

Senior Professional Project

The Senior Project helps prepare you to enter the working world – whether you do so in four months or fifty-one. To this end, you'll be responsible for the completion of the following:

1. A Proposal for your research paper (format available at your class blog), as well as a narrative Letter of Intent explaining in full what you've written in bullet-point form/shorthand in your Proposal.
2. At least **one (1)** in-person interview with an individual who's involved with your chosen profession.
 - a. You will write your questions in advance; make sure they aren't simple yes/no questions (those won't yield useful information, and you'll want to avoid wasting a working individual's time).
 - b. Subsequent interviews with other individuals (particularly those at different stages of your preferred career) may be conducted via e-mail, phone, or videoconference instead.
 - c. Because you **won't** be allowed to interview family members, you'll need to obtain parental permission before conducting your interview. The hard copy of the signed parental consent form (available at your class blog) is also due during class.
 - d. You'll need to include your interviewee's business card (complete with logo, e-mail, and phone number) with the transcript. Also, you **must** include the name of the person you are interviewing on your parental consent form. **Do not** wait until the last minute to find a person to interview.
 - e. The transcript of the face-to-face interview is due during class, and should be submitted to turnitin.com by **7:30am that same morning**.
3. Research regarding your chosen field, including (but *definitely* not limited to) your interview, at least one peer-reviewed publication/periodical/scholarly journal, two legitimate Internet resources (government-run/similarly scrutinized site = legitimate, someone's blog = illegitimate), and two books (preferably published recently).
 - a. While you can/should continue your research throughout the project, your annotated research (copies of the research + your notes on how that material's been incorporated into your project) from those **required** sources (interview excepted) will be checked during class on **Monday, May 5th**.
4. A **seven-to-ten (7-10)**-page research paper, with the decorated hard copy due during class on **Tuesday, May 27th**, and the electronic submission due to turnitin.com by **7:30am that same morning**.
5. A **seven-to-ten (7-10)**-minute presentation, featuring some material covered by your paper and some material unique to the presentation itself.
 - a. All presentations will feature at least some use of PowerPoint, and will incorporate multimedia and audio elements smoothly (either within the PowerPoint presentation or separately). Props, artifacts, and the like are strongly encouraged.
 - b. You will need to use sophisticated/formal/vivid language, wear appropriate attire during the presentation, and conduct yourself professionally. Strive for elegance, eloquence, and excellence.
 - c. Sign-ups will be available on a shared Google-Doc spreadsheet. Sign-ups will begin early in the fourth quarter in order to ensure all individuals will be able to carry off appropriately ambitious presentations (and I will have some say in the ultimate presentation order, reserving the right to move you);
6. A résumé and cover letter, printed on résumé paper, due during class on **Friday, May 2nd**.

This project will be worth **twenty (20) percent** of your final English grade this semester, and it requires a significant investment of time and energy on your part. Realistically, while you **will** finish the project, it's worth as much as you make it. If you aim to benefit from this project, you will, and you won't if you don't – you'll turn it into a massive load of busywork instead, and you'll **still** finish it. It's that simple.

That said, it's easy to get a lot out of this project. Some of my past students landed jobs by networking and/or making contacts while working on this project. Many others discovered – to their chagrin – that their “dream career” proved to be a poor fit for them once they learned more and started taking various factors into consideration. While that may not seem like a useful or positive outcome, consider this: those students will not waste time and money chasing a goal that would ultimately disappoint them, and are free to pursue new goals.

Good luck and happy hunting, children of mine.