Technical & Scientific Communication

HU 3120
Spring 2003

Walker 116
Section 04, 1605-1655
www.hu.mtu.edu/~tevoseck/3120.html

Instructor
Tom Vosecky
Office, 148 Walker
Office Hours, 11-12 MWF
(and by appt.)
Office Phone, 487-3279
E-mail: tevoseck@mtu.edu

Required Texts and Materials
Writing for the Technical Professions, 2nd Ed, Kristen R. Woolever. Longman, 2002
Photocopying or printing of various assignments, handouts.

Purpose
The general purpose of this course is to prepare you for communications (primarily writing) that you will do in your career. The specific goal, however, is to assist you in developing strategies for:

• planning, drafting and revising your writing;
• writing for a variety of audiences;
• writing in group situations;
• editing and reviewing the work of others;
• designing your documents visually; and
• creating on-line and/or oral presentations;

Course Design
The semester will be divided into six parts, and for each part you will be required to write one or more documents aimed at appropriate audiences. You will be given a detailed assignment sheet at the beginning of each project, but here is a summary of what to expect:

I. Analyzing Documents
To begin the semester, we will examine various documents to discover their audience, context, and purpose.

(- Aug 25—Sept 3: 10%)

II. Writing Career Documents: Resumes and Cover Letters
For this part you will write a résumé and a cover letter. In addition to creating two different types of documents that everyone will need for internship or job searches, this assignment will serve as an introduction to audience analysis, document design, and peer response.

(- Sept 3—Sept 12: 10%)

III. Writing for Users: An Instructions Case
For this project you will create three documents
* a proposal memo
* a set of instructions, and
* a user testing report.

(- Sept 15—Oct 10: 20%)
IV. Writing a Document Cycle: A Team Approach

The purpose of this project is to investigate a problem in an organization or community and then develop a “communication solution” for that problem. The cycle you produce will include a problem statement, a short proposal, a progress report, a final communication product, and an oral presentation. You will be working in teams throughout this project.

(- Oct 13—Nov 21: 25%)

V. Reading Science and Technology: An Interlude

For this assignment you will read an article concerning issues of science and technology in modern society and culture. We will discuss this article in class on several occasions (during the Portfolio cycle) and you will produce a written response.

(- Nov 21—Dec 12: 10%)

VI. Putting It Together: Developing a Persuasive Portfolio

To end the semester, you will put together a representative portfolio of your semester’s work.

(- Nov 21—Dec 12: 15%)

Attendance, Evaluation and Materials

In addition to the above assignments, you will be evaluated on your performance as a member of the class. The expectation here is that you will participate in class discussions, attend class regularly and participate fully in group projects. However, if you are sick or have a previously arranged commitment let me know in writing. In the case of a previously planned commitment, just give me a short memo explaining the conflict in advance. Consistent lack of attendance can result in the loss of a letter grade over the semester.

(15 weeks: 10%)

MTU’s Policy on Academic Integrity

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. MTU’s Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation,” and the policy covers copying sections or entire papers from printed or electronic sources as well as handing in papers written by students for other classes or purchasing academic papers. Plagiarism and cheating are not only dishonest but they cheat you out of learning. If you ever have any questions about this issue, or about how to cite someone else’s work properly, please talk with me or consult a coach in the Writing Center.

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 contact Dr. Gloria Melton in the Dean’s Office (phone: 7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may talk with your teacher, your advisor, a department chair, or the Affirmative Action Officer (phone: 7-3310).

CAVEAT:

There will possibly be modifications to this syllabus as the semester progresses.