



Senior Project Documentation

GENERAL INFORMATION

The Senior Project can be a personally rewarding part of the student's experience at Cleary University. This project is your opportunity to apply the concepts you have learned to a living project of your choice. You will construct its direction with the guidance of the faculty mentor. This is a collaborative venture and an opportunity for individualized learning that goes beyond any classroom experience.

Students completing their Bachelor's degree from Cleary University are required to complete a Senior Project. The Senior Project is a Directive Study and represents a research based written paper of a business related problem involving an in-depth analysis or evaluation. The Senior Project is expected to incorporate competencies in research, finance, and other business skills learned from the student's academic program at Cleary University. The Senior Project must demonstrate an exceptional level of scholarship.

Students identify a topic for the Senior Project. However, the final approval for the topic selection comes from the Faculty Mentor. The Faculty Mentor is assigned following registration in PJT 488 and remains working with the student through PJT 489 and until the completion of the final report in PJT 490. The Senior Project in most cases will be a written paper of a 40 to 50 pages of text, double-spaced, and demonstrating both theory and application following the APA style.

PROJECT TOPICS

The topics for the Senior Project will vary depending on the academic major and experiences of the student. Examples include the following:

- Projects related to work: These projects will involve process improvement, problem solving related to the operations of a business, innovations or development of new products, etc.
- Projects related to a business or feasibility plan: These projects include entrepreneur opportunities or new ventures for a non-profit agency.
- Projects related to community service: These projects will focus of these topics on strategic evaluation and assessment of programs or services in the non-profit or government sectors.



- Projects related in starting a new business: These projects will focus on creating a detailed business plan following the prescribed outline, which will be provided by the mentor.
- Projects related to marketing a product or service: These projects will be marketing audits following the prescribed outline, which will be provided by the mentor.

In selecting a topic, it is important to determine the depth of business competencies to be incorporated into this Senior Project.

DISCUSSION FORMAT

All PJT course are an interactive process between the mentor and the student. Discussions will be online or face-to-face meetings when necessary. Milestones are explained in each of the modules. Students provide a detailed analysis of the progress made during each of the modules.

Mentors monitor the progress of the students throughout each module and respond to the postings and providing written feedback to the student documenting the completion of the milestones required for the module.

Mentors are encouraged to meet with their assigned students via in-person, teleconference, or virtual meeting.

PJT 488, 489, AND 490 SENIOR PROJECT COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Students complete the required directed study BBA Senior Project course sequence at the end of their undergraduate degree program. During this eighteen-week, three-course sequence, students select project topics and complete their projects guided individually by senior faculty mentors. Preference is given to selecting topics that solve problems or contribute to the student's employer by applying business concepts students learned in their majors. Project types may include a new venture or product plan, a process or product improvement, or an analysis of a significant workplace problem.

PJT 488 and PJT 489 (non-credit courses) are completed in advance of PJT 490 for the purpose of identifying a project topic and gathering information that become the foundation for completion of the project in PJT 490 (4 credits). PJT 488 addresses writing a project/problem statement, background description, and a project plan. PJT 489 addresses gathering information or data needed to support project development and analysis. PJT 490 involves data analysis, evaluation of alternatives, development of recommendations, and writing the project report.

PJT 488

PJT 488 is designed to complete three important goals. These goals are as follows: (1) identify the problem statement or topic, (2) write the problem (topic) description, and (3) write the project plan. The student and the mentor engage in discussions regarding possible topics for the Senior Project. The discussions should focus on the background experiences and academic major of the student. Upon selection of a topic, discussions shift to the mechanics of constructing the series of drafts that lead to the final document required for PJL 488.

PJT488 is a required class. Students must earn a final grade of Satisfactory to move to PJT489, the next class towards completing the Senior Project. The mentor assigns the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory for PJT488.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Demonstrate the knowledge of identifying, developing, and writing a Senior Project
2. Apply primary and secondary research in developing a project statement and project plan in preparing to write the Senior Project
3. Evaluate business or organizational topics which lead to a written project/problem statement, background description, and project plan for the Senior Project

FINAL REPORT FOR PJT 488

At end of Module 6, the student submits an 8 to 10 page written paper following APA guidelines. **NOTE:** Marketing Audits and Business Plans will follow different plans (see Project Resources).

- Title Page
- Table of Contents
- Project/problem Statement, Background Description
- Statement of Problem
- Setting of the Problem
- History and Background of the Problem
- Scope of the problem
- Importance and Significance of the problem
- Definition of terms
- Project Plan
- Draft data collection plan
- Annotated Bibliography (APA Formatted)

PJT 489

PJT 489 addresses gathering information or data needed to support the project/problem statement and analysis for the Senior Project. The class modules for PJT 489 are aimed at finalizing the proposal and writing the final plan in preparation for PJT 490.

PJT 489 will address three important goals. These goals are as follows: (1) completion and formalization of the literature review related to the problem statement or topic, (2) define quantitative (and qualitative methods) (3) prepare to execute the data collection plan.

Students are expected to participate in each Discussion Forum sharing their project plans and providing feedback to other students. Mentors will actively participate in all discussion forums providing feedback and guidance as needed.

