IDS 2935: Ethics & the Public Sphere (Spring 2022)

General Information

Class Meetings

Lecture:	MW Period 5	5 (11:45 am – 12:35 pm)	
Discussion:	Sec 25093	F Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30 am)	MAT 0107
	Sec 25094	F Period 5 (11:45 am – 12:35 pm)	MAT 0119
	Sec 25097	F Period 7 (1:55 – 2:45 pm)	MAT 0013

Instructor

Professor Jennifer Rothschild (Philosophy) Contact: jrothschild@ufl.edu Office Hrs: Mondays 1 – 4 pm (and by appointment) FLO 307 To reserve a time slot during my office hours, use the sign-up sheet on my office door. During office hours, open time slots are available for drop-ins.

Teaching Assistant

Hana Mitchell (Graduate Student in Philosophy) Contact: mihana.mitchell@ufl.edu Office Hrs: Thursday 9 am – 12 pm (and by appointment) Zoom Meeting Room for Office Hrs: https://ufl.zoom.us/j/5813248145 Hana will lead Friday classes, keep attendance, grade your papers, and do many other things besides. She is your email contact for questions about administrative matters in the course.

Writing Assistant

Theo Thomas (Undergraduate Student Studying Philosophy and Art History) Contact: theo.n.thomas00@gmail.com Office Hrs: email for appointment Your writing assistant is available read drafts of assignments before you turn them in. The WA is not a TA, and is not authorized to speak for the administrative or content aspects of the course, nor are they able to discuss or predict your grade on papers.

Course Description

In this course, we will consider what it means to build and maintain an ethical public sphere, where 'public sphere' includes our public spaces, actions, and discourse, as well as our institutions, leaders, media, and more. Our primary ethical lens will be a set of virtue concepts: honesty, justice, courage, and humility. Using these concepts as anchors, we will explore such questions as: how do we find honest media? What work do we need to do to bring justice to our

public institutions and spaces? Why is courage so important for good public leadership? What is the place of humility in learning, or in effective political discourse? Our source materials will be multi-disciplinary, and our methods will be drawn from traditions in the humanities and anchored in philosophical ethics.

Quest and General Education Credit

Quest 1 (Justice and Power) Humanities Writing Requirement (2,000 words) This course accomplishes the Quest and General Education objectives of the subject areas listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for Quest and General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy Quest and General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

Required Readings and Works

Most of our required materials will be available through the class Canvas page (under Files, or listed as links on the syllabus). Materials which are news or magazine articles are publicly available and easy to find with an internet search for the title of the piece; I recommend you read such pieces in their original online sources whenever possible.

Books:

Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim (Independent Publisher, 2020) ISBN-13: 979-8638284138

Documentary Films (available for rent on Amazon for less than \$5 each): *The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara*, Errol Morris *The Act of Killing*, Joshua Oppenheimer

Students are required to have the day's assigned reading with them in hard copy during class meetings. Failure to do so may result in loss of participation points.

Assessment

Grade Distribution

Participation	15%
Three analytical papers	60% (20% each)
Capston Project	25%

You must complete all the assigned work in order to pass the class.

Participation

Students must come to class on time and prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course website. It also means having the day's reading in class with you. Your participation grade is based on how prepared you are for class on a regular basis, your willingness to participate by contributing questions and comments while responding to others in a respectful and attentive way, and the quality of your comments. (Note: your participation grade can also be reduced by penalties from unexcused absences. See below.)

You are expected to participate in both lecture and discussion section, but the participation requirement for the course will be calculated primarily from your discussion section.

To do well, you should demonstrate consistent, high-quality participation. *High-quality* contributions to discussion are *informed* (i.e., show evidence of having done assigned work), *thoughtful* (i.e., show evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in readings and other discussions), and *considerate* (e.g., take the perspectives of others into account).

