

Business
Communication

Erica Lau

**Professional Writing Minor Application
Fall 2012**

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October 5, 2012

Dr. LeeAnne G. Kryder
Business Communication Track Director
Writing Program
University of California, Santa Barbara
Santa Barbara, CA 93106

Dear Dr. Kryder:

The enclosed application for the Professional Writing Minor presents a detailed and sophisticated collaboration of my work that is well worth reading. I have successfully completed this as mandated by you and the other Professional Writing Minor Directors.

I understand that in order to earn a spot in the minor, I must clearly present all of the required information and writing samples. This application covers my personal information, academic preparation, writing history, statement of goals for pursuing the minor, and explanation of track choices. It also contains my resume, as well as six writing samples that best show my writing abilities and style.

I strongly believe that I belong in the Professional Writing Minor. I hope that the following pages spark your interest in me and, at the same time, provide answers to any questions and concerns you may have. Your time and consideration is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Erica Lau". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with the first and last names clearly distinguishable.

Erica Lau

Enclosure: Professional Writing Minor Application

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1.0

Prefatory Material

1.1 Personal Information and Academic Preparation

Personal Information

Name: Erica Lau
Local Address: 6622 Del Playa Drive, Unit B
Goleta, CA 93117
Phone Number: (310) 683-8211
Primary Email: erica_lau@umail.ucsb.edu

Academic Preparation

Major: Economics/Mathematics

Upper-division writing courses completed as pre-requisite for the Minor:

<u>Course</u>	<u>Instructor</u>	<u>Grade</u>
Writ 107 B	Holms	A
Writ 107 T	Holms	A
Writ 107 J	Mizrahi	A

Other Writing Program courses planned for winter and spring:

<u>Course</u>	<u>Quarter</u>
Writ 157 A	Winter
Writ 157 B	Spring
Writ 150	Spring

Planned units per quarter:

Winter quarter: 12-16
Spring quarter: 12-16

1.2 Writing History

Like most others, I have been writing since elementary school, and up through middle school and high school. But unfortunately, I was never a big fan. I wrote well, but I didn't enjoy it, as it was often too academic and theoretical. I only recently started to love writing when I took my first upper division writing course here at UCSB – business writing.

My eyes were opened to a whole new style of writing that I didn't realize was so important to the business world. And luckily, it has come pretty easily to me. The 'math geek' in me has completely adapted to the simplicity, and strength, of professional writing. Central to this style of writing, and most useful to me, is the ability to connect to specific audiences through writing.

In academic courses I have composed a variety of persuasive and negative letters, memorandums, emails, reports, contracts, cover letters, resumes, evaluations, outlines, work plans, elevator pitches, and PowerPoint presentations. I have successfully worked with a team to create a business plan, complete with a cover, a letter of transmittal, a table of contents, a list of

images, nine different sections, a list of sources, and an appendix. I have also created a user manual, including a product description, which I eventually made into a storyboard and an online wiki. In another course, I wrote a news article, short feature article, in-depth article, and seventy-five second broadcast that I presented in front of a green screen.

Outside of academics, I have been able to use my knowledge about simple, audience-specific writing to format emails, letters, lists, and files as an assistant bookkeeper for a property management company. My ability to communicate through writing was also exemplified when I was a member of the UCSB Student Athlete Advisory Board.

1.3 Statement of Goals for Pursuing the Minor

After studying math and economics for the last three years, I was happy to find an area of study that would give me a well-rounded education and be most useful in life after graduation. The Business Communication track of the Professional Writing Minor is the perfectly fitting, final piece of my educational puzzle, and everything that I desire. It would give me the opportunity to develop my writing, communication, and collaborative skills for the business world.

My goals for pursuing this minor are to refine my business writing skills and to satisfy my newfound passion for writing. Simply put, I want to become an excellent writer and be able to function in a professional environment. I have been told many times that the workplace is lacking in good writers and editors, and I want to fill that void. As a woman with an Economics/Mathematics major and a minor in Professional Writing, I would have a critical edge over my competition as I enter the business world.

No matter what workplace I find myself in, there is no doubt that my writing expertise will be put to good use. My specific interest in Investment Banking has furthered my desire to pursue this minor. I know that simple and effective writing is extremely important in this business because of the need to communicate internationally, meet deadlines, and work in groups.

1.4 Track Choices and Explanation

Desired Track of the Minor

First Choice: Business Communication

Second Choice: Multimedia Communication

Third Choice: Professional Editing

Explanation of Track Choices

I picked the Business Communication Track as my first choice because I believe that it fits best with my major and goes hand-in-hand with my desire to potentially pursue investment banking after graduation. I believe that the ability to write letters, emails, memorandums, proposals, press releases, status reports, feasibility reports, business plans, user manuals, and brochures is increasingly important in the business world.

I picked the Multimedia Communication Track as my second choice because it would allow me to refine both my writing and designing abilities. Although I do not find it quite as intriguing as the Business Communication track, I would love the opportunity to learn the principles of effective design, and bring together text and graphics. I am also willing to learn about new computer software.

Professional Editing is my third choice only because it does not apply directly to what I want to pursue in the future, not because I find it uninteresting. I would gladly accept the opportunity to become a meticulous writer, and master all grammar and punctuation rules. I believe that being able to edit a wide range of documents for diverse audiences is an underrated skill set that I would love to improve on.

