

Susan O'Brien
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Ana V. Ortiz
Superintendent of Schools



Oxford High School
61 Quaker Farms Road
Oxford, CT 06478
(203) 888-2468 Fax (203) 881-5250
Dorothy Potter, Principal
Robert Schumann, Assistant Principal

Dear Oxford High School Seniors and Parents,

This letter is to inform you of requirements for the OHS Senior Capstone program. The core mission of Capstone is to provide each Oxford graduate with a self-determined learning experience outside the school. We encourage you to read and understand the contents of this letter and attachments because Capstone is a graduation requirement.

CAPSTONE OPTIONS

We are excited to provide the following Capstone options. Each option provides students with opportunities to hone their research and analytical skills and/or explore a career interest prior to beginning college or other post-secondary pursuits. One of these three options must be completed in order to graduate:

Capstone Project: 15 hrs of field work, on your own time, mentor collaboration

Capstone Internship: during school, from mid-May till end of school; at a host site; 30 hrs/week

College Course: 3 credit (min.) course at accredited institution, on your own time (subject to approval; core subjects encouraged)

Each option requires unique planning and qualifications. Please see descriptions of the three options on later pages to help with your decision.

FACULTY MENTOR

The senior student's advisory teacher also serves as the student's Capstone faculty mentor. The faculty mentor is a student's primary contact with the Capstone program and he/she helps the student understand requirements, make good choices, and meet deadlines.

COMMUNICATIONS

Each student must join the Capstone 2019 Google Classroom, which will be the primary means of electronic communication with the Capstone program. The Google Classroom will be used to distribute information and deadlines. It is the student's responsibility to monitor and respond to the site.

Google Classroom Code: seiyvzf

Also, each senior student's Advisory teacher is the go-to person for Capstone questions and concerns.

CAPSTONE FAIR

All seniors present their Capstone experience in a required end of year presentation, a Capstone Fair. The format for the presentations is similar to a science fair where each student gives a five minute presentation of the experience and its impacts given by each student. Parents and community members are invited to attend, and students must be prepared to answer questions about their projects. The Capstone Fair is the final assessed portion of Capstone and the final step in completing the requirement. Therefore, the Fair is mandatory for all seniors.

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Students may begin work on the Capstone process immediately. Deadlines do exist. A summary of their intentions is due by December 1, 2018. A formal proposal is due no later than February 1. Again, students may submit proposals and begin work immediately, if they prefer.

Please start thinking and talking at home about your Capstone opportunities and choices. As previous Oxford seniors and many other districts in Connecticut can attest, these expanded options provide students with engaging, hands-on, independent experience that will better prepare them for life after high school. We look forward to learning what you create and discover through these exciting opportunities!

If you have questions, or need help making a decision about which program is best for you, please start with your Advisory teacher. Follow up via email or directly with one of us, the Capstone Committee (info below).

Good luck.

Sincerely,

Adrian Poffenberger, Kristen Collins, Stacy Dzienkiewicz, Andrea McRae, Dawn Poulin
Senior Capstone Committee, Oxford High School

email: poffenbergera@oxfordpublicschools.org

enclosure

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OHS CAPSTONE: Internship

OPTION 1: INTERNSHIP

A **Capstone Internship** is a thirty hour per week unpaid work experience opportunity. Students will select areas of interest and experience a work environment at an employer's location for at least 30 hours per week. Internship hours will be during school hours, therefore students participating in an internship will be exempt from coursework during the internship and will be exempt from final exams. Internships occur during the last few weeks of school (typically mid-May through end of exams). Dates are subject to change due to changes in the academic calendar. Therefore, students must make arrangements with their internship mentor to accommodate changes to the academic calendar.

Those students opting for a Capstone Internship must complete/achieve the following for approval:

- Summary of Intentions due Dec. 1.
- Internship Proposal: delineates student's interest in participating in the Capstone Internship experience, student areas of interest, and evidence of the personal responsibility required for such an undertaking.
- Maintain a minimum 85% overall GPA for all high school coursework or provide written justification for participation.
- Have not failed nor be in danger of failing any senior year course.
- Maintain above average records of discipline and attendance.
- Candidacy review by Oxford staff.
- Internships must take place within Connecticut, and are not allowed for sites where students are employed nor where family members or relatives are involved directly with the internship.

