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Designing Writing Intensive Upper Division Laboratories in Physics

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Designing Writing Intensive Upper Division Laboratories in Physics



Sara J. Callori

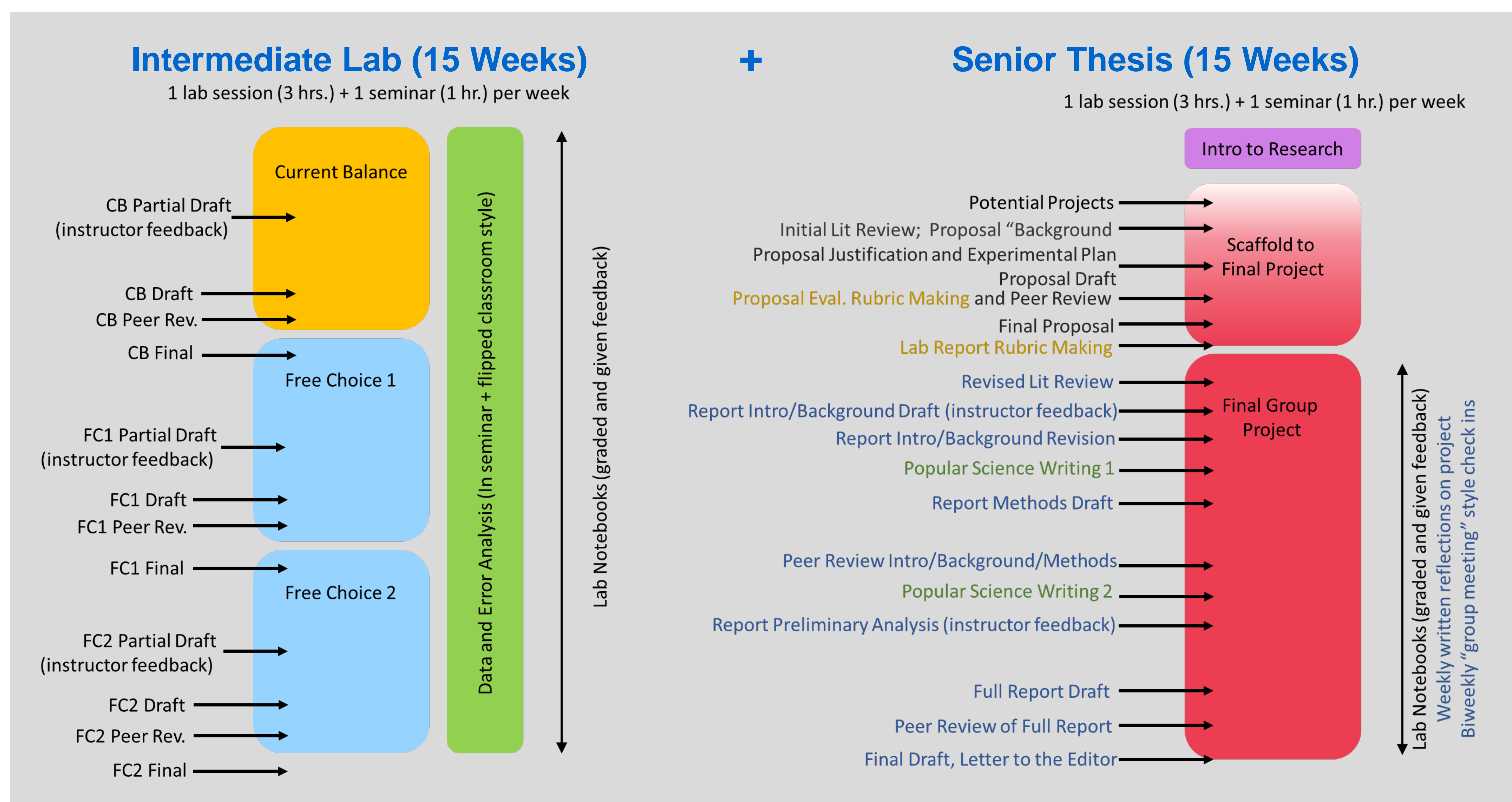
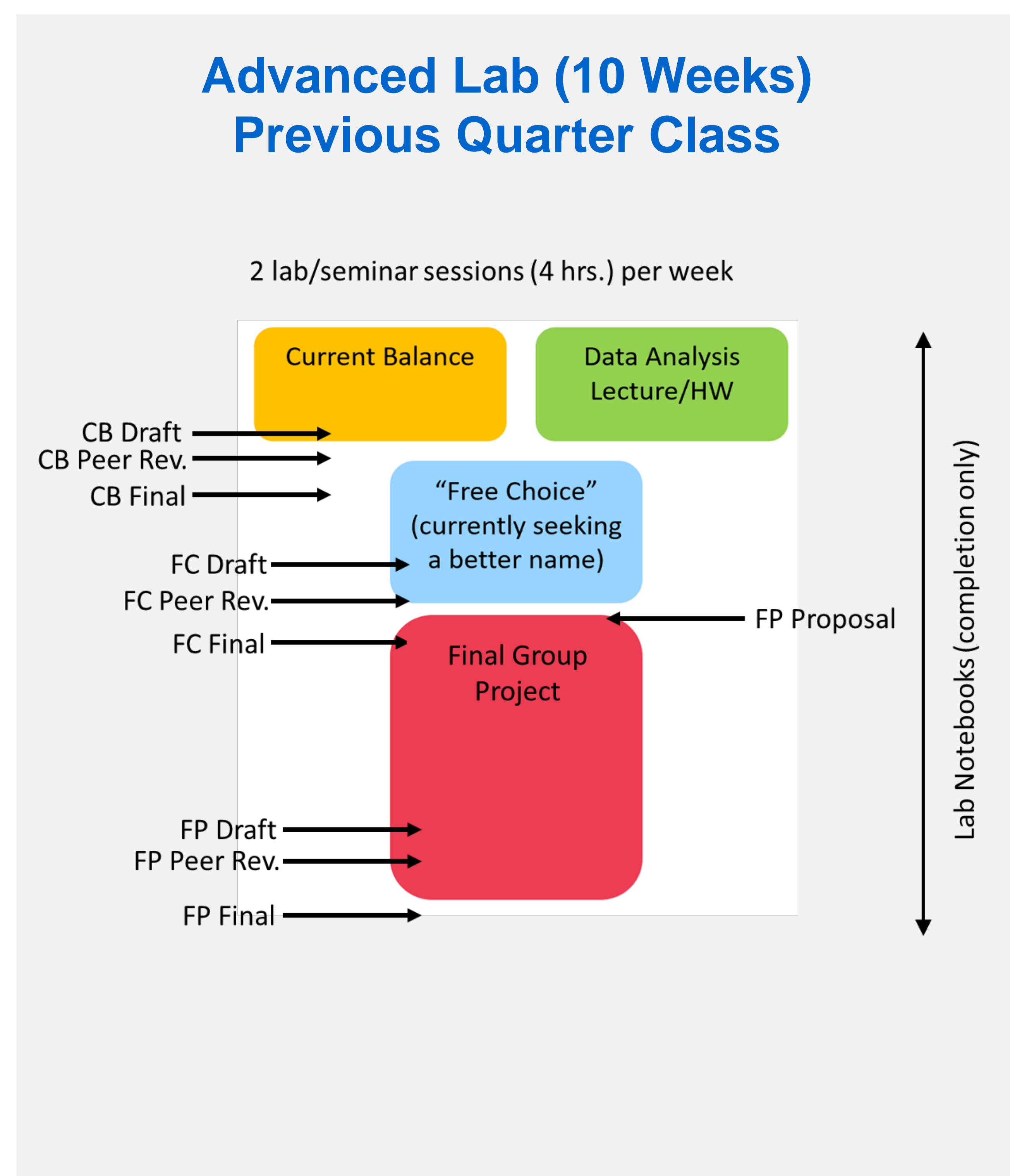
Department of Physics, California State University San Bernardino



