CRITIQUE FUNDAMENTALS

The group critique is an opportunity to share work and discuss concepts and execution. All voices are respected and comments need to be specific and constructive. One of the purposes of the critique is for the designer/producer to articulate why they did what they did or to better explain their ideas if the visuals don't reflect their intent. Good critiques should include both negative + positive feedback and often the instructor's role is to ask questions and ask the designers to address concerns based on their preestablished criteria. Critiques are guided group discussions to elicit solutions + feedback. Constructive criticism requires that all participants be in a safe place and express ideas and give honest feedback.

The best way to frame a critique is to start by establishing a **CODE OF CONDUCT**:
- No subjective statements ("I don't like that color" ...because)
- Negative criticism needs to be followed up with suggestions to improve
- Positive criticism needs to be explained (again "I like it that color" ...because)
- Reinforce that all work can be improved and the intention is to get the work to its best. Many students complete design projects as if they are completing homework deadlines and once out of sight, out of mind. Design work lives in the world separate from its producer/designer and the process of perfecting work (even when it's no longer a school project) is what distingushes exceptional designers/producers - No such thing as wasted work, it all becomes part of your process.
- Be respectful. Stay focused. Don't talk while others are speaking.

INDIVIDUAL/GROUP BEING CRITIQUED SHOULD...
- Leave their egos at the door
- Take notes
- Actively listen
- Be willing to accept feedback
- Be honest and forthcoming about their intentions
- Avoid being defensive

PARTICIPANTS SHOULD...
- Not make assumptions
- Actively listen
- Offer suggestions (good critiques are constructive and meant to help producer/designers get to the next state)
- Ask questions
- Not view work as complete even if lots of time, effort or money has already been invested
- Not take critiques personally

INSTRUCTORS SHOULD...
- Ask questions don't rush to criticism or offer solutions (that's the role of the group)
- Actively listen
- Critique the work not the person/group
- Acknowledge the person or limitations but don't make it a condition of the critique (my best students are the ones that can take the toughest critiques)
- Keep the mood from becoming hostile (no tag teams, bs, or excuses in place of work)
- Lead discussions to actionable solutions ("change that type, clean up the image..." etc.)