

ENGLISH 202D: BUSINESS WRITING

Instructor: Phillip Zapkin

Email: pzz17@psu.edu

Office Location: Burrowes 017

Office Hours: M 1:30-2:30PM and
Th 1-3PM, or by appointment

Spring 2025

- Section 014
 - MWF 12:20-1:10PM
 - Rackley 103
- Section 025
 - MWF 3:35-4:25PM
 - Huck Life Sciences 006
- Section 026
 - MWF 4:40-5:30PM
 - Huck Life Sciences 006



**"In response to your request for better communications,
I'm going to increase my lengthy explanations by 50%."**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

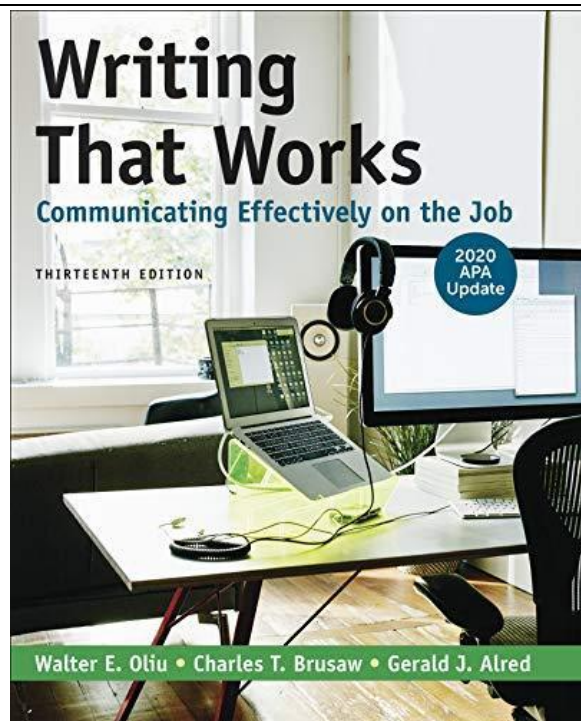
English 202D introduces students to the conventions, genres, and strategies of business communication. In particular, this course focuses on skills in critical analysis, document design, reader-centered writing, and professional discourse.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Oliu, Walter E., Charles T. Brusaw, and Gerald J. Alred. *Writing That Works: Communicating Effectively on the Job*. 13th ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-319-36152-5.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Project	Grade Weight
Topic Approval Proposal (TAP)	10%
Correspondence Packet (CP)	15%
Job Application Documents (JAD)	20%
Social Media Ad (SMA)	15%
Funding Request Pitch (FRP)	15%
Peer Reviews	15%
Participation	10%
Total	100%



You must hand in *all major projects* to pass this course

- Each project has a detailed assignment sheet available on Canvas, which we will discuss in class.
 - If you're unsure of what an assignment requires, please ask me in class, during office hours, or over email.
- Assignments will be due at the time specified in the schedule. Submitting a project after the deadline will result in the loss of 1 full letter grade per late day; submitting peer review feedback late will result in the loss of 1 point per day late.
- Each project (except the FRP) will be peer reviewed and you will review a partner's draft before the submission deadline. Use the feedback you get to improve your project. Peer review feedback will be graded out of 10 points.
- Each project should be grammatically and stylistically polished. Each project should exhibit correct formatting for that type of document. Grading will reflect the seriousness with which these matters are frequently viewed in the professional world.

PARTICIPATION

Participation is crucial to our classroom community—this is an interactive class where, in large part, what you get out of the course depends on what you put in. The participation grade is a holistic and comprehensive grade evaluating your contributions over the semester to full class discussions, group work/discussions, writing conferences, and attendance.

- Writing Conferences: Coming to discuss your work, writing, or ideas with me during office hours will add $\frac{1}{3}$ letter grade toward your participation grade per visit. Especially if you're nervous about talking in class, this can be a great way to simultaneously get useful feedback and boost your participation score.

