



Lenoir County Public Schools

Graduation Project Handbook

2013 – 2014

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General Information

In December 2011, the North Carolina State Board of Education included the North Carolina Graduation Project as an indicator for its accountability model for public high schools. The North Carolina Graduation Project must meet defined “Standards of Quality” in order for high schools to receive “credit” for the project. Experts from high schools and school systems across North Carolina developed the Standards of Quality.

In accordance with the North Carolina Accountability Model for public high schools, Lenoir County Public Schools will begin the implementation of the North Carolina Graduation Project for the 2012 – 2013 school year. The Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project is an interest-based project that demonstrates global readiness including 21st Century Skills.

The Lenoir County Public Schools’ Graduation Project consists of four components; a research paper, a product, a portfolio, and an oral presentation. Each component will be graded separately and will be incorporated in the overall grades for English III and English IV.

The first component is the research paper. This research paper is researched and written in the students’ junior year. Students will present a topic of interest for approval. The research paper will have embedded requirements such as pre-writing instruments.

The second component is the product. The product is an extension of the research paper. It may be a physical or a non-physical product. After the completion of the product, the student will be able to demonstrate learning gained through the journey of the Graduation Project.

The third component is a portfolio. The portfolio is the evidence piece, which will be used to support the Graduation Project. This is a collection of the Graduation Project components, forms, and any other supporting documentation.

The final component is an oral presentation. This is an 8 – 10 minute presentation that the student will present to a Presentation Review Panel. The presentation is set up to be reflective to the student on what he or she has accomplished.

Modifications for Transfer Students

- In the case of a student transferring to another school within the county while working on the project, the new school will accept any component completed at the previous school.
- Students who transfer into Lenoir County Public Schools during their **junior year** may complete an abbreviated Graduation Project research paper per the teacher's discretion.
- Students who transfer into Lenoir County Public Schools during their **senior year** will complete an abbreviated Graduation Project as specified below:

Weeks 1 – 6 (no paper from former school)

- Paper – Student chooses a topic of interest and writes a thesis statement. In place of the research paper, the student will create an annotated bibliography to support the thesis statement. If the student is placed in an AP/Honors English IV class, the student must have minimum of 8 – 10 sources and a minimum of one paragraph per source. If the student is placed in a regular English IV class, the student must have a minimum of 5 – 7 sources and a minimum of one paragraph per source.
- Product – No change
- Portfolio – No change
- Presentation – No change

Weeks 7 – 12 (no paper from former school)

- Paper – Student chooses a topic of interest and writes a thesis statement. In place of the research paper, the student will create an annotated bibliography to support the thesis statement. If the student is placed in an AP/Honors English IV class, the student must have minimum of 6 – 8 sources and a minimum of one paragraph per source. If the student is placed in a regular English IV class, the student must have a minimum of 4 – 6 sources and a minimum of one paragraph per source.
- Product – Reduced to 8 hours of fieldwork on the product. At least 4 hours must be spent with the mentor.
- Portfolio – No change
- Presentation – No change

Weeks 12 – 18 (no paper from former school)

- Modified at the teacher's discretion.

Special Circumstances

- Exceptional children, LEP students and students with 504 plans
 - Teachers must adhere to each student's IEP, LEP, and 504 accommodations/modifications that are located within his/her plan.
- Lenoir County Early College
 - Students who are enrolled in the Lenoir County Early College will begin the Graduation Project process during their sophomore year.
 - The research paper will be completed during the sophomore year. Early College students must adhere to same specification guidelines.
 - The product will be completed during the junior year. Early College students must adhere to same specification guidelines.
 - The portfolio will be completed during the junior year. Early College students must adhere to same specification guidelines.
 - The presentation will be completed during the junior year. Early College students must adhere to same specification guidelines.
- International Baccalaureate Program (IB)
 - IB diploma and certificate candidates will complete their research paper requirement through completion of the IB Extended Essay (3800-4000 word paper in which students are asked to engage in independent research through an in-depth study of a question related to one of the subjects they are studying), done under the auspices of the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) instructor and the supervision of a mentor assigned to each candidate. The candidates will present their papers to a panel in a 10-15 minute PowerPoint presentation or other visual presentation format. The product and portfolio requirements will be modified to meet the unique parameters of the Extended Essay and presentation.
 - IB course candidates who are not enrolled in IB Theory of Knowledge but who are enrolled in IB English A HL Literature will complete a research paper on one of many world literature topics. This paper will consist of a world literature research paper, using one or more of the works covered in Part I of the IB English A HL Literature curriculum, along with a collection of supervised writings and reflections by the individual student. The presentation will consist of an Interactive Oral Commentary (IOC), which will involve interactive dialogue between the student and the IB English A HL Literature instructors. As with the IB diploma and certificate candidates, the product and portfolio requirements will be modified to meet the unique parameters of the English A HL Literature components.
 - IB course candidates who are not enrolled in IB English A HL Literature will complete their graduation project requirements in their English III Honors and English IV Honors classes.