2.0

Resume

ERICA LAU

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erica_lau@verizon.net

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

- Prior experience in bookkeeping, administrative services, reconciliation of bank statements, and mailing in an office
- Prior experience in dealing with customers and orders in a store
- Proficient researching skills as well as accessibility to a computer/laptop
- Experience in programs such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Internet on a PC and Macintosh
- Skilled at calculating, budgeting, and writing.

JOB EXPERIENCE

Bookkeeping Assistant, Les Frame Management

Hermosa Beach, CA, intermittently December 2006 to December 2010

- Assisted in bookkeeping and administrative services
- Organized and filed important documents
- Answered and directed phone calls to office employees
- Helped balance checkbooks and account information

In-store Employee, Becker Surfboards

Hermosa Beach, CA, April 2007 to February 2008, Summer 2009

- Learned every facet of the surf industry/business
- Administered the cash registers and dressing rooms
- Organized and processed surfboard, wetsuit, shoe, and clothing sales
- Ordered and re-stocked the floor with apparel

Server and Assistant, A-Soiree Event Planning Services

Hermosa Beach, CA, intermittently 2009-2011

- Helped serve and cook at multiple events, parties, and fundraisers
- Assisted with set-up and clean-up

Head Coach, Santa Barbara Volleyball Club Blenders

Santa Barbara, CA, February 2010 to June 2010

- Coached a 5th and 6th grade girl's volleyball team during weekly practices and tournaments
- Created practice plans and team strategies
- Kept in contact with all parents in order to keep them updated on the season

EDUCATION

University of California, Santa Barbara; Expected graduation date: June 2013

- B.A. Economics/Mathematics; Overall 3.49 GPA

AFFILIATIONS

- Member of the UCSB Women's Volleyball Team
- Member of the UCSB Student Athlete Advisory Board (SAAB)

3.0

Writing Samples

3.1 Business Plan: Industry Analysis

What is this sample?

This sample is the “Industry Analysis” portion of a business plan completed for Ann Holms’ Writing 107B course, Business Writing. The business plan was a quarter-long project, and each member in our group of five was assigned different sections to complete. I did the “Industry Analysis,” “Service Description,” and “Executive Summary.” I also did majority of the editing, as well as the cover page, title page, letter of transmittal, and table of contents.

Our business, The Living Room, was a unique movie theatre that played classic movies at an extremely low price. Our commitment to service, with comfortable couches and delicious food, provided an intimate environment similar to the comfort of one’s own home. Located in Austin, Texas, The Living Room targeted the entertainment-loving group of college students in the area. Placed in an area where movie theatres play only new releases, we planed to enter the market with our unique concept.

My portion, “Industry Analysis,” was designed to set the stage for our idea’s potential. After much research, I had to evaluate our industry by looking at the facts and figures, the industry leaders, and the industry trends. From there I had to decide whether or not we should enter.

Why was this sample chosen?

I chose this sample because it shows my ability to take complicated and detailed research and condense it into an organized and concise section. It shows my straightforward, yet analytical tone. I analyzed facts, figures, and opinions to explain their importance. Since this was one of the first sections in the business plan, it was written to purposefully grab the attention of potential investors. I was also able to condense this information further into an elevator pitch at the beginning of the project and a PowerPoint presentation at the end of the quarter. This entire project shows my ability to work well with a team, and get our work done by a deadline. I think that this sample is a perfect representation of my professional writing style.

2.0 Industry Analysis

The Living Room is an innovative new option for people who enjoy movies, but can't afford the new-release movie theatres. Because we are going to play movies that are no longer considered new releases, our movie theatre combines the experience of a big-screen movie theatre with the intimate feel of watching movies in the comfort of one's own home. The Living Room will be entering the Movie and Entertainment Industry. This analysis will describe the characteristics of the Movie and Entertainment Industry and outline the industries leaders. Trends in the industry, such as potential problems and potential growth, will also be addressed. The following information will illustrate why The Living Room will fulfill a profitable and culturally important niche in the Movie and Entertainment Industry.

2.1 Industry Characteristics

The Movie and Entertainment Industry consists of three segments: video, box office, and music. As the desire for enjoyable entertainment grows, the Movie and Entertainment Industry will also continue to grow. Below is a description of the specific facts and figures of the industry that apply directly to The Living Room.

2.1.1 Facts and Figures of Industry

The United States accounts for a large percent of the global Movies and Entertainment market value at 34.1 percent, and is a close second to Europe's 36.3 percent. The performance of the market in the United States is forecasted to accelerate for the five-year period 2010-2015, which will drive the market to a value of \$24 billion [1].

As seen in Table 2.1, video is the largest segment of the Movie and Entertainment market in the United States, accounting for 39.6 percent of the market's total value, and it is expected to be the most lucrative in 2010 with total revenues of \$11,740.3 million. In comparison, the sales of box office will generate revenues of 9,833.2 million in 2010, equating to 33.2 percent of the markets total value. The other 27.2 percent belongs to the music section. The Living Room fits into both the video and the box office segments, giving it a high potential for success [1].

Table 2.1 Industry Segments [1]

Category	% Share
Video	39.6%
Box Office	33.2%
Music	27.2%
Total	100 %

The Movies and Entertainment Industry still has a large number of buyers and investors, as it is an integral part of popular culture. According to the Five Forces Analysis, supplier power, degree of rivalry, likelihood of new entrants, and substitutes are all moderate forces in the industry. Buyer power, which has the greatest impact on our business, is strengthened because the diversity of audiences in the market means that smaller players, like us, can thrive [1].

