

Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS)



Student Handbook

2021-22

Welcome to... Creativity, Activity and Service in Eugene IHS!

“We cannot live for ourselves alone. Our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads, and along these sympathetic fibers, our actions run as causes and return to us as results.” – Melville

Eugene International High School has made experiential learning a part of our identity since the founding of the school in 1985. We are committed to Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS) as an aspect of an international studies curriculum, for it is one more way students gain confidence and knowledge in a broader world than home and school.

In undertaking CAS during the junior and senior years, students derive many benefits, both practical and altruistic. The activities and experiences in which students are involved can be more fully developed both in service to the community and in exploring student interest and potential via creativity and activity.

What is CAS?

CAS is a fundamental aspect of the Eugene IHS experience. The emphasis of CAS is on new and experiential learning. It is designed to involve students in new roles and explore ways in which current activities can become true learning experiences. The emphasis is on learning by planning and performing real tasks that have tangible outcomes and reflecting on these experiences. The ultimate goal of CAS is to nurture life-long learners who seek new opportunities and challenges; balance personal and academic pursuits; act with integrity, responsibility and compassion; and who value diversity, ambiguity and discovery to create a better and more peaceful world.

Creativity is interpreted as imaginatively as possible to cover a wide range of arts and other activities that involve creative thinking. Examples could include participation in music, theater, fine arts, or design. ***In a student’s CAS program, creativity fosters an appreciation for the arts.*** Creativity involves “Exploring or extending ideas related to an original or interpretive product or performance” (IB Creativity, Activity, Service Guide 8). “Creativity in CAS provides students with the opportunity to explore their own sense of original thinking and expression. Creativity will come from the student’s talents, interests, passions, emotional responses, and imagination; the form of expression is limitless. This may include visual and performing arts, digital design, writing, film, culinary arts, crafts and composition. Students are encouraged to engage in creative endeavors that move them beyond the familiar, broadening their scope from conventional to unconventional thinking” (IB Creativity, Activity, Service Guide 18).

Activity is defined as physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle, complementing academic work. ***In a student’s CAS program, activity focuses on the physical, and thus, mental, well-being of the student.*** “The aim of the ‘Activity’ strand is to promote lifelong healthy habits related to physical well-being. Pursuits may include individual and team sports, aerobic exercise, dance, outdoor recreation, fitness training, and any other form of physical exertion that purposefully contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Students are encouraged to participate at an appropriate level and on a regular basis to provide a genuine challenge and benefit” (IB Creativity, Activity, Service Guide 19).

Service consists of an unpaid and voluntary community contribution that has a learning benefit for the student and fosters a greater sense of commitment to community—local, national and international. ***In a student’s CAS program, service focuses on an endeavor beyond a student’s current experience and shows engagement in meeting a community need.*** Service involves “Collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need. The aim of the ‘Service’ strand is for students to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution to their community and society.

Through service, students develop and apply personal and social skills in real-life situations involving decision-making, problem-solving, initiative, responsibility, and accountability for their actions. Service is often seen as one of the most transforming elements of CAS by promoting students' self-awareness, offering diverse occasions for interactions and experiences and opportunities for international-mindedness" (IB Creativity, Activity, Service Guide, page 8).

CAS Learning Outcomes

Student completion of CAS is based on the achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes realized through the student's commitment to his or her CAS program over the course of junior and senior years. These learning outcomes articulate what a CAS student is able to do at some point during his or her CAS program. Through meaningful and purposeful CAS experiences, students develop the necessary skills, attributes and understandings to achieve the seven CAS learning outcomes.

Some learning outcomes may be achieved many times, while others may be achieved less frequently. Students must provide evidence of having achieved each learning outcome at least once. Students will frequently reflect on their achievement of the learning outcomes throughout the process.

1. **Identify own strengths and develop areas for growth** *Students are able to see themselves as individuals with various abilities and skills, of which some are more developed than others.*
2. **Demonstrate that challenges have been undertaken, developing new skills in the process** *A new challenge may be an unfamiliar experience or an extension of an existing one. The newly acquired or developed skills may be shown through experiences that the student has not previously undertaken or through increased expertise in an established area.*
3. **Demonstrate how to initiate and plan a CAS experience** *Students can articulate the stages from conceiving an idea to executing a plan for a CAS experience or series of CAS experiences. This may be accomplished in collaboration with other participants. Students may show their knowledge and awareness by building on a previous experience, or by launching a new idea or process.*
4. **Show commitment to and perseverance in CAS experiences** *Students demonstrate regular involvement and active engagement in CAS.*
5. **Demonstrate the skills and recognize the benefits of working collaboratively** *Students are able to identify, demonstrate and critically discuss the benefits and challenges of collaboration gained through CAS experiences.*
6. **Demonstrate engagement with issues of global significance** *Students are able to identify and demonstrate their understanding of global issues, make responsible decisions, and take appropriate action in response to the issue either locally, nationally or internationally.*
7. **Recognize and consider the ethics of choices and actions** *Students show awareness of the consequences of choices and actions in planning and carrying out CAS experiences.*

What are the CAS program requirements?

The CAS experience is personal and should meet the needs of each individual student though certain program requirements must be met. As a CAS student, you are required to:

- Set personal goals for what you will achieve through the CAS program;
- Plan and participate in a range of activities and projects, and then **reflect** on these activities;
- Communicate with your Seminar teacher at various points during the junior and senior years to assess progress and measure outcomes;
- Maintain records of CAS activities
- Each term you must also submit **a detailed reflection or piece of evidence** relating to your CAS activities—please see your seminar course syllabus for details.
- Show evidence of achievement of the seven CAS learning outcomes via reflection and recording of hours:
 - Submit evidence and reflections at regular intervals over the course of junior and senior years.
 - Complete a minimum of 15 CAS hours each trimester. *Hours earned after July 1st of the summer between sophomore and junior year and during the entire summer between junior and senior year count toward the first trimester of each year.*
 - Complete *some amount of service for first trimester of junior year* as one component of state graduation requirements pertaining to career-related learning.

