



# ENGL 3130-006

URBAN LIFE ROOM 302C

TU/ TH, 12:45 - 2:00 PM

CRN: 10243

INSTRUCTOR: STEPHANIE GRAVES

EMAIL: [SGRAVES15@GSU.EDU](mailto:SGRAVES15@GSU.EDU)

OFFICE: 25 PARK PLACE, ROOM 2411

OFFICE HOURS: TU 2:30 - 3:30 PM

TH 9:30 - 10:30AM

& BY APPOINTMENT

## ABOUT THIS COURSE



Welcome to ENGL 3130: Business Writing! I'm excited to spend this semester with you, and I look forward to getting to know all of you and engaging with both you and your ideas throughout the term.

This course differs in both content and approach from many other writing classes. There is no monolithic body of 'business writing' to study, because generally speaking, business writing is largely transactional. The goal of business writing is to communicate in an efficient and effective manner, and what the specifics of that entail is highly dependent upon context. What this means is that the best business writing is a function of keen audience awareness.

Good communication skills are highly valued in the business world—in fact, it's one of the skillsets employers value most. This semester we will look at different approaches to becoming more effective communicators (and consider what an "effective communicator" is within different contexts). Ultimately, our course goal is to hone your ability to use writing to persuade your audience in order to achieve the concrete results that lead to your success.

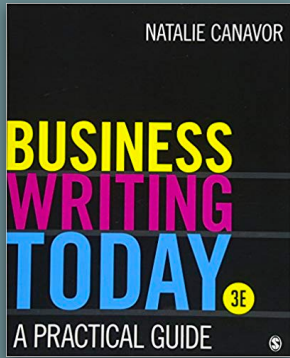
"Business has only two functions -  
marketing and innovation."  
-Peter Drucker



## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to the techniques and types of professional writing, including correspondence and reports. It is designed to help strengthen skills of effective business and professional communication in both oral and written modes. After successful completion of this course, students will have the skills necessary to communicate effectively in a variety of professional situations.

## REQUIRED TEXT



### *Business Writing Today: A Practical Guide*

By Natalie Canavor

SAGE Publications, 3rd Edition (2018)

Other materials will be made available via iCollege.

Students must have access to the Internet for supplemental readings, iCollege, and GSU email. You may also find a flash drive, GSU e-storage, or other electronic storage tools (OneDrive, Dropbox, etc.) useful for managing drafts and assignments.

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

[AKA, WHAT YOU SHOULD GET OUT OF THIS COURSE]

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Analyze written and verbal communications and evaluate their usefulness, relevance, rhetorical components, and stylistic elements
- Think critically about rhetorical choices and audience awareness
- Compose effective and persuasive written, visual, and oral texts for diverse audiences
- Recognize and implement the qualities associated with effective business writing, particularly the hallmarks of correctness, conciseness, coherence, and clarity
- Design visually attractive documents with informative and eye-catching visual elements
- Use technology to effectively present your messages
- Conduct research using a broad range of sources, synthesizing and judging the quality of collected information
- Communicate ethically
- Write in a variety of workplace genres including resumes, letters, emails, memos, and reports
- Collaborate effectively with peers



# COURSE POLICIES & PROCEDURES [AKA, HOW TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN THIS COURSE]

## ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

Showing up is a key factor for success, whether it's in school, at work, or in your personal life. Consequently, attendance is expected and integral to success in the course. You should come to class each day, on time and prepared to work, and be sure to stay for the duration of the class. A 10% portion of your final course grade is connected to in-class activities structured to help you be successful in the course, as well as your participation in class. This 10% can raise or lower your final grade by a full letter. **In-class work cannot be made up if you are absent.**

Regarding punctuality, in the business world—and outside it as well—being on time conveys respect for the time of others. Sometimes it can't be avoided, sure—we all live by the whims of MARTA and traffic in Atlanta—but chronic lateness reflects poorly on you and is one of my pet peeves. Get into good time-management habits now.

