

Syllabus

RMIN 4310: Insurance Company Operations

Professor Nat Pope

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Introduction

Insurance Company Operations is designed to provide students with an understanding of both the internal operations of a typical property-casualty insurance company and the operations of the insurance industry as a whole.

There are two primary objectives for the course. The first is that you develop an understanding of the industry's operations so that you can better interact with industry professionals and potential employers. The second is that you develop a better understanding of the various roles within the industry so that you are better prepared to pursue appropriate employment for yourself. So, the first goal is to ascertain where you think you might fit into the insurance industry, and the second objective is intended to better prepare you for the rigors of the employment search.

The course has also been accredited as eligible for the [Institutes' Collegiate Studies for the CPCU program](#).

Instructor Details

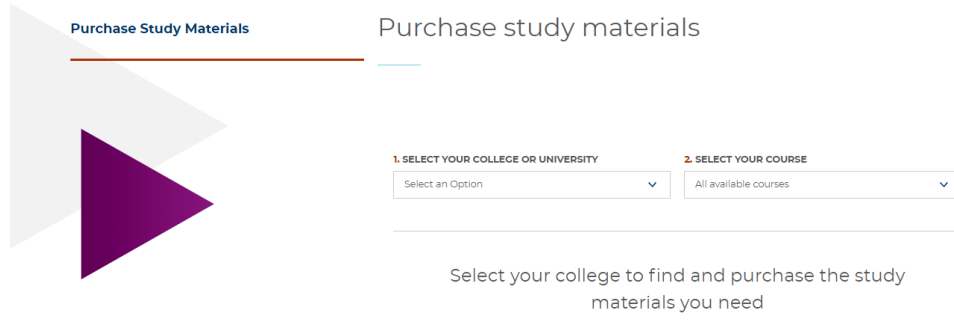
Instructor: Dr. Nat Pope
 Pronouns: He/Him
 Office: BLB 336F
 Phone Number: 940 565-4285
 Prerequisite: RMIN 2500
 Class Meets: 11:00-12:20 MW, BLB 050
 Office Hours: 12:30-2:00 MW, other by appointment
 Email: nat.pope@unt.edu

Text Materials

The Institutes' Commercial Insurance online course content is required for this course. To access this online content, you must establish an account with [The Institutes](https://web.theinstitutes.org/) (<https://web.theinstitutes.org/>).

Afterward, you can register for the required course content at [the text order site](https://web.theinstitutes.org/purchase-study-materials) (<https://web.theinstitutes.org/purchase-study-materials>) (see image below). Please be sure to follow these instructions so that you are registered for the correct course.

For course agenda and assigned readings please see the last semester’s course agenda on page 12 of this document.



Our university is the University of North Texas and our course is listed as “Insurance Operations, 1st edition (CPCU 520) The Institutes Collegiate Edition”. The cost of online access for this course will be \$79.00. Suffice to say, ***you are not likely to pass this course without access to the assigned reading content available only through The Institutes.*** Thus, access to this content is of paramount importance to your success. If you find yourself in a difficult financial situation, consider the [potential financial support available for off-setting education and text costs.](#)

Reading Assignments

- Assignment 1 Overview of Insurance Operations
- Assignment 2 Insurance Regulation
- Assignment 4 Insurer Statutory Accounting
- Assignment 5 Insurer Statutory Annual Statement Analysis
- Assignment 3 Insurance Marketing and Distribution
- Assignment 6 The Underwriting Function
- Assignment 7 Risk Control and Premium Auditing
- Assignment 8 The Claims Function
- Assignment 9 Actuarial Operations
- Assignment 10 Reinsurance Principles and Concepts
- Assignment 9 Actuarial Operations
- Assignment 11 Business Needs and IT Alignment
- Assignment 12 Insurer Strategic Management

Assessment

Students may earn points based on a variety of activities that will determine his/her final letter grade. Final assessment in the course is based on a traditional straight percentage curve, e.g., 90-100 = A, 80-90 = B, etc.

