

J4204 Strategic Writing and Design (Lab 1A, Monday 11 – 12:50 p.m.)

Instructor:

Holly Higginbotham, Associate Professor

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Office hours:

I hold office hours by appointment. E-mail, phone or see me in class to schedule a time.

Lab assignments and structure

You will complete 11 assignments as part of your 4204 lab. The assignments coincide with material that is taught in the lecture portion of the course. Some assignments will be done on your own for an individual grade. Some assignments will be done as part of a team, and all team members receive the same team grade.

The Warm-Up Weeks:

The first five weeks will be warm-up assignments that you do on your own for an individual grade. Three weeks will be ART assignments (two assignments per week, worth 50 points each) that are completed during lab time under the instruction of our design teaching assistant. Two will be WRITING assignments (one assignment per week, worth 100 points each) that you complete as homework and bring to class. On those writing weeks, we will use lab time to present each assignment and discuss it.

The Team Work Weeks:

The second six assignments will be assignments that have been done as part of a team, and every person on the team will receive the same grade for each of those assignments. All team assignments will be done as homework outside of class time, and we will spend four labs presenting and critiquing these six assignments. These team assignments are different components of an overall campaign your team is working on in preparation of your team's presentation of its final campaign.

Below is the schedule of assignments for this semester (submit through Canvas using document name listed in red):

Date	Project due
Jan. 28	ART ASSIGNMENTS #1 <i>Complete in class</i>
Feb. 4	ART ASSIGNMENTS #2 <i>Complete in class</i>
Feb. 11	ART ASSIGNMENTS #3 <i>Complete in class</i>
Feb. 18	CREATIVE BRIEF YourLastName_Brief (Word) <i>Research done before lab as homework, brief completed in class</i>
Feb. 25	PRINT AD #1 YourLastName_Print1 (PDF) <i>Do before lab as homework, present and critique during lab time</i>
March 4	TEAM ASSIGNMENTS/PREP FOR CAMPAIGN WORK AHEAD
March 11	TEAM PRESENTATIONS AND PEER CRITIQUE (first half of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creative Brief (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_Brief (Word)• Logo Design Draft (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_LogoDraft (PDF) TEAM COLLABORATION TIME (last half of class)
March 18	TEAM PRESENTATIONS AND PEER CRITIQUE (first half of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initial concepts (3 total for each team) (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>)• Logo Design Final (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_LogoFinal (PDF) TEAM COLLABORATION TIME (last half of class)
April 1	TEAM PRESENTATIONS AND PEER CRITIQUE (first half of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Print Ad (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_Print (PDF)• Out-of-Home Ad (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_OOH (PDF) TEAM COLLABORATION TIME (last half of class)
April 8	TEAM PRESENTATIONS AND PEER CRITIQUE (first half of class) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Television Ad (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_TV (PDF)• Digital/Social Media Execution (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>) TeamName_Digital (PDF) TEAM COLLABORATION TIME (last half of class)
April 15	TEAM PRESENTATIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual team sessions to pitch preliminary presentation to instructor for feedback (<i>Do before lab as homework</i>)
April 22	PRESENTATION OF FINAL CAMPAIGNS TO CLASS

Final team campaign presentation of campaign

At the end of the semester, each team will present its campaign in a presentation of no more than 7 minutes. Details on this are in the larger course syllabus. Your team will receive a grade for this final presentation, with all members of the team receiving the same grade. In addition to this grade, I will choose which of our lab's presentations I believe to be the strongest, based both on the campaign contents and the way it was presented. That team will represent our lab and, along with all other lab winners, will present its campaign to the entire J4204 class during lecture. The top three teams will be chosen by Professor Swanson and Professor Corridori.

Grading

In total, 70 percent of your grade for J4204 comes from the work you do in lab. In other words, lab is something to be taken seriously if you want to do well in the course. All assignments — individual, team and final presentation — are graded on a 100-point scale. Here is the breakdown of how lab grades affect your overall course grade:

- All 11 assignment grades, both the individual grades and the team grades, will be averaged in to one single grade. That grade will represent 30 percent of your course grade.
- The final team presentation will be 30 percent of the overall course grade.
- At the end of the semester, I will give you a professionalism grade (based on a 100-point scale) that is weighted to be 10 percent of your course grade. Here are things I am evaluating throughout the semester as I determine this grade: number of unexcused absences, multiple absences (even if they are excused), tardiness (more than a minute or two), texting or otherwise being occupied with your phone during class, not contacting me about why you were absent, quality of your participation, respect given to other students when giving critiques, overall attitude during presentation time, being prepared and ready to present your work at the beginning of class. In addition, each of your team members will be asked to evaluate and score you on the contributions you made to the group. Team members alone will truly know whether each person on the team pulled his or her weight. I take the comments and scores your teammates give you in to account when giving the professionalism grade.