Your participation g	grade is determine	ed in accordance	with the following rubric	с.
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Grade	Criteria
A	 Student makes consistent, high quality contributions to class discussion. Student is present and ready when class begins, remains alert and focused on the class discussion the entire period, keeps electronic devices silenced and off the desktop, and only begins packing belongings when class is over. Student has brought a copy of all relevant course materials to class (e.g., current reading, handouts) and consults them as appropriate.
В	 Student is often an active participant in class discussion whose contributions are sometimes of high quality. Student is present and ready when class begins, remains alert and focused on the class discussion the entire period, keeps electronic devices silenced and off the desktop, and only begins packing belongings when class is over. Student has brought a copy of all relevant course materials to class (e.g., current reading, handouts) and consults them as appropriate.
С	 Student is an active listener of class discussion but is mostly silent. Student is present and ready when class begins, remains alert and focused on the class discussion the entire period, keeps electronic devices silenced and off the desktop, and only begins packing belongings when class is over. Student has brought a copy of all relevant course materials to class (e.g., current reading, handouts) and consults them as appropriate.
D	 Student is disruptive of class space or conversation, either actively or passively. Student is disrespectful of other students or instructors.
E	1. Student fails to participate in any non-trivial way.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Much of what you learn in this class turns on your participating in serious discussions, and you cannot benefit from those unless you are here.

Attendance is not figured into the grade as a separate factor, though absences from discussion section can bring penalties by bringing down your participation grade. You are permitted three

"free" unexcused absences before you incur any penalty. For each unexcused absence beyond the third, you will lose 10% of your participation grade (e.g., with the fourth unexcused absence, a 100% will become a 90%).

If you are absent for an excused reason, you will not lose any points and the absence will not exhaust one of your free absences. In most cases you need documentation of the excuse (see below). Excused absences are typically limited to the following cases:

Issue	Documentation needed
Mental or	Note from a medical professional or from the Dean of Students within
physical	one week of absence, including the date(s) you are unable to attend
health	class/work—no private medical information should be included in this;
	alternatively, if the STP system lists you as "not cleared for campus"
	you are automatically excused from class
Personal,	Note from the office of the Dean of Students
e.g., death in	
the family	
(Some) UF	Notes must come from the activity supervisor, such as a coach, prior to
activites	the day of absence. Regular activities absences will lead to make-up
	assignments.
Religious	None required. Please talk to us at the beginning of the semester about
observances	this.

All other absences are typically unexcused, including some very good reasons to miss a class, like career or family events. I support your interest in these things, and understand why you might prioritize them over class, but that does not make them excused absences. If you think you have an exceptional case, contact us and we will discuss it.

Short Papers

Over the course of the semester students will be asked to write three original papers (900-1100 words each). Together, these papers satisfy a 2000 word Writing Requirement Credit.

Each paper will be a thesis driven analytical paper in the sense that you will present a position regarding one of the possible topics and defend it by careful argument. Papers are assessed both on content and writing in accordance with the rubric below.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, page numbers, and 12 point Times New Roman font. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your name, the date you hand in the assignment, and title and staple your essays. Each paper is to be uploaded onto the course's e-learning site in Canvas. The papers will be graded electronically, and returned to you electronically.

We will consider allowing you to turn in a paper late without penalty only if you have a valid, unforeseeable, and documented reason for doing so. If you turn in a late paper without such a reason, 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each day it is late (including weekend days!).

For foreseeable conflicts, such as activities, students should plan to submit work early. Computer errors (including disk, printer, or e-mail problems) are not acceptable excuses for late work.

Papers are graded in accordance with the following rubric.

A 1. The paper responds to the topic question and reflects a command of the relevant texts an 2. The paper identifies relevant issues and the thesis makes a significant, clear, and interest 3. The argumentative line of the paper is fully intact in the sense that there are no gaps and not littered with irrelevant material. 4. The structure of the paper is easy to discern and the content easy to follow. 5. Paragraphs make a point with clear topic sentences governing them. 6. There are few if any mechanical errors. B 1. The paper responds to the topic question and reflects a command of the relevant texts an 2. The paper identifies relevant issues and the thesis makes a significant and clear claim. 3. The argumentative line of the paper is mostly intact; gaps in presentation and irrelevant not make it difficult to discern the argument. 4. The structure of the paper is easy to discern. 5. Most paragraphs make a point with clear topic sentences governing them. 6. There are some mechanical errors but not enough to make them distracting for the reader C 1. The paper responds to the topic question and reflects a command of the relevant texts an 2. The paper identifies relevant issues and the thesis makes a reasonable and clear claim. 3. The argumentative line of the paper is discernible, even if the presentation includes gaps irrelevant material. 4. The structure of the paper can be discerned, even if it is not easy to discern.	
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D 1. The paper responds to the topic question but does not reflect a command of the relevant	texts and
material.	aalr an
2. The paper does not identify relevant issues and the thesis is unclear or inappropriately we inappropriately strong.	eak or
3. The argumentative line is hard to discern.	
4. The structure of the paper is minimal.	
5. There are enough mechanical errors to be distracting for the reader.	
E 1. The paper does not respond to the topic question and does not reflect a command of the r	relevant texts
and material.	
2. The paper lacks a definite thesis or has one that is unclear or inappropriate.	
3. There is no definite argument to be found.	
4. There is no structure to be found.	
5. There are enough mechanical errors to be distracting for the reader.	