## COMMUNITY

We are part of a learning community and must treat one another with respect at all times. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important relating to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, and nationalities. Sleeping, texting, web browsing, Instagramming, sliding into someone's DMs, doing work for other classes, or other disruptive behavior won't be tolerated. **If you are disturbing the class, I may ask you to leave, forfeiting any in-class assignments we may complete after your departure.**

Our community does not end at the classroom door, but also extends to our iCollege space and all other out-of-class environments used for our course interactions as well. The following links outline GSU's policies on student conduct and disruptive behavior:

<https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/>

<http://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/faculty-staff-resources/disruptive-student-conduct/>

## CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

Our course is designed as a face to face course and, as such, your success will rely on your being in class to interact with course materials, other students, and me. Even though we may use iCollege and other online platforms for discussions and completing work, nothing can replace the in-person interaction during class.

Just as your attendance is critical to your success in this course, so is your active participation. **This means regular, meaningful contributions to our class discussions, be they ideas, statements, questions, or written responses.**

## ICOLLEGE

All class-wide announcements will be posted on our iCollege page. You will submit your written assignments via our iCollege page, and I will grade them there. You may email my staff account with course related questions: [sgraves15@gsu.edu](mailto:sgraves15@gsu.edu)

All course announcements will be posted on iCollege, e.g. if something arises that necessitates cancelling class, I will post an announcement before class begins.

## MISSED & LATE WORK

Generally, late major projects and papers are not accepted. However, I understand that emergencies can arise. Late work will therefore be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**In-class writing (that 10% portion of your grade) cannot be made up.** If you are absent, you will miss any in-class assignments and will receive a zero for that day's work. (I will drop your two lowest in-class writing days—which is to say, you get two freebies.)

Life happens. I get it. I really do. If you know your work will be late, you can always request an extension. (This reflects how business often—but not always—happens.) Instructor approval for extensions is more likely to be granted (but not guaranteed) if requests A) come before the deadline, rather than after; B) are clear, specific (naming the assignment and the proposed submission date), and courteous; and C) are not part of a pattern of missed due dates.

In case of a major extenuating emergency, notify me as soon as you can. In a valid, documented emergency, absences can be excused and alternate schedules for major assignments can be offered. If you have any questions or doubts as to the nature of your absence and its ability to be excused, ask me as soon as possible. I am much better equipped to help you accommodate an absence with advance notice. Ultimately, I reserve the right, at my sole discretion, to excuse (or not excuse) absences for circumstances that are not already outlined on GSU's Lower Division Studies Attendance Policy on at [www.lids.gsu.edu/](http://www.lids.gsu.edu/).

## COMMUNICATION

**The only acceptable mode of electronic communication with the instructor is via email from [yourcampusid@student.gsu.edu](mailto:yourcampusid@student.gsu.edu) to my [sgraves15@gsu.edu](mailto:sgraves15@gsu.edu) faculty email account.**

If you would like to contact me outside of class, please do so via email or come by during my office hours (you may have questions or just want to chat – I encourage both!). You may reasonably expect to receive a reply from your instructor within 24 business hours—successive emails every 15 minutes inquiring about a reply will not speed up that reply.

**Please do NOT use the iCollege messaging system—I do not regularly check it.**

## INCOMPLETES

In order to receive an incomplete, a student must inform the instructor, either in person or in writing, of his/her inability to complete the requirements of the course. A grade of incomplete will only be considered for students who meet the following three conditions:

- passing the course with a C or better
- present a legitimate, non-academic reason to the instructor (documentation may be required)
- have only one major assignment left to finish.

**Assignment of incompletes and the terms for removal of the "I" will be set at the instructor's discretion.**

## STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability may do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services. Georgia State University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought. Also, please schedule an appointment with me so that we may discuss any accommodations you need in our class during office hours. To respect your privacy, we will not discuss these accommodations in class.

### PLEASE NOTE:

I recognize that as health care costs skyrocket and health insurance coverage and access dwindles, you may have a need for accommodation yet lack an official diagnosis that the university will accept. Please come talk to me if that is the case; I want to help you be successful in the classroom, and if I am aware of any challenges you face we can plan more effectively to ensure your success.

## COMMUNITY OF CARE & MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

Being a student can be stressful; you often have a lot to manage between classes, personal life, family, and work. In addition, writing and composing are vulnerable acts. As part of our effort to form a supportive community in this class, we should strive to look out for one another. A kind word, an enthusiastic comment about a peer's writing, or simply offering to listen can go a long way toward this goal. If stresses emerge regarding your course work, please speak with me. I will strive to support each of you in your academic life.