*The Senior Capstone Committee will approve each internship.

*During the internship, students are required to submit a timesheet signed by their internship supervisor.

*All students must complete reflection writing, a written response to prompts asking about various aspects of their experience.

*All students must present their experience at the end of year Capstone Fair.

The student must identify, research, and secure the internship opportunity and make all arrangements with the internship host.

The Capstone Committee must approve your participation. If you are not sure whether you should apply for the Internship, please speak to your School Counselor.

In order to participate in this program, it is your responsibility to meet eligibility requirements and you *must* submit your internship proposal by February 1. Capstone is a graduation requirement.

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OHS CAPSTONE: Project

OPTION 2: SENIOR PROJECT

A **Senior Project** is a self-directed, independent research project on a topic of your choosing that includes working directly with an adult mentor to achieve specific goals. Those students opting for a Senior Project must complete the following for successful completion:

- Summary of Intentions due Dec. 1.
- Project Proposal: delineates the essential question or research you will explore, the learning you will engage in throughout the project, how you will apply a variety of skills and knowledge from several disciplines to complete the project, and the social significance of your work. Where your field work will be done and how the field work supports your objectives.
- Collaboration Plan: the name of your project mentor and/or any other expert you will consult and how their role in the project. Group projects (multiple OHS seniors attempting to satisfy Capstone obligations together) are not allowed.
- Presentation Plan: a detailed explanation and rationale for what you will present at the year-end Capstone Fair in terms of both content and format (poster, video presentation, etc.).
- Field Work: minimum 15 hours of work focused on Senior Capstone Project objectives performed outside of school with a community/project mentor of the student's choosing (not family member or relative).
- All field work and project work (e.g., reflection writing) must be completed by May 1.

*The Senior Capstone Committee will approve each project.

*During the fieldwork portion, students are required to submit a timesheet signed by their project mentor.

*All project students must complete online reflection writing, a written response to a prompt asking about various aspects of their experience.

*All students must present their experience at the end of year Capstone Fair.

In order to meet Capstone requirements, it is your responsibility to meet all project requirements and you *must* submit your project proposal by February 1. Proposals may be submitted at any time (now!) prior to the deadline. Projects can begin as soon as your proposal is approved. Capstone is a graduation requirement.

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OHS CAPSTONE: College Course

OPTION 3: COLLEGE COURSE

Seniors who qualify may elect to satisfy their Capstone requirement by successfully completing a college level course at an accredited institution of higher learning. Courses must be at least 3 credit hours and be in a core subject (social sciences, mathematics, English, science). Courses outside these subject areas require advanced approval. Online courses are acceptable. All obligations, including but not limited to identifying appropriate schools/courses, applications, application fees, tuition and other fees, books, transportation, etc., are the responsibility of the student.

In order to participate in Capstone College, students must accomplish:

- Summary of Intentions due Dec. 1.
- College Course Proposal (due in time for enrollment): describes student's interest in participating in the Senior College experience, intended area of study, institution, how student has understood and met any prerequisites, and evidence of the personal responsibility required for such an undertaking.
- Proof of college acceptance/enrollment.
- Have not failed nor be in danger of failing any senior year course.
- Maintain above average records of discipline and attendance.
- Candidacy review by Oxford staff.
- Score of 'C-' or better in attempted college course: official transcript required.

*The Senior Capstone Committee must approve written proposal.

*All College Course students must complete online reflection writing, a written response to a prompt asking about various aspects of their experience.

*All students must present their experience at the end of year Capstone Fair.

In order to participate in this program, it is your responsibility to meet eligibility requirements and you *must* submit your College Course proposal by December 1. In addition the student must successfully enroll in the course. If you do not attend the course, you will not satisfy Capstone requirements. Capstone is a graduation requirement.