MKT 309: BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS (CRN #85232)

Spring 2019, Monday, 6– 8:50pm, Bryan 106
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

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GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Course Description

Business and professional communication: teamwork, communication technology, verbal and non-verbal strategies in a problem-solving, innovation context. Emphasizes effective persuasive, interpersonal, intercultural, and organizational strategies through business styles, formats, and presentations.

Prerequisites

Junior standing and admission to an approved Bryan School of Business and Economics program.

General Education Writing Intensive and Speaking Intensive Student Learning Outcomes

In addition, because this course is designated as Writing Intensive and Speaking Intensive at UNCG, students will be able to write and speak in genres appropriate to the discipline(s) of the primary subject matter of the course. Specifically, this course will promote the ability to write and speak clearly, coherently and effectively as well as adapt media of communication specific to audience needs.

The Bryan School of Business and Economics Mission Statement

In the Bryan School of Business and Economics, we create and disseminate knowledge about the theory and practice of business. In addition to our courses and research, we accomplish this through hands-on projects, global experiences, and outreach to the community. Our work produces principled leaders and exceptional problem solvers who have a global perspective, an innovative mindset, a broad understanding of sustainability, and a commitment to improve the organizations in which they work and the communities in which they live.

BRYAN SCHOOL LEARNING GOALS AND COURSE OBJECTIVES

Bryan School Student Learning Goals

1. Students will implement the various steps of the critical thinking process, supported by the appropriate use of analytical and quantitative techniques, to formulate recommendations for subsequent decision-making
2. Students will apply appropriate ethical standards when making recommendations for business decision making
3. Students will evaluate business decisions in the context of sustainability goals, balancing environmental, social, and economic needs, conditions, and potential decision impacts

4. Students will formulate appropriate strategies, in the context of global issues and forces, to improve business performance in the world economy
5. Students will explain the roles of innovation and innovation management in achieving successful business strategies, decisions, and performance
6. Students will plan, schedule, contribute to, and lead projects

Impact of MKT 309 on Bryan School Student Learning Goals

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to meet various components of two of the above learning goals: Learning Goal #5 – Innovation and Learning, Goal #6 – Collaboration and Communication.

- Innovation (Learning Goal #5)

This course will introduce (1) three aspects of innovative thinking called innovative mindset or human flourishing and includes a study of mindfulness, mindsets. and character strengths, and (2) the design thinking problem solving approach. The final exam is an end-of-term essay on these two components.

5.1: Understand the process and product of innovation
5.2: Relate the innovation process to value in business strategies, decisions, and performance

- Collaboration and Communication (Learning Goal #6)

In this course, students will study effective business writing and presenting. Additionally, in teams, students will plan and manage a semester-long project focused on a real client's business need. The students will produce both draft and final writing and speaking products. The written assessment is the end-of-term innovative essay, and the speaking assessment will be the video presentation of the project.

6.1a: Employ multiple forms of <u>written</u> communication techniques to deliver the most effective communication for the situation.
6.1b: Employ multiple forms of <u>spoken and nonverbal</u> communication techniques to deliver the most effective communication situation.

MKT 309 Course Student Objectives

1. Understand the importance of effective communication in the workplace
2. Identify communication strategies for business situations
3. Create responses to communication needs
4. Conduct business research for evidence-based writings and presentations
5. Use accurate documentation of sources
6. Write concise and organized documents using the appropriate format
7. Use the three-step writing process
8. Write reports based on evaluation of data
9. Develop and demonstrate effective oral presentations with verbal and nonverbal proficiencies
10. Understand the positive human capacities for deep insight, collaboration, and innovative problem solving
11. Develop skills to conceive, research, prototype, and design innovations using verbal, nonverbal, visual-figurative, and written forms of communications

COURSE OVERVIEW

In this course, we will be placing an emphasis on developing the most desired attributes for business professionals. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers' (NACE), those attributes include problem-solving skills, communication skills (written), communication skills (verbal), ability to work in a team, interpersonal skills, and leadership. This course provides students opportunities to learn and cultivate these qualities and is designed to change thinking and behaving, not just offer knowledge for memorization.

