Course Syllabus

I. Course Information

Course Name: Special Topics in UCD: UX Design Processes
Course Number: RUCD-290-1DL
Course Start & End Dates: April 11 - June 19 2018

Instructor’s Name and Contact Information
Jen McGinn, MS
Email: jmcginn@brandeis.edu

Office Hours/Availability – Saturday 7:30am, Monday 7:30am, Tuesday 7:00pm

Document Overview
This syllabus contains all relevant information about the course: its objectives and outcomes, the grading criteria, the texts and other materials of instruction, and of weekly topics, outcomes, assignments, and due dates. Consider this your roadmap for the course. Please read through the syllabus carefully and feel free to share any questions that you may have.

Course Description
This course will provide students with the industry skills and techniques required to work effectively on a user experience (UX) or product team in the context of different organizational environments. Students will explore a range of development processes (Agile, Lean, SAFe, and many others), and learn how UX design and user research fit into those processes.

Coursework will focus on developing and applying communication and collaboration skills. Topics will include obtaining stakeholder and executive buy-in for UX resources, process change, and the integration of design thinking and design critique activities into product development processes.

Course Outcomes
By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate how and when UX activities can fit into development processes
2. Evaluate the UX maturity of an organization
3. Articulate the pros and cons of different user experience team structures
4. Create an effective user experience strategy that aligns with and supports the business strategy
5. Conduct a design thinking workshop with stakeholders
6. Estimate, decompose, and track their UX work using the same tools as their engineering peers
7. Communicate and collaborate more effectively with stakeholders across the organization

Relevant Programs: MS in User-Centered Design
Prerequisites: Basic knowledge of UX research and design methods highly recommended.
Materials of Instruction

a. Textbooks:

- User Experience Management: Essential Skills for Leading Effective UX Teams
- Thanks for the Feedback
- 27 Powers of Persuasion: Simple Strategies to Seduce Audiences & Win Allies
- Gamestorming: A Playbook for Innovators, Rulebreakers, and Changemakers
  https://www.amazon.com/Gamestorming-Playbook-Innovators-Rulebreakers-Changemakers/dp/0596804172/
  ○ or http://gamestorming.com/

b. Required/Recommended Software: Agile management software (Trello or JIRA cloud) and remote brainstorming software (Mural) will be supplied for students.

c. Recommended Text(s) / Journals: There will be recommendations in each week’s materials.

d. Online Course Content

This section of the course will be conducted completely online using Brandeis’ LATTE site, available at http://moodle2.brandeis.edu. The site contains the course syllabus, assignments, discussion forums, links/resources to course-related professional organizations and sites, and weekly checklists, objectives, outcomes, topic notes, self-tests, and discussion questions. Access information is emailed to enrolled students before the start of the course. To begin participating in the course, review Week 1 and read the first Course Announcement.

Students will be provided with PDF copies of additional course material and links to relevant material, if required.

Welcome Message from the Instructor

Hi there!

I want to welcome you to UCD 290 – Special Topics: UX Processes, in the User-Centered Design Masters program!

I’m Jen McGinn, a Senior Director of User Experience at CA Technologies and an Adjunct Professor in the Brandeis University’s Rabb School Division of Graduate Professional Studies (GPS).

This course will provide you with the industry skills and techniques required of a User Experience professional to work effectively on a UX team and/or in a development environment. Over the course of the next ten weeks, we will explore the most common development processes (Agile, Lean, SAFe, plus many others), and how to make design and user research work in each of those contexts. You’ll get tools for communicating more effectively with stakeholders, and will be able to discuss the pros and cons of different organizational structures of UX. You’ll learn how to conduct a design thinking session, and practice talking an executive into letting you run one. We’ll explore how to create a UX strategy with your team, and how to overcome the challenges of getting buy-in for it. And starting in week 4, you’ll use JIRA to document, decompose, estimate, and track your work.

This course will be conducted entirely through this LATTE course site. There’s a lot of information here, so each week you’ll be directed to the corresponding set of learning resources, discussions, and assignments. I may limit
the number of weeks ahead that you can see, to keep it from being overwhelming. That’s a UX principle — can you name it?