What is the Group Project?

Students will participate in a **group project involving three or more individuals**. This year, **only those seniors who are also IB diploma candidates must complete a group project**. However, all juniors should plan to complete a group project by April of their senior year. The group project should be a collaborative, well-considered series of sequential CAS experiences. The group project should

- Extend over at least one month, from planning to completion (longer projects are encouraged);
- Include one or more of the CAS strands—creativity, activity, and/or service;
- Incorporate a group of at least three people (we encourage you to work with other Eugene IHS students and to involve students from multiple IHS campuses, but this is not a requirement—you may work with non-IHS students or with a community agency, for example, if you prefer);
- Be completed any time between the beginning of the CAS program junior year and its due date in Term 2 of senior year (see senior Seminar packet for details);
- Demonstrate thoughtful commitment and meaningful engagement through the required group project reflection; through evidence such as photos, videos, flyers, etc.; and through supervisor reviews. There is no limit on hours for the group project, but students should reflect accurately and honestly on activities undertaken. The Seminar teacher will determine the final value of the work.

Overview of Changes to CAS Requirements Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic

CAS requirements are somewhat relaxed again this year compared to the past. In the past, students had to complete at least 25 hours of creativity, 25 hours of activity, 50 hours of service, and 150 total hours by April of their senior year. Juniors had to complete a minimum of 15 hours of *service* in the first trimester of Seminar.

However, opportunities to complete service hours are especially limited due to the virus. Therefore, you are not required to complete any specific number of service hours as you would in a normal year. Ideally, you will show a reasonable balance of creativity, activity and service, but under no circumstances should you participate in any CAS experience that isn't safe.

Normally, IHS students need to complete supervisor review forms, but that requirement is suspended this year. Instead, you will create a thoughtful, detailed reflection on your CAS work each term. You should complete 15 hours of CAS per term, but the most important thing is clearly demonstrating what you have done and how you have grown.

The traditional requirement to complete 150 total CAS hours over the course of junior and senior years is waived, like it was for last year. CAS will continue to be a term-by-term endeavor for this year. The emphasis is on quality over quantity.

Spanish and French immersion students need to show meaningful effort toward completing some CAS experiences in their immersion language. However, the strict 50-hour minimum requirement over two years is relaxed for this year. Fifty hours is a goal, but not an absolute requirement toward earning an immersion medallion so long as students demonstrate a strong effort.

Seniors will not need to complete a CAS Group Project unless they are IB diploma candidates. Juniors should plan on completing a group project by April of their senior year, but the requirement may look different than it has in the past. Keep an eye on your Seminar materials in Canvas for examples of distanced experiences that can be completed safely, whether individually or in groups.

In the summer of 2022 we will re-evaluate and may restore some or all of the traditional CAS requirements for your senior year (if you are a junior). However, any changes we make for next school year will be in strict accordance with public health recommendations. They will also apply only to your senior year; you will not be required to make up "lost" hours from junior year to meet our traditional CAS totals.

Please check in with your Seminar teacher if you have questions about CAS or anything else related to the course. Your teacher will have regular office hours in addition to being available through email.

We hope that these revised requirements will make your Seminar experience manageable, meaningful, and rewarding. We look forward to working with you as we all embark on this adventure together!

What types of activities count for CAS?

In planning your CAS program, please think about the spirit of CAS. Focus on the learning outcomes, make a plan, and reflect on your experience. The aim of CAS is to create a meaningful experience that will contribute to your growth as a student and as a person.

Service:

Service activities involve volunteering your time to make a positive contribution to your community. Scope can be local, national, or global. Possible activities could include the following. In choosing your activity be mindful of following health regulations in place during the time of Covid-19

- Mentoring younger students (could be done online)
- Volunteering for a service organization (Red Cross, Doctors without borders, Free the Ocean)
- Volunteering for Food for Lane County or Eugene Humane Society
- Kidsports coaching
- Helping elderly in your neighborhood with shopping or lawn care

Service activities don't include household chores for your own family, taking care of siblings and can't be activities where you are paid for your time or where you receive school credit. Service activities also can't be activities that are required for your participation in a school or sports organization.

Creativity:

Creativity activities involve the arts and other creative endeavors. Activities might include but are not limited to

- Practicing a musical instrument
- Painting, sculpting, drawing, etc.
- Dance lessons and dance performance
- Writing poetry

Creativity hours can't be hours in a class where you are receiving credit or hours for which you are paid.

Activity:

Activity hours involve engaging in physical exertion leading to a healthy lifestyle. Activities might include but are not limited to:

- Organized sports
- Running, hiking, skiing
- Yoga
- Dance

Activity hours can't be hours in a class where you are receiving credit or hours for which you are paid.

How can parents support students in their quest to complete CAS?

Parental support is a vital part of helping students complete CAS requirements. Here are some ideas for parents to encourage students:

- Familiarize yourself with the CAS requirements.
- Discuss the requirements/opportunity with your teen.
- Share your own volunteer experience with your teen and reflect on what you have given

and gained through volunteering.

- Explore your teen's interests and explore possible activities together, and encourage your teen to build on previous successful volunteer experiences.
- Be willing to be involved—attend games, plays, and concerts, or volunteer with your teen.
- Support your teen's activities by providing transportation, discussing experiences, and helping make calls to explore interest areas and available experiences.
- Encourage your teen to start early and stay organized!

We look forward to sharing the CAS experience together!