Each term, all the MKT 309 sections have a hands-on project on a real organization's business need. The client for this term is a nonprofit called The Forge based in Greensboro (www.forgegreensboro.org).

If for any reason a student is uncomfortable with the client or the project s/he is welcome to drop the course and take it at a future date when there will be a different client and project.

The deliverables that will be given to the client at the end of term include a polished report and a persuasive video presentation. There is no compensation for this work, as is customary for all student projects performed in the Bryan School.

ATTRIBUTE	% OF RESPONDENTS
Problem-solving skills	82.9%
Ability to work in a team	82.9%
Communication skills (written)	80.3%
Leadership	72.6%
Strong work ethic	68.4%
Analytical/quantitative skills	67.5%
Communication skills (verbal)	67.5%
Initiative	67.5%
Detail-oriented	64.1%
Flexibility/adaptability	60.7%
Technical skills	59.8%
Interpersonal skills (relates well to others)	54.7%
Computer skills	48.7%
Organizational ability	48.7%

The good news is students will learn how to provide polished, relevant, and meaningful deliverables that will likely be used by the clients. This is not a theoretical course but a practical course giving students impactful communications and innovation skills and mindsets.

Course Format

The course teaches effective business writing and speaking through individual and group work. It is different in that students are asked to think and work in new and creative ways that improve problem solving. Students may feel uncertain and uncomfortable but are asked to trust in the learning process.

Assignments are structured in relation to a hands-on innovation project to reflect an important business context as well as to cultivate the problem-solving and human capacity skills, knowledge, and mindsets useful for working in changing, challenging, collaborative, and ambiguous environments.

This is a university-designated writing intensive and speech intensive course directed at teaching students to write and speak in genres appropriate to business disciplines. As such, students are expected to revise and improve their work iteratively in accordance with the Three-Step Writing process, for both written and spoken assignments.

Students will be provided comments for improvement on their assignments and are to apply this feedback (called feedforward) to improve all current and future assignments. Ignoring feedforward and failing to integrate the insights provided will result in diminished grades *and* subsequent feedforward, i.e. earlier comments will not be repeated.

To aid the learning process, a set of generative human skills and mindsets called Human Flourishing or Innovative Mindset will be taught and practiced, accompanying the business communications and

innovation content. These skills and mindsets will aid students in all individual and group business communications and innovation tasks, from the planning and revision of written and oral forms of communicating to the collaborating and problem-solving on innovation endeavors.

Required Materials

Writing That Works: Communication Effectively on the Job by Oliu, Brusaw and Alred, 12th Edition. Other articles and readings will be assigned and posted on Canvas.
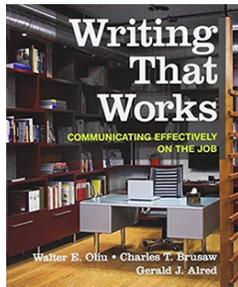

Students must bring laptop or tablet to EVERY class. Students must also bring other specified printouts, materials such as post-it notes and markers as indicated in this syllabus. The instructor will not verbally remind students as these requirements are specified on the syllabus.

Time will be given in class to work on individual and group assignments, but students should devote significant time (as much as twice the time devoted during class) to this work outside of class. To produce sections of the project portfolio, teams are advised to use the provided class time well, given the difficulty of scheduling meetings outside of class. Arranging a schedule of team meetings is solely the responsibility of students.

Students should read the assignments, readings, and view the website and videos prior to attending class per the syllabus. Not having done so will be evident and affect the quality of participation and thus course grade. The readings will be used or referred to during class, but not reviewed in detail in class under the assumption that the content has been digested outside of class. **This is known as the flipped class method.**

