

**Jefferson Morgan School District
Culminating Project
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Jefferson Morgan School District Culminating Project Introduction

The purpose of the culminating project is to teach students how to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information and then communicate that knowledge and understanding.

The Board of Education, Faculty and Administration of the Jefferson-Morgan School District believes that a well prepared project will provide students with the opportunity to engage in higher-level problem solving. It will also allow students to demonstrate initiative and involve them in authentic experiences. Well-planned projects will provide an avenue for creative expression and a demonstration of talents. The entire experience will encourage interaction among peers as well as adults who will advise and mentor students. The project will provide an opportunity for student's proficiency in his/her selected areas.

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education Chapter Four (4) Standards for graduation include: course completion grades, completion of a culminating project and results of state and local assessments of academic standards. With the full cooperation of the Jefferson-Morgan High School Faculty, Administration, and Student Body, the following culminating project will serve as a guide for compliance with the Chapter Four (4) high school project.

The Culminating Project is a requirement for graduation. After successful completion of the project process, the student will receive one credit towards graduation. The project will either be completed individually, or as part of a group, while under advisement of a high school staff member. The project itself will consist of, but not limited to, written, oral and visual demonstrations or presentations. District wide rubrics will be used for project evaluations. Each student must achieve at least a "SATISFACTORY" rating on his or her project from the evaluation committee, and should follow the timeline stated in the Project Plan to be considered a candidate for graduation.

Culminating Project General Outline

Regulations of the Pennsylvania State Board of Education state:

“Requirements for graduation shall include course completion and grades, completion of a culminating project, and results of state and local assessments of academic standards.”

The project overview will begin in eighth grade; briefing in ninth grade and project completion by the end of the third nine weeks of the student’s eleventh grade (junior) year. An exception to this completion date will only be considered after the student petitions the Jefferson- Morgan Design Team for consideration.

The project may include the following components:

1. The work may be grounded in real-life experiences that help solve community or school problems that are relevant to the learner.
2. It may be meaningful to the student.
3. The project is presented in written and oral with visual forms.
4. The project may be a part of a regular on-going class assignment or connected to career-oriented activities so that support and advisement can be provided to the student over the course of the learning experience.
5. The project should be developed over several months to a year.

The general timeline for the project completion is:

- **Freshmen Year/Orientation to the project requirements and narrowing of the topic.**
- **Sophomore Year/Selection and topic approval.**
- **Junior Year/Research, Written Project Completion and Presentation.**

Portfolios

Students may be required to maintain a portfolio representative of their culminating project work. The advisor and mentor will evaluate the portfolio.

Culminating Project Overview

Freshmen will be divided among full-time professional staff with the exception of the Guidance Counselor, Head Teacher and the School District Health Personnel. Once a student has been assigned an advisor, he/she will remain assigned to that advisor until graduation requirements are completed.

Each student will have the responsibility of locating and requesting the assistance of a mentor who will be knowledgeable in the subject of the project. The mentor may be a faculty member, administrator or an expert from a local business, industry or artistic community. The student may not choose an immediate family member as an official mentor for the project, but they certainly may act in an unofficial capacity.

The student may meet with his/her advisor as many times as both agree are necessary.

The procedure for acclimating students and parents to the preparation of the graduation project area is as follows:

➤ **8th Grade Year**

Students will receive an overview of the project in his/her reading class. They will learn about the purpose of the project, the process and the evaluation methods to be used. This overview will be completed by the third nine weeks grading period to allow all students to be familiar with the project.

➤ **Freshman**

Advising will begin in the first nine weeks of the freshman year. Each freshman will select a project subject area.

➤ **Sophomore**

In-depth exploration of the chosen area of interest will take place in the sophomore year. During the sophomore year, the student will select a topic, a mentor and form a written proposal. The advisor, mentor and student must approve the written topic and proposal. If there is a question concerning the chosen topic, the student, the advisor or mentor may appeal to the design team for the appropriateness of the topic for presentation.

➤ **Junior**

The presentation of the project (written, oral with visual) will take place in the second semester of the junior year. Upon a “Satisfactory” presentation of the Culminating Project, the student will receive one credit towards graduation.

