Required Texts:


A sturdy folder/binder – to hold your Journal Responses and all the other documents you will produce for this course.

Note: Bring the pens, pencils, magic markers, crayons, etc. you like to write with to class so you can use them to write, draw, doodle in class.

Course Description:

This course is intended to help you develop and strengthen your oral, visual, and written literacy skills and communication practices. You will make oral presentations (individually and in small groups) that require supporting visuals, and you will compose documents that require formatting decisions, to show evidence of your competence with the communication practices that rely on the countless oral, visual and written literacies that permeate our public and private lives. Plus, you will find and analyze written documents, speeches, songs, graphics, etc. to determine what kinds of communication media and strategies are – or are not – appropriate for different situations. Drawing on your analyses, you will propose and then produce a substantial piece of communication media – an essay, brochure, poster, presentation, report, web site, etc. – that utilizes the skills you develop.

Class goals:

By the end of this semester, you should have:

Acquired a wide repertoire of oral, written, and visual communication strategies and tools.

Assessed different communicative contexts in order to decide which media, strategies, and tools are appropriate for the situation and audience.

Developed a range of strategies for effectively giving and getting feedback and for assessing your own communicative products.

Learned to make explicit and question the cultural, temporal, and personal assumptions that underlie communication practices.

These four goals are based on the communication practices and strategies you need to function in our complex, global world. Achieving these goals can and will provide you with the fundamental tools and skills you will need to succeed and/or excel in college, during your career, and during your public and private involvement with the world – and everybody is involved because you cannot not participate, which is just one of the many things we will discuss. We will also discuss the effectiveness of public participation and how it works. To accomplish all these goals, the class will discuss and explore the communication practices and strategies used by individuals and groups of individuals involved in the turbulent social and political issues in this country and the world during its involvement in Vietnam, which took place between 1950 and 1975. As we do this, we will determine what their messages were, how they were prepared and delivered, and if the formation and delivery of their messages was logical or illogical, rational or irrational, effective or ineffective, based on valid or invalid information, etc.

You will do this as a class by pitching and selecting two specific groups or related groups of individuals from that era to study for the entire semester. The social or political issues you decide to research and study do not have to be directly or indirectly related to the Vietnam War – any important or significant issue is fair game.
Grading:

Participation: 50%

Participation means reading the assigned readings and writing responses to them, coming to class prepared, being an active group member, and contributing to class discussions. Note: Bring your journal responses to class every day.

Attendance is essential because absences will affect your final grade. A lot of work is going to be done in class during class discussions, etc. If you can not make it to class, please notify me – before class if possible. If you miss a class, you are responsible for making up the missed work.

All assignments are due as listed on the syllabus. All assignments that are turned in late will affect your final grade in this course. **Notes: You must complete ALL required assignments to receive a passing grade in this class. I reserve the right to revise the syllabus and/or course schedule to better serve the needs of the students and the course.

Writing and Oral and Visual Presentations: 50%

This portion of your grade will be based on ALL of the assignments listed above under Course Requirements. I will discuss my grading policy in detail in class. Note: Write a Journal Responses for EVERY reading assignment, EVERY video shown in class, and EVERY class period. (When in doubt, write.) In these responses, REFLECT ON and DISCUSS the assignment(s). This means you must write more than a summary of assignment. Hand the Responses in during the next class period, and I will read and evaluate them, and return them to you during the next class period if possible. (Responses can be either typed or hand-written – if hand-written, please make them legible.)

Course Requirements:

At the end of the semester you will add the documents listed below to your portfolio. You may not understand all of these documents at first, but you will be receiving full explanations and detailed assignments in class. ** Note: This means you MUST save ALL the documents and material that you produce for this course to be included in your portfolio.

- Your self- and class-assessment cover letters
- A selection of your Journal Responses
- Your Oral, Visual, and Written Literacies Essay in which you explore the role oral, visual, and written literacies play in communication practices in general and your practices in particular (you must address all three literacies in your essay)
- The drafts & final version of your persuasive Academic Research Paper (all instructor’s and peers’ comments to be included)
- Your 1 page (maximum) overview of 1 article from Readings for Revisions not listed on the syllabus
- Your response to the feedback you received on your formal persuasive presentation of your Academic Research Paper
- Your written Communications Media Project Proposal
- Your Communications Media Project
- Your written Communications Media Project Report

In addition to the paper documents above, you will also be making three oral presentations in class.

- A small group "pitch proposal" (a short persuasive presentation)
- An individual formal, academic presentation
- A small group informative presentation

"MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). 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 (2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action office (3310)."