# Learning Contract

In Neighborhood Analysis, I agree to work towards a grade of A . I have met with Professor Greenlee to discuss the details of this agreement on \_\_\_\_\_. Any changes to this agreement will require an updating of this contract in consultation with Professor Greenlee, and may must be made by March 22, 2021. In addition to meeting all of the baseline requirements for the course, I would like to add the following learning and engagement goals:

Item 1- *Attendance and Participation*

* Task Description: **Will** will be an active part of the learning and growth experience. This includes being present, engaging in the class discussions, and, barring any uncontrollable situations, have his video on. Simultaneously, he will not dominate the conversation and prevent other students from participating. His focus will be on the course and no other distractions.
* Learning Goal: The most important part is making this class as meaningful as it can be. While there will be rigor and a lot of quantitative exercises, the overarching area of importance is connecting numbers to our biggest local problems. **Will** wants to make sure he can separate his desires to strive for high quality work from the goal of being an active part of the collaborative learning experience, whether it be for self-growth or helping his classmates grow too. Nothing about this should feel transactional as Will has attended grad school out of a genuine interest in intellectual and personal growth.
* Reconciliation Period: **Will** plans to never miss class just because. If any important event conflict occurs, he will contact Andrew two weeks in advanced and set up an office time to discuss what was missed to further clarify the materials on Compass. Emergencies do come up and **Will** willlook at strategies to make these exceptions align with this goal.

Item 2- *Weekly Reflections*

* Task Description- The course is only as meaningful as it can be if the data is tied to real life cases wherever possible. The weekly reflections give us an opportunity to think about the course’s connection to challenges in civic society and the planning field.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will actively keep up with these, tying his course and lived experience to the prompt. If there’s a week where he cannot necessarily tie in his Macon lens, **Will** will prioritize synthesizing the readings for each prompt.
* Reconciliation Period: **Will** will have these in by Tuesday each week, with a 24 hour grace period only used in desperate situations.

Item 3- *R Learner’s Permit*

* Task Description: The learner’s permit signifies that the student has made satisfactory process in the course’s early lessons.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will prove that his basic understanding of the R language and RStudio interface qualifies him to proceed in moving onto the next topics and applying the methods learned to other data sets.
* Reconciliation Period: In line with DRES accommodations, **Will** gets a 24 hour buffer for full credit starting February 19. He requests a 72 hour window allowing for partial credit. This should still be in mid February.

Item 4- *Lab Notebooks*

* Task Description: The lab notebooks provide students the opportunity to take lab assignments and convert them into polished, easy-to-read briefings on the issue that can be shared with a wider professional audience. : **Will** will submit one of these in mid March and the other in mid April. Each book will be between 1000-2000 words of data analysis and include at least two visualizations. As most germane to his location for his term paper, **Will** will focus one on “Analyzing Population Distributions and Segregation” and the other on “Crime and Incarceration”.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will show a capability to adapt big data sets and written code into widely accessible issue briefings. This will provide an early introduction to jobs actively focused on research.
* Reconciliation Period: Submitted March 15 and April 15. He will have a 24 hour grace period, up to 72 hours (unless previously requested longer period) to submit with deduction.

Item 5- *Term Project Proposal*

* Task Description: This will center **Will’s** interest in grassroots empowerment in Macon’s Unionville neighborhood to a basic question, possible datasets to help understand the problem, and how applying them can lead to indicators for measuring improvement. It will also discuss ways to move to solutions and recommendations, when considering strengths of the area. Limitations require specific focus, as would possible strategies for mitigation these.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will have narrowed his hopes and dreams into an actionable strategy. He will pursue guidance on how to better organize if needed to make completing this a real possibility. He will also learn how to work with certain data or engagement limitations and how to strategize alternatives if getting past them are completely infeasible.
* Reconciliation Period: Due March 8- 24 hour grace period, up to 72 hours (unless previously requested longer period) to submit with deduction.

Item 6- *Term Project Background*

* Task Description: **Will** will provide a high level, but specific, summary of the project’s task, including a geographic profile and early observations of relationships within the data. He will also discuss limitations found that cannot be move around. He must also end with a few questions/stated struggles and request guidance in how to handle some of these.
* Learning Goal: Understanding that an effective data analysis cannot occur at the last minute, this is meant to show that **Will** has put consistent thought and energy into giving this the time it needs. He will also remember that community change is collaborative and asking for help is important.
* Reconciliation Period: Due March 29- 24 hour grace period, up to 72 hours (unless previously requested longer period) to submit with deduction.