Unsuccessful Completion

Students who do not successfully complete English III due to the research paper will be required to attend credit recovery. Students will be required to complete all of the necessary components of the research paper in order to fulfill course requirements. The Graduation Project Committee will generate guidelines for the students to follow. The Graduation Project Committee will also assess each phase of the research paper process in order to ensure that the research paper and its components are satisfactory. After the completion of credit recovery, the student will be given a pass "P" or fail "F" that will be on the transcript.

Roles and Responsibilities of Selected Personnel

Graduation Project Coordinator:

- Coordinate and monitor all phases of the project.
- Maintain a calendar of events each school year.
- Conduct meetings with teachers/students as needed.
- Serve as a liaison between the school and community.
- Provide professional development for the Presentation Review Panel on rubrics.

Graduation Project Committee:

- Assist in selection of the Presentation Review Panel.
- Procure names of mentors from students' proposals and send the school administrator names of acceptable mentors to begin any necessary background checks.
- Assist Graduation Project Coordinator with any issues that may occur.
- Assist the academic teacher in the approval of Graduation Project Proposals.

Mentors:

- Allocate time and make arrangements to work with the student on the project.
- Offer suggestions to students for obtaining research.
- Advise students with the creation of their products.
- Keep check in progress of Graduation Project components.
- Provide accurate and honest verification of the student's work.

Presentation Review Panel:

- Attend professional development on rubrics.
- Provide feedback on students' completed products.
- Evaluate student presentations.

Roles and Responsibilities of Students

Through the completion of the graduation project, students can select an area of interest and sharpen their focus on a specific topic to develop. The completed project can serve a variety of purposes for the students as they pursue their goals whether they include post-secondary studies or entry into the workforce.

Most of the project will be completed without the daily supervision of classroom teachers. It is essential that students take full ownership of this opportunity involving the culminating project. All work presented for the project will be assumed to be the student's own work. The student responsibilities are defined below:

- Select a viable project.
- Complete all components of the Graduation Project successfully: research paper, product, portfolio, and presentation.
- Work on their Graduation Project individually, unless there are approved special circumstances.
- Obtain a suitable mentor for the Graduation Project with the support of their academic teacher and Graduation Project Committee.
- Submit all documentation and paperwork by the prescribed deadlines.
- Seek advice and assistance when needed.
- Maintain all necessary documentation with the Graduation Project.
- Identify and maintain regular contact with the English teacher and assigned mentor during the development of the Graduation Project.
- Research and write an interest-based research paper with the specified guidelines.
- Complete and document all mentor and product logs accurately.
- Prepare a portfolio documenting all work and making the portfolio accessible to the Presentation Review Panel.
- Present a presentation to the Presentation Review Panel that is evaluated as satisfactory by the panel and the academic teacher.

Research Paper

Junior Year

Research Paper Information

What is the paper?

The research paper is an interest-based paper that is completed the junior year of high school through the English III class. For example, if the student has an interest in helping with abused or neglected animals, then his or her research paper may focus on the issue of animal cruelty within the United States. Student must get their topic approved prior to writing the final paper. All drafts of the paper, including any process work, will be turned in on specific due dates that will be given to the student at the beginning of their junior year.

How will the paper be graded?

The components of the research paper for example, pre-writing, drafts, note cards, etc. will be counted within the nine weeks grades. The final research paper will as 10% of the overall grade. Teachers must attempt to inform parents if the student is not making satisfactory progress towards completing the Graduation Project. Parent contact attempts may include, but not limited to phone calls, emails, parent conference, progress reports, and/or nine-week report cards.