Assessed Item	Weight
Final Exam	10%

IRIS Exam	10%
Reinsurance Exam	10%
Reading Assignment Quizzes	40%
Ethics	10%
Miscellaneous Quizzes	20%

*Professionalism Bonus: potential of 5%

Final Exam

The final exam will be worth 10% of your overall grade for the course and this is the only exam that you will have. The exam will be in a multiple choice/true-false format. The exam is cumulative over all of the course reading assignments for the semester and will include from 5-10 questions from each reading assignment.

Ethics

This course includes a specific ethics module that will require the student to participate in an online ethics course. It will involve a relatively short series of reading assignments and an associated 50 multiple-choice question exam. This score will constitute 10% of your overall course grade. Registration for the [Ethical Decision Making in Risk and Insurance \(https://web.theinstitutes.org/ethical-decision-making-risk-and-insurance\)](https://web.theinstitutes.org/ethical-decision-making-risk-and-insurance) is free by The Institutes and is *due by midnight on the last day of the semester before finals week*.

If you have already taken the ethics course, you can use your previous score in that course for this current assignment – or retake the test to try to improve your score – it’s your choice. Note that this means that you could retake the ethics exam and if the score is lower than your previous score, you can simply neglect to report the most recent results to the instructor and you will automatically keep your previous score on that ethics exam. Please note that while you are allowed to take the ethics exam *as many times as you want for The Institutes’ purposes* (you need a 70% to earn credit from them to apply toward your Collegiate Studies for CPCU Certificate). However, *for the purposes of our class*, I will only accept the results of your **first attempt** during our current semester – regardless as to what the score is – good or bad (and I will be asking for you to submit your ethics exam score history so you won’t be able to hide those results from the instructor). So, prepare well for that ethics exam. Poorly preparing for this particular exam is very common in this course – don’t let it happen to you.

Reading Assignment Quizzes

There are 12 reading assignments in the course online text and there is an associated 10 question quiz associated with each assignment. The two lowest score among these 12 assignment quizzes will automatically be dropped from consideration and the average of the remaining quiz scores will represent 40% of the student’s overall score for the course.

Miscellaneous Activities/Quizzes

There will be a number of miscellaneous activities over the course of the semester. Some will occur in-class while others will be assigned as homework. The average of the aggregate point accumulation of those assignments will comprise 20% of your overall grade for course. The lowest two miscellaneous scores among all such scores will automatically be dropped when determining your score for this course.

IRIS & Reinsurance Exams

Because of the comparatively complex character of IRIS and reinsurance applications, each of these topics will be tested in a mini-exam format scheduled during class-time. The result of *each* will constitute 10% of the student's overall score for the course.

Participation Bonus

You have the potential for earning a total of five additional percentage points over the course of the semester that will be added to your final overall score for the course. Ostensibly, these are extra credit points that can be earned through your participation in approved professional development events such as attendance at approved industry speaker events, lunch-n-learn activities, student insurance fraternity (GIS) meetings, etc. A qualifying attendance at any given approved event will result in an additional half of a percent being added to your over-all score for the course up to a maximum of five full percentage points.

Canvas

This course relies heavily on Canvas as a repository of content and resources for the class. You are urged to develop sufficient familiarity with that system so that you can freely access necessary resources outside of class.

To log into the course, go to the Canvas main page (<https://unt.instructure.com/>). Please try to log onto the course as soon as you have officially enrolled in the course. If you have trouble accessing the page please let me know as soon as possible. If you are having difficulty with getting your computer set up correctly, you can contact the UIT Help Desk at (940) 565-2324 or via email: helpdesk@unt.edu.

Classroom Expectations & Teaching Philosophy

As your instructor, I have an obligation to establish the goals and objectives of the course and to provide the student with guidance and instructions as to how s/he might attain those goals. That said, while an instructor might teach, only a student can learn – and that is the goal; without student learning whatever else happens is superfluous. I see the relationship within the classroom as being analogous to that of a tourist on a cruise liner where the instructor is the captain. As captain, the instructor has been hired by the cruise company (i.e., the university) to manage the operations of the ship as it visits each of the pre-designated “ports-of-call” enumerated in the travel brochure. While sensitive to the customers' comments, experience and concerns, those concerns do NOT override the promises made by the company in the travel brochure.