Scaffolding Writing Throughout Upper Division Lab Courses

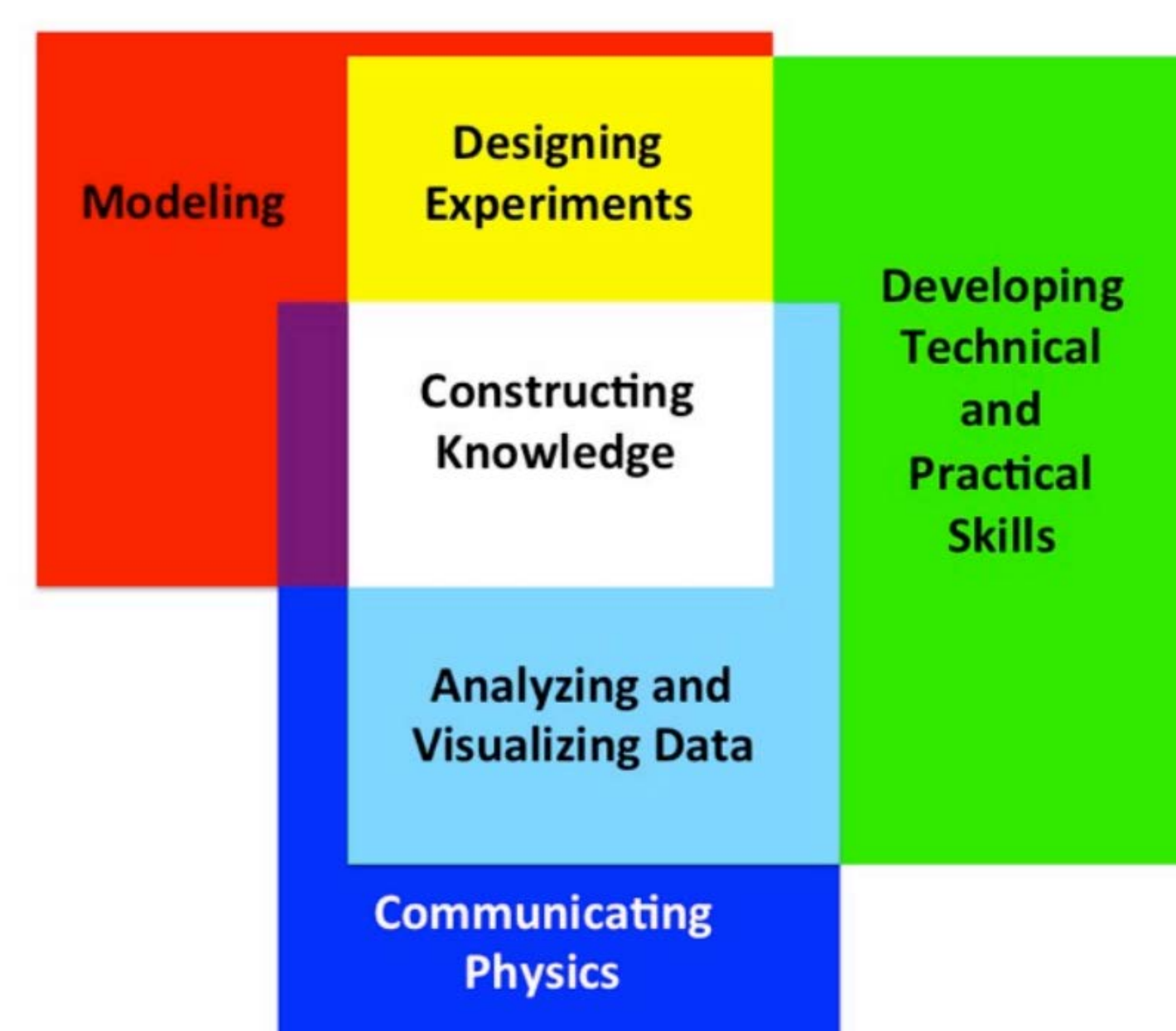
Significant Outcomes

- More time for feedback and revisions
- Student-designed assessment
- More varied forms of communication
- Heavily scaffolded major products