Team Assignments

In the larger course syllabus is information on the different team roles and what their responsibilities are. You will give me your preferences of the roles you are most interested in taking on. I will try to keep all these preferences in mind as I formulate teams and assign roles, but I cannot promise you that you will be put in your #1 or even #2 choice. It will all depend on how varied the interests are of our lab members. If you get put in a role that isn't necessarily one you wanted, I challenge you to use the opportunity to learn more about that area. Perhaps you will discover that you are gifted in a way you didn't realize, and it will open new doors of possibilities for you as you explore what you might end up doing after getting your degree.

Presentations and peer/instructor critiques

Outside of the three individual art assignments, we will use our lab time to present and discuss the ads that have been assigned to you or your teams as homework. The point of these presentations is to allow you the opportunity to get multiple opinions on your work. Getting those outside opinions helps tremendously with the rewriting and redesigning process. Even though you will not be asked to redo the warm-up assignments we present, you can learn some things from the feedback you get that you can use as you move forward in your team projects.

Once we move into the teamwork portion of the semester, presenting your work in lab and getting multiple opinions on it will help you gauge where you are with the work and whether it's accomplishing what you had hoped it would. Based on the feedback you get, you will rewrite/redesign each of the team assignments to polish and refine them for your final presentation.

During presentations, I facilitate a discussion about the work, soliciting responses and feedback from the class. Once the class has given you their thoughts, I will give you my feedback. My role is to provide constructive criticism and suggestions on how you can improve your work to give you the direction you need to do a successful rewrite and/or redesign for your final campaign and presentation. You likely will find that you learn not only from the comments I give you, but also from comments I give others on their ads. Students have told me in the past that what they learn during the presentations outweighs any discomfort they feel at having me dissect their work in front of the class.

Participation

For you to get the most out of your lab this semester, participation by each one of you during presentations is critical. Not only will you enjoy lab a lot more when there's a lively debate going on about the merits of an ad's approach, but you'll also have a better learning experience. I'm looking for insightful comments, not "I like it" comments. Having people pinpoint specific things that are working well or not working well with your ad will help you during the revision process, so that's the kind of critiques I challenge you to give your classmates. While it is not always easy to hear or even give less than a rave review about one's ad, it is an inevitable part of the advertising world, so learning how to give and receive respectful and thoughtful critiques is a skill I want you to learn in this course.

Attendance:

Attendance in all J4204 labs is **expected and required**. The simple rule is this: If you miss a lab for an unexcused reason, you miss the right to turn your assignment in for a grade — which means your grade for the assignment will be a zero. For me to consider accepting your assignment for even a partial grade, you must contact me within 24 hours to let me know why you missed lab, preferably before class starts. Please note, I may require documentation to excuse absences for illness, funerals, etc.

A word about grammar, punctuation and spelling

In the professional world, errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling reflect badly on you and your work, so it's a good idea to learn now to take the time to spot those mistakes before a project leaves your hands. Do not rely on spell check to catch these errors; it misses a lot. A certain percentage of every project grade will evaluate professionalism in this area. For every error I see, 1 point is deducted from your overall project score.

How to succeed in J4204 lab

I am a fairly easy person to get along with, but like everyone I have my pet peeves. To succeed in my lab, I have the following expectations, many of which go back to your professionalism grade.

- **Show up.** For you to improve your ad work and grow as a writer and designer, getting feedback from your classmates and me is critical. So if you're not in class to receive that feedback, you miss the opportunity to learn and to make your work the best it can be for your final campaign.
- **If you do miss class, contact me in a TIMELY manner...within 24 hours.** A lack of communication about absences is perhaps the fastest way to irritate me. Just as you would not miss work without calling your boss, you shouldn't miss class without letting your instructor know why. You may have the lamest excuse in the world for missing (your alarm didn't go off or your car wouldn't start) but if you are responsible enough to deliver that lame excuse to me in a reasonable timeframe, I'm much more likely to consider giving you partial credit for a missed assignment if your class performance has otherwise been acceptable. If you email me about a missed class and don't hear back from me that day, then I advise you to pick up the phone and call me. Emails don't always reach their destination in a timely manner, so a phone call is the safest way to make sure you reach me within 24 hours.
- **Take good notes on the feedback you get.** Doing so will help you when it's time to sit down and do your rewrites and redesigns for your final campaign. I am usually pretty thorough in my oral comments and won't take the time to rewrite those comments on the work that I hand back. (Generally, all you will get back from me on the grading rubric is point totals, not comments.) This format mimics what you'll find in the real world: you'll present your work to a client, they'll tell you what they think, then you'll have to go back and revise according to what you hear.