GCSD
Generic School Letterhead
Generic Central School District

Generic High School
123 Learning Street
Education, NY 12345

Phone: 315-555-5555
Fax: 315-555-5555
www.gcschools.org

What is the Senior Capstone Project?

Senior Capstone Projects (SCPs) address a challenge or strengthen an asset in a community of choice using skills and knowledge developed through cross-curricular learning experiences and civic engagement. SCPs bring provocative ideas to light and use the arts as a catalyst or tool for change. The SCP is in essence, the authentic assessment of what it means to be an "artist-scholar" and the manifestation of our mission:

We are artist-scholars who analyze issues impacting humanity for the purpose of becoming an engaged community inspired to CREATE.

What is the process?

Starting in the freshman year of high school, students begin exploring "issues impacting humanity for the purpose of becoming an engaged community inspired to CREATE". In their junior year, all arts majors write a "Letter of Intent" (LOI) within their arts major trimester 3. Students whose LOIs are selected by our school leadership team are placed in a grant writing course Trimester 1 of their senior year. After completing grant proposals, these students present their work in front of a panel of judges in February from all sectors and locations. This finalist committee selects projects deemed feasible, allocates funding, and provides kind, specific, and helpful feedback. Trimester 3, selected projects manifest in arts major courses in the form of committees such that all students participate in an SCP's manifestation, documentation, and impact.

Students who successfully complete their funded senior projects exemplify what it means to be an "artist-scholar". They have a sound academic and artistic record, and embody the tenets of our Habits of the Graduate - commit, reflection, envision, act, trust, and excel, and our shared values.

- Dance to Freedom: original choreography depicting the Black experience fighting for freedom in America
- Raw & Unfiltered: a mural project on the topic of positive body image
- Look Up: floor decals for our campus that address low self-esteem
- Transit Desert: a poster/t-shirt campaign focused on the lack of adequate transportation in the Rockaways
- Project Spark: a workshop series focused on the impact of music on mental health, and
- DIY IT to Survive It: community based workshops inspired by inequity in the Rockaways related to access to PEE

Selected projects are celebrated at an end of year Showcase and one project is selected annually by Dr. Linda Nathan to receive the Rob Maitra CREATE Award. This award is given to a project she deems as making a considerable impact in a community through artistry and scholarship. The scholarship amount is $500.

Example finalist presentations can be viewed here.

Our first inaugural recipient of the Rob Maitra CREATE Award was "Look Up".

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How will students be assessed?

Projects are evaluated by using a rubric or scoring guide in the following areas:

- Idea (Skill Application, Feasibility, Impact and Clarity)
- Writing
- Presentation

What is the Vision?

The vision for the Senior Capstone Project (SCP) is to have students claim their place as an artist in the community by having an innovative, worthwhile and workable idea that is mutually beneficial by relating to the students' identity and their community.

Students engage in an internal transition by using skills and knowledge they have accumulated in four years in a new way. Students engage in an external transition by preparing for a world outside of HUM IV.

Through committing time and resources to SCP, the HUM IV community works to present graduating students as capable artists and scholars, train viable professionals, encourage entrepreneurship, develop artist-citizens, hold itself accountable internally and externally, and retain its traditions.

What is the History to the Senior Capstone Project?

The concept of the Senior Capstone Project originates from Boston Arts Academy's "Senior Grant Project". The curriculum has been designed collaboratively and will help frame our shared work (both artistic and academic).

What are the Goals?

- Student Goals:
    - To prove graduation credentials by demonstrating the ability to apply cumulative learned knowledge across various content areas, but specifically in history, research, writing, and the arts.
    - To demonstrate self-advocacy skills (professionalism, articulation, artistic and scholarship credibility) to an outside audience of professionals
    - To prepare for life after high school via real-world experiences related to forming partnerships, collaboration, civic engagement, event-planning, critique, and presentation
    - To design and experience ways that one can make a contribution to society as an “artist-scholar”
    - To write in concise, descriptive and persuasive language
- School Goals:
    - To wrestle with a shared cross-curricular experience as a sounding board for our work together
    - To model the redesign of a “high stakes” exit benchmark
    - To open up our practice to public accountability
    - To distinguish ourselves through innovation as we grow in this Key Design Element
    - To engage and service the community beyond our walls