Course Theme
Visual and Textual Representations of Social Position, Race, and Gender

Course Description
In this course, we will focus on reading and understanding complex writing and imagery, concentrating on representations of social position, race, and gender. In our lives as students, as professionals, and as citizens, we are confronted with many different forms of writing every day. Whether it is a website, magazine article, film, or professional journal, to understand the arguments presented and form a position, it’s to our advantage to analyze the writing and visual representations, asking questions such as: What is the author’s purpose? How does the author use words and images to convey information? How does the author perceive the audience? Is the writing intended for us? What opinions can we form from the writing? Is the information complete, or is this just one aspect of a larger whole?

The goal is to help you begin to think about reading and writing differently, to engage in discussion on complex arguments, and provide tools to assist you in creating your own argumentative writing.

This course is the first of two that will fulfill your general education requirements. The second course, “Revisions: Oral, Written, and Visual Communication,” will be offered next year.

Course Goals and Objectives
• Discover ways of reading complex writing; something we call “rhetorical analysis”
• Recognize the author’s intention and audience within different forms of writing
• Identify ways to analyze various strategies used in writing, the author’s use of strategy, and how this could apply to your own writing
• Distinguish surface features of writing from its structure, and an author’s argument from his/her intention
• Broaden your understanding of different perspectives on issues of social position, race, and gender
• Explore and examine visual representations and their relationship to writing
• Investigate ways to begin writing an in-depth argumentative paper using research to support your position

Required Materials
Bartholomae, David and Anthony Petrosky. Ways of Reading: An Anthology for Writers (5th Ed.)


You will also need a “writing journal” — a dedicated folder — to gather together your responses and writings in this class. You will need this by the second day of class.
Grading
Your final grade will be calculated on the following scale:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses and short essays</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
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You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.

Participation
Class participation is a very important part of this course. We will be relying heavily on discussion and group activities to explore the readings and images, investigate argument and intention, and improve our writing skills. To benefit fully, you will need to be actively involved. I am interested in what you have to say, and I look forward to your participation.

Attendance
Class attendance is integral to your understanding of the reading material and contributing to and learning from your fellow students. Attendance is strongly encouraged. Many of the exercises will take place within the classroom and will be difficult, if not impossible, for you to recreate. You are responsible for completing all assignments, whether or not you attend class. Please see me prior to the absence if possible, or immediately following, and consult your assignment sheets. You are allowed only two unexcused absences this quarter; subsequent absences will affect your grade.

Excused absences (illness, official university activity, family emergency) are allowed under university policy. If you are seeking an excused absence because of illness, you must bring a note from the person who is treating you. If you are involved in an official university activity that conflicts with the class, you must notify me prior to the absence and bring official notification from the Dean of Students or appropriate department.

Respect
Because of the nature of the material covered in this course, it is extremely important that all viewpoints be heard and respected. This often means that we must not only look for ways that our viewpoints differ from others, but also ways that they are similar. This is not to say that everyone (or anyone) must agree on any particular issue; it simply means that this classroom will remain a safe environment where students should feel free to express their views.

Plagiarism
Plagiarism is considered cheating, and is a serious academic offense. MTU’s Academic Integrity Policy defines it as “knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation,” and it covers copying sections, major ideas, or entire papers from printed or electronic sources as well as handing in papers written by other students. Plagiarism is not only dishonest but it prevents you from learning, the primary reason you are here. Please read the information on plagiarism (pages 32-33) in the Guide to Succeeding in First-Year English. If you ever have further questions about this issue, please talk to me or consult a coach in the Writing Center (7-2007).

MTU’s Policy on Discrimination and Harassment
MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

Course Outline and Assignments
In the first part of this course we will be using passages from the book Ways of Reading to explore “rhetorical analysis,” a way of reading difficult academic writings. Then beginning in Week 4, we will be reading chapters from Stephen Jay Gould’s Mismeasure of Man — a long, complex argument about a serious issue that affects all of us. The first essay will be due on a subject related to this book, followed by individual student conferences.
The final weeks of the course will include additional readings from *Ways of Reading*; a second short essay that begins to explore an issue related to social position, race, or gender; a review of research and writing techniques; and workshops to polish your writing. A final argumentative paper on a topic of your choosing may be due the end of the term.

**Important Note:** Most of the readings in this course will explore issues of social position, race, and gender. In addition, your written assignments are meant to build upon each other — for example, an issue raised in your first essay may become the topic for your argumentative paper. Keep this in mind throughout the course; we will also be discussing these “links” as we progress through the readings.

In brief, your assignments will include the following:
- Several 1-2 page writing responses based on the readings
- An essay based on the *Mismeasure of Man* that analyzes Gould’s argument, intention, audience, and central strategies (length: 5 pages)
- A second essay that explores a topic that interests you related to social position, race, and gender (length: 3-4 pages)
- An argumentative paper on a subject incorporating information from *Mismeasure of Man*, passages we’ve read in *Ways of Reading*, and your own library research (length: 8 pages)
- A revision of the argumentative paper

Note: Assignments are subject to change based on class needs.

**Course Schedule**
The following is a basic outline of the coursework for this class. Specific assignments, activities, and other readings will be in addition to what is listed here. *All information is subject to change depending on class needs.*

**Week 1**
9/6 Labor Day — No Class
9/8 Introductions
Bordo, "Hunger as Ideology" (138-171)
9/10 Discuss Bordo

**Week 2**
9/13 Library Day — meet in the Van Pelt Library
9/15 Reading response due
Review Bordo responses
Auster, "Portrait of an Invisible Man" (50-99)
9/17 Discuss Auster

**Week 3**
9/20 Reading response due
Discuss Auster responses
Woolf, "A Room of One’s Own" (748-775)
9/22 Reading response due
Discuss Woolf, review responses
Griffin, "Our Secret" (404-454)
9/24 Discuss Griffin

**Week 4**
9/27 Reading response due
Discuss Griffin responses
Gould, *Mismeasure of Man* (chapters TBD)
9/29 Discuss Gould
10/1 Reading response due
Review responses
Essay topic generation
Gould reading and discussion (continued)
Week 5
10/4 Gould reading and discussion (continued)
10/6 Wrap up Gould discussion
   First essay draft — peer critique
10/8 First essay due
   Student Conferences

Week 6
10/11 Student Conferences (continued)
   Library Day — meet in the Van Pelt Library
10/13 Berger, “Ways of Seeing” (104-132)
10/15 Reading response due
   Review responses
   Discuss Berger
   Coles, “The Tradition: Fact and Fiction” (175-217)

Week 7
10/18 Reading response due
   Discuss Coles
   Mitchell, “The Photographic Essay: Four Case Studies” (520-556)
10/20 Discuss Mitchell
   Second essay draft — peer critique
10/22 Second essay due
   Discuss Mitchell

Week 8
10/25 Writing with sources
10/27 Writing techniques
10/29 First draft of argumentative paper
   Peer critique

Week 9
11/1 Student Conferences
11/3 Student Conferences
11/5 Student Conferences

Week 10
11/8 Writing Workshop
11/10 Writing Workshop
11/12 Writing Workshop
   Goodbyes and Evaluations

Final (revised) argumentative paper due Monday, 11/15