

The WHS Senior Capstone is an opportunity for Windham High School students to independently design, implement, and exhibit their learning on a topic or subject that they are passionate about or deeply interested in. The project also provides an opportunity for students to identify and tackle an issue in their local or global communities.

Through this experience, the student will learn:

- to make their own choices regarding their topic of education
- how to interact with community members on a professional level,
- how to make contacts in a potential career option, and
- how people in the industry continue to serve their community through their work.

The project stresses the importance of making a connection with local mentors and uses learning experiences that occur outside of the four walls of Windham High School. Completion of the Senior Capstone Project is a WHS graduation requirement.

Student Name:

Topic:

Essential Question:

Community Service:

Community Contact Name (someone in the field of your Capstone topic who has experience. This is a person who you will interview to help you answer your essential question. An employee of RSU 14 or a family member is not considered a community contact unless given special permission): NAME OF COMMUNITY CONTACT IS:

Community Contact Email:

Need help? Check in with these WHS staff members:

- Lorraine Glowczak, *Director of Community Connections*, lglowczak@grsu14.org
- Kerry Kowalczyk, *Career & College Specialist*, kkowalczyk@grsu14.org
- Kristin Freeling, *WHS Librarian*, kfreeling@rsu14.org

Table of Contents

Documentation Checklist and Timeline.....	3
Research Timesheet.....	4
Annotated Bibliography.....	5
Reflection #1.....	6
Reflection #2.....	8
Capstone Fair.....	11
Rubric.....	12

Documentation Checklist & Timeline

[Helpful check-off list](#) for your convenience and organization

Deadlines	Task
October 1	<p>Submit Capstone Proposal BEFORE starting research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share with Lorraine Glowczak at lglowczak@rsu14.org. DATE APPROVED: _____
Begin immediately	<p>Begin research by gathering relevant and reliable sources related to your topic. Reach out to your community contact.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research should include at least 5 sources (your community contact is one source). • Record your research time in your Timesheet (timesheet below) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ GOAL: 30 hour minimum of combined research and service
November 1	<p>Determine and confirm Service/Volunteer Opportunity _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No hour requirement (4+ hours recommended) but must serve the greater community. • Service for family or a for profit organization is not allowed for this project.
	<p>Locate and confirm Community Contact _____</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask Ms. Glowczak for help if needed.
December 1	<p>Continue your research and create your Annotated Bibliography: 5 sources in MLA format bibliographic citations. (Use of NoodleTools is recommended!)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotation for each source includes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Summary of source ◦ Evaluation (Assessment & Reflection) of source • Record this time in your Timesheet
January 3	<p>Write your <u>first</u> reflection essay. Critical Reflection #1: What are you learning and why does it matter?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write at least two (2) pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font in MLA format. • EXAMPLE REFLECTION 1 (Example #1) • EXAMPLE REFLECTION 1 (Example #2) • EXAMPLE REFLECTION 1 (Example #3)
February 1	<p>If you haven't already done so, complete Service/Volunteer Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Record your time in your Timesheet
March 1	<p>Write your second reflection essay Critical Reflection #2: How can your learning help you or others?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write at least two (2) pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point in MLA format

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Record time in your Timesheet EXAMPLE REFLECTION 2 (Example #1) EXAMPLE REFLECTION 2 (Example #2) EXAMPLE REFLECTION 2 (Example #3)
April 1	Create the visual for your presentation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan, organize, and write script Record your time in your Timesheet
April 10	Present Capstone Presentation at the CAPSTONE FAIR (This option is highly recommended and is the easiest way to present) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Write a thank-you note and send it to your community contact. If you choose not to participate in the Capstone Fair - then choose one of the following: Two Teachers, OR Ms. Glowczak, OR Ms. K, OR one Admin) - Completed: _____

Research Timesheet

*Approximately 30 hours. Can include service hours **but not** time spent completing packets or papers.*

Date	Time Spent	Type of Research (online, email, textbook, shadow, interview, etc.)	Additional Info (who you talked with, what you read about, etc.)

Annotated Bibliography

Krakauer, Jon. "How Chris McCandless Died." *The New Yorker*. 12 Sept. 2023. [Link](#)
2023.

Ever since Krakauer wrote about Chris McCandless' death in Alaska, there has been controversy surrounding his death. In this article, Krakauer examines new evidence regarding the toxicity of wild-potato seeds and concludes that, in spite of the fact that the seeds would not affect anyone who was healthy, someone who was already close to starvation could be susceptible to the incapacitating effects of the seeds. Krakauer's conclusions are based on an account of a type of grass used to feed inmates of a WWII concentration camp. The scientific evidence seems accurate, but the conclusion regarding the seeds' effects on McCandless is still based on conjecture. I think that Krakauer is a biased observer; he is still trying to prove that McCandless was not as foolish as his actions seem to demonstrate. This makes it hard to view this article as entirely accurate. The article is certainly useful in adding to the arguments surrounding McCandless' death, particularly if one wants to prove McCandless was not a fool.

Pollack, H. N., and Al Gore. *A World without Ice*. New York: Avery, 2010. Print.

World Without Ice is a full-length book that describes the impact global warming is having on glaciers and other bodies of ice around the world. The book takes a look at the role ice plays in maintaining the world's current climate and discusses what might happen if climate change continues and the world loses more ice. Much of the research on this topic describes a similar scenario as this book, though the detail and length of this book provide a more in-depth look at the topic. In this book, the author describes the extreme

effects of the loss of ice in the world in ways that shorter articles do not. This source provides excellent data and examples of the profound impact melting ice will have on the world. In particular, this source describes how sea levels will rise dramatically in the next 100 years if we do not curb global warming quickly. If this happens, many of the world's major cities and population centers will be underwater by the time our grandchildren become adults. This resource makes the effects of global warming clear and the data and strong arguments it provides will be useful in demonstrating the importance of glaciers and ice to all of Earth's spheres in my final project.