Research Paper Specifications

Format Specifications:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MLA Documentation style
Style:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 point Times New Roman font • Double-spaced
Length:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors classes: Body of paper; 7 – 9 pages • Regular classes: Body of paper; 4 – 6 pages
Margins:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-inch margins: top, both sides, and bottom
Prewriting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence of prewriting (Example: outlines, thinking maps, etc.)
Heading:	<p>The following information should be in the upper-left hand corner of the first page double-spaced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Name • Teacher Name • Course • Date (day, month, year)
Paper Title:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centered on the first page of the paper • Double-space after the last line of the heading and title • Use initial caps only to capitalize important words • No underlining, quotation marks, or bold print
Page Numbers:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student’s last name and page number must be in the upper, right-hand corner of each page (Example: Smith 1, Smith 2)
Works Cited:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document must be double-spaced. • All entries must be in alphabetical order according to MLA guidelines • Periods should be at the end of each citation
Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Honors classes: 8 – 10 sources cited • Regular classes: 5 – 7 sources cited
Citations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All citations must be properly formatted according to MLA style • Any fact used to back up the central point of the paper must be documented, whether the fact is directly quoted or in the student’s own words
Page Order:	<p>The paper must follow this order:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prewriting • Paper • Works Cited Page(s)

Research Paper Rubric

The provided rubric will be used to assess the research paper. It is extremely important that all parents and students be familiar with the rubrics. The following are the descriptors for each level of performance, which indicates what is expected on specific criteria.

4 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency.

3 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency.

2 POINTS – Students performing at this level have not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.

1 POINT – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project.

0 POINTS – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

Research Paper Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Focus	Presents an insightful and focused thesis statement.	Presents a thesis statement with adequate insight and focus.	Presents a thesis statement with minimal insight and focus.	Presents a thesis statement with no insight or focus.	Fails to submit paper.
	Draws strong and clear connections between the thesis and significant related ideas.	Draws adequate connections between thesis and related ideas.	Draws insufficient connections between thesis and related ideas.	Shows no understanding of connections between thesis and related ideas.	Fails to submit paper.
Organization	Effectively provides a logical progression of related ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.	Adequately provides a progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.	Provides a poorly organized progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.	Does not provide a progression of ideas and supporting information in the body of the paper.	Fails to submit paper.
	Arrives at a well-documented, logical conclusion, involving critical thinking.	Arrives at a well-documented, logical conclusion, involving critical thinking.	Arrives at an insufficiently documented conclusion.	Does not arrive at a documented conclusion.	Fails to submit paper.

Research Paper Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Support/ Elaboration	Effectively synthesizes complex ideas from research sources.	Sufficiently synthesizes ideas from research sources.	Ineffectively synthesizes ideas from research sources.	No evidence of synthesizing ideas from research sources.	Fails to submit paper.
	Consistently draws clear links between supporting ideas and the thesis statement.	Sufficiently draws links between supporting ideas and the thesis statement.	Insufficiently draws links between supporting ideas and the thesis statement.	Does not draw links between supporting ideas and the thesis statement.	Fails to submit paper.
	Provides a meaningful presentation of multiple perspectives.	Provides an adequate presentation of multiple perspectives.	Provides a limited presentation of multiple perspectives.	Does not present multiple perspectives.	Fails to submit paper.
	Effectively balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing.	Adequately balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing.	Insufficiently balances use of quotations and student paraphrasing.	Does not balance use of quotations and student paraphrasing.	Fails to submit paper.

Research Paper Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Style	Exhibits skillful use of language, including effective word choice, clarity, and consistent voice.	Exhibits good use of language, including some mastery of word choice, clarity, and consistent voice.	Exhibits ineffective use of language, including weak word choice, limited clarity, and inconsistent voice.	Exhibits severely flawed use of language, including weak word choice, no clarity, and no voice.	Fails to submit paper.
	Demonstrates exceptional fluency through varied sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.	Demonstrates sufficient fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.	Demonstrates limited fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.	Lacks fluency through sentence structure, paragraphing, flow of ideas, and transitions.	Fails to submit paper.
Conventions	Demonstrates a sophisticated use of the prescribed format (MLA), including title page, pagination, and margins.	Demonstrates adequate use of the prescribed format (MLA), including title page, pagination, and margins.	Demonstrates limited use of the prescribed format (MLA), including title page, pagination, and margins.	Demonstrates no use of the prescribed format (MLA), including title page, pagination, and margins.	Fails to submit paper.
	Demonstrates a sophisticated use of citations in the prescribed format (MLA).	Demonstrates adequate use of citations in prescribed format (MLA).	Demonstrates limited use of citations in the prescribed format (MLA).	Demonstrates no use of citations in the prescribed format (MLA).	Fails to submit paper.
	Consistently uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.	Generally uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.	Minimally uses standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.	Does not use standard writing conventions in grammar, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.	Fails to submit a paper.