The course week runs from Wednesday to Tuesday. Whether or not you’ve taken an online class from Brandeis before, here are a few things to do:

- Please post your introduction to the Introduce Yourself forum in Week 1. In addition to telling us about your personal and/or professional background, please also include your objectives for taking the course, any other Brandeis courses you’ve already taken, as well as any experience you have with Agile, JIRA, and/or Design Thinking.
- The Week 1 module indicates what’s expected during our first week. In addition to the readings and introductory posts, weekly discussion posts need to be submitted by midnight Saturday. Replies to the posts of two classmates should be made by midnight Tuesday, the end of our course week. In addition, a significant weekly assignment will be due on each Tuesday.

I hope you are excited to learn about how ideation, design, user research, and UX strategy all work in practice, not just in theory!

I look forward to seeing you in the forums,

Jen McGinn

### Course Grading Criteria

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Outcomes Met</th>
<th>Week Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>Discussions/On-line participation</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>Every week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 1: UX Metrics</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
<td>Week 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 2: Feedback</td>
<td>1, 7</td>
<td>Week 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 3: Collaboration</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 4: Planning and grooming</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
<td>Week 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 5: Writing stories and grooming</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
<td>Week 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Assignment 6: Conducting a Retro and planning</td>
<td>1, 6</td>
<td>Week 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Assignment 7: Design Thinking</td>
<td>1, 5, 7</td>
<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>Assignment 8: UX Strategy</td>
<td>4, 7</td>
<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>20%</td>
<td>Final Project: Facilitate a design thinking session</td>
<td>1, 5, 7</td>
<td>Week 10</td>
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### Online Discussions and Rubric

Online discussions should be completed during the course week in which they are assigned. Early or late discussion posts do not earn credit. Your first post should be made by Saturday midnight of each course week; following posts should be made by Tuesday midnight. You are expected to post on at least three different days of the course week. Unless stated otherwise, you should expect to post substantive answers to each discussion question and at least one response to a post from another student (3 to 4 substantive posts per week). A substantive post is one that is about 150-250 words, and which makes a useful point or asks a useful question. Posts that are poorly written, which merely quote from external sources, or which merely echo
agreement or disagreement with another post will not earn credit. Participation beyond these minimum requirements will earn additional credit.

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<tr>
<th>Question Responses</th>
<th>60% of weekly participation grade</th>
<th>Max. Points per criteria</th>
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<tr>
<td>Includes your own insights into the topics, sharing your professional experiences as appropriate and your own conclusions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Includes references to weekly required readings and/or other external sources, cited appropriately. All original responses must draw on external references</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answers the question posed completely; poses questions or points of consideration to elicit responses from classmates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consists of at least 150-250 words</td>
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<tr>
<td>Well written, with no spelling or grammatical errors, and with the care normally exercised for the student’s professional communications</td>
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**One day late:** -15 out of 30 possible raw points; more than one day late: no credit

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<tr>
<th>Discussion Replies</th>
<th>30% of Weekly Participation Grade</th>
<th>Max. Points per criteria</th>
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<td>Substantive (beyond an &quot;I agree&quot; or complimentary post) with:</td>
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<td>o Follow-on points from your related experiences and/or from the readings</td>
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<td>o Consists of at least 100 words</td>
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<td>o Follow-up questions of others to extend the conversation (encouraged, but not required)</td>
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**Grammar/spelling/format/sources** noted as appropriate | 6

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<tr>
<th>Posting Activity</th>
<th>10% of Participation Grade</th>
<th>Max. Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Post the minimum number of required posts and replies</td>
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<td>Post fewer than the minimum number of required posts and replies</td>
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### Assignment Descriptions

**Assignment 1: UX Metrics**

Identify 3 to 5 of the business goals, objectives, outcomes, or metrics that you find in the case study, and choose three UX metrics that support one or more of the business goals. For each UX metric, provide a description of why you selected it, and how it supports one of the items.
Assignment 2: Feedback

Identify the feedback trigger that you are most susceptible to, and give an example of how that has played out in your work life. Then discuss at least two strategies from the book that you can employ that will help you hear and benefit from that feedback. Optionally, share assignment with classmates.