Capstone Reflection #1

WHAT AM I LEARNING AND WHY DOES IT MATTER?

This is your chance to:

- Pause and reflect on everything you've been learning during your Capstone Project so far.
- Think of it like telling the story of your journey—what you've discovered, how it's changing your thinking, and why it matters to you and possibly your future.
- This isn't just about facts—it's also about *you*.

What's the goal of this reflection?

This is your space to show your research in action. You get to explain what you've been exploring, how it's affected you, and how it connects to the real world.

This is not a report—it's a reflection. That means it should sound like *you* talking about what *you* care about. It's totally okay (and expected!) to use words like "I," "my," and "me."
But it should still be polished, thoughtful writing.

REQUIRED: 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font.

Need help getting started? Use this outline to organize your thoughts (then delete the prompts when you're done):

1. Introduction: Set the stage.

- What is your topic about?
 - Why did you choose this topic?
 - What is your research question?
 - What are three things you learned/discovered from your research?
-

2. First Paragraph: Go deeper with your first discovery that you mentioned in your introduction.

- Start with a **topic sentence** that introduces your first learning.
- Go into some detail about that learning and include **evidence from your research** (cite your sources!).

3. Second Paragraph: Go deeper into your second discovery that you mentioned in your introduction.

- Start with a **topic sentence** that introduces your second learning.
- Go into some detail about that learning and include **evidence from your research** (cite your sources!).

4. Third Paragraph: Go deeper with your third discovery that you mentioned in your introduction.

- Start with a **topic sentence** that introduces your third learning.
- Go into some detail about that learning and include **evidence from your research** (cite your sources!).

5. Fourth Paragraph -

- How has your project changed since your original proposal?
- What was the hardest part? When did you doubt yourself—and how did you keep going?
- What did this project teach you about yourself (as a learner, a worker, or a citizen)?
- How did you grow? (Time management? Confidence? Communication?)
- How might this experience help you after high school?

4. Conclusion: Look ahead.

- What new questions do you have now?
- How might you keep learning or exploring this topic in the future?

Capstone Reflection #2

How Will What I Learned Make a Difference?

This is your second (and final!) reflection for your Capstone project, and it's all about looking ahead.

Think of this as your chance to show how everything you've done—your research, your product, and your community service—comes together to prepare you for what's next.

REQUIRED: 2 pages, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font.

Need a little structure? Here's a simple outline to guide you:

Intro Paragraph: Re-introduce your topic

- Remind your reader what your research topic was and the main question you were trying to answer.
- Share what you discovered—what's the big takeaway?

Body Paragraph #1: How has this project helped you personally?

- Talk about what you learned and the skills you gained.
- How will what I learned help me in the future?
- Will I actually use it? If so, how? If not, why not?

Body Paragraph #2: How can your learning help others or make a difference in the community?

- Describe what you did for your community service
- How did it help someone else?
- What did you learn about giving back?

- Why is giving back to the community an important part of life and community? (USE A SOURCE to back your answer!)

Conclusion: What's next?

- Reflect on the whole experience.
- How has this project changed the way you think, act, or plan for your future?
- Will this lead you down a new path, inspire a goal, or help you make a difference?

Capstone Fair (April 10, 2026)

Things to consider

1. **Think about your audience.** You are presenting to peers, community members, and school staff. Be professional and take pride in your appearance.
2. **Organize your material.** What do you plan to say and how would you like to say it? Write a script for yourself. Use notecards or utilize presenter notes on your computer.
3. **What to include.** You must include a clear introduction explaining your project, your interest, and why you chose it. Use what you synthesized from your reflection essays. Discuss the research process and reflect on what you learned, your challenges, and your strengths in the process. Recognize your community contact and their role.
4. **Avoid information overload.** Too much information in your visual can distract from your presentation. You are teaching the information, use your visual as an aid but not as the main means of communication. Your visual should be interesting, eye-catching, and enhance your presentation. You may have a handout, a poster, a Google Slides presentation, whatever you would like. Get creative! You could complete a demonstration or performance, consider what props and materials will need.

WHS Senior CAPSTONE - Scoring Rubric

Date of Presentation: _____

Student Name: _____

Staff Reviewer: _____

<i>Shows New Learning</i>	<i>Meets Requirement</i>	<i>Does Not Meet</i>	<i>Reviewer Notes:</i>
Demonstrates meaningful learning			
Demonstrates the appropriate level of rigor			

<i>Shows Evidence of Creative and Practical Problem Solving</i>	<i>Meets Requirement</i>	<i>Does Not Meet</i>	<i>Reviewer Notes:</i>
The project shows evidence of planning			
The student is able to evaluate the success of the project			
The student can identify next steps/future options			

<i>Shows Evidence of Being a Clear and Effective Communicator</i>	<i>Meets Requirement</i>	<i>Does Not Meet</i>	<i>Reviewer Notes:</i>
The student is able to respond knowledgeably to questions			
Presentation uses at least one audio or visual aid			

<i>Shows Evidence of Being a Responsible and Involved Citizen</i>	<i>Meets Requirement</i>	<i>Does Not Meet</i>	<i>Reviewer Notes:</i>
Displays an awareness of global or local issues			
Shows evidence they have taken steps to address a local or global issue			

<i>Engages in Critical Reflection</i>	<i>Meets Requirement</i>	<i>Does Not Meet</i>	
The student can explain why their learning is important			
The student can share what they can do with the new learning			