ASSIGNMENT #6: Non-Profit Group Project

POINTS: 50
DUE: All documents are due for a grade in the Assignments folder by midnight Sunday week #12. Individual document drafts have additional D2L due dates throughout weeks 9 - 12.
FORMAT: Final documents will be submitted to D2L for grading. Your proposal and letter must be Word docs; your two design documents should be PDFs, unless they are webpages.
TOTAL DOCUMENTS: 4
- Project Proposal (2-3 pages), *draft due Discussion Week #9*
- Fundraising Letter (1 page, not to be exceeded), *draft due Discussion Week #10*
- Two design documents (length variable depending on medium/format), *drafts due Discussion Week #11*
  - **NOTE:** Peer review and revision takes place during Week #12.
  - **NOTE:** You will turn in documents for a grade (50 pts) Sunday of Week #12; all documents until that point are considered drafts and will not be graded.

==**REQUIRED DISCUSSION POSTS (which are highlighted in yellow in following pages):**==
- **Week 9:** Team Leader will post topic *by midnight Tuesday in DB#1.*
- **Week 9:** Team Leader will post entire Project Proposal *by midnight Sunday in DB#2.*
- **Week 11:** Team Leader will post drafts of 4 Non-Profit Documents for peer review *by midnight Sunday in DB#3.*
- **Week 12:** Individuals will respond to other group docs *by midnight Wednesday.*

ASSIGNMENT OVERVIEW

You will work in groups to **develop four graded documents** for a non-profit organization.

You might think of this project in one of two ways: 1) as an opportunity to create documents that could be used by an actual organization (and thus listed on your resume as professional writing experience); or 2) as an opportunity to practice working in technical writing genres that we both have and have not yet covered as a class.

The non-profit organization you use for this group may be real or fictional. If fictional, the needs of organization must be realistic and reasonably similar to the needs of an actual organization. (Don't propose to write memos for martians, in other words.) Typically, smaller, local organizations work well; alternatively, you may choose to "work for" a local branch/division of a large national organization such as the World Wildlife Fund.

The project involves several aspects of technical writing:

- Researching local communication needs and brainstorming products based on those needs;
- Interacting with peers about ideas;
- Writing and revising documents themselves;
- Presenting documents to a peer audience for feedback; and
- Finalizing documents for your instructor.

Each part is described more specifically below.

ASSIGNMENT SPECIFICS & STAGES

STAGE 1: Generate Ideas for Non-Profit Project and Post Topic to DB (Week 9)
You will work with group members to collectively identify a local organization (or fabricate a realistic one) for your project and gather vital statistics: size of organization; mission statement; existing printed and online resources; contact information; on-going and future projects, etc.

==Team Leader== will post your proposed topic with some basic organizational information to the Non-Profit Discussion Board *by midnight Tuesday of Week #9*. I will then respond with a "thumbs up" (it's a good fit for assignment) or "thumbs down" (in which case I'll provide suggestions for a better fit).

STAGE 2: Project Proposals (Week 9). As a group, you will develop a 2-3 page, single-spaced proposal in which you state your focus for this assignment. Chapter 17 demonstrates different proposal types, so please read their explanations and examples. For this project, I require MEMO formatting with the following sections:

- **(2 pts) TO, FROM, DATE and SUBJECT lines identified at the top, as you would any memo.** Address the memo to your instructor and peers.

- **(5 pts) Background Information**: At least ½ page in which you explain to readers in detail what the organization does, who it serves, and why its services are needed. Keep paragraphs short and information specific. Whenever you draw from outside sources, please use **in-text citations** to refer readers to a **Works Cited** list at the end of the document.

- **(5 pts) Description of Communication Needs**: At least ½ page in which you explain the organization's rhetorical needs in detail. In other words, which audience or audiences does the organization need to communicate with at this time? For what purposes? Is there anything that makes this rhetorical situation particularly challenging or complex? What's missing from the written materials the organization has available now? <u>You are creating documents based upon a need—and this where you clearly and specifically identify that need.</u>

- **(8 pts) Description of Solution:** Take at least ½ page to describe the documents you propose to develop to address the communication problem described above: <u>one must be a fundraising letter;</u> <u>two must contain some design elements that illustrate your understanding of Williams' four design principles.</u> Designs need not be fancy or extensive (I would, for instance, consider something like a resume a design document if you used a couple different fonts and emphatic features like bold, color and bullets.) As detailed on the next page, one of your design documents can be mostly design (like flier or postcard) while the other should contain more written content (800 -1,000 words is an estimate). Identify the genre, audience, and purpose of each document you propose to develop, including any unique rhetorical or ethical constraints.