PJT489 is a required class. Students must earn a final grade of Satisfactory to move to PJT490, the next class towards completing the Senior Project. The mentor assigns the Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory for PJT489.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Gather research data and other information through Research Library resources and other methods to complete the literature review.
2. Prepare a written data collection plan.
3. Begin necessary data collection to write the Senior Project in PJT 490.

FINAL REPORT FOR PJT 489

At end of Module 6, the student submits a 12 to 18 page written paper following APA guidelines. **NOTE:** Marketing Audits and Business Plans will follow different plans (see Project Resources)

- **Literature review** (build from the annotated bibliography in PJT 488. Complete the write-up in PJT 489; 8-10 pages)
The literature review is the section of a research report in which your secondary research is presented. This is to say, it is here that previous scholarly investigations of the subject your research will address are summarized, cited and evaluated. The end of this section should detail the specific gap(s) in the existing literature your research project will help fill.

- **Description of the proposed project** (Complete in PJT 489; 2-4 pages)
The objectives of your research project should be specified clearly in this section. This section of the research paper details the specifics of the problem(s), research question(s) being studied and/or hypothesis being tested. Along with a discussion of specific questions and hypothesis your research will address, this section explains how your research will help fill in the gaps or answer the open questions you identified in the literature review section of your paper.
- **Methods** (draft created in PJT 488; Complete in PJT 489; 2-4 pages)
This section details the specific methods by which your research was conducted. What methodology is used (i.e. survey research, textual analysis, experimental research etc.) to collect data? What framework is used to interpret the data? What, if any, statistical tools are used to draw inferences from your data? Why was the specific methodology chosen as opposed to alternatives? Weaknesses and strengths of your data collection and analysis methods may be discussed here.

PJT 490

PJT 490 builds upon the work completed in PJT 488 & 489. The first 4 - 5 modules address the results of the data collection plan, which was executed at the end of PJT 489.

The student begins to present the results/findings of the research conducted. A draft of all inferences made from the data is presented, as are any charts and/or tables that support those inferences. Specific research questions and/or hypotheses are discussed in turn.

PJT 490 will address two important goals. These goals are as follows: (1) interpret and discuss the findings of the research and (2) understand and apply recommendations and conclusions to the quantitative research.

Students are expected to participate in each Discussion Forum sharing their research findings as well as test recommendations and conclusions. Mentors will actively participate in all discussion forums providing feedback and guidance as needed.

PJT490 is a required class worth 4 credits. Successful completion of PJT490 is a Cleary University graduation requirement. The mentor assigns the final grade for PJT490.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Analyzes research data to finalize Senior Project
2. Infer recommendations from the data
3. Writes final paper for Senior Project

FINAL REPORT FOR PJT 490

At end of Module 6, the student submits the final 20 -30 page written paper following APA guidelines. NOTE: Marketing Audits and Business Plans will follow different (see Project Resources). Once data has been collected, the next two sections of the Senior Project report must be prepared:

- **Results** (Complete in PJT 490; 6-10 pages)
This section of the report presents the results / findings of the research conducted. All inferences made from the data are presented here, as are any charts and/or tables that support those inferences. Specific research questions and/or hypotheses are discussed in turn in this section. Counter-intuitive findings or findings that contradict your proposed hypothesis and/or those of previous studies discussed in your lit review should be elaborated here. Findings that indicate support for your hypotheses and/or the findings of previous research reports should also be detailed here.
- **Conclusions & Recommendations** (Complete in PJT 490; 6 -10 pages)
This section should briefly summarize the taxonomy of the paper that followed up to this point. It should then explain the significance and/or meaning of the results you presented in the preceding section. Specific recommendations may be offered here, especially if your report is specific to the situation of an individual business, type of business, or genre of business activities (i.e. operations, marketing, web design etc.). Conclusions and recommendations should follow directly from findings and not be based on any assumptions not relevant to the study.
- The final report will contain all of the completed report from PJT 488 and the work completed in PJT 489.

CHECKLIST FOR SENIOR PROJECT

- Has the purpose of your project been clearly stated?
- Has the history and relevant background been described.
- What is the importance and significance of your project?
- Have the objectives been defined.
- Has a literature review been done?
- What data collection method has been used?
- Have the limitations of the data been examined.
- Have the key results obtained from your data been presented.
- Have the results been summarized.
- Have conclusions been made.
- What impact has your project made?



SENIOR PROJECT ENTERPRISE AWARD

The ENTERPRISE AWARD recognizes the most outstanding Senior Project report. Preference is given to report topics that solve problems or contribute to the students' employers by applying business concepts students learned in their majors. Project types may include a new venture or product plan, a process or product improvement, or an analysis of a significant workplace problem.

The student author of the winning entry will receive recognition at commencement. In addition to the principal Award winner, 3 honorable mention awards will also be reported at commencement. To be eligible for consideration, a nominee must meet the following criteria:

The project must be completed within the scheduled terms preceding the date of submission.

The project must be nominated by the student's faculty mentor. As part of the nomination process, the faculty mentor must include a one-page written description of the project explaining its methods, conclusions, and significance.

All Senior Project Award nominations must be received by the evaluation committee 14 days prior to commencement.

Nominated Senior Projects will be submitted to an evaluation committee (made up of the Dean of Students, Dean of Instruction, and the Provost) who will make final determination of the award winner.