Comments and recommendations must accompany each project rated “Unsatisfactory”. An explanation to the student as to why a project was found “Unsatisfactory” must be explicitly outlined in the written remarks made by the review panel. A second review must be satisfactorily completed by the second semester of the senior year. If the project does not pass the final review, the school board policy regarding graduation requirements will be followed. The finalized formal composite evaluation sheet will be presented to the student to be placed in to his/her portfolio.

Parents, advisors and mentors will receive a copy of the scoring guides that will be used by the evaluation panel and are encouraged to monitor, counsel, advise and assist in the student's progress.

Three members of the Jefferson- Morgan faculty will comprise an Evaluation Committee. A student may request that one faculty member be excluded from his/her review panel.

The project review will take place following the final project approval of the advisor. The review will be conducted at a mutually agreed upon site and time, No electronic recording devices will be permitted at the review.

Two weeks prior to the final presentation, the student must submit to the advisor the final written portion of the project. The advisor will then submit the final written portion to the principal for review.

Group presentations (no larger than two (2) students) are appropriate if **each** participant has a specific and unique responsibility as part of the project. The group will function with one (1) Evaluating Committee. **Each** student in the group will be responsible for **an individual paper** with a distinct separate focus as well as being responsible for a specific portion of the oral presentation.

A packet of information will be distributed to any new student who has enrolled in the Jefferson Morgan School District and that student will be responsible for completing the Culminating Project in the Jefferson Morgan School District. If a student transfers into the district with an approved Culminating Project from another district, the Jefferson Morgan Design Team will review the project for approval.

Those students identified as special needs students will receive a high school diploma upon successful demonstration of the standards and criteria as identified in the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). An Assessment Committee will continually review the assessment process and identify options for student achievement.

Culminating Project Timeline

Freshman Year

- ❖ Large group meeting (parent/student)
- ❖ Purpose of the Project
- ❖ Role of the advisor and mentor
- ❖ Overview of the Project
- ❖ How a mentor is selected
- ❖ Selection of an area of interest before December 1 of the Freshman year
- ❖ Begin the research process

Sophomore Year

- ❖ Specific topic and written proposal will be submitted prior to the end of the first semester
- ❖ Continued research and meeting with the advisor and mentor
- ❖ Topic changes may occur with the written approval of the advisor

Junior Year

- ❖ Topic changes will not be permitted beyond September 30th of the Junior year
- ❖ Project completion will occur during this year
- ❖ Students will present the project to the committee during the Junior year
- ❖ Presentation of the project before an Evaluation Committee of three members of the professional staff chosen randomly
- ❖ If the project is deemed “Unsatisfactory”, the project must be revised and re-evaluated in conjunction with the Junior presentations the following year

Culminating Project Student Responsibilities

1. Each student will have the responsibility for locating and requesting the assistance of a mentor who will be knowledgeable in the field of the project.
2. As a preliminary activity, ninth graders will choose an area of interest.
3. A specific topic and written proposal must be submitted prior to the end of the first semester of the sophomore year.
4. The project progress report must be signed by the parent/guardian, advisor and mentor at regularly scheduled intervals.
5. Topic changes will be permitted at the discretion of the advisor, but NO changes will be accepted beyond September 30th of the junior year.
6. The presentation of the project will take place sometime after the approval of the projects as determined by the school district but before the end of the junior year.

7. The student will provide a written copy of the project to the advisor at least two weeks prior to the formal review.
8. At the final review, the student must present a well-organized oral presentation with visual components.
If an “Unsatisfactory” review is received, the second review must be completed the following year in conjunction with the junior presentations.