As seen in Figure 2.1 below, there are multiple drivers of buyer power in the Movie and Entertainment Industry. Four of the strongest drivers are tendency to switch, buyer independence, low-cost switching, and price sensibility. This shows that buyers, described as “individual consumers who buy DVDs or watch films at the cinema,” are more likely to switch theatres if prices are more reasonable. The independence of buyers allows them to freely experiment with new aspects of the industry, such as The Living Room [1].

Figure 5: Drivers of buyer power in the movies & entertainment market in the United States, 2010

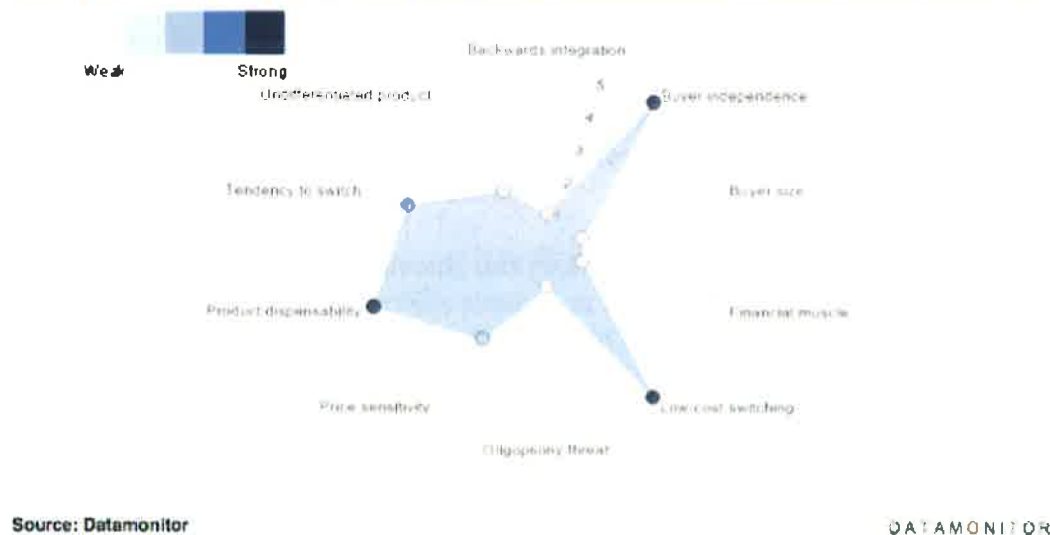


Figure 2.1 Buyer Power [1]

While there are a large number of buyers in this market, there are also some clear demographic features. Teenagers and young adults in the 12-24 year old range have the highest propensity to visit cinemas, compared to younger children and older adults. Statistically, cheap alternatives like The Living Room have the biggest impact on people’s willingness to switch theatres. Both of these statistics apply directly to our college-friendly movie theatre [1].

According to the industry facts and figures, we have found that it is a prime time to start our unique movie theatre, The Living Room.

2.2 Industry Leaders and Potential Competition

Currently, the majority of the Movie and Entertainment Industry is made up of big-name companies such as The Walt Disney Company, Netflix Inc, Fox Filmed Entertainment, and Time Warner Inc. Most movie theatre leaders are also big-name chains that play new releases [1].

Nonetheless, The Living Room will be entering a market that is a very small percentage of the Movie and Entertainment Industry. We are playing movies that are no longer considered new releases, yet we still offer the movies on a big movie screen. Therefore competition with the big-name companies will be minimal. Simply put, the uniqueness of our movie theatre is what shields us from current competition.

2.3 Industry Trends

The trends of the Movie and Entertainment Industry allow us to make informed predictions about whether or not the industry will make it, and therefore whether or not our business will be able to survive. Below is a description of the potential problems and potential growth that come from trends in the Movie and Entertainment Industry.

2.3.1 Potential Problems Facing the Industry

A growing problem in this industry is piracy. The videotaping and publication of movies is slowly growing into a global underground industry of its own, costing film studios billions of dollars. The reason that piracy is having such a negative impact is because the industry thrives on a "windowed" distribution system, which maximizes revenue because movies don't come out on DVD until about 4 months after hitting theatres [9].

For the most part, The Living Room avoids this problem because many of the movies that are being pirated are new releases, not movies already on DVD. The Living Room will provide a cheap alternative as well as higher quality of movies in order to discourage piracy.

2.3.2 Potential Growth

Across the board, movie-viewing levels have hardly been affected. In fact, they are running at near record highs. The "consumer" part of the movie and entertainment industry appears to be virtually recession proof, and this is the portion that most affects our business. "Domestic box-office revenue went up in five of the past seven recession years dating to the 1960s," according to research compiled by the National Association of Theatre Owners. Since the Depression of the 1930s, when a quarter or less could buy a full day's entertainment at a theater, and even now, when movies are \$10-\$15 a ticket, movies have been a refuge for the cash-deprived – as a place to forget about everyday troubles and a way to stretch tight household budgets [8].

Even as other industries are affected by the recession, ours won't be. Our low prices are ideal in such a strenuous economy, and are most appealing to college students who are short for money in the first place.

2.4 Conclusion

There are very few industries that are as globally successful as the Movie and Entertainment Industry. Due to the current recession, this industry is going to continue to grow and expand, and it would be foolish not to enter. The Living Room's unique features and commitment to service will allow us to enter the industry with ease and hopefully assume a larger role in the near future.

3.2 User Manual: Pinterest

What is this sample?