As a student, you may experience a range of challenges that can interfere with learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, substance use, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may impact your ability to attend class, concentrate, complete work, take an exam, or participate in daily activities. Problems with relationships, family worries, loss, housing or food insecurity, or a personal struggle or crisis can also contribute to decreased academic performance. In these cases, please consider taking advantage of the resources the university provides through the Dean of Students' Office or the Counseling and Testing Center. You can reach Counseling at <https://counselingcenter.gsu.edu/> and 404-413-1640 and the Dean of Students Student Advocacy team at 404-413-1515.

## THE WRITING STUDIO

@ GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY



25 PARK PLACE, 24TH FLOOR, ROOM 2420

[www.writingstudio.gsu.edu](http://www.writingstudio.gsu.edu)

The purpose of the Writing Studio is to enhance the writing instruction by providing undergraduate and graduate students with an experienced reader who engages them in conversation about their writing assignments and ideas, and familiarizes them with audience expectations and academic genre conventions. They focus on the rhetorical aspects of texts, and provide one-on-one, student-centered teaching that corresponds to each writer's composing process. Although they are not a line-editing or proofreading service, the Writing Studio is happy to discuss grammar concerns with students from a holistic perspective. Tutors will be alert listeners and will ask questions, and will not judge or evaluate the work in progress. The Writing Studio offers 30 minute sessions for face-to-face tutoring. Online tutoring is also available; visit the Studio website for information.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY/ PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty. It's important to keep in mind that plagiarism does not factor in your intent--whether it is committed on purpose or by accident, uncredited use of another's work is plagiarism.

We will, of course, discuss plagiarism--and tactics for avoiding it--in class. You should also familiarize yourself with Georgia State's policy on Academic Honesty, which applies not only in this course but in every course you take at Georgia State:

[https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/files/2019/07/2019\\_7\\_3\\_Academic\\_Honesty.pdf](https://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/files/2019/07/2019_7_3_Academic_Honesty.pdf)

This policy refers to every piece of writing you do for class--drafts, reading responses, and finished essays alike. If you are ever unsure what may or may not be plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask me. In fact, I welcome your questions. Any work that is turned in to this class that is plagiarized or violates the university academic honesty policy will receive an automatic 0 for the assignment grade. Furthermore, I may refer you to the College of Arts and Sciences for further disciplinary action or course penalties.

Georgia State University defines plagiarism as "... any paraphrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own ... [It] frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text ... the quotation of paragraphs, sentences, or even phrases written by someone else." At GSU, "the student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources ... and the consequences of violating this responsibility."

In addition, students are required to be honest in their academic work by writing their own papers. Handing in papers you receive from someone else or allowing someone else to heavily edit or write work for you constitutes an academic honesty violation.



## ENGLISH MAJORS & THE GRADUATION PORTFOLIO

The English department at GSU requires an exit portfolio of all students graduating with a degree in English. Ideally, students should work on this every semester, selecting 1-2 papers from each course in the major and revising them, with direction from faculty members. The portfolio includes revised work and a reflective essay about what you've learned. Each concentration (literature, creative writing, rhetoric/composition, and secondary education) within the major has specific items to place in the portfolio, so be sure to download the packet from the English department website.

The Senior Portfolio is due at the midpoint of the semester you intend to graduate. Please check the university's academic calendar for that date. Please direct questions about your portfolio to the instructor of your senior seminar or to Dr. Mark Noble, Director of Undergraduate Studies.

### ONLINE EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTOR

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.



**THIS SYLLABUS REFLECTS A PLAN FOR THE COURSE. DEVIATIONS FROM THIS PLAN MAY BECOME NECESSARY AS THE SEMESTER PROGRESSES. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR TAKING NOTE OF ANY CHANGES THAT MAY OCCUR.**

# ASSIGNMENTS

## ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

Most assignments (except quizzes and in-class writing) will be uploaded through iCollege. This includes your blogs, presentation materials, and your projects.

Assignments that require you to upload a link (such as your blog posts) will only require that you paste the link in the text box.