A note on the Writing Requirement:

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback before the end of the course on all of the student's written assignments with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization.

WR course grades have two components. To receive writing requirement credit, a student must receive a grade of C or higher *and a satisfactory completion of the writing component of the course*.

Capstone Project

At the end of the semester you will work on a capstone project designed to engage you with an experiential learning activity that enables you to apply and reflect on the material earlier covered in class. The project focuses on justice and requires the following:

Individual contribution to a class book	 Identify an organization that, in your view, promotes justice and is worth supporting. Investigate that organization not only by getting information from independent sources but by contacting them, interviewing someone there, or otherwise interacting with someone involved in the activities of the organization. Write a profile of the organization that explains what it does that in your view promotes justice, what makes it a worthy organization, what challenges it faces, how to get involved, and so on. The profile should be visually interesting, appealing, and organized, and show good judgment about what to highlight. The profile should be sure to make use of the material on justice reviewed earlier in the class.
Role in compiling the class book	Each student will take on one role in the class project beyond their individual contribution.
Reflection paper	Write up a brief reflective essay on the experience, including a comparison of your expectations about the organization and/or your efforts to find out information with the reality of the organization and your attempts to write up a useful profile. This will include a reflection on whether this experience has helped you understand better the situation such organizations find themselves in or the challenges of working in such an organization as well as how this experience might affect your future engagement with ethical issues in the public sphere.

Capstone Projects are graded according to the following rubric.

Grade	Criteria
А	1. The student did the appropriate research: investigated the organization they selected,
	gathered relevant information, and made contact with the organization or someone involved
	in its activities to find out more.
	2. The student completed an excellent profile with significant information on the
	organization, its activities, the challenges it faces, and how to get involved. The profile
	shows excellent judgment about what to include, and the profile is well-organized,
	interesting, and visually appealing.
	3. The student did an excellent job contributing to the group project by completing their
	individual contribution on time, being responsive to feedback on that contribution,
	communicating effectively with others on the project, and fulfilling their assigned role on the
	overall team.
	4. The student completed a reflective essay that connected their experience in this project
	with their expectations about such organizations and whether it would affect their own future
	engagement with ethical issues. The essay was thoughtful and well-written.
В	1. Student completed four tasks above (under A), but one or two of the tasks was completed
	merely adequately as opposed to excellently. For example, the profile is too busy or not
	informative enough, or the student did not incorporate peer feedback, or the reflective essay
	does not relate their expectations or thoughts to their future engagement with issues.

С	1. Student completed four tasks above, but three or four of the tasks were completed merely adequately as opposed to excellently.
	2. Or, alternatively, student completed all four tasks above, but one of the tasks was not completed adequately. For example, the profile was submitted so late that the review round
	was impossible, or the profile itself is messy or boring, or the reflective essay is somewhat
	hastily done (not particularly thoughtful, full of errors).
D	1. Student completed four tasks above, but two or more of the tasks were not completely
	adequately.
	2. Or, alternatively, student failed to complete one of the four tasks entirely (or to a
	minimally acceptable standard).
Е	Student failed to complete two or more of the four tasks entirely (or to a minimally
	acceptable standard).

Grading Scale

Α	94-100%	С	74 - 76%
A-	90 - 93%	C-	70-73%
B+	87-89%	D+	67 - 69%
В	84-86%	D	64 - 66%
B-	80-83%	D-	60 - 63%
C+	77 - 79%	Е	<60

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

At the end of this course, students will be expected to have achieved the Quest and General Education learning outcomes specified below.

 Identify the resources available in philosophy and other disciplines, including history and literature, to develop the ability to identify morally relevant features of public activities. (Content SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Quest 1) Assignments: participation, three papers.
 Analyze and evaluate several particular ethical issues regarding the public sphere, whether they arise in social media, educational institutions, politics, entertainment, or the like. (Critical Thinking SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Quest 1) Assignments: participation, three papers.
 Present effective and clear responses to questions about ethical issues as they arise in the public sphere, in both oral and written forms. (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Quest 1) Assignments: participation, three papers.