In the end, the student has purchased the right for access to the course and the instructor. In turn, the student's work will be assessed by the instructor in light of the stated course goals. Ultimately however, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they learn what they want to take away from the course – it is *not* the instructor's responsibility.

Course Policies

In-class cell phone usage

Without prior instructor approval, use of your cell phone during class will negatively affect your course professionalism bonus points and possibly result in an ejection from a given class meeting. If you feel compelled to use your phone during class, simply step outside the room and have your conversation.

Is attendance required?

The short answer to that question is no. You have paid for the right to participate in the course; it's up to you as to whether you exercise that right. Please note however, missing class without an excused absence (in advance of the absence) may result in you not being able to make up any graded events that may have taken place during your absence. Also note that if you have four or more unexcused absences you will no longer be eligible for professionalism bonus (extra credit) points.

What should you do if you are going to miss class?

If you know you are going to miss class and you hope to have that absence excused it is imperative that you contact the instructor *in advance* of that absence and gain confirmation that the absence will be excused. Failure to allow for sufficient time for an instructor response will likely result in an *unexcused* absence. The best method for contacting your instructor is email – leaving voice messages on the phone is the worst.

Why should you care about excused versus unexcused absences?

If you have ***more than three*** unexcused absences, you will no longer be eligible for professionalism bonus points – that includes the ½ percentage point that might be awarded for the completion of your personal profile at the beginning of the semester. While not exhaustive, the following reasons for excused absences from class are generally acceptable:

- School sponsored activities, *e.g.*, participation in an athletic event, Gamma event, etc.
- Job interviews
- Medical emergencies/accidents
- Funerals of close family members/friends

Note that a student does not get an excused absence for family vacations or illness for which no evidence is provided (if you are too sick to come to class then visit the student health center). Also, if you hope to be excused from class for one of the eligible reasons above you should expect to be asked to provide some tangible evidence, *e.g.*, a medical bill, obituary notice, email correspondence, etc.

What should you do after you miss class?

The first step is to check the related online Canvas content and check with other students in the course, etc. After checking with fellow students and online content, if questions remain, then you should consider contacting the instructor.

Can I makeup assignments/quizzes if I miss class?

If the absence is *unexcused*, the answer is no. If it is an excused absence, then the instructor will work with the student on the issue so that he/she is not penalized because of the absence. Usually that means merely dropping that graded event from the student's evaluation, although other solutions are sometimes used, as well.

Are there any penalties for turning assignments in late?

You should assume that there is a 48-hour late submission window associated with all assignments **unless otherwise stated**. Under no circumstance are late submissions accepted after 48 hours. Late submissions made within 48 hours will incur a 10 percent penalty on the earned score for the assignment. Be aware that there will sometimes be announced, assessed, in-class activities. Missing those events **without an unexcused absence** will prevent you from making up that assessment.

What should you do if I believe one of my assignments has not been fairly evaluated?

You have one week (seven days) from the time the results of a graded item, *e.g.*, a quiz, an exam, etc., is made available to you in which you can make an appeal for reconsideration. The **appeal must be made in writing and submitted via email (NOT as an email attachment)**. The likelihood of the success of an appeal is based on the inherent logic of that appeal supported with evidence. The strongest evidence comes from citations, *e.g.*, “Page 37 in the text says...and therefore, I believe my answer to be correct.” Appeals demonstrating a lack of due diligence on your part, *i.e.*, a lack of research in support of your position, will be quickly dismissed. If you expect your grade to be changed then you are expected to do your “homework.” **Appeals must be submitted to the instructor within a week of that assignment having been returned to the student, *i.e.*, you have one week within which you must submit an appeal.** So, if you have an issue address it in the short-term – don’t wait for time to pass.

What should you do if I want to do better in the course?

Speak with the instructor - early. I am always eager to help you help yourself – but I can’t do that if you aren’t proactive. Students are most often concerned about their course grade after the semester has ended – but I cannot help them at that point. You are responsible for your efforts and grade in the course, and you need to manage those efforts accordingly. If your grade in this course is important to you then I would expect you to be proactive in managing that effort.

