

Writing Your Grad Challenge Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent serves as the overview of your project. It should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. It must have your signature.

Contents

Your Letter of Intent must:

- ◆ describe how the subject area you have chosen is new learning for you;
- ◆ describe the options you have chosen to customize the three main components of the project;
- ◆ outline specifically what you will be doing during your community experience;
- ◆ name your Community Consultant and describe his/her expertise in your subject area;
- ◆ describe the Tangible Product, if applicable;
- ◆ explain the focus of your Tri-Search Paper;
- ◆ list the titles of at least three different types of resources for the paper (see Finding Resources);
- ◆ list the names of at least three people to interview for the paper (see Deciding Who to Interview);
- ◆ use the required format for the Letter of Intent (see section in this handbook); and
- ◆ attach a complete and legible Grad Challenge Contract.

Resources

The resources must contain enough meaningful, accurate information for your subject area;

- not all three can be websites
- encyclopedias (including Wikipedia) are excluded.

Don't limit yourself; many students find having four or five resources makes it easier to write the paper. Track bibliography information on all of your resources.

Evaluation

The Letter of Intent must be free of spelling, grammatical, and typing errors. The required format is described in detail on the following page. The *GC Contract* must be filled out completely and be legible. Both must be submitted to your Advisor on the Letter of Intent deadline date; **this is a Cut deadline**. Your Advisor will bring the letter to his/her GC Faculty Reading Group for final project approval. You will be notified of approval with a *Letter of Intent Approval Form*. Should your project intent not be approved, you may make changes and resubmit the letter for final approval.

Before students may start the Community Learning Experience, they must receive approval of their Letter of Intent and Grad Challenge Contract from their Advisors. Additionally, the Advisor must have a conversation with the Community Consultant prior to giving project approval.

The Letter of Intent is the most important preparatory element of your Grad Challenge project. Devote significant time, effort, and research in preparing this letter. When done thoroughly, this sets up a well-planned project.

Writing the Letter of Intent Takes Time...

It typically takes several weeks; start putting together your project as soon as you can.

- Community members have busy schedules and may need time to schedule an appointment. Email is not an effective and reliable way to make initial contact with people.
- Allow time to do initial library research to make sure there are resources for your topic.
- Your Advisor may suggest revisions to your draft of the letter, prior to the deadline.
- Letters of Intent must be well written, with complete information.

See Letter of Intent format on next page.

Letter of Intent Format

Your name
Your Street Address
Town, State Zip
October 12, 2007 (or any date prior to this due date)

Your Advisor's first and last name (correctly spelled)
Champlain Valley Union High School
369 CVU Road
Hinesburg, VT 05461

Dear Mr. / Ms. (your Advisor's last name):

Paragraph One:

Describe the subject area of your proposal in both general and specific terms. Share your motive for choosing this topic.

Paragraph Two:

Explain how this project is **new** learning for you. (If you have already done extensive work in an area, you must show how your project is new learning...or you may be asked to pick a new topic).

Paragraph Three:

Describe which option you have chosen for each of the *three* GC component options (refer to the table on Grad Challenge Contract) and why these choices are a good match for your project.

Paragraph Four:

Give the name of your Community Consultant and provide a *brief background* of his/her experience in the specialty area.

Paragraph Five:

Describe how you will accomplish the Community Learning Experience hours. What will you be doing? Who will be supervising you? When will you start and what will your schedule be?

Paragraph Six: (if applicable)

State in detail what your Tangible Product will be (if applicable). How is this new learning? Does your Tangible Product have value to others beyond Grad Challenge?

Paragraph Seven:

Describe the focus of your Tri-Search Paper. How will your research help you to create your Tangible Product (if applicable) or enrich your learning experience?

Paragraph Eight:

This is a very important paragraph. First, give the full names of three people you will interview and why they are your best choices. This does not have to include your Community Consultant. What is their experience with the subject area? Second, list the titles of at least three resources which you will use in your research. Not all can be a websites. Work with the CVU library staff for help.

Paragraph Nine:

Explain what you will be doing for your presentation. Do you anticipate using an audio/visual aid? If so, what would that be?

Yours truly,

sign your name (the letter needs your handwritten signature; it cannot be emailed to your Advisor.)

type your name

Submit this with your GC Contract to your Advisor for approval.

Be sure that all forms are completely and **legibly** filled out.

