HU 3120: Technical and Scientific Communication--Spring 2003

Instructor: Mike Robertson, Section R03.
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office: 149 WAHC, phone 7-3780; office hour Wed. 9-10AM or by arrangement
[If I'm not in my office during my office hour, check the CCLI.]

Course Supervisor: Dr. Robert Johnson,
Chair of MTU Dept. of Humanities

The primary purpose of this course is to improve your communication skills, focusing specifically on the kinds of communication tasks that technical professionals frequently have to perform, such as

• planning, drafting and revising your writing,
• writing for a variety of audiences,
• writing in group situations,
• presenting your work,
• designing your documents visually, and
• editing and reviewing the work of others.

Assignments

I. Writing Career Documents: Resumes and Application Letters
To begin the semester, you will write a resume and application letter. In addition to creating two different types of documents that you will need for internship or job searches, this assignment will serve as an introduction to audience analysis, document design, peer response, and proofreading.

II. Writing for Users: An Instructions Case
For this project you will create a set of instructions, and design and perform a user test.

III. Writing a Document Cycle: A Team Approach
The purpose of this project is to investigate a problem in an organization or community and then investigate a possible solution for that problem. The cycle you produce will include a problem statement, a research proposal, a progress report, a feasibility report, and an oral presentation. You will be working in teams throughout this project.

IV. Special Interest Project
For this portion of the course, you will either (a) complete a short report on a topic pertaining to science and technology studies, or (b) with my approval, you will complete an alternative project of your own design. You will also write a proposal for your project or report.

V. Putting It Together: Developing a Persuasive Portfolio
To end the semester, you will put together a representative portfolio of the work you have done for this class.

VI. Class performance
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, come to class prepared, do assigned homework, and participate fully in group projects.

Schedule of Assignments
Grading
Assignments from the above list will be graded on the "check-plus-minus" system.

- "check" means your work meets but does not significantly exceed the requirements for that assignment.
- "check plus" means your work exceeds requirements by a significant margin
- "check minus" means your work does not meet the requirements for that assignment

Your semester grades will be assigned according to the following criteria:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Your work always exceeds requirements and is occasionally among the best in the class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Your work never fails to meet and consistently exceeds requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Your work never fails to meet and occasionally exceeds requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>Your work is consistently mediocre—never exceeds requirements, OR your work is inconsistently superior—occasionally fails to meet requirements but more often exceeds requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Your work occasionally exceeds requirements but more often fails to meet requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>Your work never exceeds and occasionally fails to meet requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Your work consistently fails to meet requirements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>You have failed to complete a major assignment and do not qualify for an I or X.</td>
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Required Texts and Materials


Additional materials will be distributed in class.

Academic Integrity

MTU's Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "knowingly copying another's work and calling it one's own or not giving proper credit or citation." The penalties for plagiarism or other forms of cheating range from receiving a failing grade on the work in question to expulsion from the university. Students who have any questions about this issue, or who have questions about whether they have properly cited their sources properly, should consult the instructor or a coach in the MTU 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 to your instructor, your advisor, a department chair, or the
Affirmative Action Officer (phone: 7-3310).

THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE