

# Avon High Capstone

(April 18, 2017)



# Overview

Guided by personal passion or intellectual curiosity, students will independently tackle a complex real world problem or engage in an intellectual pursuit. Students will ultimately demonstrate that they have acquired the requisite knowledge and skills through developing and implementing an action plan, and defending their process and product, results, or position to an authentic audience.

# Criteria for Capstone Development

Address the upcoming State requirement for a capstone project

Avoid a gap between the end of SMP and the start of Capstone

Require a clear inquiry/research focus

Allow broad student choice in both topic and product to maximize student interest/initiative

Refocus the mentor role on support and guidance

Raise expectations for ALL students

Ensure that the presentation is an authentic opportunity for each student to defend their work

Calibrate to ensure consistency and high standards by graders

# Process for Development

1. Philosophy/Vision: Administration and Department Coordinators
2. Initial Definitions/Framework: Administration and Department Coordinators
3. Feedback/Refinement/Revisions: Department meetings and Student Focus Groups (grades 9-12)
4. Rubric/Handbook/Proposal Creation: Day-long work with expanded group, comprised of coordinators, additional faculty members, and students

# Proposal

As early as spring of Junior year and no later than October 1 of Senior year:  
Student will find a faculty mentor who has some background knowledge in an area related to potential topics

Optional: Student can find a secondary (expert) mentor in the broader community

Student will work with mentor(s) to fine-tune topic and develop a project proposal to submit to the Capstone Committee for approval

# Research and Product Development

1. Student will develop a contract with mentor to establish the appropriate steps and expectations for the research process
2. This is a research-based project and all students will be expected to provide lists of sources
3. There are three scheduled presentation dates to accommodate various research and project timelines

# Presentation

- Student and mentor will collaborate to determine presentation readiness. Student will submit a presentation readiness request to the Capstone Committee for approval to present
- Student will present to a grading panel of teachers
- At least one topic expert will be present to ask probing questions
- The grading panel will receive reflection and research components before the presentation
- There will be multiple dates available during the school year

# Grading

Students are required to pass the Capstone to graduate

- Possible grades include “Meets Standard/Pass,” “Does not Meet Standard/Incomplete”
- If a presentation does NOT receive a “Meets Standard,” students will address deficiencies and return to present again at a later date
- Each grading panel may nominate exceptional projects to the Capstone Committee for consideration to receive a “Pass with Distinction”



# On-going support for students and staff

## Student Support

April 24th: Junior class meeting

Office hours for Capstone

Coordinators/Capstone committee to field all questions and provide support

## Staff Professional Development

April 7th: Rubrics, Inquiry, and Mentor/Mentee workshops

May 17: Inquiry workshop

May 24: Technology workshop

August PD: Grading calibration

# Contributors

Betsy Sanborn

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Nicole Nilsen

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Peter Ettlinger

Elizabeth Ferry

Jessie Shaw

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Jen Greene

# Capstone Committee (2017-2018)

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