The course is new and as such was first offered in the fall semester, 2012. However, I did make some changes based on various assessments done during and after the fall semester. Among these:

1. With regard to how lab instructors were trained/oriented/supervised (GPTIs leading discussion groups of 25 students or less), I decided to make it mandatory that they each attend every one of my lectures. I did so because in “exit interviews” with the prior lab instructors, I realized that if they missed some lectures they really felt out of the loop in terms of what the students were supposed to work on and know that week and they were much less equipped to answer student questions about assignments. This process, once implemented went well this spring semester. I also continued to have weekly meetings on Monday mornings with them to further enhance the consistency with which we could all answer student questions; it also helped to discuss student issues and come up with consistent approaches. I also did the peer review teaching observations myself this spring semester for all four of my GPTI lab instructors (it had previously been assigned to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies in COMC), which allowed me to not only see them in action in the classroom, but allowed me the opportunity to speak with their students about their experiences with the instructors, the assignments/grading and the course in general.

2. With regard to changes made in the base syllabus, I made the syllabus much more detailed, especially adding detailed explanations/rubrics regarding expectations for writing assignments and oral presentations. I did this in response to informal discussions with students in the fall about their feelings of confusion as to actual expectations of individual assignments, and to more formal assessment methods such as written student responses to end of the semester survey about their experiences with the various oral and written assignments.

3. Also with regard to changes made in the base syllabus, I chose not to include a timeline as to when particular assignments were due, instead leaving it to my lectures and their individual lab instruction to supply them with that information each week. I did this in response to a student concern that there was not enough time between assignments. I felt that was a valid concern and that there was a learning curve on my part as to the structure and flow of this new course, so I wanted to build in some flexibility to adapt the schedule as time permitted. No students complained this spring semester about not having such a timeline in the syllabus, though admittedly they probably could not complain about that which they did not know!

4. With regard to changes made to base content and/or the way the course was assessed, I did several things. First, I did simply build more time in between assignments so as to allow for better opportunities for students to implement changes in their writing and presentations given instructor assessment/feedback on earlier assignments. I also revamped their Investor Pitch assignment (overwhelmingly mentioned as the favorite assignment on post-course assessment tools) because while popular and deemed relevant to most students, some indicated that it was limited (it asked for them to come up with an idea for a new television show and pitch it to potential investors/network executives) in that many students do not watch television in the same way as historically we all have, and they mentioned that mobile applications play almost a more important role in their lives, so I added the opportunity for them to either pitch a TV idea OR a mobile app idea to those investors. This met with much success. Finally, I changed the Interview project at the end of the semester in that I had the students interview with a different lab instructor than their own (as I had done in the fall semester). I made this change in response to my “exit” interviews with the lab instructors and in response to the end-of-semester student assessment, where both groups told me that the interview was not “real world” enough because students had developed such a personal relationship over the semester with their lab instructors that it was hard to take the interview as seriously as if they were in a professional
environment where they did not know the interviewer/interviewee. This semester it turned out to be a much more valuable assignment.

5. With regard to changes in the delivery of the course, I only made slight modifications, and these were really in response to informal assessments of the students’ feeling of preparedness for assignments and exams. I was already using Raiderlink’s eLearning tab to post notes from lectures, but I used it additionally this semester to post links to examples shown in class of various presentations, to additional writing resources, and to the grading rubrics for writing/presentation assignments.