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE

You are allowed to miss 3 classes with no penalty to your grade. *Each class missed beyond those 3 will cost $\frac{1}{3}$ of a letter from your overall course grade.*

- [Excused absences](#) do not count against you. In order for an absence to be excused you must notify me as early as possible beforehand (at least 24 hours). Reasons for excused absences include: religious holidays, military service, university required activities (i.e., participation in a university sports team), or severe illness or injury.
 - However, excessive absences—regardless of reason—are unacceptable (see [Policies and Rules, 42-27](#)). Students with a (long term) health issue or emergency situation should contact their advisor and to discuss the situation (including potentially [withdrawal options](#)).
- If you miss class, *it is your responsibility to make up the missed material*. Ask a classmate to take notes for you, and then come to office hours and/or email me. Unless I explicitly grant you an extension, you must still meet assignment deadlines, regardless of attendance.
- Be aware: Students can fail a class for non-attendance regardless of the quality of written work done.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University's Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

According to Penn State policy [G-9: Academic Integrity](#), an academic integrity violation is "an intentional, unintentional, or attempted violation of course or assessment policies to gain an academic advantage or to advantage or disadvantage another student academically." Unless your instructor tells you otherwise, you must complete all course work entirely on your own, using only sources that have been permitted by your instructor, and you may not assist other students with papers, quizzes, exams, or other assessments. If your instructor allows you to use ideas, images, or word phrases created by another person (e.g., from Course Hero or Chegg) or by generative technology, such as ChatGPT, you must identify their source. You may not submit false or fabricated information, use the same academic work for credit in multiple courses, or share instructional content. Students with questions about academic integrity should ask their instructor *before submitting work*.

Students facing allegations of academic misconduct may not drop/withdraw from the affected course unless they are cleared of wrongdoing (see [G-9: Academic Integrity](#)). Attempted drops will be prevented or reversed, and students will be expected to complete course work and meet course deadlines. Students who are found responsible for academic integrity violations face academic outcomes, which can be severe, and put themselves at jeopardy for other outcomes which may include ineligibility for Dean's List, pass/fail elections, and grade forgiveness. Students may also face consequences from their home/major program and/or The Schreyer Honors College.

STANDARDS OF CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Classroom behavior should always reflect the essential Penn State values of civility, integrity, and respect for the dignity and rights of others. As such, the classroom space should be safe, orderly, and positive—free from disruptions, disorderly conduct, and harassment as defined in the University Code of Conduct. The University Code of Conduct defines disruption "as an action or combination of actions by one or more individuals that unreasonably interferes with, hinders, obstructs, or prevents the operation of the University or infringes on the rights of others to freely participate in its programs and services;" disorderly conduct includes but is not limited to "creating unreasonable noise; pushing and shoving; creating a physically hazardous or physically offensive condition;" and harassment may include "directing physical or verbal conduct at an individual...; subjecting a person or group of persons to unwanted physical contact or threat of such; or engaging in a course of conduct, including following the person without proper authority (e.g., stalking), under circumstances which would cause a reasonable person to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others or to suffer emotional distress" (Section IV, B). The course instructor has the authority to request that any disruptive students leave the class for the class period. If

disruptive behavior continues in subsequent class periods, a complaint may be filed with the Office of Student Conduct, which may result in the student being dismissed from class until university procedures have been completed. Any student with concerns or questions as to this policy should contact the Director of the Program in Writing and Rhetoric.

DISABILITY EQUITY

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. [The Student Disability Resources website](#) provides contact information for every Penn State campus. For further information, please visit the Student Disability Resources website.

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your [campus's disability services office](#) will provide you with an accommodation letter. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

EDUCATION EQUITY: BIAS REPORTING

Penn State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the Report Bias webpage.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES

Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): 814-863-0395,
Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400
Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT

The Pennsylvania State University campuses are located on the original homelands of the Erie, Haudenosaunee (Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Mohawk, and Tuscarora), Lenape (Delaware Nation, Delaware Tribe, Stockbridge-Munsee), Shawnee (Absentee, Eastern, and Oklahoma), Susquehannock, and Wahzhazhe (Osage) Nations. As a land grant institution, we acknowledge and honor the traditional caretakers of these lands and strive to understand and model their responsible

stewardship. We also acknowledge the longer history of these lands and our place in that history.

COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is subject to change by me. I will notify you ahead of time in class and/or by email of any changes.

