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## 2a. Writing Assignment 1

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- Text:** Select one of the chapters from *Why Buildings Fall Down*  
Please note that you only need to read ONE of the chapters.
- Objectives:** Explain technical mechanisms that can cause a building to fail;  
understand organizational, economic and other reasons that contribute  
to building failure
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### Scenario

Choose one of the building failures that is described in the chapter that you just read. You have been identified as an expert on buildings by your local mayor. Your task is to write a short memo to the mayor explaining (a) why this building failed and (b) how this type of failure can be prevented in the future. Imagine this memo is being written shortly after the failure occurred. Your answers to (a) and (b) should cover both technical problems and fixes, and non technical (political, economic, bureaucratic...) problems and fixes. Although each of the chapters discusses several buildings, you are asked here to focus this discussion on one specific building.

### Some Tips

- It is a memo. It does not need to be long (1-2 pages double spaced).
- Be sure to focus on the most important details that the mayor will want to know if someone asks him/her about it at a press conference.
- Please express your own opinion (especially in part b). You are being asked to make a recommendation. Expand/reject/explore Salvadori and Levy's recommendations in *Why Buildings Fall Down*.
- You can focus on the material provided in *Why Buildings Fall Down*. However, you are encouraged to use other sources as well.
- On a separate page, list the sources that you used to develop your memo. Also, remember not to plagiarize! This means that if you take any wording directly from any of your sources, you must put that material in quotes and add a footnote or other citation showing where the material came from.

### Submission

Submit the paper online in the appropriate dropbox.

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## 2b. Writing Assignment 2

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**Objectives:** Investigate the relationship between county and municipal government and green building; develop proficiency with SketchUp as a modeling tool.

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### Your Tasks

- 1) *How does Boulder County promote green building?* Ron Flax discussed the work of the Boulder County Sustainability Examiner during class. In the first paragraph, summarize the work that his office does and the goals behind their work. In the second and third paragraphs, I am interested in your opinion. The second paragraph should focus on what you think Boulder County is doing well with regard to sustainability. The third paragraph should focus on what you think Boulder County could improve. Be specific. The essay can be double spaced and should be about 1 page long.
- 2) *A picture is worth a thousand words.* Create a SketchUp model of a building of your choosing. Your submission should include a) a picture of the building, b) 3-4 screenshots of your SketchUp model, and c) a description of the building and what you are trying to present in your SketchUp model (you could choose to focus on engineering aspects, architectural aspects, landscaping, etc., but I want you to describe in 200- 300 words the goal of your SketchUp representation).

### Submission

Submit the paper online in the appropriate dropbox. Please attach a copy of your SketchUp model file to dropbox as well.

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## 2c. Writing Assignment 3

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**Objectives:** Explore the role of drawing in building design. Articulate your opinion on the importance of drawing.

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### **“Position Paper”**

In your reading, Prof. Eric Hines argues that “Drawing is the language of the engineer.” In one paragraph (about ½ page), explain what he means by this statement.

In a second paragraph (about ½ page), describe your own experiences with drawing. Have you taken courses in drawing? Did you like to draw when you were a child? Do you incorporate drawings in your assignments for other classes? What kinds of drawings? If you like include these drawings with explanations.

In a third paragraph (about ½ page), offer your own opinion about drawing being a language for engineers. Do you agree or disagree? When is drawing useful for you?

### **Submission**

Submit the paper online in the appropriate dropbox.