Suggested Readings
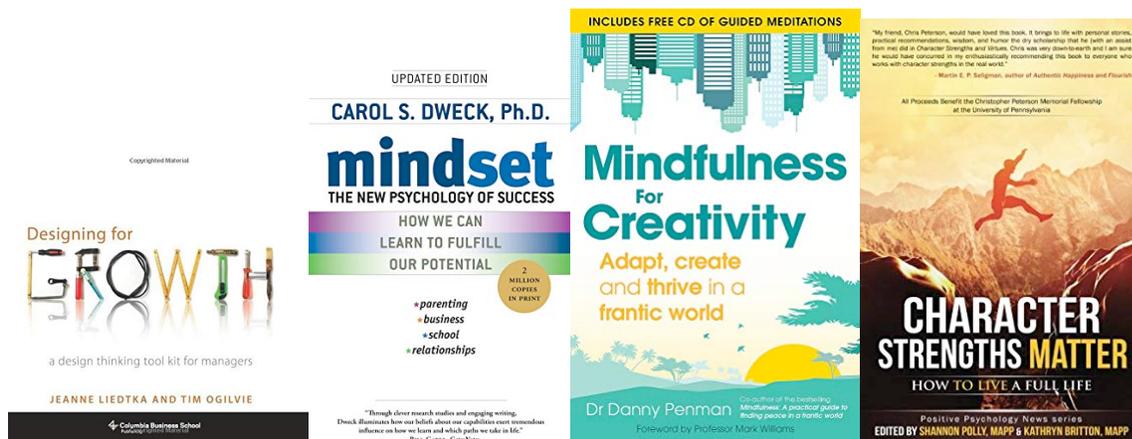
Attendance and Participation

Attendance of each class is mandatory. Missing only one class is equivalent to missing three classes, and because the class meets only once per week and significant individual and group work is done during class times, attendance is required. Emergencies will be handled on a case-by-case basis by notifying the instructor. Additional absences without prior notification and consent of the instructor will result in a full letter grade penalty for the course.

Students should arrive on time and remain through the class period. <u>Late arrival or early departure constitutes an absence and will be marked as such, even if you have signed the roll sheet</u>. The instructor is aware of who leaves class early without permission. Punctuality is expected because business values it. <u>Students are responsible for signing in at the beginning of each session and will not be permitted to sign in after the session</u> is over for any reason, including having forgotten.

In general, quality (i.e. thoughtful) and quantity participation are expected. Students will be graded on both aspects. Merely being vocal does not signify quality participation.

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Policies

The Bryan School is a professional school dedicated to preparing students for careers in business. Practicing proper classroom and business etiquette at all times assists students in developing the skills that contribute to their future career success. These classroom policies promote and maintain a professional atmosphere in the classroom conducive for learning:

Students are to treat fellow students, the instructor, and classroom guests with the utmost respect and courtesy by…

- Thoughtful listening and interacting
- Refraining from side conversations
- <u>Muting and putting away all cell phones, pagers, tablets, and laptops **upon entering class** (none are permitted for note-taking and can only be used in class upon instruction)</u>
- Not texting, reading a book, typing on a laptop or tablet or being on social media unless instructed
- Arriving for class on time and leaving at the end of the designated period
- Respecting others' views that may differ from their own
- Using appropriate, professional language at all times
- Supporting the instructor's ability to teach and the other students' ability to learn
- Refraining from loud, distracting, aggressive behaviors and communications toward others (derogatory comments or threatening actions will not be tolerated)
- Not sleeping in class
- Conducting yourself in a courteous, attentive, and professional manner at all times

Students who cannot abide by these policies should consider enrolling in another course. Students not complying with these policies will be asked to leave the classroom, possibly escorted by the campus police, and be subjected to actions under UNCG's student disciplinary procedures. The instructor has discretion to withdraw a student from the course as outlined in Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom policy: https://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/policies/disruptive-behavior-in-the-classroom/

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to abide by the UNCG Student Code of Conduct and act with academic integrity as articulated in two weblinks: https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/ and
http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/student-code-of-conduct/

In keeping with these policies, evidence of academic dishonesty, including cheating on an exam or submitting another person's work as one's own, will automatically result in a failing grade for the course and disciplinary review by the University.

Plagiarism is also a form of academic dishonesty. It includes passing off someone else's work or ideas as one's own, or paraphrasing material from a source (e.g. the Internet) without proper acknowledgement and citation (whether from web or hard copy sources). Changing one or a few words from an original source can constitute plagiarism. The instructor will use an electronic service to check for plagiarism on all assignments.

To avoid plagiarism, do not copy from your sources. You are expected to read the material and then express the ideas in your own words, while giving credit to the source. Plagiarism is such a serious offense that it is grounds for expulsion from this and any university and can mar your academic transcripts and reduce prospects for hiring and graduate program admission. See the above weblinks or consult with the instructor before submitting any assignment if you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism. All cases of academic dishonesty will be vigorously pursued and brought before UNCG's student disciplinary committees.