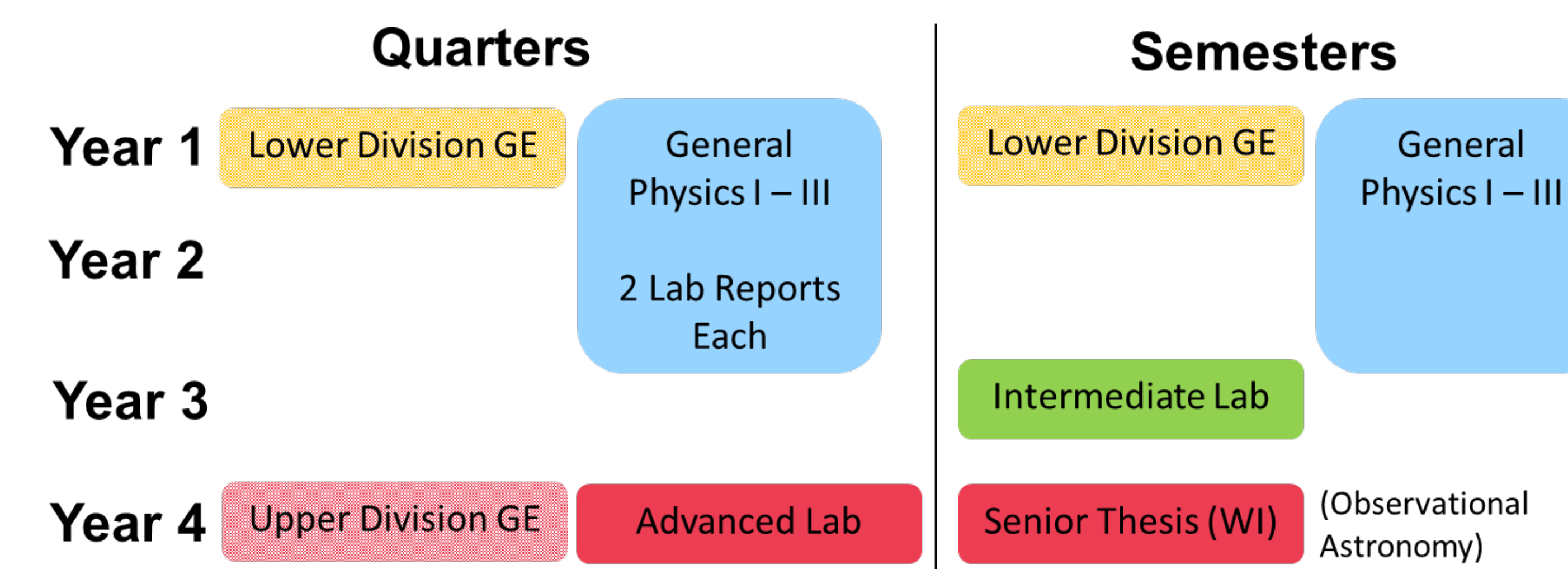


Why Writing Intensive in Physics?

California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) is currently transitioning from quarters to semesters (Q2S), starting in Fall 2020. As part of this transition, the Department of Physics has transformed its curriculum to better suit the needs of its students. From a practical standpoint, under the revamped general education (GE) program, we are able to incorporate upper division writing into the major. However, there are many benefits where having a writing-intensive major course aligns with program goals and professional organization recommendations.



- Benefits of writing:
- Necessary for STEM careers
 - Practice disciplinary norms of communication and documentation
 - Analysis and metacognition – “How do we know what we know”?**



Q2S – Revising the timeline of when students write. Students don't have a "break" when they won't be doing some form of writing in the major. This will allow for better scaffolding across the physics curriculum.