Research Paper Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Information Literacy	Effectively employs an extensive variety of sources, including a significant amount of current information.	Adequately employs a sufficient variety of sources including a sufficient amount of current information.	Employs a limited variety of sources including an insufficient amount of current information.	Does not employ a variety of sources and/or does not include current information.	Fails to submit paper.
	Demonstrates strong evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.	Demonstrates sufficient evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.	Demonstrates limited evaluation skills in determining resource credibility and reliability.	Demonstrates no evaluation skills to determine resource credibility and reliability.	Fails to submit paper.

Please Note:

Any type of plagiarism in the final research paper will receive a grade of zero.

Research-Based Product

Senior Year

Research-Based Product Information

What is a research-based product?

The research-based product represents a hands-on experience dealing with some aspect of the research topic. It is an extension of the research paper that demonstrates learning and mastery of the topic. Extending off of the example topic given in the research-based paper about neglected animals, a student could plan, organize, and implement a service project for the local animal shelter for their research-based product. The research-based product may be a physical or a non-physical product.

The research-based product should be new to the student or perhaps an extension of the student's prior knowledge. After the completion of the product, the student will be able to demonstrate learning gained through the journey of the Graduation Project. Students will create diverse and unique products that vary from student to student.

Any fundraising will require approval from the school administrator. The student will follow school and district policy for receiving and disbursing money. A letter must be submitted to the official organization for which the student is raising funds indicating that all monies collected in the fundraiser will go to that particular organization.

Examples of products:

- **Physical** - A product can be a physical item that requires a minimum of 15 hours to build or create. This type of product is appropriate for fields like automotive technology, landscape design, construction trades, aesthetic arts, and any other hands-on field.
- **Experimental/Teaching** - Some students work with professionals in fields where field research is appropriate. A student may work with a mentor to set up an experiment based on a concept of interest. The tangible results may vary and include forms such as surveys, experiment data, lessons, psychological surveys, etc. This type of product often requires the most explanation on the part of the student and flexibility on the part of the judges.
- **Performance** - Some students choose to work on a performance piece for the product. The time spent perfecting the performance selection should be obvious in the performance. This field includes many of the fine arts of music, art, and drama but may involve other areas of interest too. The judges will acknowledge that sometimes the performance is not polished because the student has learned a brand new skill.
- **School/Community Service/Improvement** - Students may elect to plan and design a product that will provide a service or improve a function within the school or community. For example, a student may plan and design a youth program for this type of product.

Research-Based Product Information (Cont'd)

- **Entrepreneurship** - Students who have a genuine interest in business and/or marketing may choose to create a product in this category. Such products might involve a marketing process, inventing a new product, or developing a new business.
- **Personal Interest** - Some students choose to examine and expand upon hobbies and interests. For example, a student may want to research a particular hereditary disease or condition, investigate a specific career path, or create and compile a furniture design portfolio. It is imperative that students working in this category remember that in order to show a learning stretch, they must research and create the product in a new and challenging manner.

How will the product be graded?

The research-based product will count as 10% of their overall grade in English IV. Presentation Review Panel recommendation will be considered in determination of the overall grade. The academic teacher will determine the final grade. Teachers must attempt to inform parents if the student is not making progress towards completing the Graduation Project. Parent contact attempts may include, but not limited to phone calls, emails, parent conference, progress reports, and/or nine-week report cards.

