

Senior Seminar
Course Number 01310
Syllabus

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Course Description:

Senior Seminar is a comprehensive and mandatory course for all 12th grade students at Raby. The course focus is on postsecondary education, and students will explore and thoroughly plan and prepare for life after high school. Planning and applying to colleges and post-secondary schools will be the primary goal of the first semester. Students will participate in every phase of college preparation and planning—researching and matching with colleges, writing personal statements, submitting applications and financial aid forms, applying for scholarships and exploring careers and other post-secondary options. During the second semester, students will strengthen and develop post-secondary life skills with units and activities regarding campus life, college issues, and financial education. Each student will fulfill the CPS consumer education requirement through this class and complete an independent senior research project in conjunction with Senior English. Each semester is worth a half credit; the entire course is worth one full credit.

Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- **meet a variety of application deadlines on a regular basis**
- **research and present two (2) colleges and or post-secondary vocational schools to a group of peers**
- **apply to six (6) colleges and/or post secondary schools—two safety schools, two target schools and two reach schools**
- **gain acceptance into at least two schools including a four year university**
- **complete both college and scholarship application trackers/checklists**
- write and craft personal statements to fit the needs of the prompt
- write one (1) general personal statement
- submit completed FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
- research and apply for at least five (5) scholarships that require an essay
- write one (1) general scholarship essay
- complete several career inventories
- design a usable resume and compose appropriate cover letters
- write thank you letters to college and scholarship representatives
- compile a list of four (4) candidates to write letters of recommendation
- compile a personal fact sheet to accompany recommendation requests
- write thank you letters to recommenders
- participate in several mock interviews
- compose appropriate emails
- set attainable short and long term financial goals
- track personal spending and create a usable budget
- calculate a variety of interest rates and understand types of fees associated with lending
- understand the benefits and dangers of credit cards
- compare financial components of transportation, telecommunications, and food sources
- access and complete *Choices Planner* and *Naviance* online program and activities
- visit the Post-Secondary Lab at least twice a quarter
- complete multiple conferences with post-secondary education coach (Ms. Park) and senior counselor (Ms. Cannon).
- visit the Writing Center at least twice a quarter
- complete senior year portion of Raby portfolio
- pass the Consumer Education test
- complete and present an independent research project in collaboration w/ English class

Instructional Materials:

Our primary resource will be *College Match* and the *Raby Senior Handbook*. Each student will also access and use the online programs *Choices Planner* and *Naviance* throughout the year. We will also use a variety of supplemental reading materials including articles, handouts, and excerpts from non-fiction books and/or novels. Students will receive supplemental materials on a regular basis and are responsible for reading and organizing them in their class binders.

Grading:

Senior Seminar is a task-oriented course. Students **will submit assignments on a regular basis and must adhere to deadlines. Students must have a valid excuse for missing class, and late work will only be accepted in accordance with the Raby school wide policy which states that no late work will be accepted for seniors except in the case of excused absences. It is the responsibility of the student to check the class assignment log or class binder for assignments when absent. Students must arrange a conference with me upon return. Missed homework assignments must be made up at lunch or after school in our classroom, Raby Academic Centers, the Writing Center, the library, the technology lab, or other approved sites. Late homework must have an after-school site pass attached to it.**

The senior seminar room is also available for student use before and after school, as well as during lunch.

Assignments will typically be worth between ten and fifty points, The grades in Senior Seminar will be broken into categories and weighted as follows:

Completed Applications, Scholarships, FAFSA, and checklists	30%
Personal Statements, Essays, and Writing Assignments	30%
Short-term or in-class daily assignments	20%
Class Participation	10%
Homework	10%

(Accommodations will be made for students with IEPs on an individual basis).

Materials and Supplies:

The following materials and supplies will be needed daily:

- **College Match** textbook and **Raby Senior Handbook**
- one soft plastic three ring binder with dividers
- one pocket folder
- loose leaf paper
- highlighters
- ink pens and pencils (bring both each day)
- sticky notes

Students in Senior Seminar should also purchase six (6) large mailing envelopes and at least one (1) book of stamps at the beginning of the school year.

Expectations and Rules:

All students will be required to adhere to the Raby Code of Conduct and the CPS Code of Conduct (formerly the Uniform Discipline Code). In addition, students are expected to:

- Respect self and others
- Arrive on time
- Come prepared with materials
- Maintain a suitable attitude
- Follow directives
- Use school appropriate language
- Keep the environment clean
- Return borrowed materials

Also, food, candy, gum and pop are not permitted in the classroom anytime. Feel free to bring water in a plastic bottle, and please try to place paper and plastic items in the recycle bins by the door.

Scope and Sequence:

The year will be divided into five units. The themes are as follows:

Unit	Focus/Topics/Activities	When
Choices Planner and Naviance	-Online College Preparation and Planning	Ongoing throughout school year
Financial Education	-Budgeting/Saving/ Financial Planning	

	-Setting SMART Goals	
<p>Unit One</p> <p>Matching with and choosing colleges</p> <p>Career Exploration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Self-Discovery/Who am I? -Types of Colleges/Schools -Choosing the Right College -Safety/Target/Reach/schools -Researching Colleges and Careers (ongoing) -Exploring Other Post-secondary Options Guest Speakers (ongoing) 	Sept
<p>Unit Two</p> <p>Personal Statements</p> <p>Applying to College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Writing Personal Statements -Researching Colleges (ongoing) -Completing Applications -College Visits and Interviews -Guest Speakers (ongoing) 	<p>Oct-Nov-Dec</p> <p>Submit applications</p> <p>Nov 15 - Dec 15</p> <p>Priority filing is Nov 15</p>
<p>Unit Three</p> <p>Financing College</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -FAFSA process -FAFSA workshops -Completing Scholarship Applications -Writing Scholarship Essays -Interpreting Aid and Award Letters -Guest Speakers (ongoing) 	<p>Dec-January-Feb</p> <p>Complete FAFSA</p> <p>between Jan 1 and Feb 1</p>
<p>Unit Four</p> <p>Campus and College Life</p> <p>Surviving Freshman Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Roommates -Communicating with Professors -Balancing Social and Academic Life -Time Management -Examining and Interpreting Syllabi and College Assignments -Guest Speakers (ongoing) 	March
<p>Unit Five</p> <p>Financial Responsibility</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Budgeting and Saving -Credit Cards -Good Debt/Bad Debt -Predatory Lending -Cell Phone Packages -Car Expenses -More SMART Goals 	April-May
Senior Research Project		Ongoing throughout second semester