This sample is the cover page, table of contents, and first three sections of a Pinterest User Manual created during Ann Holms' Writing 107T course, Technical Writing. Although I worked with another girl, the following portions were completed by me alone. While this sample is only the first eight pages, we collaborated to make a 27-page user manual with everything you need to know about the website Pinterest.

Why was this sample chosen?

This sample was chosen for a variety of reasons. Most importantly, this sample shows my eye for detail and simplicity. I followed professional technical writing standards and kept my audience in mind. The cover page shows my ability to format a document in a professional manner. I created the icon as a way to summarize and showcase what Pinterest is all about. The entire document shows my ability to access a website, analyze every detail, and then break it down into a well-designed and easy-to-read layout. Each step given is short and in a logical order. Additionally, I used visuals to help clarify instructions. After finishing the entire user manual, we created an online wiki for the manual, further showing my ability to use different computer software programs.



Pinterest User Manual

Prepared For: Ann Holms
By: Lindsay Meade and Erica Lau
March 8, 2012



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About This Manual

The purpose of this section is to introduce the User Manual for Pinterest. It addresses the six main sections of the manual, the intended audience, and lastly, how to use this manual in order to have a successful Pinterest experience.

Manual Contents

This manual provides a basic guide to using Pinterest.com. It is designed to instruct people on the basics of setting up and using Pinterest.com. All of these instructions explain common actions performed on Pinterest. The manual has six main sections:

- **Create an Account:** The Create an Account section shows how to sign up for the website in four steps, starting with getting to the website and ending with creating a username and password.
- **Get Started/First Steps:** This section explains how to get started on Pinterest by addressing some of the most basic steps needed for browsing and pinning.
- **Browse in Pinterest:** The Browse in Pinterest section introduces the three ways to browse through Pinterest in order to have access to unlimited pages of interests and topics.
- **Access Pin Options:** This section shows every option you have when you are looking at a pin, for example, repining, commenting, and liking.
- **Add Pins to Your Pinboard:** This section discusses the two ways to add pins to your pinboards to best keep track of your interests.
- **Edit a Pin:** The Edit a Pin section shows all of the ways to edit a pin, which allows for organized and easier browsing.

Intended Audience

The audience is expected to have general computer skills and knowledge to perform the computer related tasks provided in the user manual. The user must know how to navigate the Internet, copy and paste, locate files on their computer, and access email.

How to Use this Manual

This User Manual will allow someone who has never heard of Pinterest to successfully use the website and all that it has to offer. New users should start from the first section, and follow every set of instructions. People that are already members of Pinterest will be able to easily find information and directions for every category of Pinterest by using the Table of Contents to get to specific sections of interest.

About Pinterest

The purpose of the website Pinterest is to connect everyone in the world through the things they find interesting. It allows you to organize and share what you find on the web. People use this virtual 'pinboard' to plan their weddings, decorate their homes, organize recipes, and much more. You can browse 'pinboards' created by other people, which is a fun way to discover new things and get inspiration from people who share your interests. Below is a list of terms that are important to understand before browsing through this manual and Pinterest.

Terms

Term	Definition
Pin/Repinning	An image added to the Pinboard. Using the Pin It button, you can add images from a website or You can upload images from your computer. You can add a pin to your Pinboard from another user's board – called 'repinning'.
Pinboard	A virtual board to categorize pins (also called Boards)
Liking	Liking a pin adds the image to your 'like' section. Liking a pin is different from repinning, since the image does not get added to one of your boards.
Commenting	You can comment on a pin by either clicking the 'comment' button and writing a message, or typing a comment in the text box below the full-size image.
Following	Following another user means that their boards and pins will be available for you to look at in your Recent Activity feed. You can follow individual boards, and you can also un-follow boards if you decide you don't like it.

Create an Account

This section describes how to get started on the website www.Pinterest.com. Using these instructions, you will be able to get to the website, request an invite, access your email to retrieve required information, and, lastly, create a username and password.

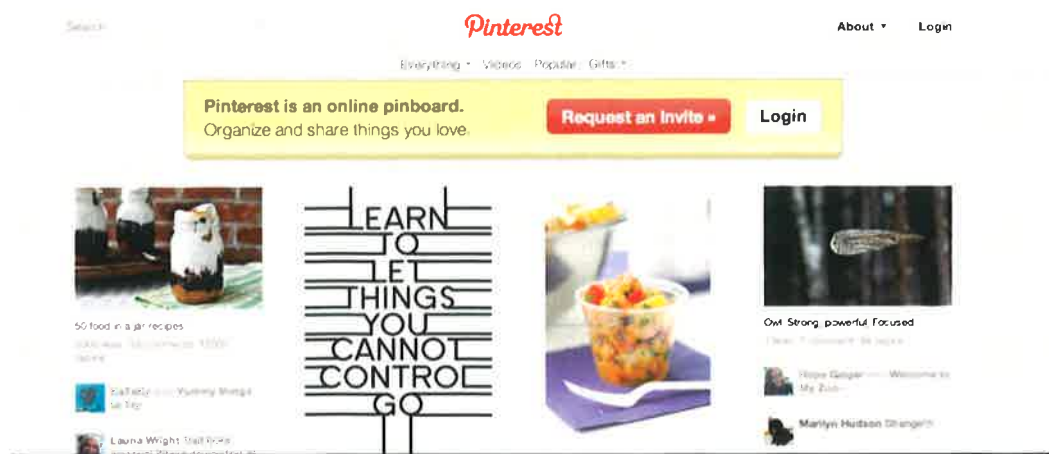
Get to the Website

NOTE: You must be on a computer already with the Internet open in order to get started.

