who are not enrolled in a CCA English class during their senior year, a CCA junior English teacher will serve as a supervising teacher
- **Senior English Teachers:** As part of regular classwork and instruction, continuing work associated with the argumentative research paper during Quarter 1 will be conducted with guidance in senior English classes and will include:
 - Finalizing research, outlines, Works Cited Page, rough drafts and final drafts
 - Evaluating and grading all elements / checkpoints associated with the paper
 - Evaluating and grading the final draft of the paper

Mentor Teacher Responsibilities

Due to other Senior Project responsibilities, junior and senior English teachers cannot serve as mentors.

Mentor teachers can accept a maximum of 2 seniors. Mentors are responsible for guiding seniors throughout the project to its completion. This guidance includes:

- Conducting a minimum of 3 face-to-face meetings (minimum 15 minutes each)
 - **Meeting #1 (September):** Preliminary review of the senior's research topic and submission of a Mentor Request form to the Senior Project Coordinator
 - **Meeting #2 (by November 19):** First in-person presentation run-through and discussion (with guidance on appropriate attire, areas for improvement, etc.)
 - This includes scoring the presentation and submitting a completed presentation rubric to the Senior Project Coordinator by the established deadline
 - Seniors should have submitted a final draft of their essay in order to give the mentor a wide and deep view of the senior's research and conclusions
 - **Meeting #3 (by December 6):** Second in-person presentation run-through and discussion (with guidance on appropriate attire, areas for improvement, etc.)
 - This includes scoring the presentation, submitting a completed presentation rubric, and submitting a minimum of 3 Q & A questions to the Senior Project Coordinator by the established deadline
 - *Seniors cannot advance to Presentation Night until mentors submit 2 scored presentation rubrics to the Senior Project Coordinator (as a result of Meetings #2 and #3 explained above).

Final Grading Process Overview

Grades for the argumentative essay and presentation will be determined using school-wide rubrics. A combined minimum score of 70% is required to earn a passing grade. The components of the project will be weighted and scored to arrive at the final grade:

- Research paper: 60% (minimum score to pass = 17/24)
 - Graded by:
 - Senior English teacher
- Presentation: 40% (minimum score to pass = 26/36)
 - Scored by:
 - Lead judge, auxiliary judge (CCA staff)
 - 1-2 community judges (weighted at ½ the value of the CCA staff evaluations)

Argumentative Research Paper Overview

PLEASE NOTE: This is an argumentative, thesis-driven paper and will be a scholarly work that is **worthy of submission in a quality college class**. Students will explore all facets of their topic, acknowledge and address counter-arguments, and prove the credibility of their assertions through the integration and analysis of high-quality evidence.

- The argumentative research paper and all preliminary elements (MLA Works Consulted, outline, rough draft, etc.) will be assigned and graded in the senior's English class.
 - If a senior is not currently enrolled in a CCA English class, he or she will work with a designated junior English teacher and will be responsible for all official Senior Project assignments and deadlines.
- The paper will follow the conventions of MLA Format (margins, font, spacing, citations, Works Cited Page, etc.) and shall be **no less than 1,500 words and no more than 3,000 words in length** (not including Works Cited Page and any appendices).
- The research will include a **minimum of 6 sources** from experts in their fields:
 - 4 of the sources must be academic / scholarly in nature, which will include:
 - Peer reviewed / published sources (scholarly articles, books, studies)
 - Remaining sources may also include:
 - Personal interviews (with experts in their field)
 - Research data (i.e. polls, studies, etc.)
 - Speeches
 - Audio/video recordings
 - Magazine articles
 - News stories, etc.
- **Papers that do not meet the minimum requirements (as listed above) will automatically fail.**

Presentation Overview

The presentation will be derived from the research paper and will take the audience through the senior's learning process. **In order to participate in Presentation Night, the final draft essay must earn a passing score by November 19th .**

- The judging panel will consist of Charter faculty members and adult community members. Parents, family, and friends are welcome to attend.
- The presentation will last **no less than ten minutes** and **no longer than fifteen minutes** and will include a question and answer period that will be conducted by the lead judge
- Seniors will implement presentation software (PowerPoint, Google Slides, Prezi, etc.) or some other visual element, demonstrating effective use of the technology and/ or other approaches
- Seniors will demonstrate command of the topic, depth and variety of research, and sincere consideration of counter-arguments and diverse perspectives

Revision Phase for a Failed Paper and/or Failed Presentation

PLEASE NOTE: If the paper and presentation do not pass with a minimum of 70% by the end of Semester 1, the senior will not graduate.

December-January (before the end of 1st Semester): Senior Project revision plans and deadlines will be decided by the revision committee (comprised of: Senior Project Coordinator, school administrator, mentor, CCA English teacher, counselor, parents, etc.).

- **Paper Revision Process:** If the paper is not passing with at least 70% by November 30th, the student will not present at Presentation Night.
 - The senior, mentor, and English teacher will establish deadlines specific to that student
 - The senior will continue work on the paper until it passes based on scores from the designated English teacher and mentor
- **Presentation Revision Process:** This stage of Senior Project cannot commence until the paper earns a passing score.
 - The senior will present to a selected panel of judges after school at a designated date/time.