

Graduation Requirements

A total of 64 hours out of a possible 66 AND the successful completion of the Senior project. A passing grade on the project equates to successful completion. Each student will be held accountable on this project in their theology classes and by a panel of three people that will grade the final project. The combination of service hours performed and successful completion of the project make up the graduation requirements.

Senior Service Requirements

Successful completion of the senior service project
30% of theology grade for first three quarters

Senior year will begin immediately with service in mind. The goal here is to excite the students to get to work right away on their active project. On the first day of school, every Senior or Senior team (consisting of no more than two students) must turn in a preliminary action plan to their theology teacher for approval. This plan will include the issue that the students wish to address as well as a brief statement of what they can do to help. Also, the students will be required to provide a proposed timeline. The student, teacher, and parent will sign this proposal form. This form alone is worth 5% of the student's quarter grade. A sample form is attached.

Next, curriculum will be closely tied to these service projects. Upon completion of Chapter 3 in the textbook where we further explore the Circle of Faith in Action, students will be required to create a very thorough and detailed relationship map of the system they are working to improve and all of the factors that affect it and all the factors it affects. This relationship map will be worth 10% of the first quarter grade. A sample relationship map is attached.

Thirdly, also in the first quarter, students will be required to take their proposal and their relationship map as a starting point, and create a video that is no more than 15 minutes and no less than 10 minutes exploring who they plan to serve, what the needs of that agency are, and research into the umbrella issue that they are addressing. This video can include an interview with a representative of the agency that they wish to serve. It could include pictures and music that is related to their topic. It must, however, start with the overarching injustice and then become more specific with the agency and the particular needs of that agency. This will be worth 15% of the first quarter grade. The grading rubric is attached.

The first quarter of senior year will be full of service related activities. This is easily tied into the Peace and Justice curriculum which makes up 70% of the first quarter grade. Each piece of this project is designed to build on the piece before it. The preliminary proposal starts the ball rolling which leads, then, to a relationship map and, finally, a video exploring the possibilities of the project.

During the first week of the second quarter, all Seniors or groups will be required to turn in their first action plan for their project. This action plan must include a project description, the social justice issue that is being addressed, the project goals, a financial plan, a detailed culminating event, a letter from the agency stating their approval of the project, and a call log to catalog the contacts the students have made with the agency. The project description must detail the action that is being performed and maybe a creative and descriptive name for the project. The action plan must also include a description of the present condition, who will benefit from the action, and the social justice issue that is being addressed. The project goals must be clearly stated and must be goals that are measurable and achievable. Also, in the goals section must be a projected timeline for each goal. Most projects will required some costs. In this action plan, students must provide a list of materials needed and the cost of each item. Make sure to note if the items are donated or loaned or must be purchased. Once the students have determined how much the project will cost, they must specify a plan to raise the money to pay for it. Obtaining the funds is the student's responsibility, not their parents' responsibility and not Holy Cross's responsibility. Asking the students and staff of Holy Cross excessively for material and monetary donations will not be tolerated and is outside the spirit of the project. The students need to include in this action plan an estimated amount that will be raised by each fund raiser. If the cost is just too much to raise, then another project may need to be chosen. The culminating event is important because it shows that the project has an end. This event should be detailed in the action plan and signify that the students have accomplished the goals that they already specified. If there is not a culminating event, no clear end to the project, then another project may need to be chosen. The agency must provide a letter on letterhead stating their approval of the suggested project. This action plan needs to be detailed and the students need to have put some real thought, planning, and communication into this plan. This plan will make up 20% of the second quarter grade. A grading rubric is attached.

Throughout the second quarter, students should be actively working to raise money and finalize all plans for their project. During the last week of the second quarter, students will turn in another action plan. This action plan will include the same kinds of things as above, but must include any changes in the original plan. We all know that as we begin working on a large project, oftentimes, things don't quite work out the way we planned for them. This will be no different with these projects. Students will have to flex and adapt their plans to allow for the unexpected. In this action plan, students must point out any changes that they have made to their original plan. Also, this action plan must include a photo documentary to catalog the activity that has been done on their projects so far. These photos could include photos at fund raisers or at hardware stores. They could include photos of the items they are raising money to purchase. The photos must be like a picture diary of the work done so far. This action plan will be worth 10% of their second quarter grade. A grading rubric is attached.

So, in the first two quarters of the first semester of senior year, students will be hard at work on these projects. The Peace and Justice curriculum ties very well with the goals of these projects. Since we will no longer be doing time-release service for the seniors, much class time can be spared for teacher-guided assistance on these projects. The students will not be on their own on these projects. Every step of the way, they will be provided with ideas and advice for the project from their theology teacher as well as the service coordinator. Over Christmas break, the projects should be completed including the culminating event. All seniors should come back to school

after Christmas with an overwhelming sense of accomplishment. Students will have truly helped their community become a better place and made contact with true service agencies that they helped to improve.

The first week and a half of second semester, the Seniors should be compiling all of their project details into one thorough presentation to be presented the last two weeks of January to a panel (the teacher, the service coordinator, and one outside person – a parent, an administrator, a counselor, etc.). This presentation should use the new software called Inspiration or PowerPoint to summarize the last six months of work on this project. The presentation should state and explain the injustice that was being addressed. It should detail the action plan and culminating event. It should include some concluding thoughts on how the students were affected by the service project. Also, the presentation must be well presented and creative. It should last no less than 15 minutes and no more than 20 minutes. A grading rubric is attached.

The presentation may seem like the end of this experience, but just as the Seniors are finishing up their presentations, the Juniors will be beginning their time-release service. Remember, at the end of the time release service, the Seniors will be presenting their projects to the Juniors. The Seniors will now be experts on helping the community. They will be thoroughly aware of many of the injustices in our community and how each person can really make a difference and actively participate in the world. They will be experts on the Circle of Faith in Action, Catholic Social Teaching, and how to successfully follow the Church's model for effectively working for justice. The Seniors will be champions of our ideal goal of service + curriculum + retreat = a well-rounded, healthy hunger for justice. Now, the Seniors will be equipped with the tools to take on service projects as an adult. They will be the leaders of the school on a service front as well as an athletic and academic front. They will be role models for the Juniors just beginning the journey. Don't forget as well, the Freshmen and Sophomores will be doing service on their own in preparation for this project. They will be actively involved in school-wide projects for our partner agencies and may be actively involved in the fundraising efforts by our Seniors. Holy Cross High School will truly be working together internally to completely participate in the community. We will be Experiencing the Power of the Cross together, at every grade level.