1. Type www.pinterest.com into the internet web browser



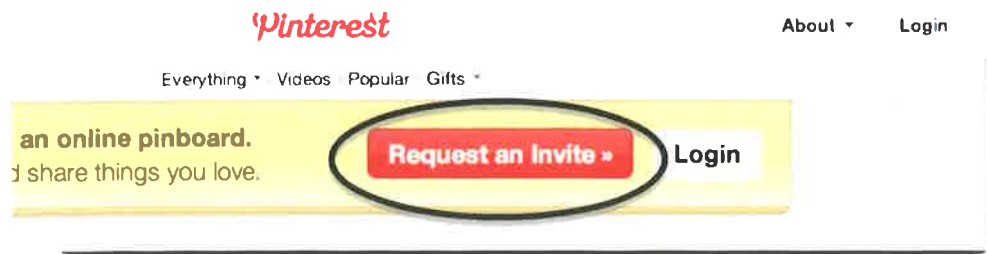
2. Press **Enter/Return** on your keyboard to access the Pinterest home page seen below.



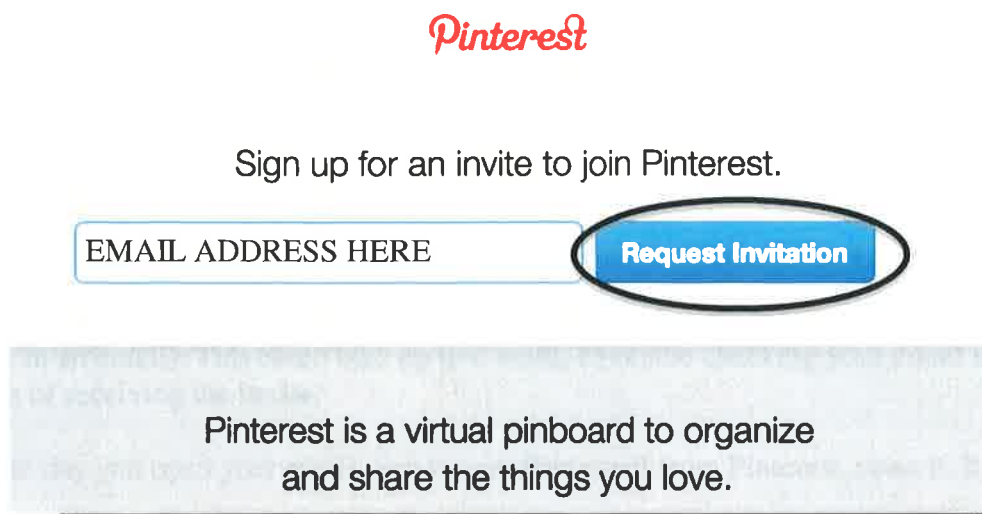
Request an Invite

NOTE: You must be on the Pinterest website in order to request an invite to join

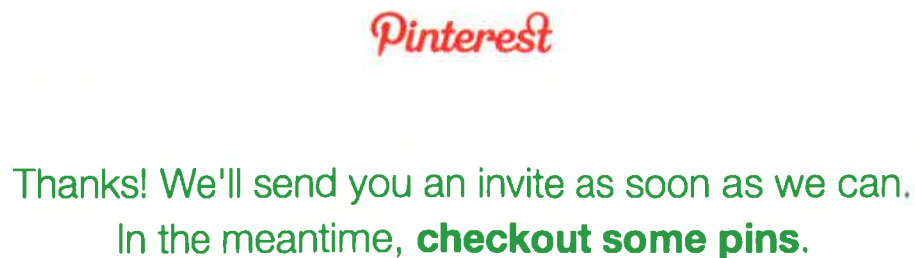
1. Click the red **Request an Invite** button that is on the home page of Pinterest, as seen below.



2. You will then be led to a sign up page (seen below). Enter your email address in the provided space, and then click the blue **Request Invitation** button.



Once you have pressed the blue button, you will be thanked for your request (seen below). Next, you will be sent an invite to the email address that you entered. This is covered in the next section



Retrieve Required Information from Your Email

1. Access the email account you used to 'Request an Invite' (shown above). You should see an email from Pinterest informing you that they are processing your request. The email will look like this:

Thanks for Joining the Pinterest Waiting List

Thanks for Joining the Pinterest Waiting List

Hi!

Thanks for joining the Pinterest waiting list. We'll be sure to send you an invite soon.

In the meantime, you can follow us on [Twitter](#). You can also explore a few [pins](#).

We're excited to get you pinning soon!

- Ben and the Pinterest Team

2. Once you have received this email, the next step is waiting for the actual invite (it will come in an email). This could take up to a week. Continue checking your email in the hopes of receiving the **invite**.
3. On the day you open your email, and see another email from Pinterest, open it. It will say this:

You've Been Invited to Join Pinterest

You're in!

I'm excited to invite you to join Pinterest, a social catalog. I can't wait to have you join our little community.

To create your Pinterest account, click the link below and push the blue "FB Connect" button. You can also join with Twitter.

http://pinterest.com/invited/?email=enca_lau@venzon.net&invite=b8ddc633

• Pinterest Etiquette: Try to...

- Be Nice!
- Be Creative. The best pinboards mix products, art, recipes and images from all across the web. Try not to pin everything from a single source.
- Give Credit. If you blog about an item you found on Pinterest, it's nice to credit your fellow pinners by linking back to the original pin.