Item 7- *Final Project Deliverable*

* Task Description: **Will** ends the semester with a 10-15 page community background, analysis, synthesis, and recommended plan of action to enable Unionville to grow stronger and bounce back in unprecedented ways from the COVID-19 pandemic. He will continue to make edits post final submission. He will highlight possible stakeholders that should be involved in an action team, whether they’re neighborhood-based leaders, local public/nonprofit officials, and potential funders with national draw.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will show a strong proficiency in R language and software as an approach to thoroughly analyzing and organizing data. He will have full understanding of how GitHub can be an effective part of his professional portfolio and active medium for sharing his future work.
* Reconciliation Period: Due May 7- 24 hour grace period, up to one week (unless previously requested longer period) to submit with deduction.

Item 8- *Final Presentation*

* Task Description: Within ten minutes, **Will** will walk through his project- including the surrounding contextual stories, the data analysis process, and the stories the data tells- with his classmates. He will think of a way to engage in questions his classmates might have without taking away from the actual allotted course time (possibly a post-presentation anonymous feedback and open question inquiry link.
* Learning Goal: **Will** seeks to share his experience and the inherent potential of the Unionville neighborhood with his classmates. He will learn how to talk about complex and sensitive issues in an intentional, yet coherent way. He will also get better at setting context on places he might know well but others do not.
* Reconciliation Period: This will occur as scheduled, based on how the professor decides to do this. Will is either ready or not.

Item 9- *Extension Proposal for Increased Actionability and/or Contribution to Discipline*

* Task Description: This provides a proposal for how the term project- a report or plan taking from data to action- can best be put into community action. It may focus specifically on a clear timetable for Unionville or providing an overview of what would need to be done to apply to another Macon neighborhood. Additionally, this would begin a longer discussion of how it could become a published guide to certain engagement/advocacy practices with chronically unserved, left out neighborhoods.
* Learning Goal: **Will** will take the deep thought he places into his coursework and continue to apply and modify to facilitate the changes he wants in this world that draw him to planning.
* Reconciliation Period: Discussed with professor at the end of the course post final project

**Contract Rationale**

**Learning Goals:** What is it that you hope to learn by taking this class? Provide details that contextualize these goals within your academic and professional goals.

I want to learn how to tell better stories with the data and also know how to use programming effectively and on a regular basis. Folks at home see some of the things I’m doing in school or learning as indispensable because they aren’t widely used in a social lens. I think taking a “not-so-great” early introduction to R and learning it in a way that keeps it in my mind is the only way I can begin to approach this area. If effective, I might take this thirst for knowledge to other classes.

**Strengths:** *What do you see as the strengths that you bring to this class? How do you propose leveraging those strengths in service of our teaching and learning this semester?*

Authentic enthusiasm for the material and inclusion are huge parts of my attitude to school. I find most happiness when I can make others smile and I feel like I’m succeeding when my peers are. I’m open about weaknesses and am fully at piece with where I may find challenges. Sharing when times aren’t easy could be helpful for my classmates too. I’m open about my lived experience and ways to tie that in, without excessive virtue signaling, will also be meaningful to this experience. If no one speaks up to answer something, you can also always call on me.

**Areas for Improvement:** *What do you see as some areas where you hope to improve this semester? What areas of growth do you want to focus on? What forms of support and feedback will help you to improve these areas?*

Time management is important, embracing my neuro-atypicalities and obligation for self care are musts. I want to be proud of whatever I do even when it’s not up to my absurd and sometimes unattainable goals. I appreciate how accessible you are and just hope we can keep the conversation going. I might ask honest questions about what the data can’t do and hope for more direct answers. It’s good to have me think and not immediately give me the easy way out, but I’d like to know if I’m completely off base or am striving for the impossible.

\*\*\***If I misunderstood what anything was asking or need to clarify, please let me know. I hope this indicates my investment in the potential and excitement for the days ahead.**

Signed Agreed to by

William D. Finkelstein \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This was deleted, but maybe a sign that I’m going to have to petition downward…