Assignment 3: Collaboration

Given a scenario, identify 5 tactics that you would use to try to help your messages land with the your stakeholders. For each tactic, provide a description of why you selected it, and how it will resonate with the motivations of the stakeholders.

Assignment 4: Planning and grooming

Work with your scrum team to identify which items from your backlog need to be pulled into the current sprint (week 4 and 5). Order the items by priority and groom them as a team. Decompose at least three stories by creating applicable tasks. Track all of your work for week 4 in the agile management tool.

Assignment 5: Writing stories and grooming

Write stories for yourself for the work that remains in this sprint. Be sure to point and subtask them. When you and your team meet, groom your backlog. Track all of your work for week 5 in the agile management tool.

Assignment 6: Planning and conducting a Retro

Close your first sprint, and hold a retrospective with your scrum team.

Assignment 7: Design Thinking

Create a plan for a design thinking session, including timing, gamestorming activities, and materials you’ll need to conduct the session.

Write an email to the VPs of Development and Product management convincing them to run the session with a specific number of people for a specific duration.

Assignment 8:

Using the UX strategy blueprint and method from Jim Kalbach, (https://experiencinginformation.com/2014/08/12/ux‐strategy‐blueprint/), meet with your team and create a UX strategy that supports the [fictional] business goals of a company. You can use Mural or another remote collaboration tool of your choosing.

Final Project: Facilitate a design thinking session

II. Weekly Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>UX Teams and Structure</th>
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| **Objectives** | ● Discuss the pros and cons of different types of UX team structures  
● Explain how UX metrics relate to business metrics  
● Generate a list of UX metrics that align to your organization’s business metrics |
| **Readings** | ● Week 1 lecture  
● Chapter 3 in *User Experience Management*  
● Chapter 4 in *Org Design for Design Orgs* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2</th>
<th>User Centered Design Processes</th>
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| **Objectives** | - Describe the four phases of user-centered design and explain why each one is important  
- Identify several common user research methods and explain when/why you’d employ each one  
- Select and justify user research methods for a design project  
- Define what a design system is and explain how it’s used  
- Identify three types of feedback that you can receive from peers and stakeholders, and explain which types of responses can be triggered |
| **Readings** | - Week 2 lecture  
- *Thanks for the Feedback* |
| **Discussions** | - Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday |
| **Assignments / Assessments** | - Assignment 1: UX Metrics |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
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| **Objectives** | - Discuss how user experience collaborates with each stakeholder and team  
- Explore the challenges of collaboration within remote and cross-cultural teams  
- Employ framing and storytelling techniques to deliver your message in a way that it will land  
- Compile a list of new strategies that you can use to engage with your stakeholders and communicate more effectively  
- Apply those strategies to specific scenarios |
| **Readings** | - Week 3 Lecture  
- *27 Powers of Persuasion*  
- Sun Tzu and the Art of UX Influence (slideshow) |
| **Discussions** | - Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday |
| **Assignments / Assessments** | - Assignment 2: Feedback |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 4</th>
<th>Agile UX</th>
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| **Objectives** | - Identify the key concepts of Agile development  
- Assess where user research and design fit in Agile processes  
- Discuss how Agile management systems support Agile processes  
- Demonstrate how your UX work can be managed using the same tools and processes as development teams use |
| **Readings** | - Week 4 Lecture  
- YouTube video on Scrum |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Discussions</th>
<th>• Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday</th>
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<td>Assignments / Assessments</td>
<td>• Assignment 4: Planning and grooming</td>
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<td>Week 5</td>
<td>Lean UX</td>
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| Objectives | • Identify the key concepts of Lean Startup and Lean UX  
 • Discuss the similarities and differences between Lean UX and Agile UX  
 • Compare and contrast other Agile variants  
 • Write new stories for your project backlog and c subtask templates |
| Readings | • Week 5 Lecture  
 • Chapters from Lean UX  
 • Chapters from UX for Lean Startups |
| Discussions | • Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday |
| Assignments / Assessments | • Assignment 5: Writing stories |
| Week 6 | Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe) and other Agile variants |
| Objectives | • Identify the key concepts of Scaled Agile Framework (SAFe)  
 • Discuss how Lean UX works in the context of SAFe  
 • Defend a position of whether or not UX should be part of the architectural runway  
 • Conduct a retrospective with your scrum team |
| Readings | • Week 6 Lecture  
 • Scaled Agile website material  
 • YouTube video on conducting a retro |
| Discussions | • Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday |
| Assignments / Assessments | • Assignment 6: Conducting a Retro |
| Week 7 | Design Thinking/Studios/Sprints |
| Objectives | • Identify the steps/stages of design thinking activities and why each one is important  
 • Discuss the similarities and differences between design sprints, designs studios and design thinking activities and when you would use each one  
 • Justify the goals and benefits of design thinking activities to participants and stakeholders to generate support and enthusiasm  
 • Plan and organize a design thinking session that you will facilitate. |
| Readings | • Week 7 Lecture  
 • Book Gamesstorming  
 • Select presentations on design thinking from SlideShare or chapters from the four design thinking books in the recommended reading |
| Discussions | • Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday |
| Assignments / Assessments | • Assignment 7: Design Thinking |
### Week 8: UX Strategy

