

## Senior Design — Weekly Updates

**Due Date:** Every week of class until “dead” week, on Monday at Noon.

The team leader is expected to prepare weekly updates for your faculty advisor, instructor and industrial advisor. This update is distributed via the Messages tab in Basecamp to all team members, your faculty advisor, instructor and industrial advisor (unless they request otherwise). The weekly updates are to be in plain text in the email – in other words, do not send an email with the weekly update as an attachment.

For these updates, the subject line will always be:

“Weekly Update, team (insert your concise, descriptive team name), date (insert date sent)”

The update should have the following sections with the headings as shown below. Remember, *milestones* are things that are to be or have been completed. *Tasks* are things that are done to achieve a milestone. Milestones are nouns, tasks are verbs.

**Milestones Completed:**

a list of milestones you completed since the last update. If there are none, state this fact.

**Overdue Milestones:**

a list of all not-completed milestones whose due date has passed. If there are none, state this fact.

**Upcoming Milestones:**

a list of milestones that must be completed before the next weekly update. If there are none, state this fact.

**Recent Tasks:**

the tasks you worked on this week. These are not milestones, but actual work that you did to reach towards milestone completion. This section should never be empty. Identify individuals who worked on each task.

**Missed Tasks:**

note any tasks that had planned to do during the last week but did not complete. If there are none, state this fact

**Plans:**

the tasks you expect to complete next week and an estimate of how many hours it will take to complete them. These plans should be consistent with upcoming milestones (and missed tasks). Identify individuals expected to work on each task.

Concerns:

your top concerns about the project and what your options are for resolving them. Do not leave this blank. You should always have concerns.

The Recent Tasks and Missed Tasks portion of the weekly update should be consistent with the Plans section of the previous update. Everything that was planned for the last week should be listed as accomplished or missed. You should continually update Basecamp as specific tasks are identified or defined.

Your task list in Basecamp should be consistent with the Plans section of your update. For example, if your update states that you plan to “complete the budget proposal” this week then “budget proposal” should be a Basecamp task and assigned to the proper people on the team.

The milestones and due dates you include in these updates should match those in your most recent project plan. *If you revise your milestones, you must submit to the instructor and advisors an updated plan including a concise explanation as to the need for revision.*

Good tasks and milestones should be easy to measure or define. An observer should easily be able to tell when it is done.

- Bad Task: “Design the wing spars”
- Good Task: “Select material for wing spars.”
- Bad Task: “Begin writing design report”
- Good Task: “Complete writing the background section of the design report.”
- Bad milestone: “Oral presentation 50% completed”
- Good milestone: “Oral presentation PowerPoint slides completed”

Tasks should be small; usually less than 8 hours. Any task that you estimate will take longer than 12 hours is too long and needs to be broken up into subtasks.

## **Grading**

Grading will be based upon the following criteria:

- Was your update turned in on time and sent to the appropriate people?
- Are you defining good tasks?
- Are your milestones and tasks consistent with Basecamp?
- Are your updates consistent with each other?

You will be graded strictly on the quality and timeliness of your weekly updates. How well you are staying on schedule will not affect this aspect of grading (although it certainly will affect the quality of your final project).

## Example of a Weekly Update

### Milestones Completed:

- Spar design completed (material selected, geometry fully defined, location in wing established).

### Overdue Milestones:

- Complete the design report

### Upcoming Milestones:

- Order all parts

### Tasks

- Completed load and stress analysis to determine final spar dimensions (Shaggy)
- Worked on figures for the design report (Scooby)

### Missed tasks

- Did not complete all figures for the design report, nor the conclusion and recommendation section.

### Plans

- Scooby: complete the figures for the design report (7 hours)
- Shaggy: complete writing the conclusion and recommendations for the report (5 hours)
- Velma: obtain part numbers from Fred, order all parts.
- Team: Meet to review the final the design report (3 hours), and submit the report.

### Concerns

- The parts list is pretty long. If any parts fail or don't ship we'll have to find a local supplier.
- Scooby ran out of snacks and couldn't finish the figures. We bought an extra large box of snacks this weekend that should last until the end of the semester

*Credits: Dr. Nuxoll's talents played a larger role in creation of this document. Thank you Dr. N!*