If you have any questions, we'd love to hear from you. Email us at hi@pinterest.com or follow us on twitter [@pinterest](#). We also have an [iPhone app](#).

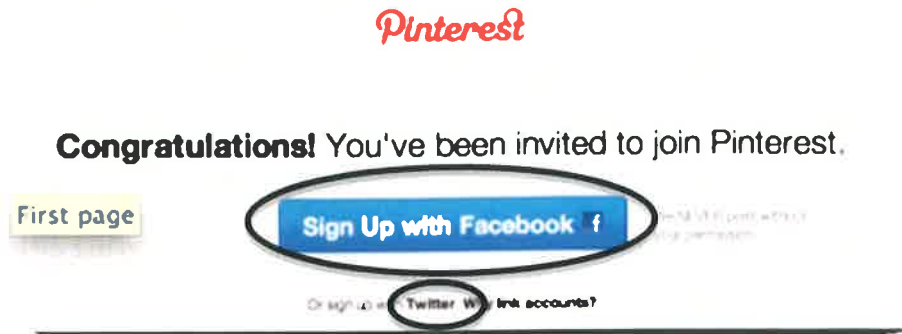
Happy pinning!

-Ben & the Pinterest Team

This is an email that says you are officially a part of Pinterest. It contains all of the information and links (circled above, for example) required in order to create a username and password. This will be further addressed in the next section.

Create a Username and Password

1. Click the link that is in your Invite email (circled in the step above). You will be forwarded to a page that looks like this:



2. Next, sign up with Facebook or Twitter by clicking the blue **Sign Up with Facebook** button or the black **Twitter** button, both circled above.
3. On the next page, click **Allow**. You must do this in order to carry on.
4. After you allow access from your Facebook or Twitter account, you will be prompted to create a Pinterest username and to provide your email and a password.

Congratulations! You are now the newest member of Pinterest! You will receive an email confirming your new membership. It will look like this:

YOU are the newest member of Pinterest, a community to share collections of things you love. We're excited to have you as a member and can't wait to see what you pin.

A few tips to get the most out of Pinterest:

- Install the **bookmarklet**. It lets you add a pin from any website with just one click.

- Follow a few more pinboards. After all, Pinterest is as much about **discovering** new things as it is about sharing.

- Pin carefully! As one of the first members of Pinterest, your pins will help set the tone for the whole community. Use big images, write thoughtful descriptions, and pin things you really love. Also, no nudity :)

Thanks for joining and happy pinning!

- Ben and the Pinterest Team

3.3 In-depth Article and Broadcast

What is this sample?

The following sample is an in-depth article and seventy-five second broadcast written for Janet Mizrahi's Journalism and News Writing course, Writing 107J. Both are written about the same topic – burnout in athletes. The article is a piece that we worked on progressively throughout the quarter, as we also wrote a news story and a feature story on the same topic. It was to be no less than 1800 words. I wrote the broadcast during the last couple weeks of the quarter, and presented it in front of a green screen with a teleprompter.

Why was this sample chosen?

I am extremely proud of both of these writing pieces. I had never taken a journalism class before, and it took a little bit of adjusting, but I ended up loving the style of writing. I had to analyze and practice news writing for print and broadcast before I could write an article and broadcast that I was actually pleased with. Fortunately, my hard work paid off, and I was left with the following samples. I believe that they showcase my focus on style (specifically 'kebob' style), interview and attribution techniques, background research, editing, and ethical issues. My writings portray the journalistic characteristics of clarity, conciseness, and correctness. Most importantly, I learned the importance of working to deadline and writing to word count.

Nicole Favreau refused to open her eyes as her alarm went off for 8:00am practice.

"I don't want to do it anymore; I can't do it anymore," she remembers saying to her roommate.

The day before, Nicole had faked illness to avoid playing in the first game of her college career. "There was too much pressure, I was stressed, and I no longer had confidence in myself," she recalled.

Nicole, 21, had played competitive volleyball for ten years and she had loved every minute of it. She'd dedicated almost every day to improving her game. Until she had had enough.

She was burned out.

Research shows that athletes like Favreau who are overly passionate about their sport may be at a higher risk of developing burnout. This burnout is affecting all levels and ages of athletes.

And when athletes burnout, they often drop out too. Twenty million kids register each year for youth hockey, football, baseball, soccer, and other competitive sports. The National Alliance for Sports reports that 70 percent of these kids (around 1.4 million) quit playing these league sports by age 13 – and never play them again. Given the benefits of exercise and sport participation, athletes who give up sports also give up important health benefits.

Webster's dictionary tells us the definition of burnout is, "to stop burning because of lack of fuel...to come to nothing,"

A Sport Psychologist, Thomas Raedeke, defines athlete burnout as a condition that involves both emotional and physical exhaustion, a diminishing sense of achievement, and a tendency to undervalue sport participation.

Like Raedeke said, with athletes, burnout means exhaustion. The athlete feels spent or empty and seems to have a lack of fuel. This will more often occur in athletes who are really driven – those who work, train and practice very hard and very often.

There is a razor-thin line between commitment and over-commitment, good pressure and bad pressure, and passion and too much passion. When that thin line is crossed, the sport the athlete loves ceases to be fun.

"Burnout," said Kathy Gregory, who has been a high-level collegiate coach for the last thirty-seven years, "is when athletes don't have the same motivation to push themselves. It's when they lose that fire in their belly."