  - **Regarding Fundraising Letter:** Since this document is a requirement of the project, it is helpful to understand what constitutes a successful fundraising

letter. As such, I encourage you to skim the readings pertaining to fundraising to best understand rhetorical and content requirements.

- **Regarding Formatting:** When you proposal your three documents, chunk information to boost readability; use white space and bullets as needed to increase visual (and therefore content) effectiveness.
- **References:** Use MLA documentation style to create in-text citations and a Works Cited page to reference outside sources cited in the proposal.
  <mark>*DUE: Team Leader will post your draft Proposal in the Non-Profit Discussion board by midnight Week #9.*</mark>

STAGE 3: Drafting, Revising and Editing Documents (Weeks 10 -11)

Once I have approved of your topic and provided some feedback on your proposal, begin developing the three documents you proposed, paying particular attention to audience, purpose and context. The more time you spend on the project, the more nuanced your understanding of the rhetorical situation is likely to become. Given what you now know, how well are you solving the communication problems identified in your proposal? Would your target audience(s) find your documents accessible, engaging, and relevant?

#1 FUNDRAISING LETTER (10 pts, Week 10): Once you have written the project proposal, it's time to help them out--and your first charge is writing a Fundraising Letter.

Assume that the letter will be sent out to a mailing list of people who have been flagged as likely donors, but who may or may not have heard of the organization before. In your letter, you will need to ask for **money**; while you may mention the need for volunteers or a range of different kinds of contributions, you must also ask for specific dollar amounts (the less direct the "ask," the less likely the response).

Length: Shoot for 1 full page. Provide enough background on the organization so that readers don't have to do research, though you may want to mention some additional resources toward the end.

Format: Full block, which includes

- heading (letterhead works well)
- date
- inside address (even if just fake to act as a place holder)
- salutation
- intro/body/concluding paragraphs not indented (single spaced paragraphs with a blank space between each)
- closing, *4 spaces for signature*, printed name

NOTE: Successful past letters have included a SUBJECT LINE and/or POST SCRIPT (P.S.)

Tone: Courteous, formal, professional; use "You" perspective

Techniques: Complete this week's readings, as I expect you all to implement Klein's "psychology of letter reading" and consider her suggestions for the opening paragraph, body, conclusion and postscript. Also, successful letters

will some of the 24 techniques offered in "Why People Respond to Fundraising Letters." This is ALL about audience.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES: The Kim Klein article provides very specific advice for organizing an effective fundraising letter, while the chapter "Why People Respond to Fundraising Letters" and the video "The Art of Asking" help flesh out the rhetorical situation you are about to enter in asking strangers to give. Remember to use Chapter 10 in Gurak and Lannon's text to ensure proper formatting. Please read and view all before getting started.

#2 & #3: TWO DESIGN DOCUMENTS (10 each, Week 11): Create two documents for your non-profit organization that have some design elements.

Examples include, but are not limited to: brochures, newsletters, fact sheets, web pages and annual reports.

Both documents must be central to the work the organization does. One of your documents must be larger *(shoot for at least 500-800 words, though this is just a guideline to ensure one document integrates more substantial writing with design)* and both must contain some design features, though they need not be extensive or fancy; I just want to see that you understand and can apply Williams' four principles of **contrast**, **proximity**, **alignment** and **repetition**.

The best way to generate design ideas is to start collecting fliers, brochures, posters, etc. as you walk around campus or town. *Don't* copy what others have done, but *do* notice what you like and don't like and use those design elements in your documents. Your documents need to be created with the purpose established in your Non-Profit Project Proposal.

DUE: Your **Team Leader** will post all 4 documents to Non-Profit Discussion #3 by midnight Sunday of Week 11 for peer review.

Individually, you will respond to another group's project by midnight Wednesday of Week 12.

STAGE 5: Revision and Submission of Polished Project (Week 12)

During the final week of our project (after you have received some peer feedback in DB#3), your group will collaborate to revise all four documents based on peer feedback and individual reflection. Once this is complete, the **Team Leader** will submit all four polished documents to the **Assignment folder** *by midnight Sunday of week 12* for a grade **(20 +10+10+10=50 points total)**