Also, not tolerated is passing off papers written by students in other sections of this course as yours. The instructor can easily spot plagiarized papers (in part or in total) as well as papers written by other students for this or other courses.

Furthermore, falsification of documents constitutes a violation of UNCG's academic integrity policies. Falsification includes forging another student's signature on a sign-in sheet, taking an exam for another individual, re-using another student's assignment from previous semesters, and paying a service or another individual to write an assignment for you.

Disability Accommodations

UNCG is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that individuals with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at UNCG. Students with disabilities who require accommodations are to contact the Office of Accessibility Resources & Services at 336.334.5440 the first week of school and discuss arrangements with the instructor as soon as possible.

Communicating with the Instructor

The best way to reach the instructor is through email at t_poind2@uncg.edu. (No texting the instructor is allowed.) It is imperative that the email be written clearly, politely, and in a timely fashion to practice the communications principles being taught in this course. Include a subject in the subject line, a formal salutation and name (for example "Dear Prof. Poindexter Smith" rather than "hey"), and the request made with sufficient time to receive a reply. Emails will not be responded to immediately but during normal business hours and usually within one to two business days, although the response may at times be slower as occurs in business.

Write your name at the end to formally close the email. Additionally, be mindful of the tone and language used in order to solicit a helpful response. Use of accusatory, volatile, or charged language will not solicit such a response, as is true in organizational life. Do not send emails through the Canvas In-box, as they may not be sent or received.

An alternative to emails is to request an appointment to see the instructor at other times. Often a verbal or in-person exchange is faster and more effective in obtaining the needed information than a series of emails.

Under no circumstances will grades be negotiated or extra points be provided upon request, whether electronic or in-person. Questioning the veracity of grades or expertise by which evaluations have been made will not be entertained. Only if a mathematical calculation is possibly erroneous should a question be raised.

ASSIGNMENTS & PROJECT

Writing Assignments

There are three graded individual writing assignments and two graded team writing assignments. All drafts are expected to be polished and revised multiple times prior to submission. Students receive feedforward on drafts and are to use it to significantly improve the final submission. Drafts are not graded but are required. Failure to submit a required draft will result automatically in a zero on the final graded assignment.

One individual assignment requires a worksheet per the syllabus. The worksheet is available on Canvas. The worksheet must be submitted along with the assignments if specified on the assignment due date. Missing worksheets, not following format requirements, or failure to adhere to other instructions will result in point deductions.

Please submit all written assignments (with worksheets, if specified) as an MS Word document through Canvas (do not submit as a PDF). All team written assignments must be submitted by the deadlines in both the Turnitin Folders as well as the Project Folders on Canvas. All individual assignments need only be submitted once in the regular folder and will be automatically reviewed through Turnitin for plagiarized content.

Speaking Assignments

Students will prepare and deliver a draft and revised video presentation with individual parts, using Power Point and original video footage demonstrating the prototype and its functions and features. Students will be graded on their individual speaking parts (with their faces showing) and the team will be graded as a whole for the entire video. The video has two parts: a) presentation of the secondary and primary research (every team member must participate in this portion), and b) explanation and demonstration of the final prototype and its ties to the research. The total video length is a maximum of 10 minutes, with no fewer than 5 minutes devoted to the research.

Innovation Project

Students will work throughout the semester on an innovation project as a means of learning how to communicate, collaborate, research, problem solve, and design an innovation in a real-world context. Students will be placed into teams and required to develop an innovation for an actual organization. Although innovation is typically thought of as a new product or service, it can be any new or improved product, process, system, or model that addresses a complex problem.

The approach to innovation that will be taught is called Design Thinking, a relatively new method adopted by leading companies such as Google, Apple, Pepsi, and even the U.S. Marines. Students will learn the Design Thinking methods, mindsets, steps, and tools in order to apply it to organizations. The core components will be taught through the innovation project and business communications assignments. This way clarity, structure, insight, persuasion, and other key principles of impactful business communications are instilled in tandem with the ability to solve complex problems adaptively.