**Objectives**
- Define the relationships between mission, vision, and strategy
- Evaluate how the UX strategy can support the business strategy
- Select gamestorming activities to facilitate the creation of a UX mission and vision statement
- Apply persuasion skills to evangelize your UX strategy, vision, and mission across organizations and teams

**Readings**
- Week 8 Lecture
- HBR Articles on strategy, mission, and vision
- Chapters 5, 8, and 9 in *User Experience Management*

**Discussions**
- Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday

**Assignments / Assessments**
- Assignment 8: UX Strategy
- Identify topic for final project

### Week 9: UX Maturity Models

**Objectives**
- Discuss which aspects of the available maturity models are most important
- Assess an organization's UX maturity using criteria from one or more of the models

**Readings**
- Week 9 Lecture
- Parts of chapter 8 in *User Experience Management*
- Select SlideShare presentations

**Discussions**
- Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday

**Assignments / Assessments**
- Work on final project.

### Week 10: Other topics that impact UX processes

**Objectives**
- Articulate ethical issues in research and design
- Describe dark patterns in UX and UI design
- Debate the value (or risks) of diversity in tech
- Describe how sustainability intersects with engineering design

**Readings**
- Week 10 Lecture

**Discussions**
- Initial Response is due Saturday, a minimum of 2 replies are due Tuesday

**Assignments / Assessments**
- Present final projects
III. Course Policies and Procedures

Late Policies
Assignments are due by the end of the relevant course week. For example, Homework 1 is due at the end of week 2. In fall 2016, this will be just after 11:59pm on Tuesday, Feb. 4. To avoid any problems caused by confusion over dates and times, I set assignment deadlines to be 6am on the following Wednesday. This gives you an automatic six-hour grace period for each assignment. If an assignment is late, it will lose 5 points for every day it is late. Continuing with this example, if the first assignments is submitted after 6am but before midnight on Feb. 5, it will lose 5 points. Submission by midnight on Feb. 6 loses 10 points. If an assignment is more than a week late, I will not accept it for credit. I do this so that I will have an opportunity to discuss the assignments and possibly post reference solutions to help the class.

Brandeis and its servers run on Eastern Time. If you are in another timezone, the times you see in Latte are not converted to your local time unless you change your preferences. Due dates and times always reflect Standard Time or Daylight Saving Time when these are observed in Massachusetts. Note that Brandeis will change from Eastern Daylight Time to Eastern Standard Time during this semester.

Grading Standards
- Work expectations – Students are responsible to explore each week's materials and submit required work by their due dates. On average, a student can expect to spend approximately 3-5 hours per week reading and approximately 5-8 hours per week completing assignments and posting to discussions.
- How points and percentages equate to grades

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Feedback
My goal is to grade homework within a week of the due date. I will post an announcement if I am delayed in grading for some reason. If you submit an assignment late, I usually grade it after the following assignment is due, so that my feedback is timely for the greatest number of students.

If you have questions about assignments, the most reliable private way to reach me is via the One on One Discussion forum. If your question will help the entire class, I may take the liberty of answering it via the Questions and Answers forum.

If you send me a message at my Brandeis email address, I normally respond within 24 hours of receiving it. However, email may be delayed several days.