Readings Key: *WTW*=*Writing that Works*, *CA*=Canvas, *LIL*=LinkedIn Learning

WEEK 1

❖ Mon. 13 Jan.: Introducing Ourselves; What is Rhetoric?; Setting Course Goals

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM ET: "Professional Introduction" Discussion Forum Post
 - On CA, read:
 - Syllabus
 - Topic Approval Proposal Assignment Sheet
 - Funding Request Pitch Assignment Sheet
 - "ChatGPT: US Lawyer Admits Using AI for Case Research"
 - "AI Lies"
 - "AI Makes Up Stories"
 - "The Writing Instructor's Approach to Grading"

❖ Wed. 15 Jan.: Discuss Syllabus; Introduce Topic Approval Proposal; Begin Choosing TAP Groups

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In *WTW*, read:
 - "Keeping Your Audience in Mind" pp. 42-43
 - On CA, watch:
 - "5 Key Principles for Business Writing"
 - "Audience Awareness"
 - "Logging into LinkedIn Learning"
 - *LIL*: "Making Your Writing Concise"
 - *LIL*: "Making Your Writing Conversational"

❖ Fri. 17 Jan.: Key Principles of Business Writing; Anticipating Audience Needs; Carefree Catering Memo Revision

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In *WTW*, read:
 - "Writing Systematically" pp. 4-13
 - "Writing Persuasively" pp. 21-29
 - "Planning and Writing Proposals" pp. 403-408
 - On CA, read:
 - Background Information and Problem sections from "Sample TAP Draft 1"
 - Background and Problem sections from "Sample TAP Draft 2"
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Brainstorming"
 - "Hedging Phrases"
 - *LIL*: "Determining the Three Elements of a Strong Purpose"
 - *LIL*: "Designing the Content of Your Message"

WEEK 2

❖ Mon. 20 Jan.: *Martin Luther King Day; No Class*

❖ Wed. 22 Jan.: Background and Problem Statements

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Collaborating on Content” pp. 75-88
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Collaborative Writing”
-

❖ Fri. 24 Jan.: Collaborative Writing

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Conducting Research” pp. 94-129
 - On CA, read:
 - Personal Qualifications and Motivation, Research Plan, and Strategic Schedule sections from “Sample TAP Draft 1”
 - Personal Qualifications and Motivation, Research Plan, and Schedule sections from “Sample TAP Draft 2”

WEEK 3

❖ Mon. 27 Jan.: Qualifications, Research Plans, and Schedule

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Designing Letters” pp. 263-268
 - On CA, read:
 - “Formatting A Business Letter Sample”
 - Opening and Conclusion sections from “Sample TAP Draft 1”
 - Opening and Conclusion sections from “Sample TAP Draft 2”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Formatting a Business Letter”
 - “Submitting a Project and Downloading Feedback”
-

❖ Wed. 29 Jan.: Business Letter Formatting; TAP Introduction and Conclusion

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By Beginning of Class: TAP Peer Review Draft
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Revising a Document” pp. 46-48
 - “Proofreading” pp. 61-62
 - On CA, (re)read:
 - Topic Approval Proposal Assignment Sheet
 - “Revision Strategies”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Peer Reviewing”
 - “Grading and Standards”

❖ Fri. 31 Jan.: TAP Peer Review

- **Due Today:**
 - By Beginning of Class: TAP Peer Review Draft
 - By 11:59PM ET: TAP Peer Review Feedback
- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM ET: Topic Approval Proposal
 - On CA, read:
 - Correspondence Packet Assignment Sheet
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Routine and Positive Messages” pp. 277-287
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Positive/Neutral Messages”

WEEK 4

❖ Mon. 3 Feb.: Introduce Correspondence Packet; Writing Routine and Positive Messages

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **Topic Approval Proposal**
- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Sensitive and Negative Messages” pp. 287-298
 - On CA, read:
 - “ENGL Position Letter”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Negative Messages and Bad News”
 - “Direct vs. Indirect Rhetoric”
 - *LIL*: “Delivering Bad News”

❖ Wed. 5 Feb.: Writing Negative Messages

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Writing Emails, Memos, and Letters” pp. 243-264
 - On CA, read:
 - “Formatting a Memo Sample”
 - “Jack Dorsey’s Layoff Letter to Twitter Staff”
 - “Microsoft Executive Stephen Elop’s Email to Employees”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Formatting a Memo”
 - “Writing a Professional Email”

❖ Fri. 7 Feb.: Formatting Emails and Memos; Analyzing Negative Messages

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - “The AIDA System”

WEEK 5

❖ Mon. 10 Feb.: The AIDA System

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - “Crash Course in Rhetorical Appeals”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Rhetorical Appeals”
-

❖ Wed. 12 Feb.: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By Beginning of Class: CP Peer Review Draft
 - On CA, reread:
 - Correspondence Packet Assignment Sheet
 - “Revision Strategies”
-