Will the instructor modify my final grade for the course after the semester ends?

Most assuredly *not*. That should reinforce the emphasis I place on you taking proactive responsibility for managing your course efforts during the course itself – instead of looking for help after the semester has ended.

Communications

What are student responsibilities for professional communication?

All written correspondence that is transmitted within the course (including email), is expected to be of a *professional standard* reflecting an appropriate business tone and style. Communications not presented in that format will be returned to the sender asking for modification. Further discussion as to what standards are expected can be found at [15 Email Etiquette Rules Every Professional Should Follow <www.inc.com/business-insider/email-etiquette-rules.html>](http://www.inc.com/business-insider/email-etiquette-rules.html). Pay particular attention to the elements expected in such communication, *e.g.*, subject line content, use (professional) salutations to the recipient, include your (the sender) name, etc. Failure to comply with these standards may result in the lack of a response for the instructor.

Communication management

You should look at your UNT Outlook system at least once a day to see if you have received any messages from me or other professors. This course will rely on a significant degree of online communication, sometimes through the Canvas system but more typically through your UNT Outlook system. To help you collect and manage these messages, you are strongly encouraged to establish a folder named RMIN 2500 and set up your Outlook system to automatically sort email whose header included “RMIN 2500” into that folder (see the next section for instructions). I will endeavor to include “RMIN 2500” in the header of all communication I send to you.

Forwarding your Canvas messages to Outlook

You can change your course Canvas settings to automatically forward messages originating in Canvas to your Outlook email system. This would be a good way to ensure all of your messages related to this course show up in one single folder every day. Here are the instructions to accomplish this task:

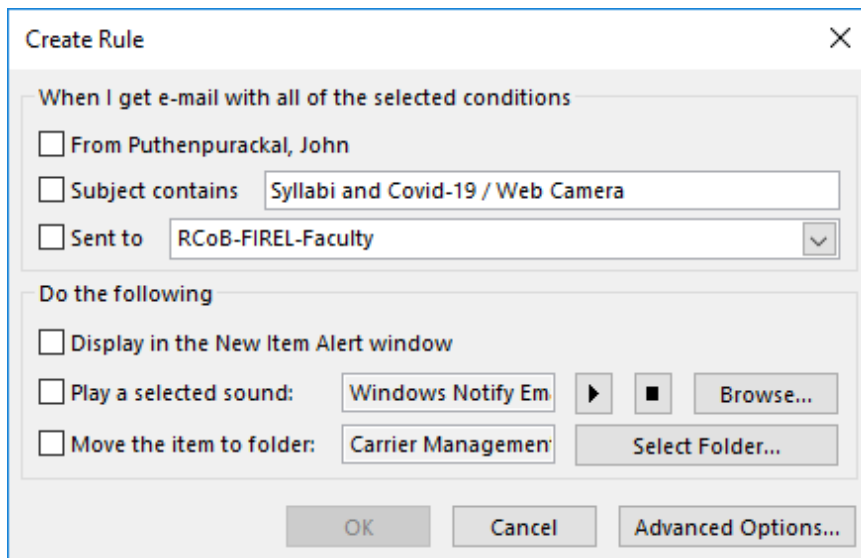
- In Canvas, access your *Profile* - it is the icon at the top of the menu bar on the left-hand side of your monitor when you are in Canvas (looks like a profile of a head in a circle).
- Then access the *Notifications* tab (at the top of the it is the icon at the top of the menu bar on the left-hand side of your monitor).
- Note the email address on the right-hand side of the screen – it should be your UNT address.
- Under the Course Activities section, activate the “Due Date” option by clicking on the bell icon on the right-hand side of the screen.
- Scroll down the Conversations section header and activate the *Conversation Message* option.

Managing your course email in Outlook

Instructions for setting up an automatic destination folder in Outlook for specifically tagged emails are included below.