Culminating Project Role of Advisor

1. A teacher in the Jefferson-Morgan School District assigned to a student to guide the student through the Culminating Project process.
2. Approve the project topic in cooperation with the mentor.
3. Communicate the project time line to the student and emphasize his/her responsibilities and deadlines.
4. Check and maintain appropriate signatures on the Project Progress Report.
5. Meet with the student throughout the school year to guide his/her progress on the project and its processes.
6. Communicate with the school principal and parents regarding the student’s lack of progress on the project.
7. Assist the student in preparing his/her formal presentation.
8. Issue a Deficiency Report to the parent/guardian if satisfactory components are not received on time.
9. Keep records of Deficiency Reports issued to students making unsatisfactory progress.
10. Schedule and attend a conference with the students and parents if Deficiency Reports are not resolved within 2 weeks.
11. Inform the principal of any student deficient at the end of the school year.
12. Collect, organize and maintain all documentation pertaining to the Culminating Project. Format mechanics is evidenced by the correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence and paragraph structure. The Written Component will follow the writing model within the *Writing Resource Handbook* by showing evidence of the Writing Process of:
 - a. Pre-writing
 - b. First, or rough, draft
 - c. Revising/editing
 - d. Publishing
13. After approving the completed project, the advisor will forward final copies with the *Request for Final Review* to the Principal.

Culminating Project Mentor Role

1. Approve the project topic in cooperation with the advisor.
2. Guide the student in his/her search for appropriate and timely human and material resources.
3. Meet with the student throughout the school year to guide his progress on the project and to provide expert information and guidance.
4. Communicate with the advisor when necessary concerning project progress
5. Review the draft and final written portion of the project prior to final submission to the Evaluation Committee.
6. Aid the student's preparation for subsequent reviews when needed.

Culminating Project Evaluation Committee

1. Approve the selection of the student's choice of the Culminating Project mentor by signing the appropriate form.
2. Evaluate the written portion using the appropriate rubric.
- 3.
4. Provide immediate feedback to the student at the conclusion of presentation (written and oral).

Culminating Project Role of Parent/Guardian

1. Approve the selection of the student's choice of Culminating mentor by signing the appropriate form.
2. Indicate that you have seen and reviewed the progress report sent home at regular intervals by signing in the designated area.
3. Guide and assist the student's work through the Culminating Project.

Culminating Project Components, Procedures and Materials

The Culminating Project should be characterized by:

- An investment in time
- Evidence of planning
- Choices which allow a student to show his/her strengths
- Research exhibiting the gathering, analyzing and synthesizing of data from a minimum of five (5) various sources and cited using the MLA documentation guidelines
- A realistic time-line for the completion of the project
- Communication of information obtained in both written and oral components

- Use of technology and cited in the proper format
- Clearly defined assessment criteria prior to initiation of the subject

Four Major Components of the Culminating Project

Planning

- ❖ Background information by researching and exploring
- ❖ Working bibliography (list of five (5) sources) using the MLA Guide
- ❖ Selection of topic
- ❖ Establish a realistic time-line
- ❖ Development of resources *without plagiarism*. Plagiarism is defined as taking and using the work of another writer and representing it as one's own

Development

- ❖ Research using the MLA Guide with a minimum of five (5) various sources. See Appendix for MLA Guide
- ❖ Project paper with properly cited sources
- ❖ Portfolio
- ❖ Final presentation with visual component

Student self-evaluation

- ❖ Student reflection on process

Procedures

- ❖ Assignment of advisor and selection of mentor
- ❖ Discovery of potential projects and identification of needed material, resources and procedures
- ❖ Topic proposal
- ❖ Acceptance of proposal
- ❖ Establish a realistic time frame
- ❖ Initiate project
- ❖ Conduct research
- ❖ Assess progress periodically and adjust procedures with advisor and mentor
- ❖ Conclude project
- ❖ Finalize written and oral presentation with visual component
- ❖ Secure advisor's approval for evaluation
- ❖ Schedule project for evaluation by committee and complete student self-evaluation
- ❖ Revise project if necessary and present for subsequent evaluation
- ❖ Acceptance of project

Suggested Materials/Resources

Library resources	Textbooks	Experiments
Industries/Business	Expert Individuals	
Computer Applications	Other resources as deemed necessary	

OVERVIEW OF THE CULMINATING PROJECT

Student Name _____ Advisor _____

REMINDER: REQUIREMENTS FOR CULMINATING PROJECT

_____ Culminating Project Study Area Selection and Reflection (December 1, freshman year)

_____ Culminating Project Proposal (end of 1st semester, sophomore year)

_____ Culminating Project Proposal Approval (end of 1st semester, sophomore year)

_____ Culminating Project Mentor Approval (end of sophomore year)

All of the following should be completed sometime during the 1st and 2nd nine weeks of the junior year:

_____ Reviewed First Draft of written project (with advisor)

_____ Reviewed Final Draft of the written project (with advisor)

_____ Reviewed Oral Presentation with advisor

_____ Culminating Project Request for Review Panel (end of 2nd nine weeks. Junior year)

_____ one copy of the written project to the advisor at least 2 weeks to the formal review

If requirements aren't being met, notify the principal, send a deficiency notice, document dates and notify parents to set up conference.

**Culminating Project
Subject Area Selection**

Student Name _____

Advisor _____

I have selected the following subject for my culminating project:

I understand that I must submit a specific topic and written proposal for my culminating project prior to the end of the first semester of my sophomore year.

Student's signature _____

I have read the culminating project booklet and I understand the circumstances which my son/daughter will need to undertake to successfully complete this project.

Parent's signature _____

Advisor's signature _____

This form must be completed by December 1 of the freshman year.

Culminating Project
Mentor Approval

Student Name _____

Advisor _____ **Date** _____

I have contacted the following person and he/she agreed to mentor me in the research preparation and presentation of my culminating project.

Mentor's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____ Web Site _____

Area of Expertise _____

Student's signature _____

Mentor's signature _____
(or verification)

Advisor's signature _____

This form must be completed by the end of the sophomore year

Culminating Project
Project Proposal

Project Title

Brief description

1. Project outcomes or objectives

2. Project Content (issues, topics or concepts):

3. Project Completion Strategies (what the student should do/time-line):

4. Examples of resources and materials to use to complete the project task:

This form must be completed prior to the end of the first semester of the sophomore year.

**Culminating Project
Project Proposal Approval**

Name of student _____

Project Title _____

Advisor _____ Mentor _____

Date Submitted _____ Date approved _____

The proposal:

a. describes the project _____

b. states the outcomes of the project _____

c. describes the plan for gathering information/data _____

d. indicates the general presentation format _____

Student signature _____

Advisor signature _____

Suggestions for improvement (if not approved)

Culminating Project Format and Organization of Written Component

The Written Component must be in the following order:

	Component	Page Length
1.	Personal Introduction	1 page
	The paper contains a Personal Introduction that documents the process in which the student has engaged during the project. The page has a title (Personal Introduction) and is double-spaced. The information in this section provides the reader with a clear understanding as to how and why this topic was selected. This section is a minimum of one page.	
2.	Formal Paper	3-5 pages
	The writer uses ideas that are original and supports his/her thoughts with research that is cited. The writing reflects a depth of research and a thorough grasp and understanding of the topic that was selected. The paper has a title (Title is based on paper topic), is double-spaced and is written in the writer's own words. All thoughts or ideas that are borrowed from another are cited and quoted if used exactly.	
3.	Personal Summary	1 page
	The paper contains a Personal Summary that explains what the student has learned as a result of the process and research. The page has a title (Personal Summary) and is double-spaced. This section is a minimum of one page.	
4.	Works Cited Page	1-2 pages as needed
	The paper contains a minimum of five sources. See Appendix for proper MLA guide.	

Example of Header:

Name

Advisor

Title (ex. Personal Introduction, Human Society, Personal Summary)

Date

Culminating Project Request for Review Panel

Student's
Name _____ Homeroom _____ Grade _____

Project Title _____

Area of Concentration _____

Advisor Name _____

Mentor Name _____

Complete and submit **this form** to the Advisor

You will be notified of the **DATE** and **TIME** assigned for your presentation.

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Signature _____ Date _____

Please list any specific physical or technical needs for your presentation:

Presentation Site: _____

Presentation Date _____

Presentation Time: _____

This form must be completed by the end of the first nine weeks of the junior year.

Culminating Project Review Score Sheet

Student Name _____ Date _____

Project Title _____ Advisor _____

Evaluator _____

Please circle the appropriate level of success in each area.