Research-Based Product Guidelines

- The product must be student generated. For example, students cannot purchase a model kit to assemble as a product.
- The product must be an extension of the research paper that the student produced in their junior year.
- The product may not be a recycled version of an earlier project from previous classes or years. The product should be a new effort for the student.
- Timeline Requirements:
 - A minimum of 15 hours of fieldwork outside of the regular classroom is required for the product. This may not include time spent on the research. At least 8 hours will have to be documented to show evidence of mentor meetings.
- Students must have the product approved and a mentor assigned before he or she may begin logging hours of fieldwork.
- The student should have a mentor to guide and assist with the product.
- If the product that the student chooses requires a significant expenditure of funds, the student may want to select another choice of product. The State of North Carolina and/or Lenoir County Public Schools will not provide funding for Graduation Projects. Significant expenditure of funds will not enhance the student's evaluation of the product or project.
- Evidence:
 - Product completion evidence will be kept in the portfolio and documented in the Product Log. The student will need to complete an entry in their log for each occasion he or she works on the product.
 - Physical evidence will be the actual product or visual documentation of the progress of the product. (Examples: videotape, photos, receipts, printed correspondence, and/or certificates of completion.)
- Reflection:
 - The student must describe the steps taken to complete the product, and details of the learning gained by completing the product. Students may want to include statements about obstacles that they encountered and how they dealt with those obstacles as well as any successes they encountered.

Research-Based Product Rubric

The provided rubric will be used to assess the research-based product. It is extremely important that all parents and students be familiar with the rubrics. The following are the descriptors for each level of performance, which indicates what is expected on specific criteria.

4 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency.

3 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency.

2 POINTS – Students performing at this level have not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.

1 POINT – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project.

0 POINTS – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

Research-Based Product Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Time (A minimum of 15 hours with 8 hours being mentor meetings)	Meets or exceeds number of recommended hours.	Completes 10 of the recommended hours.	Meets less than 10 of the recommended hours (minimum of 5 hours).	Shows evidence of little to no hours invested.	Fails to submit product.
	Demonstrates effective time management.	Demonstrates sufficient use of time management.	Demonstrates minimum use of time management.	Demonstrates no use of time management.	Fails to submit product.
Learning Over Time and Depth of Knowledge	Chooses a challenging product representing a significant learning over time.	Chooses a product representing a sufficient learning over time.	Chooses a product representing limited learning over time.	Chooses a product with no learning over time.	Fails to submit product.
	Demonstrates a logical and relevant link to the research topic.	Demonstrates an adequate and relevant link to the research topic.	Demonstrates a minimal link to research topic.	Shows no link to the research topic.	Fails to submit product.
	Demonstrates critical analysis of research in producing an original product.	Demonstrates reasonable evaluation of research in producing an original product.	Demonstrates limited understanding of research in producing original product.	Demonstrates no understanding of research in producing original product.	Fails to submit product.
	Demonstrates significant creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem-solving.	Demonstrates sufficient creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem-solving.	Demonstrates limited creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem-solving.	Demonstrates no evidence of creative thinking, decision-making, reasoning, and/or problem-solving.	Fails to submit product.

Research-Based Product Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Quality of Work/Effort	Exhibits creative and exceptional results using talents, abilities and varied resources.	Exhibits adequate results using talents, abilities and varied resources.	Exhibits ineffective results using talents, abilities and varied resources.	Exhibits unacceptable or no results.	Fails to submit product.
	Displays extensive use of detail.	Displays sufficient use of detail.	Displays minimum use of detail.	Lacks use of detail.	Fails to submit product.
	Shows evidence of consistent self-directed actions.	Shows evidence of requiring some prompting for self-directed actions.	Shows evidence of requiring continuous prompting for actions.	Shows no evidence of self-directed actions.	Fails to submit product.
	Displays evidence of exceptional technical skills.	Displays evidence of competent technical skills.	Displays evidence of minimal technical skills.	Displays no evidence of technical skills.	Fails to submit product.
Ethics	Consistently demonstrates ethical standards in product development.	Generally demonstrates ethical standards in product development.	Demonstrates limited understanding and application of ethical standards in product development.	Demonstrates unethical standards in product development.	Fails to submit product.

Portfolio

Senior Year

Portfolio Information

What is a portfolio?

The portfolio is documented evidence of activities associated with the project. It will be a record of the student's process and progress through all the steps of the Graduation Project. The portfolio will be kept in a binder, which will show a collection of work and/or materials throughout this two-year project.

Portfolio Requirements:

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Expectation Agreement
- Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Proposal
- Research Paper
- Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Product Description
- Mentor Agreement
- Mentor Logs
- Product Logs
- Documentation/Evidence of Product (pictures, work samples, notes, etc.)
- Product Reflection
- Copy of presentation; if applicable

How will the portfolio be graded?

The portfolio will count as 5% of their overall grade in English IV. Teachers must attempt to inform parents if the student is not making progress towards completing the Graduation Project. Parent contact attempts may include, but not limited to phone calls, emails, parent conference, progress reports, and/or nine-week report cards.