A study released in 2011 by the European Journal of Science has shown that athletes who are overly passionate about their sport also have high levels of stress and negative well-being. Most significantly, they portray signs of burnout.

Overly passionate athletes tend to put themselves into unhealthy situations such as overtraining, and they get to a point where they no longer enjoy the sport, Gregory said.

But what we should be asking is, "what is causing such an excessive amount of passion in athletes?"

The answer? Too much pressure from parents, coaches, and society.

From a young age, kids feel the pressure to succeed from the people they are surrounded by. "My parents pushed me into sports and then my coaches pushed me to win," said Jackie Gardner, an 18-year-old ex-athlete. "For a while, the pressure was tolerable, but eventually, it seemed like they wanted me to succeed more than I wanted to succeed."

Studies show that intense training and pressure-packed competitions, coupled with close adult supervision, can create a lot of stress in young athletes. If this stress is maintained at a high level for a long time, athletes may become "burned out" and lose their desire to continue participating.

In other words, stress is a sign of burnout.

Raedeke, who has conducted multiple studies on this topic, including ones

that were published in the Journal of Sport Behavior and the Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology, agrees that burnout is partly a reaction to stress. Athletes who have this stress and then experience burnout are typically involved in their sports because they "have to be" rather than "want to be."

Favreau experienced this reaction first-hand. "I felt a lot of pressure from my coaches and parents to stick with (volleyball) even when I wanted a break," she said. "All of the pressure stressed me out more than it should've at that age."

However, not all pressure is bad pressure.

A study in the European Journal of Science indicates that being overly passionate about a sport can be compared with being 'on fire.' Certain types and amounts of pressure can lead to this excessive passion (and eventual burnout). But, just the right amount of pressure can cause an athlete to be harmoniously passionate about their sport.

Having too much passion allows the sport to control the individual athlete, where having just the right amount of passion allows the individual to willingly participate in the sport. These polar-opposite forms of passion are shown to lead to completely different responses in the athlete.

Studies show that harmoniously passionate athletes are associated with well-being and positivity, but completely disconnected from the aspects of burnout, stress, and negative well-being.

According to Gregory, the positivity and well-being of athletes comes directly from "balance in their lives." And the balance is a direct result of the right kind of pressure from parents, coaches, and society.

Chad Kingi, a college athlete, has never experienced too much pressure from his surroundings. He has a stable home life, good friends, tough classes, and a love for his sport – it can't get much more balanced than that.

"My parents have always pushed me to succeed, but at my own pace," Kingi said. "I'm always upbeat and positive on the court, I'm rarely stressed, and I've definitely never considered quitting."

A study shows that to succeed in an elite sport, feeling passionate is very important. Having the right amount of enthusiasm for a sport can help athletes stay motivated over time and sustain at least 10 years of "high-quality goal-oriented training."

Kacey Schmidt, a 24-year-old lover of sports, still plays at an extremely high level of competitive soccer. She has spent her years since graduation playing in a National Adult Soccer League.

But she has balanced out the competition with a full time job and a happy family. She has never been pushed to the brink of quitting by her parents or coaches, she said. "I still love playing soccer at such a high level," Schmidt said, "but I think that's because it has never been my only priority."

Schmidt was also one of few athletes that play multiple sports growing up, rather than just one sport. Athletes that balance their lives by playing multiple sports are also less likely to burn out.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children involved in sports should be encouraged to participate in a variety of different activities and develop a wide range of skills. Young athletes who specialize in just one sport may be denied the benefits of varied activity while facing additional demands that come with intense training and competition.

Sport specialization is more common now than it was just a couple decades ago. "I played high-level collegiate volleyball 30 years ago, and to this day, I still play every week," said Melissa Fisher, a 52-year-old mother of four. "I was lucky because I got to play basketball, soccer, and tennis in the off seasons, and I definitely never burned out."

Fisher said that she also never pushed her kids to be single-sport athletes.

She believes that this is the reason that they have continued playing through high school and college.

In fact, research has found that limiting multiple-sports participation at a young age can lead to fatigue, decreased performance, chronic injuries, decreases desire to participate, and lack of enjoyment, all of which are aspects of burnout.

The prevalence of single-sport athletes is seen nationwide with the significant growth of year-round sports clubs and leagues. For example, according to the Southern California Volleyball Association, there are more than 1,000 club volleyball teams in Southern California alone.

Considering that number is only including girls in one region of California, the number grows tenfold across states. Therefore, statistically, there are thousands of club sports teams across the nation, and the number is only growing.

"Club sports are too demanding," said Gregory. "There is too much pressure for scholarships, the athletes play all year around, and there are too many teams."

An aspect of single-sport participation is the tendency to develop a sense of identity for the sport. A study shows that one of the reasons that overly passionate athletes stick with one sport is because of this tendency to feel connected to it.

Another study states that strong identification with a sport tends to lead to more injuries because of insufficient recovery. This also might pose a risk of burnout, despite any signs.

Favreau and Gardner, both overly passionate athletes, remember feeling like their sports defined their lives, and without them they were unknown.

"Volleyball was my life, my job, for so long that people automatically associate me with it," Favreau said. "I was so scared

of what people would think when I decided to quit."

In contrast, Kingi and Schmidt had identities separate from their sports.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, research supports the recommendation that child athletes avoid early sports specialization. Those who participate in a variety of sports and specialize only after reaching the age of puberty tend to be more consistent performers, have fewer injuries, and stick with sport participation longer than those who specialize early.