Written Presentation

CONTENT (Must contain personal introduction, formal paper and personal summary)

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

ORGANIZATION

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

RESEARCH/WORKS CITED (Must contain a minimum of five sources)

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

FORMAT MECHANICS

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

In order to pass the written presentation, students must pass three of the four above categories.

OVERALL Written Presentation Rating

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

Comments:

**CULMINATING PROJECT
REVIEW SCORE SHEET**

Student Name _____ Date _____

Project Title _____ Advisor _____

Evaluator _____

Please circle the appropriate level of success in each area.

ORAL PRESENTATION

CONTENT/VISUAL MEDIA

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

EFFECTIVE SPEAKING

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

ORGANIZATION

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

2 of the 3 areas must be satisfactorily completed.

OVERALL PRESENTATION RATING

Outstanding

Satisfactory

Unsatisfactory

Comments: _____

**CULMINATING PROJECT
FINAL SCORE SHEET**

Student Name _____ Date _____

Project Title _____

Evaluation Committee Signature:

Please circle the appropriate level of success in each area as judged, using the provided rubric.

Written Presentation Evaluation

Outstanding Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Oral Presentation Evaluation

Outstanding Satisfactory Unsatisfactory

Comments _____

OVERALL FINAL REVIEW RATING

OUTSTANDING SATISFACTORY UNSATISFACTORY

1. A final review rating of “Outstanding” indicates both written and oral presentation areas have received ALL “Outstanding” ratings by all evaluators.
2. A final review rating of “Satisfactory” indicates that both written and oral presentation areas have received ratings of “Satisfactory” or a combination of ratings.
3. A final review rating of “Unsatisfactory” indicates that a majority of the written and oral presentation areas have been rated unsatisfactory.

CULMINATING PROJECT WRITTEN COMPONENT EVALUATION RUBRIC

1. This component is made up of four categories: Content, Organization, Research/Work Cited and Format Mechanics.
 - a. **Content** should be judged as the presence of a single controlling point based on ideas developed through facts, examples, anecdotes, details, opinions, statistics, reasons and/or explanations with accurate vocabulary or terminology. Must include personal introduction, formal paper and personal summary.
 - b. **Organization** is the order developed and sustained within and across paragraphs using transitional devices; an introduction and conclusion; and a variety of words and sentence structure to create the writer's voice and tone.
 - c. **Research/Work cited** is the utilization of a minimum of five (5) credible and relevant sources cited correctly in the Works Cited page. Citations will be according to the *Modern Language Association Style*.
 - d. **Format Mechanics** is evidenced by the correct use of grammar, spelling, punctuation and sentence and paragraph structure. The Written Component will follow the writing model located within the Writing Resource Handbook by showing evidence of the Writing Process of:
 - a. Pre-writing
 - b. First, or rough, draft
 - c. Revising/editing
 - d. Publishing
2. Scoring of each component should be as follows:
 - a. When ALL categories are rated "Outstanding", that component will be judged as "Outstanding".
 - b. When any combination of "Satisfactory" or "Outstanding" is used, that component will be judged as "Satisfactory".
 - c. When an "Unsatisfactory" appears in the majority of categories, that component will be judged as "Unsatisfactory".

CULMINATING PROJECT ORAL COMPONENT EVALUATION RUBRIC

1. This component is made up of four categories: Content, Effective Speaking, Organization and Visual Media.
 - a. Content should be judged as the presence of a single controlling point based on ideas developed through facts, example, details, opinions, statistics, reasons and/or explanations with accurate vocabulary or terminology.
 - b. Visual Media is the use of graphic design that communicates information or data.
 - c. Effective Speaking should be judged on the ability to express thoughts, opinions or information orally.
 - d. Organization is the order developed and sustained within the oral presentation using transitions, an introduction and conclusion, and focused around a controlling idea.

2. Scoring of each component should be as follows:
 - a. The oral presentation will be judged “Outstanding” when rated Outstanding in ALL categories.
 - b. The oral presentation will be judged “Satisfactory” when all three categories are rated “Satisfactory” or a combination of “Satisfactory” and “Outstanding”.
 - c. The oral presentation will be judged “Unsatisfactory” when a majority of categories are judged “Unsatisfactory”.