Portfolio Rubric

The provided rubric will be used to assess the portfolio. It is extremely important that all parents and students be familiar with the rubrics. The following are the descriptors for each level of performance, which indicates what is expected on specific criteria.

4 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency. Exemplary work implies that the student has exceeded expectations in every way and has presented a model Graduation Project worthy of showcasing and emulating.

3 POINTS– Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency. Satisfactory work implies that the student has worked diligently to do strong work on all components and has presented a worthy Graduation Project.

2 POINTS – Students performing at this level have not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency. Developing/emerging work implies that the student has more work to do to present satisfactory work in order to complete the Graduation Project.

1 POINT – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project. Resubmission implies that the student has considerable work to do to complete the Graduation Project and is in need of coaching in order to do so.

0 POINTS – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

Portfolio Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Format/ Appearance	Adheres to all guidelines for portfolio appearance.	Adheres to most guidelines for portfolio appearance.	Adheres to some guidelines for portfolio appearance.	Does not adhere to guidelines for portfolio appearance.	Fails to submit portfolio.
Organization	Exhibits exceptional organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.	Exhibits sufficient organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.	Exhibits minimal organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.	Exhibits no organizational skills in compilation of portfolio.	Fails to submit portfolio.
Completeness	Meets all requirements for portfolio contents.	Meets most requirements for portfolio contents.	Meets some requirements for portfolio contents.	Does not meet requirements for portfolio contents.	Fails to submit portfolio.
Student Growth	Demonstrates exceptional depth in academic and/or personal growth.	Demonstrates sufficient depth in academic and/or personal growth.	Demonstrates limited depth in academic and/or personal growth.	Does not demonstrate depth in academic and/or personal growth.	Fails to submit portfolio.
Student Reflection	Reveals exceptional insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.	Reveals sufficient insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.	Reveals limited insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.	Reveals no insight into how the student anticipated changes and dealt with contingencies.	Fails to submit portfolio.

Presentation

Senior Year

Presentation Information

What is the presentation?

The presentation is the final part of the Graduation Project. Students will present the conclusion of his or her work the Project Review Panel. The Presentation Review Panel will assess the student's Graduation Project Presentation.

Presentation Review Panel Criteria:

- Must be 21 years of age or older.
- Must not be directly related to the presenting student.
- May be a staff member.
- All Presentation Review Panel members must attend a training session.

The presentation will consist of an 8 – 10 minute speech on his or her research paper, the created product, why he or she chose that particular project, obstacles and/or successes that the student encountered during the project, and what personal value was gained from completing the project. The presentation is set up to be reflective to the student on what he or she as accomplished.

The presentation must include an effective visual aid. After the oral presentation, the student must be prepared to answer any questions from the Presentation Review Panel relating to the different components of the project.

How is the presentation graded?

The presentation will count as 10% of their overall grade in English IV. Presentation Review Panel recommendation will be considered in determination of the overall grade. The academic teacher will determine the final grade.

Presentation Rubric

The provided rubric will be used to assess the portfolio. It is extremely important that all parents and students be familiar with the rubrics. The following are the descriptors for each level of performance, which indicates what is expected on specific criteria.

4 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a superior level beyond the level, which is required for proficiency.

3 POINTS – Students performing at this level perform all components at a consistent level and demonstrate acceptable proficiency.

2 POINTS – Students performing at this level have not shown sufficient proficiency in all components and have not achieved adequate proficiency.

1 POINT – Students performing at this level have not achieved proficiency in all components and have not met the minimum standards for completion of the Graduation Project.