From the Outlook app:

1. Access the location where you want the folder to reside within your folder system and then use the app’s menu: Home>Folder>New Folder and name the new folder “RMIN 2500.”
2. Create a rule to move RMIN 2500 emails into the “RMIN 2500” folder
3. From the Outlook app’s menu: Home>Rules>Create Rule
4. In the message box you access (see image below) in the “When I get an e-mail with all of the selected conditions: you should select the “Subject contains: ‘RMIN 2500’”
5. Next, in the “Do the following” section in the “Move the item to folder” option you should select the RMIN 2500” folder.



LockDown Browser + Webcam Requirement

Computer equipment

Participation in this course *requires that the student have access to a computer that allows for the use of Lockdown Browser and a monitor that includes a camera.* Watch this brief [video to get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature](https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml) <https://www.respondus.com/products/lockdown-browser/student-movie.shtml>.

Lacking such equipment, the student is strongly advised to drop the course immediately. In the off chance that you do not have the necessary equipment, please contact the [UNT Willis library](http://library.unt.edu/services/borrowing/) <library.unt.edu/services/borrowing/> to check out any equipment you might need. Alternatively, check the [Student Computer Lab Laptop Checkout Program](https://it.unt.edu/laptop-checkout) <<https://it.unt.edu/laptop-checkout>>.

Download Instructions

[Download and install LockDown Browser from this link](https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=165715487)
<https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=165715487>.

Once installed, you won't be able to access a quiz that requires LockDown Browser with if LockDown Browser isn't installed on that computer. If this is tried, an error message will indicate that the quiz requires the use of LockDown Browser. Simply start LockDown Browser and navigate back to the exam to continue.

The webcam system will create a video of you during your access to the item being assessed and subsequently provide, an automated rating of your compliance with the "Guidelines" presented below. If the system rates your quiz-taking behavior as highly suspicious you should be prepared to have those results zeroed-out for that particular assessed item. This is particularly important with regard to the "environment scan" required before you begin any monitored session. Failure to perform a "rigorous" environmental scan will automatically disqualify your results.

Assessment Guidelines

When taking an online quiz, follow these guidelines:

- Ensure you're in a location where you won't be interrupted
- Turn off all other devices (e.g., tablets, phones, second computers) and place them outside of your reach
- Before starting the quiz, know how much time is available for it, and that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
- Be sure to perform a good environmental scan of your environment – specifically your desktop. Failure to do so may result in your score not being accepted.
- Clear your desk or workspace of all external materials not permitted - books, papers, other devices
- Sit at a desk/table (don't be laying down during the quiz) and perform a thorough environmental scan and be sure to include your desktop (I don't care what I on your ceiling or behind you – but I do care about your desktop)
- Remain at your computer for the duration of the quiz
- Keep your eyes on the monitor – there is no reason for you to look away from the monitor during an assessment – with the possible exception of a calculator (rarely needed in this course). If you use a calculator, please show it to the camera before using it

- If the computer, Wi-Fi, or location is different than what was used previously with the "Webcam Check" and "System & Network Check" in LockDown Browser, run the checks again prior to the exam

To produce a good webcam video, do the following:

- Avoid wearing baseball caps or hats with brims
- Ensure your computer or device is on a firm surface (a desk or table). Do NOT have the computer on your lap, a bed, or other surface where the device (or you) are likely to move
- If using a built-in webcam, avoid readjusting the tilt of the screen after the webcam setup is complete
- Take the exam in a well-lit room, but avoid backlighting (such as sitting with your back to a window)
- Remember that LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted

Getting Help

Several resources are available if you encounter problems with LockDown Browser:

- The Windows and Mac versions of LockDown Browser have a "Help Center" button located on the toolbar. Use the "System & Network Check" to troubleshoot issues. If an exam requires you to use a webcam, also run the "Webcam Check" from this area.
- UNT also has special assistance available at its [Help Desk: Resources for Students](https://it.unt.edu/help-desk-resources-students) <<https://it.unt.edu/help-desk-resources-students>>.
- Respondus has a Knowledge Base available from support.respondus.com. Select the "Knowledge Base" link and then select "Respondus LockDown Browser" as the product. If your problem is with a webcam, select "Respondus Monitor" as your product.