Luckily, having too much passion for a sport is a sign, not a consequence of burnout.

Being aware of the indicators of excessive passion can help athletes, coaches, and parents better prepare to avoid burnout. According to the conclusions of a study, it is highly recommended that these athletes be more closely monitored for too much passion, and other signs of burnout.

"Sometimes people are so driven to be good, they want to do everything, every second, but they don't have balance in their lives," Gregory said. "But by recognizing this, I like to hope [burnout] can be prevented."

Looking for signs of excessive passion includes looking for signs of external pressure, single-sport participation, and sport identity.

Favreau wishes that she knew more about the relationship between passion and burnout a couple years ago.

For Favreau, the pressure was too much. She hasn't played volleyball since the morning she woke up and decided she was done. "It's sad that my love for a sport caused me to hate it so much," she said.

The key, she said, is to find a happy medium and try to stick with it.

WORD COUNT: 1812

BROADCAST:

Good afternoon. I'm Erica Lau, and this is UCSB News.

Thinking about letting your kid obsess over one sport? Think again.

Research shows that athletes who are overly passionate about their sport are more likely to burn out. And when athletes burn out, they drop out.

In fact, The National Alliance for Sports reports that around 1.4 million kids quit playing competitive sports by the age of thirteen.

Sport psychologists define athlete burnout as exhaustion and a sense of underachievement, which lead to an overall hatred of sports.

Too much pressure to succeed from parents, coaches, and society can cause athletes to be overly enthusiastic about their sport, and eventually burnout.

Also, athletes who play only one sport tend to become obsessive, and eventually suffer exhaustion as well. The prevalence of single-sport athletes is seen nationwide with the significant growth of year-round sports clubs and leagues.

Luckily, having too much passion for a sport is a sign, not an after effect, of burnout. Parents and coaches that are aware of this can help prevent further burnout in kids and young adults.

For more information on this phenomenon visit www.theeducatedsportsparent.com.

3.4 Negative and Persuasive Letters

What is this sample?

The following letters were written in Ann Holms' Business Writing course, Writing 107B. The first letter is a 'bad news' letter in response to a customer complaint. We were asked to write a thoughtful letter that effectively addressed the customer's problem while attempting to maintain their business. The second letter is a persuasive letter for our business plan service that highlights the features and benefits of the business.

Why was this sample chosen?

Though challenging at first, since I had never written an apologetic or sales letter prior to this assignment, I believe that these documents best reveal my ability to properly format and write a business letter. It exemplifies my capacity to present a range of information in a condensed format. The negative letter shows my willingness to approach an uncomfortable situation in a professional manner. The sales letter demonstrates my ability to gain the attention, interest, and action of potential customers. Most importantly, both letters illustrate my ability to be constantly aware of my audience.

Gold's Gym and Fitness Center

808 Old Stine Road
Bakersfield, CA 93305

www.goldsgymandfitness.com
Phone: (661) 555-1234

October 13, 2011

Ms. Monique Cooper
303 New Stine Road
Bakersfield, CA 93305

Dear Ms. Cooper:

We are happy to learn that you have taken advantage of everything that Gold's Gym and Fitness Center has to offer. Like our many customers, you are able to keep up with fitness and a healthy lifestyle because of the variety of memberships, like the Extended Membership, that are available.

One of the reasons we are able to offer this multi-service program at such affordable prices is because we insist that all applicants have a solid credit rating to join. If our plan accepted all credit applicants, prices would have to be higher to maintain our huge staff and multiple services.

Although we cannot currently accept your credit application, we would like to encourage your cash business. Our Drop In and Work Out Plan offers the use of available facilities on a cash basis. This plan enables members to reserve space on racquetball and handball courts, as well as sign up for yoga and exercise classes.

If you are interested, we are happy to give you a walk through of the Drop In and Work Out plan. Don't forget to make an inquiry to the credit-reporting company Experian to learn about your credit report. You are eligible to receive a free credit report if you mention this application. We look forward to seeing you in Gold's Gym and Fitness Center soon.

Sincerely,



Erica Lau
Manager

Enclosure

The Living Room

932 Guadalupe St.
Austin, TX 78701

www.austinlivingroom.com
Phone: (512) 555-1234

October 13, 2011

Mr. John Customer
303 New Stine Road
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Mr. Customer:

Everyone loves re-runs of classic movies, but when was the last time you got to see your favorite childhood movie *in a theatre*?

Well, now you can! At **The Living Room**, you can watch some of the most classic movies from the last ten decades while sitting in a theatre that has all the comforts of your own home. Don't bother watching blurry movies on your small computer screen any longer! Here are some of the reasons you'll love **The Living Room**:

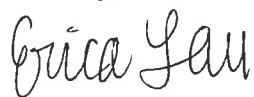
We offer outstanding prices. Instead of paying \$12 to see a new movie that you're not sure you'll like, you can pay less than \$4 to see one of your all-time favorites.

We want your opinion. You get to pick the movies we run by visiting our website and voting. Your interests are important to us!

We love themes. We like to have themed weeks where we show flicks for a holiday, decade, or series. We won't mind if you dress for the occasion either!

At **The Living Room**, you'll find a much more satisfying alternative to the standard and boring movie theatres. We hope you'll stop by with a group of friends to check it out and watch one of your favorite classic flicks!

Sincerely,



Erica Lau

Enclosure

PS. Don't forget to bring the enclosed coupon on your first visit and save an extra 25% at our mouth-watering concession stand!