0 POINTS – Student did not submit evidence of any effort completed for the designated task.

Presentation Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Communication Skills	Consistently speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation.	Generally speaks with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation.	Has difficulty speaking with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation.	Does not speak with appropriate volume, tone, and articulation.	Fails to make presentation.
	Consistently employs appropriate eye contact and posture.	Frequently employs appropriate eye contact and posture.	Employs infrequent eye contact and/or poor posture.	Makes no eye contact.	Fails to make presentation.
	Consistently employs appropriate nonverbal communication techniques.	Adequately employs appropriate nonverbal communication techniques.	Employs limited nonverbal communication techniques.	Does not employ nonverbal communication techniques.	Fails to make presentation.
	Consistently exhibits poise, enthusiasm, and confidence.	Generally exhibits poise, enthusiasm, and confidence.	Exhibits limited poise, enthusiasm, and confidence.	Lacks poise, enthusiasm, and confidence.	Fails to make presentation.
	Consistently employs standard grammar.	Generally employs standard grammar.	Infrequently employs standard grammar.	Does not employ standard grammar.	Fails to make presentation.
	Adheres to prescribed time guidelines.		Violates prescribed time guidelines.		Fails to make presentation.
	Wears appropriate relevant attire.		Wears inappropriate attire.		Fails to make presentation.
	Employs creative use of visual aids (PowerPoint, physical product, etc.) that enrich or reinforce presentation.	Employs appropriate visual aids (PowerPoint, physical product, etc.) that relate to presentation.	Employs ineffective visual aids.	Uses no visual aids.	Fails to make presentation.

Presentation Rubric (Cont'd)

	Successful Completion		Has Not Completed		
	(4 points)	(3 points)	(2 points)	(1 point)	(0 points)
Content and Coherence	Effectively defines a main idea and clearly adheres to its purpose throughout presentation.	Adequately defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation.	Insufficiently defines a main idea and adheres to its purpose throughout presentation.	Does not define a main idea or adhere to its purpose.	Fails to make presentation.
	Employs a logical and engaging sequence that the audience can follow.	Employs a logical sequence that the audience can follow.	Employs an ineffective sequence confusing to the audience.	Lacks an organizational sequence.	Fails to make presentation.
	Demonstrates exceptional use of supporting details/evidence.	Demonstrates sufficient use of supporting details/evidence.	Demonstrates insufficient supporting details/evidence.	Demonstrates no supporting details/evidence.	Fails to make presentation.
Self Reflection	Offers an insightful reflection of the project process.	Offers a clear reflection of the project process.	Offers a reflection of the project process.	Fails to offer a reflection of the project process.	Fails to make presentation.
	Reflects on successes and challenges with exceptional depth and insight.	Reflects on successes and challenges with sufficient depth and insight.	Reflects on successes and challenges with limited depth and insight.	Does not reflect on successes and challenges with depth or insight.	Fails to make presentation.
	Extensively reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.	Generally reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.	Minimally reflects on the collaboration with the mentor.	Fails to reflect on the collaboration with the mentor.	Fails to make presentation.
Extemporaneous Responses	Confidently, politely, and accurately responds to judges' questions and comments.	Politely and accurately responds to judges' questions and comments.	Ineffectively responds to judges' questions and comments.	Unacceptably responds/does not respond to judges' questions and comments.	Fails to make presentation.

Forms and

Permission Slips

Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Expectation Agreement

Description: Lenoir County Public Schools' Graduation Project is a multi-year culminating project.

Student Requirements: LCPS Graduation Project includes:

- A research paper
- A product
- A portfolio
- A presentation

The Project: Requirements of the project include:

- Knowledge and skills attained from courses.
- Involvement of academic teacher and/or mentor assistance and interviews.
- Management of time.
- Responsibility of individual's work.

The Student: Students will:

- Develop a written proposal to be approved by the English III teacher.
- Select and research a topic of interest, develop a research paper, and complete a product that is reflective of the LCPS Graduation Project topic.
- Write, speak, solve problems, and use real life skills, such as time management and organization.
- Work with the academic teacher and mentor in collaboration with other community partners, business representatives, and other school-based personnel in the development of the LCPS Graduation Project.
- Turn in a completed research paper, product, portfolio, and other evidence at the time designated by the academic teacher.
- Present the completed components of the LCPS Graduation Project before a review panel composed of teachers, community partners, business representatives, and/or other school personnel.

I, _____, have read and understand the above requirements involving the Lenoir County Public Schools' Graduation Project. I agree to abide by the requirements. I will conduct myself with the utmost professionalism in working with school and community leaders. I understand that it is necessary for me to work with my mentor, if applicable, outside of regular school hours. I realize that my success will depend on my ability to work between school and community resources. I understand that each Lenoir County Public Schools' Graduation Project component (paper, product, portfolio, and presentation) is a major part of my Junior and Senior English courses. Each component of the LCPS Graduation Project depends on the other three components. I understand that in order to complete the entire LCPS Graduation Project I must successfully complete all components.