**Some days we will be peer reviewing your material in class—you will need to bring your work with you, whether that is a hard copy or electronic. We are in a computer classroom, but you may want to bring your own laptop/ device anyway—it is up to you.**

**FINAL DRAFTS:** Final Drafts of projects must be submitted by the due date/ time to our class iCollege site in a form I can open. (This usually means a web link, a PDF, JPG, PNG, GIF, TIFF, PPT, Pages, Keynote, or iMovie. You have another format? Discuss with me, or export to something listed above.)

It is the responsibility of the student to have and maintain access to iCollege, to properly submit all work through this platform, and to contact the instructor immediately if they have issues with assignment submission. If a student is unable to upload an assignment to the iCollege platform for some reason, they must notify the instructor via email and include the assignment as an attachment to that email.

**NOTE ABOUT WORKLOAD:** This is a 3-hour credit course; for every hour the class meets, you should expect to spend 3 hours outside of class working on assignments. This course is by its very nature writing-intensive. For your own sanity, try to stay on top of your workload; if you fall behind, it compounds quickly.

## ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS

### IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES & DAILY WRITING

These grades are comprised of in-class writing, group activities, and peer editing—they may connect to that day's lecture, or they may be a response to the assigned reading. Since you cannot make up an in-class assignment, a total of your (2) lowest in-class grades will be dropped. These in-class assignments are rarely announced ahead of time. In addition, you are expected to provide thoughtful, meaningful contributions to our class conversations and participate in any in-class work assigned by your instructor.

### BLOG POSTS

Throughout the semester, you will have a total of (5) blog posts due. The blog entry topics I leave to your discretion—but do try to tie them into your field. Is something new in the music industry? Did you attend a fascinating workshop or lecture by someone in your area of study? Is there a news item you'd like to respond to? There will be submission folders in iCollege for each blog link—you will need to upload a file with your submission (We will discuss further in class). Although it may sound like a daunting amount of writing, it's an inescapable fact that writing improves through practice, and these blogs are a chance to try out different genres, modes, and tones.

### MAJOR PROJECTS

#### FORMAL LETTER

You will identify a professional in your field to whom you would like to write and create a formal business letter that will be mailed.

#### JOB MARKET PACKAGE

Resume/ CV, Cover Letter, LinkedIn Profile

#### SOCIAL MEDIA PACKAGE

(3) Social Media platform posts (you can choose the platforms) that tie into your professional web presence

#### PRESENTATIONS

The first presentation will critique the social media presence of a company or individual. The second presentation will be a pitch—you may pitch a new product, service, or yourself. This second presentation may also be submitted as a video project.

#### PROFESSIONAL WEBSITE

This website should illustrate the principles of good writing and design that we discuss throughout the semester. It also hosts your blog posts as well as your job market materials and links to your social media package. You can update this throughout the semester, but the final version will be due May 1, 2020.