Confidentiality
- We can draw on the wealth of examples from our organizations in class discussions and in our written work. However, it is imperative that we not share information that is confidential, privileged, or
proprietary in nature. We must be mindful of any contracts we have agreed to with our companies. In addition, we should respect our fellow classmates and work under the assumption that what is discussed here (as it pertains to the workings of particular organizations) stays within the confines of the classroom.

- Finally, for your awareness, members of the University's technical staff have access to all course sites to aid in course setup and technical troubleshooting. Program Chairs and a small number of Graduate Professional Studies (GPS) staff have access to all GPS courses for oversight purposes. Students enrolled in GPS courses can expect that individuals other than their fellow classmates and the course instructor(s) may visit their course for various purposes. Their intentions are to aid in technical troubleshooting and to ensure that quality course delivery standards are met. Strict confidentiality of student information is maintained.

### Class Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>April 11 - April 17, 2018</td>
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<td>April 18 - April 24</td>
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<td>April 25 - May 1</td>
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<td>June 6 - June 12</td>
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<td>June 13 - June 19, 2018</td>
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### Time Management

Students sometimes run into problems related to managing their time, especially in distance learning courses. I hope these ideas will help you to succeed in the class:

- If you are employed full-time, do not take more than two courses at a time. I have never yet met a student who could successfully manage this, especially toward the end of the term as finals and projects come due.
- Keep up with the course week-to-week. Don’t let yourself fall behind on readings, discussion posts, etc. Brandeis courses are not self-paced, and they depend on the collaboration of everyone. Participating late, or “trying to get ahead” is very disruptive.
- Take a look at course assignments early in the week and consider how you will approach the solutions. Ask questions early, so I have time to answer them. Don’t wait until Tuesday night to begin work.
- If you are planning a vacation, plan to continue participating in the class. Thanks to LATTE, you can post discussions and submit homework from virtually anywhere in the world. I will not be able to accept homework late because of a scheduled vacation.
- If you do find yourself short of time, remember that discussion posts count for 30% of your grade. Do not forgo discussions, because it’s impossible to complete the course successfully without them.
- If you experience a serious situation, such as a severe illness, contact me as soon as you can, or contact the GPS office.
IV. University and Division of Graduate Professional Studies Standards

Please review the policies and procedures of Graduate Professional Studies, found at http://www.brandeis.edu/gps/students/studentresources/policiesprocedures/index.html. We would like to highlight the following.

Learning Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this course, please contact me immediately.

Academic Honesty and Student Integrity

Academic honesty and student integrity are of fundamental importance at Brandeis University and we want students to understand this clearly at the start of the term. As stated in the Brandeis Rights and Responsibilities handbook, “Every member of the University Community is expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty. A student shall not receive credit for work that is not the product of the student’s own effort. A student’s name on any written exercise constitutes a statement that the work is the result of the student’s own thought and study, stated in the student’s own words, and produced without the assistance of others, except in quotes, footnotes or references with appropriate acknowledgement of the source.” In particular, students must be aware that material (including ideas, phrases, sentences, etc.) taken from the Internet and other sources MUST be appropriately cited if quoted, and footnoted in any written work turned in for this, or any, Brandeis class. Also, students will not be allowed to collaborate on work except by the specific permission of the instructor. Failure to properly cite resources may result in a referral being made to the Office of Student Development and Judicial Education. The outcome of this action may involve academic and disciplinary sanctions, which could include (but are not limited to) such penalties as receiving no credit for the assignment in question, receiving no credit for the related course, or suspension or dismissal from the University.

Further information regarding academic integrity may be found in the following publications: "In Pursuit of Excellence - A Guide to Academic Integrity for the Brandeis Community", "(Students') Rights and Responsibilities Handbook", AND "Graduate Professional Studies Student Handbook". You should read these publications, which all can be accessed from the Graduate Professional Studies Web site. A student that is in doubt about standards of academic honesty (regarding plagiarism, multiple submissions of written work, unacknowledged or unauthorized collaborative effort, false citation or false data) should consult either the course instructor or other staff of the Rabb School Graduate Professional Studies.

University Caveat

The above schedule, content, and procedures in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. If you have questions or concerns about course content before the start of the course, please contact the instructor.