HU333: Introduction to Technical Communication
Section 1, Walker 134, MWF 8:05-8:55 AM

Instructor: Huatong Sun
Office: Walker 142
Office Phone: 487-3273
E-mail: hsun@mtu.edu
Office Hours: MW 9-10 am
Class Listserv: 333techcom-l@mtu.edu
Web Address: http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~hsun/hu333/fall.html

Course Description: In this course, you will learn how to develop information products that convey scientific and technical information. Based on the reader-centered approach, we will study the genres of technical communication and will practice writing a variety of documents, including formal and informal reports, memos, letters, resumes, instructions and Web pages. Much of your success in this class is dependent on the progress you make in analyzing your audience, applying this knowledge to the production of information products, and being able to demonstrate that your choices were informed, accurate, and effective.

Some objectives of this course:
• Learn methods of audience analysis.
• Learn methods of information gathering.
• Learn about specific information products and when to use them: reports, memos, resumes, instruction manuals, graphics, presentations, Web pages, and more.
• Learn how to apply all of the above to produce professional information products that address the needs of your audience and that accomplish your objectives.
• Learn how to test your information products to verify that they satisfy the needs of your audience in effective, efficient, eloquent, and ethical ways.

Required Text

Grading
• Project 1 30%
  • resume and cover letter 15%
  • oral presentation 15%
• Project 2 55%
  • proposal 10%
  • instructions 20%
  • usability report 10%
  • webfolio 15%
• miscellaneous assignments 5%
• participation 10%

Attendance
Attendance is strongly recommended. If you are absent, you miss valuable class time with your peers and will have difficulty keeping up with the pace of the class. When if you can not make it to class, please notify me before class; otherwise I will take it as an unexcused absence. An unexcused absence will make a difference in your final grade.
Schedule

week 1  9/8  Introduction
      9/10  Ch1 - reader-centered approach

week 2  9/13  Ch2 (pp26-43) - resumes
      9/15  Ch2 (pp43-49), Appendix (pp556-560) - application letter and letter format
      9/17  • Draft 1 of resume and job application letter due;
            • Ch13 (pp361-370) - evaluating drafts

week 3  9/20  • Ch10 - effective style
      9/22  • Due: Resume and Cover Letter
            • Ch3, 4 and 5 - objectives, informational needs and persuasion
      9/24  • Ch19, Appendix (pp567-569) - proposal and memo format
            • Workshop on defining the topic for project

week 4  9/27  • Due: Proposal
            • Ch6 - conducting research
      9/29  Ch20 - instructions
      10/1  Ch7, Reference (pp194-218) - prose element

week 5  10/4  Ch11 - visual aids
      10/6  Ch12 - document design
      10/8  • Draft 1 of instructions due;
            • Ch14 - revising; Peer review

week 6  10/11 Ch13 (371-380) - user testing
       10/13 Usability tests
       10/15 Ch18, Reference (pp459-514) - reports

week 7  10/18  • Ch8.9 - beginning and ending a communication
            • Workshop on user test reports
      10/20  • Appendix (pp569-588) - book format
            • Workshop on instructions
      10/22  • Due: Usability Report and Instructions
            • Ch15 - electronic media

week 8  10/25 Conferences for Project
       10/27 Conferences for Project
       10/29 Conferences for Project

week 9  11/1  Creating informational web sites
       11/3  Workshop on informational web sites
       11/5  Ch16 - oral presentations

week 10 11/8  Oral Presentations
       11/10 Oral Presentations
       11/12  • Oral Presentations
             • Due: Webfolio