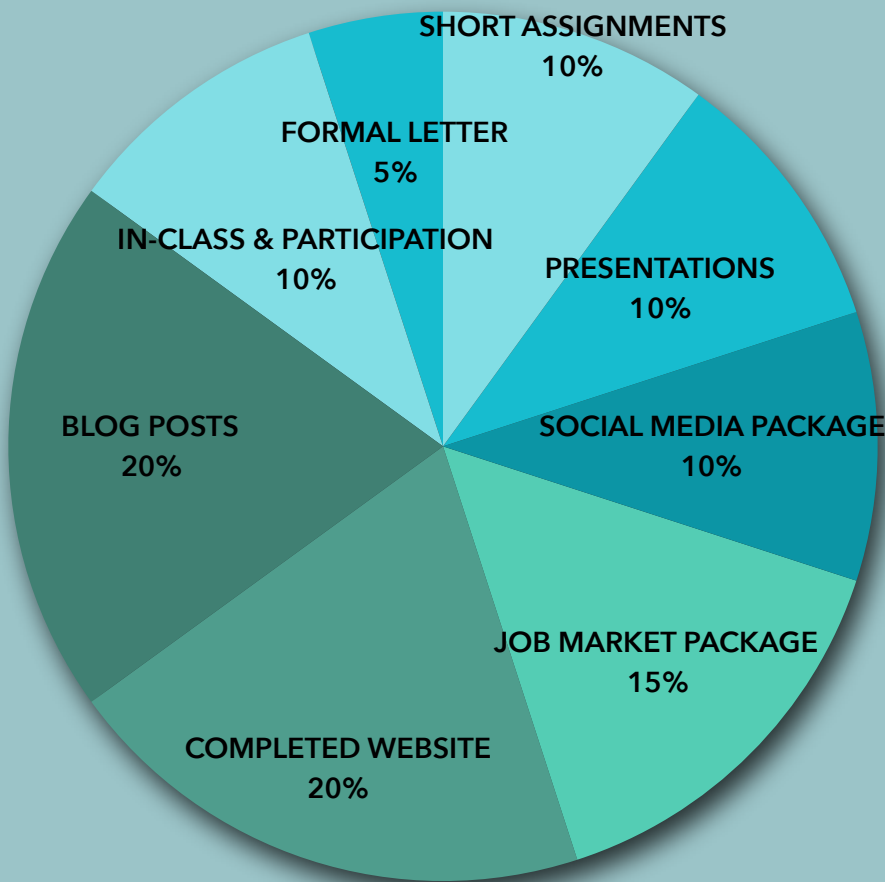
# ★ GRADING SCHEMA

SUPERIOR	SATISFACTORY	NEEDS IMPROVEMENT	FAILING
100 to 98 = A+	89 to 88 = B+	79 to 78 = C+	
97 to 93 = A	87 to 83 = B	77 to 70 = C	Below 60 = F
92 to 90 = A-	82 to 80 = B-	69 to 60 = D	

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR A+

An A+ paper must meet and exceed the assessment criteria for the A. There are two circumstances under which a student can earn an A+ on a formal paper or project assignment in these courses. 1] A+ work is writing at a higher academic level (i.e., a paper for a first-year class meeting expectations for a sophomore-level or advanced course) and 2] A+ work addresses audience expectations or writing needs beyond the course; for example, the paper has been accepted or is being reviewed for publication, serves a public or community service, is professional and ready for workplace distribution, or influences social or policy change in the student's community.

## GRADING BREAKDOWN



## GRADING RUBRIC

Several elements will go into your grade. Spelling, punctuation, grammar, and mechanics are inevitably at the foundation, but I am also looking for clear, concise, and concrete writing. Does it flow easily from sentence to sentence, image to image, paragraph to paragraph? Finally, does the work succeed by making the point strongly and coherently, including with its visual design? All of these qualities fold into your grade in approximately equal portions.

Finally, if I were to assume the role of your manager, applying the following general distinctions between A work, B work, and so on, to your writing:

**A:** Manager or clients would be **impressed** and remember the work when a promotion or contract is discussed. An "A" is reserved for work that clearly fulfills the requirements or criteria for a given assignment.

**B:** Manager or clients would be **satisfied** with the job but not especially impressed. A "B" indicates some lack or deficiency in one key area. For example, a "B" would be given to an assignment that overlooks a specified criterion, has a less than professional visual quality, or was not edited or proofread thoroughly.

**C:** Manager or clients would be **disappointed** and ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing outsiders to see the work. A "C" indicates more substantial shortcomings in the areas discussed above. This weakness might come up in your annual job performance review

**D:** Manager or clients would be **troubled** by the works' poor quality. "D" indicates that there are profound weaknesses in all areas of the document. This would impact your job performance review negatively.

**F:** Manager or clients would start looking for someone to replace you.

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# COURSE SCHEDULE

[SUBJECT TO CHANGE; UPDATES WILL BE POSTED ON ICOLLEGE]