If you're still unable to resolve a technical issue with LockDown Browser, go to support.respondus.com and select "Submit a Ticket". Provide detailed information about your problem and what steps you took to resolve it.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

Provide a list of the minimum technology requirements for students, such as:

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements \(https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements\)](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Provide a list of course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course, such as:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Using presentation and graphics programs

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: [UIT Student Help Desk site](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

Miscellaneous

Emergency Evacuation Procedures for Business Leadership Building

Severe Weather In the event of severe weather, all building occupants should immediately seek shelter in the designated shelter-in-place area in the building. If unable to safely move to the designated shelter-in-place area, seek shelter in a windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of the building. All building occupants should take shelter in rooms 055, 077, 090, and the restrooms on the basement level. In rooms 170, 155, and the restrooms on the first floor.

Bomb Threat/Fire In the event of a bomb threat or fire in the building, all building occupants should immediately evacuate the building using the nearest exit. Once outside, proceed to the designated assembly area. If unable to safely move to the designated assembly area, contact one or more members of your department or unit to let them know you are safe and inform them of your whereabouts.

Persons with mobility impairments who are unable to safely exit the building should move to a designated area of refuge and await assistance from emergency responders. All building occupants should immediately evacuate the building and proceed to the south side of Crumley Hall in the grassy area, west of parking lot 24.

What if I have a qualifying learning disability?

Students in need of special accommodation should contact the staff in the [Office of Disability Accommodation](http://disability.unt.edu/) <disability.unt.edu>.

Academic Integrity

All students enrolled in class are expected to maintain high standards of ethical conduct within the classroom and when completing assignments, projects, and/or exams. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty such as cheating will not be tolerated. Students are expected to provide appropriate citations for non-original writing even if the original work is paraphrased. Penalties for plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty may be severe. Any violation of [UNT Student Academic Integrity Standards](https://vpaa.unt.edu/news/new-academic-integrity-policy) <vpaa.unt.edu/news/new-academic-integrity-policy> will be handled in accordance with the University policies.

Course Agenda

Lecture	Day	Date	Topic	Readings Assigned	Chapter Quiz Date
1	M	13-Jan	Course Introduction		
2	W	15-Jan	Overview of Insurance Operations	Assignment 1	
3	W	22-Jan	Insurance Regulation	Assignment 2	Assignment 1
4	M	27-Jan	Insurer Statutory Accounting	Assignment 4	
5	W	29-Jan	An Introduction to IRIS		Assignment 2
6	M	3-Feb	Insurer Statutory Annual Statement Analysis	Assignment 5	Assignment 4
7	W	5-Feb	Financial Analysis Practice		
8	M	10-Feb	IRIS Exam		Assignment 5
9	W	12-Feb	Annual Report Analysis		
10	M	17-Feb	Insurance Marketing and Distribution	Assignment 3	
11	W	19-Feb	Careers in Marketing and Production		
12	M	24-Feb	The Underwriting Function	Assignment 6	Assignment 3
13	W	26-Feb	Careers in Underwriting		
14	M	3-Mar	The Claims Function	Assignment 8	Assignment 6
15	W	5-Mar	Careers in Claims		
16	M	17-Mar	Introduction to Insurance Ethics		Assignment 8
17	W	19-Mar	Understanding the Underwriting Cycle		
18	M	24-Mar	Actuarial Operations	Assignment 9	
19	W	26-Mar	Careers in Actuarial		
20	M	31-Mar	Reinsurance Principles and Concepts	Assignment 10	Assignment 9
21	W	2-Apr	Reinsurance in Action		
22	M	7-Apr	Careers in Reinsurance		Assignment 10
23	W	9-Apr	Reinsurance Exam Prep		
24	M	14-Apr	Risk Control and Premium Auditing	Assignment 7	
25	W	16-Apr	Careers in Premium Auditing and Risk Control		
26	M	21-Apr	Business Needs and IT Alignment	Assignment 11	Assignment 7
27	W	23-Apr	InsurTech		
28	M	28-Apr	Surplus Lines		Assignment 11
29	W	30-Apr	Final Exam Prep		