Time will be given in class to work on the project throughout the semester, including assembling the group assignments. However, a greater portion of the work will be done outside of class. At the end of the semester, student teams will assemble a project portfolio and present their work in both written and video forms. The client organization will receive these deliverables to see how effectively students conceive, design, and communicate the innovation.

Human flourishing and Innovative Mindset skills and practices will be taught to facilitate individual development and team business communications and innovation activities. Students will therefore learn about listening, empathy, agility, collaboration, problem solving, character strengths, growth mindsets, and mindfulnesss along the way. Where severe dysfunction occurs, teams have the option to remove a member under specified conditions. Teams have significant authority to manage their affairs, and thus the opportunity to learn how to lead.

A team member who is voted out will have no replacement assignment or recourse with the instructor as the decision made by the team is final. This situation reflects the reality of corporate business practices, where uncooperative and unreliable individuals are terminated from employment. The details of the group removal process will be provided in class. Members will also grade each other on the team project, such that there may be variance in grades among members on any team assignment.

Leadership of the team rotates over the semester, so each member has a chance to lead and be responsible for producing that part of the innovation project. The leader is also responsible for Canvas submissions of the respective portion s/he leads. Responsibilities are as follows:

- Leader 1: project brief and secondary research
- Leader 2: primary research plan and primary research
- Leader 3: concepts and prototypes
- Leader 4: total portfolio (report)
- Leader 5: video presentation

On specified days, teams must bring to class specified materials in order to work on the project, such as post-it-sheets, colored markers, and post-it-notes. Students who fail to bring materials or equipment (e.g. laptop) will be asked to leave the class and will suffer a lower participation grade. Check the syllabus for dates on which to bring materials. Always bring your laptops to class. Please share the cost of materials among team members.

GRADING & SUBMISSIONS

Grading

Individual Assignments

Reflections	15%
Secondary Research	12.5%
Individual Portion of Project Presentation	12.5%
Final Exam	10%
Participation	10%

Group Assignments

Innovation Portfolio/Report**	30%
Project Presentation**	10%
Total	100%

*Team grade given. Individual contributions attached. All members are expected to contribute roughly equally. Grades will be lowered for individuals contributing less based on attached individual work.
**Team grade given. Grades will be lowered for individuals contributing less based on team input.

The course grading scale is below:

A = 94-100%
A- = 90-93%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 84-86%
B- = 80- 83%
C+ = 77-79%,
C = 74-76%,
C- = 70-73%
D+ = 67-69%
D = 64-66%
D- = 61-63%
F = 60% or below

Grades are non-negotiable. Assignments can take 6 -14 business days to grade and/or provide feedback. Feedback will be more detailed on earlier than later assignments in the semester and will not be repeated within an assignment or on future assignments if the same errors are made. This situation (of repeated errors) will be pointed out as such, and the student is encouraged to self-correct once the error is noted.

Late Submission Policy

Late submissions for any individual or group assignment will have point deductions as indicated below.

If a draft assignment, a late submission results in a 5-point deduction for each day late on the final graded assignment (a submission past 6 p.m. on the due date automatically counts as one day late up until 6 p.m. the next day, after which it becomes two days late, and so on). All seven (7) days of the week are counted. Keep in mind that deadlines are very real in the corporate world – and deadline extensions are rare.

If a revised or graded assignment, a late submission results in a 10-point deduction on the grade for each day late (a submission past 6 p.m. on the due date automatically counts as one day late up until 6 p.m. the next day, after which it becomes two days late, and so on). All seven (7) days of the week are counted.

It is entirely the responsibility of the students to double check timely and correct submissions on Canvas. Incorrect files will be graded as if they are correct.

If you are unsure about how to use or are having difficulty with Canvas, please see or call a UNCG information technology consultant (6-TECH), who are available seven (7) days a week.

Non-Submission Policy

Non-submission for any individual or group assignment will have points deducted as indicated below:

Failure to submit a required draft or ungraded required portion of a larger total assignment will result in a zero on the final or graded assignment. For example, failure to submit the draft secondary research memo will result in a zero on the revised or graded secondary research.