Student Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Lenoir County Public Schools Plagiarism

According to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 7th Ed., plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following behaviors:

- Taking someone else's paper and submitting it as if it were one's own paper.
- Not giving someone credit when copying exactly or paraphrasing someone else's words, or
- Using someone else's ideas or arguments without giving him or her credit. (56-57)

Lenoir County Public Schools regards plagiarism as a very serious discipline offense. Although it is the teacher's responsibility to provide instruction concerning documentation procedures, ultimately, academic honesty is the student's responsibility. If plagiarism appears in the final paper or product, the student will receive a grade of zero and be subject to disciplinary action according to the LCPS Student Code of Conduct.

My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the above procedure on plagiarism, and I agree to follow the guidelines as stated.

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Proposal

This form must be submitted and approved by the student's English III teacher and a parent/guardian.

1. Describe the topic that you plan to research and the content area focus to which it aligns.

2. Why are you interested in this topic?

3. Have you had any previous experience(s) related to this topic? If so, what were they?

4. What do you hope to gain from your research investigation?

5. How does this topic relate to your career goals?

6. What kind of product do you propose to present with your research?

I have discussed with my parent/guardian the responsibilities associated with the Lenoir County Graduation Project. My parents/guardians are aware that this may require work outside the school setting. Also, they are aware that I will be working on a research paper, a project, a portfolio, and a presentation.

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

Student Signature and Date

English III Teacher Signature

Approval Date

Lenoir County Public Schools
Graduation Project

Mentor Application
(Please print or type)

A Graduation Project Mentor is a responsible individual who has expertise and experience with a particular project topic and accepts the following responsibilities:

- Allocates time (a minimum of 8 hours) and makes arrangements to work with the student on the project.
- Offer suggestions to students for obtaining research.
- Advise students with the creation of their products.
- Keep check in progress of Graduation Project components.
- Provides accurate and honest verification of the student's work.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email Address (optional): _____

Area of expertise related to the Graduation Project: _____

Job Title: _____

Employer: _____

Employer's Address: _____

Have you ever been convicted or pleaded *nolo contendere* (no Contest) to any violation of the law other than minor traffic tickets? Yes No

Do you have criminal charges or procedures pending? Yes No

I understand the responsibility entrusted to me as a Graduation Project Mentor and I acknowledge that I will be required to submit a National Background Check.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student Name (if known): _____

Student's School: _____

Mentor Letter

(Will need to be put on an official school letterhead)

Date

Dear _____,

_____ High School greatly appreciates your willingness to serve as a graduation project student mentor. You have been selected because your expertise, experience, and guidance are essential for the learning process in the student's selected topic.

It is the policy of Lenoir County Public Schools that the safety of our students is ensured by performing a criminal history/background check on all potential mentors who are not current federal, state, or local government employees. Attached you will find a consent form to perform the background check. This will be at no cost to you. Please completely fill out the attached form and return to our district office using the self-addressed envelope by _____.

If you are a current federal, state, or local government employee, please provide written proof through a letter from your direct supervisor on official letterhead. This too should be returned to the district office using the self-addressed envelope.

Again, your efforts and time to add to the learning experience and development of our students are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Principal's Name/Title
School Name

**Lenoir County Public Schools
Graduation Project Mentor Log**

Student _____

Topic _____

Mentor _____

Date	Purpose of Interaction	Recommendation	Initials

Lenoir County Public Schools
Graduation Project Product Description

This form must be submitted and approved by the student’s English IV teacher and a parent/guardian prior to beginning the product. The minimum 15-hour product is a major grade in the English IV course. Answers to the following questions should be written in complete sentences using standard grammar.

1. Write a summary of your LCPS Graduation Project research paper.

2. Explain in **detail** how you will spend a minimum of 15 hours creating your product. Remember the product’s purpose is to show what you learned during this time.

3. What resources will you need to complete the product? (Ex. transportation, supplies, computer access, etc.)

4. Explain how your product relates to your research.

Approve

Not Approved

English IV Teacher Signature and Date

Student Signature and Date

Parent/Guardian Signature and Date

Lenoir County Public Schools Graduation Project Product Log

This form may be submitted typed or written in black or blue ink.

Student: _____

Topic: _____

Mentor: _____

Date	Activity Description	Hours	What do I need to do next?	Mentor/Parent Initials

This is a truthful account of the time I worked on my Product.

Student Signature: _____

Total Work Time: _____

Mentor Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