4. Critically reflect on connections between ethical issues that arise in the public sphere and their own experiences, convictions, and understanding of their role in the world. (Connection SLO for Quest 1) Assignments: Capstone project.

Quest Learning Experiences – Experiential Learning and Self-Reflection

Both the experiential learning and self-reflection elements of the course are addressed by the capstone project. The capstone project requires engagement outside of class by interacting with organizations that promote justice and producing a portfolio of the sort that could be shared with other students or people not at UF. The capstone project requires a short essay in which the student reflects on their expectations about the organization they investigated, how their experience corrected or enhanced their understanding of the issues that organization works on, and how this experience might affect the student's future engagement with ethical issues in the public sphere.

Other Policies

Electronics

Electronic devices—including phones, computers, tablets, and recording devices—should be silenced, and you will need to suspend interaction with them during class. This means you will need to bring a hard copy of your reading and a way to take notes, as you won't be able to use your devices to facilitate in-class activity.

Students are allowed by law to record video or audio of class lectures. If you choose to do this, please set it up prior to class start time. The purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. A student who circulates a recording, even to another student in the course, without written consent of the instructor may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

Class Demeanor

Students are expected to arrive to class on time, give the class your full attention the entire class period, and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion should be kept to a minimum.

Attendance Policy

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting

https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code

(https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

The Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/ or in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Wk	Торіс	Readings and Assignments	
1	Framing the Conversation	1/5: Introduction and Overview of Course	
2	Introduction to ethics	1/10: Anthony Weston, Ch. 1, "Getting Started," pp. 3-221/12: Weston, Ch. 2-3 "Beyond Authority" & "Ethical Theories," pp. 23-63	
3	Public reason & happiness	 1/17: no class – holiday 1/19: Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" pp. 1-2 Adriana Cavarero, "A Revolution in Happiness" NYT (Opinion), pp. 1-2 	
4	The public sphere, virtue	1/24: Hannah Arendt, "On Humanity in Dark Times," pp. 3-311/26: Aristotle, excerpts from <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>, pp. 111-116	
5	Public virtue	 1/31: Kristján Kristjánsson "A Framework for Character Education in Schools," Jubilee Centre, pp. 1-11 Eric Liu, "We're Not 'All in It Together" <i>The Atlantic</i> (Opinion), pp.1-3 	
	Honesty Honesty as a	2/2: Roberts and West, "The Virtue of Honesty: A Conceptual Exploration," pp. 97-126 Christian Miller, "Motivation and the Virtue of Honesty: Some	
6	virtue Bullshit, Lies, and Honesty in	Conceptual Requirements and Empirical Results," pp. 355-371 2/7: Harry Frankfurt, "On Bullshit," pp. 1-20 2/9: Guest Lecturer: April Hines	
	the Media	 Librarian, College of Journalism and Communications Antino Kim et all, "Rating News Sources Can Help Limit Spread of Misinformation," <i>The Conversation</i>, pp. 1-3 EJ Dickson, "How I Accidentally Started a Wikipedia Hoax" <i>Daily</i> <i>Dot</i>, pp. 1-4 Caitlin Dewey, "How a 13-year-old's one-line blog post became a 	
7	Fact vs. value, misleading statistics, and self-deception	 worldwide meme," <i>The Washington Post</i>, pp. 1-5 2/14: C.S. Lewis, "Men Without Chests," pp. 1-26 Video, "Why statistics should make you suspicious," Spiegelhalter interview, https://edition.cnn.com/videos/tv/2019/04/01/amanpour-david-spiegelhalter-statistics.cnn (18:50) Video, "The era of blind faith in big data must end," Cathy O'Neil TED talk, <u>https://www.ted.com/talks/cathy_o_neil_</u> 	
		the_era_of_blind_faith_in_big_data_must_end?language=en (13:10) 2/16: Film: <i>The Act of Killing</i> , Director Joshua Oppenheimer (2 h 46 min)	
8	Lying in politics	 2/21: Film: The Fog of War: Eleven Lessons from the Life of Robert S. McNamara, Director Errol Morris (1 hr 47 min) Hannah Arendt, "Lying in Politics: Reflections on The Pentagon Papers," pp. 1-16 	
	Justice Health care	2/23: Timothy Snyder, excerpts from <i>Our Malady: Lessons in Liberty from a Hospital Diary</i> , pp. 13-59	
9	Fictional presentations of justice,	Paper Due Thursday, 2/24 on Canvas at 11:59 pm2/28: Ursula Le Guin, "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas," pp. 1-4Margaret Drabble, ch. 1 of <i>The Witch of Exmoor</i> , pp. 1-243/2: Guest Lecturer: Tobita Chow	
	activism	Director, Justice is Global (a project of People's Action)	