It is entirely the responsibility of students to double check timely and correct submissions on Canvas, allotting sufficient time for submission in the event of a technology or power failure. No exceptions will be made for failing to ensure proper and timely submission, whether due to technology or other issues.

The instructor will not negotiate grades or make exceptions based on not understanding how to use Canvas or not double-checking proper submission. It is advisable to clear the browser or cache of past searches as this can interfere with interfacing with Canvas. A leader's failure to submit the correct file on behalf of the team by the deadline will not result in a pass for the rest of the team. It is best for the entire team to check the files are correct and submitted before the deadline.

Other Information

Students should use and check their UNCG email to access and send information or questions to the instructor. Do not assume that a personal email address or Canvas emails will be responded to.

Students are advised to read this syllabus carefully to understand course parameters. Receipt of this syllabus constitutes acknowledgement of the policies and requirements of the course, and therefore attempts to negotiate deadlines, assignments, or policies will not be entertained.

If a student anticipates the course assignments to be incompatible with work and class schedules or other time demands and interests, s/he is strongly advised to enroll in another course or this course another semester. Assignments are consistent with advanced level (junior standing and above) university coursework.

<p style="text-align:center">COURSE SCHEDULE</p>
<p style="text-align:center">(Subject to Change, 8/26/2019)</p>
<p style="text-align:center">Essential to bring items noted on specified days for in-class work and the feedforward experiences.</p>
<p style="text-align:center"><u>Always bring your laptop and complete assignments handout.</u></p>

Date	Topics	Assignments Due Post by 6 p.m.	Prepare for Class!
8/26	Course Overview & Communications		Ch.1
9/9	-The Project -Secondary Research & Project Brief -Teaming		- Ch. 6, 7, 8, Appendix B - Read project file - Watch project videos on Canvas - Review client website (www.forgegreensboro.org) **- Bring your project questions**
9/16	-Writing Strategy & Methods -Human Flourishing: Mindsets -Design Thinking		-Brown article on Canvas -Ch.2, 3, 4 -Watch Dweck Video (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_X0mgOOSpLU) -Read on Dweck's mindsets (https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/01/29/carol-dweck-mindset/)
9/23	-Human Flourishing: Character Strengths -Design Thinking	IND Draft Secondary Research Memo w/ Worksheet	-Complete VIA Survey: http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Character-Strengths-Survey (SAVE results) -Read your top 5 strengths http://www.viacharacter.org/www/Reports-Courses-Resources/Resources/Character-Strength-Fact-Sheets **Bring your VIA survey results;** **Bring IND Draft Secondary Research & Worksheet**
9/30	-Collaborative Work -Project Tools, Context Map, & Project Brief	*IND Revised Secondary Research Memo & <u>no</u> Worksheet	-Ch.5 **Bring IND Revised Secondary Research; post-it notes, large sheets, markers**
On Your Own	Primary Research		
10/7	-Human Flourishing: Mindfulness -Designing Primary Research Methods		-Ch.13 -Watch 2 mindfulness videos (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qzR62JJCMBQ) -Read about mindfulness (https://www.mindful.org/what-is-mindfulness/) **Bring TEAM primary research plan and questions on primary research**
10/21	Mapping Primary Research\		**Bring TEAM secondary & primary research; post it-notes, large sheets, and markers**
10/28	Ideation	*TEAM Primary Research w/ Individual Contributions	-Ch.5 -Ch.11 **Bring TEAM secondary & primary research; post it-notes, large sheets, and markers**
11/4	-Prototyping -Creating & Delivering Presentations		**Bring ideation sheets from last week; prototyping materials (e.g. foil, scissors, tape, playdough)**
11/11	Prototyping & Testing		- Ch.14 **Bring prototyping materials (e.g. foil, scissors, tape, playdough); questions and ideas on video presentation**
11/18	Draft Presentation	TEAM Draft Presentation	Ch 11 **Bring flash of PPT presentation**
11/25	Final Presentation & Prototype	*TEAM Revised Presentation	
On Your Own	Synthesizing Portfolio		**Bring all draft sections of portfolio**

12/2	Final Portfolio	*TEAM Portfolio	
12/9	Final Exam		

Ch.= *Writing That Works* chapter*s*, IND = Individual, TEAM = Team. *Graded