WEEK	DATE	DAILY AGENDA	HOMEWORK FOR NEXT CLASS	DUE
WEEK 1	JAN 14—TUE	INTRODUCTION TO COURSE	Send introductory email	
	JAN 16—TH	Syllabus; Intro to Persuasion in Business Writing	Send persuasive email	<b>1/21: PERSUASIVE EMAIL DUE</b>
WEEK 2	JAN 21—TUE	Writing as Process; INTRO BLOG PROJECT	Set up blog webpage Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 1, 2, 3	<b>1/23: UPLOAD BLOG LINK</b>
	JAN 23—TH	Elements of Business Writing	Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 10	<b>1/26: BLOG POST #1 DUE</b>
WEEK 3	JAN 28—TUE	Online Presence: websites, LinkedIn, social media; GOOGLING THYSELF	Work on creating/ updating a LinkedIn page Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 5	
	JAN 30—TH	<b>NO CLASS;</b> refine websites	Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 12 Start drafting Resume, cover letter	<b>2/2: BLOG POST #2 DUE</b>
WEEK 4	FEB 4—TUE	Job Market Materials: Resume/ CV, Cover Letter	Bring draft of resume & cover letter for peer review	
	FEB 6—TH	In-Class work day: BRING RESUME, COVER LETTER	Revise Resume/ Cover Letter Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 7	<b>2/9: JOB MARKET PACKAGE DUE</b>
WEEK 5	FEB 11—TUE	Email, Revisited	Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 11	
	FEB 13—TH	PRESENTATIONS: Tactics for Survival	Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 6	<b>2/13: FORMAL EMAIL #2 DUE</b>
WEEK 6	FEB 18—TUE	SOCIAL MEDIA: The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly	Read " <u>Social Media Management</u> "	
	FEB 20—TH	Social Media Strategies; DRAW LOTS FOR PRESENTATIONS	Prepare for presentation	
WEEK 7	FEB 25—TUE	<b>PRESENTATION #1: Social Media</b>		<b>2/25 &amp; 27: SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENTATION</b>
	FEB 27—TH	<b>PRESENTATION #1: Social Media</b>	Read <i>BWT</i> Ch 8 & 9	<b>2/25 &amp; 27: SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENTATION</b>
WEEK 8	MAR 3—TUE	Business Documents	Identify letter recipient	
	MAR 5—TH	Letters & Memos	Draft Business Letter	<b>3/8: BLOG POST #3 DUE</b>
WEEK 9	MAR 10—TUE	Proposals & Reports	BRING PRINTED COPY OF LETTER & ENVELOPE TO CLASS	
	MAR 12—TH	CATCH UP DAY; MAIL LETTERS	Enjoy Spring Break	<b>3/12: LETTERS DUE IN CLASS</b> <b>3/15: BLOG POST #4 DUE</b>

WEEK	DATE	DAILY AGENDA	HOMEWORK FOR NEXT CLASS	DUE
WEEK 10	MAR 16 - 22	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	Enjoy yourself!	
WEEK 11	MAR 24—TUE	Design elements (for non-designers); INTRO SOCIAL MEDIA PACKAGE	Read "Proximity," "Alignment" (iCollege); bring in an example of design you'd like to discuss in class (or email it before class)	
	MAR 26—TH	Design Critiques/ Editing Visual Elements	Read "Repetition," "Contrast" (iCollege);	<b>3/26: BLOG POST #5 DUE</b>
WEEK 12	MAR 31—TUE	Where Design & Business Writing Collide; INTRO PRESENTATION #2	Read "Type Contrasts"; Acquire a flyer that uses bad design & bring to class on 4/2	
	APR 2—TH	Bad Flyer Project—in class	" <u>Writing the Personal Statement</u> "	<b>4/12: SOCIAL MEDIA PACKAGE DUE</b>
WEEK 13	APR 7—TUE	The Dreaded Personal Statement; Bios for business	Draft Personal Statement—bring to class 4/9	
	APR 9—TH	Peer Review Personal Statements; Discuss Reports & Memos	Draft a Memo	<b>4/12: MEMO DUE</b>
WEEK 14	APR 14—TUE	CATCH UP DAY; Draw lots for presentation order	Work on updating your website	
	APR 16—TH	<b>NO CLASS</b>	Finalize presentations & end of semester work	
WEEK 15	APR 21—TUE	<b>PRESENTATIONS #2: THE PITCH</b>		
	APR 23—TH	<b>PRESENTATIONS #2: THE PITCH</b>		
WEEK 16	MAY 1—FRIDAY	<b>FINALS WEEK—FINAL PACKET DUE</b>		<b>4/26: COMPLETED WEBSITE DUE</b>

**REMINDER:** Please fill out the course evaluation once grades are released!

**NOTES:**