❖ Fri. 14 Feb.: CP Peer Review

- **Due Today:**
 - By Beginning of Class: CP Peer Review Draft
 - By 11:59PM ET: CP Peer Review Feedback
- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM ET: Correspondence Packet
 - On CA, read:
 - Job Application Documents Assignment Sheet
 - “Career Coaches on the Biggest Mistakes People Make in the Job Search”
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Conducting the Job Search” pp. 497-505
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Searching for Jobs”
 - “Critically Reading Job Ads”
 - LIL: “Find the Right Job Postings”

WEEK 6

❖ Mon. 17 Feb.: Introduce Job Application Documents; Searching for Jobs

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **Correspondence Packet**
- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Preparing an Effective Resume” pp. 505-533
 - On CA, read:
 - “Guidelines for Resumes and Application Letters”
 - “Generic Resume Model”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Generic Resume Design”
 - “Creating Multiple Columns in a Resume”
 - LIL: Chapter 2—“Customizing the Basic Resume Components” (4 videos)

❖ Wed. 19 Feb.: Generic Resume Design

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Promoting Your Skills for a Successful Job Search” pp. 492-497
 - On CA, read:
 - “Aurora Program Leader Job Call”
 - “Aurora Resume_Untailored”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Tailoring Targeted Resumes”
 - “Demographic Information in Job Applications”
 - LIL: Chapter 3—“Upgrading Your Resume” (3 videos)
-

❖ Fri. 21 Feb.: Tailoring Resumes; Aurora Resume Tailoring Practice

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - “Parminder Knowledge_JAD Job Ad and Generic Resume”
 - “Parminder Knowledge_JAD Tailored Resume”
 - “Rachel Jobseeker_JAD Job Ad and Generic Resume”
 - “Rachel Jobseeker_JAD Tailored Resume”

WEEK 7

❖ Mon. 24 Feb.: Analyzing Sample Resumes

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Writing an Effective Letter of Application” pp. 533-539
 - On CA, read:
 - “Application Letter Template”
 - “How a Tenacious Summer Analyst Applicant Got Laughed at by Goldman, Morgan, and Everyone Else on Wall Street”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Writing and Tailoring Application Letters”
-

❖ Wed. 26 Feb.: Writing and Tailoring Application Letters

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - “James Learner_JAD Job Ad and Generic Resume”
 - “James Learner_JAD Application Letter”
 - “Parminder Knowledge_JAD Job Ad and Generic Resume”
 - “Parminder Knowledge_Application Letter”
-

❖ Fri. 28 Feb.: Analyzing Sample Application Letters

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By Beginning of Class: JAD Peer Review Draft
 - On CA, reread:
 - Job Application Documents Assignment Sheet
 - “Revision Strategies”
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Completing a Job or Internship Application Form” pp. 540-542

WEEK 8

❖ Mon. 3 Mar.: JAD Peer Review

- **Due Today:**
 - By Beginning of Class: JAD Peer Review Draft
 - By 11:59PM ET: JAD Peer Review Feedback

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Doing Well in the Interview” pp. 543-548
 - “Sending Follow-up Correspondence” pp. 548-551
 - On CA, read:
 - “Career Experts on the Best Way to Answer ‘Why Do You Want to Work Here’?”
 - “Job-seekers are Missing ‘Something Very Basic’ in Interviews, Says Hiring Expert of 20 Years”
 - “3 Job Interview Red Flags, According to a Recruiter Who’s Interviewed ‘Thousands’”
 - On CA, watch:
 - “Succeeding in an Interview”
 - “How to Dress for a Job Interview”
 - LIL: “How to Rock an Interview” (whole course)

❖ Wed. 5 Mar.: Job Interviews

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM ET: Job Application Documents
 - By 11:59PM ET: “Business Article Assessment” Discussion Forum Post and Response

❖ Fri. 7 Mar.: Digital Class; Discussion Forum Post “Business Article Assessment”

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **Job Application Documents**
 - By 11:59PM ET: “Business Article Assessment” Discussion Forum Post and Response
- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - Social Media Ad Assignment Sheet
 - In WTW, read:
 - “Understanding Design Principles” pp. 154-155
 - “Designing Documents” pp. 155-163

WEEK 9

❖ Mon. 10 Mar.: *Spring Break; No Classes*

❖ Wed. 12 Mar.: *Spring Break; No Classes*

❖ Fri. 14 Mar.: *Spring Break; No Classes*

WEEK 10

❖ Mon. 17 Mar.: Introduce Social Media Ad; Basics of Visual Rhetoric

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - “Alpha Kappa Delta Phi Christmas Bakesale”
 - “Axis THON pasta Fundraiser”
 - “Pie A Kappa”
 - “Tarot Readings”
 - On CA, watch:

- *LIL*: "Understanding the PARC System"

❖ Wed. 19 Mar.: The PARC System; Analyze Student SMA Samples

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - "Creating Visuals" pp. 163-200

❖ Fri. 21 Mar.: Meet in Pattee Library W140; Visual Design Using Adobe Express

WEEK 11

❖ Mon. 24 Mar.: Meet in Pattee Library W140; Video Editing with Adobe Rush

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, read:
 - "Cookies for a Cause"
 - "Dunkin Donuts Donut Giveaway"
 - "The Haunted House"
 - "The Shining"
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Serif and Sans Serif Fonts"
 - *LIL*: "Understanding the Importance of Type"
 - *LIL*: "Understanding the Importance of Color"

❖ Wed. 26 Mar.: Color and Type; Analyze Student SMA Samples

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Snuggie – As Seen on TV Network"

❖ Fri. 28 Mar.: Basics of Video Rhetoric

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Ask for the Moon—Chanel Fragrance"
 - "Wild Animal Jeep Liberty TV Commercial HD"
 - "ZzzQuil – OTC Sleep Aid Commercial"

WEEK 12

❖ Mon. 31 Mar.: Analyze Commercials

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - "Writing in an Online Environment" pp. 205-234
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Writing for Digital Spaces"
 - *LIL*: "Build a Social Media Marketing Strategy" (whole course)

❖ Wed. 2 Apr.: Composing for Digital Audiences

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By Beginning of Class: SMA Peer Review Draft
 - On CA, reread:
 - Social Media Ad Assignment Sheet
 - "Revision Strategies"

❖ Fri. 4 Apr.: SMA Peer Review

- **Due Today:**
 - By Beginning of Class: SMA Peer Review Draft
 - By 11:59PM ET: SMA Peer Review Feedback
- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM ET: Social Media Ad
 - On CA, reread:
 - Funding Request Pitch Assignment Sheet
 - In WTW, read:
 - "Writing Informal Reports" pp. 313-331
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Synthesizing Researched Sources"

WEEK 13

❖ Mon. 7 Apr.: Introduce Funding Request Pitch; Informal Reports

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **Social Media Ad**
- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - "Preparing and Delivering Presentations" pp. 453-474
 - On CA, read:
 - "3 Tricks to Get People to Actually Listen to Your Presentations"
 - On CA, watch:
 - LIL: "Speaking Confidently and Effectively" (whole course)

❖ Wed. 9 Apr.: Crash Course on Public Speaking

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Designing an Effective Powerpoint"
 - LIL: "Powerpoint: Eight Easy Ways to Make Your Presentation Stand Out" (whole course)

❖ Fri. 11 Apr.: Designing a Powerpoint; FRP Sign Ups

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - "The Best Pitch Ever! The Best of Shark Tank"
 - "Shark Tank / Fairy Shoes / Worst Pitch Ever"

WEEK 14

❖ Mon. 14 Apr.: Analyzing *Shark Tank* Pitches

- Homework for Next Class:
 - On CA, watch:
 - "Academic Presentations"
 - "How Economic Inequality Harms Societies—Richard Wilkinson"

❖ Wed. 16 Apr.: Presentation with Powerpoint

- Homework for Next Class:
 - In WTW, read:
 - "Listening" pp. 474-476
 - On CA, watch:

- “Active Listening”
- *LIL*: Chapter 4—“How to Actively Listen” (6 videos)

❖ Fri. 18 Apr.: Critical Listening; Q&A Sessions

- Homework for Next Class:

WEEK 15

❖ Mon. 21 Apr.: *Optional Class*; FRP Practice

❖ Wed. 23 Apr.: Funding Request Pitches

❖ Fri. 25 Apr.: Funding Request Pitches

WEEK 16

❖ Mon. 28 Apr.: *Phillip Is Out Of Town; No Class*

❖ Wed. 30 Apr.: *Phillip Is Out Of Town; No Class*

- Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM: FRP Visuals
-

❖ Fri. 2 May: Funding Request Pitches

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **FRP Visuals**
 - Homework for Next Class:
 - By 11:59PM: FRP Funding Awards Sheet
-

WEEK 17

❖ Mon. 5 May: FRP Funding Awards Sheet

- **Due Today:**
 - By 11:59PM ET: **FRP Funding Awards Sheet**
-