	1	
		George Black, "Your Clothes Were Made by a Bangladeshi Climate
		Refugee," Mother Jones, pp. 1-8
		Hadas Thier, "Activists Demand Rich Countries Suspend Patent Laws and
		Share Vaccines Freely," In These Times, pp. 1-5
10		3/7 – 3/11: Spring Break
11	Protest and	3/14: Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter From Birmingham Jail," pp.1-6
	progress	Malcolm Gladwell, "Small Change: Why the revolution will not be
		tweeted," The New Yorker, pp. 1-8
		Raquel Willis, "How Stacey Abrams Channelled Her Anger Into
		Change," them, pp. 1-4
		3/16: Thessaly La Force et al. "The 25 Most Influential Works of American
		Protest Art Since WWII," pp. 1-28
		Susan Neiman, "Monumental Recognition," ch. 7 of Learning from the
		<i>Germans</i> , pp. 261-307
		Paper Due Sunday, 3/20 on Canvas at 11:59 pm
12	Reparations	3/21: Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," <i>The Atlantic</i> , pp. 1-14
	110pmminolie	Susan Neiman, "Rights and Reparations," ch. 8 of <i>Learning from the</i>
		<i>Germans</i> , pp. 308-350
	Courage	3/23: G.E.M. Anscombe, "Mr. Truman's Degree," pp. 1-8
	g-	Kenneth P. Nolan, "Courage," pp. 62-63
	What is	Dewan and Oppel, "We Expect Police to Be Brave For Us. But What
	courage?	Happens When They're Not?" New York Times, pp. 1-4
	0	Video, "9/11 Comment Bill Maher Got Fired For,"
		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rNMhNJDRnhU (0:20)
13	Public	3/28: Graduation Speeches:
	speeches on	Ed Helms at Knox (2013), https://www.knox.edu/news/knox-college-
	courage, A	commencement-2013/commencement-speaker-ed-helms (13:13)
	soldier's	Amal Clooney at Vanderbilt (2018),
	courage	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9JmeixoS024 (3:28)
		David Foster Wallace at Kenyon (2005) (audio only)
		https://fs.blog/2012/04/david-foster-wallace-this-is-water/ (22:37)
		3/30: Guest Lecturer: Lieutenant Commander (LCDR) Robert Jameson,
		Department Head at HSM-48 (Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron),
		US Navy
		For an introduction to this kind of helicopter and its uses, see
		https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FRlBeKuvnk (3:03)
		Katie Lange, "Medal of Honor Monday," pp. 1-3
		Steven Pressfield, passage from Gates of Fire, p. 1
		MAD Moore, "Aristotle's Courage," pp. 1-2
		LT Sarah McGuire, "Blocks, Blocks, Blocks," Aviation, pp. 18-19
		Webpage on Naval Operational Risk Management (decision-making):
		https://nps.edu/web/safety/orm
		Fallows, "2020 Time Capsule #11: 'Captain Crozier'," Atlantic, pp. 1-3
		Individual Capstone Contribution Due Sunday, 4/3 11:59 pm
14	A novel about	4/4: Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, pp. 1-67
	courage	4/6: Joseph Conrad, Lord Jim, pp. 68-169
15	(cont.)	4/11: Joseph Conrad, <i>Lord Jim</i> , pp., 170-223

		Paper Due Sunday, 4/12 at 11:59 pm
	Humility	4/13: Guest Lecturer: Elise Murray Dykhuis,
		Senior Research Scholar, Program for Leadership and Character,
	Psych research	Wake Forest University
	on virtue	
		(No Reading)
16	Humility & the	4/18: Plato, <i>Apology</i> , pp. 26-61
	unity of the	4/20: Plato (cont.), Concluding Discussion
	virtues	
		Class Capstone Book Due Friday, 4/22 @ 11:59 pm
		Individual Capstone Portfolio Due Sunday, 4/24 @ 11:59 pm