Required Texts:

The Little, Brown Handbook, 8th edition
Ramsey Fowler, Jane E. Aaron

Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, 7th edition
Joseph M. Williams
ISBN: 0-321-09517-0

Web Materials:

<http://www.hu.mtu.edu/~cyselfe/hu3605>

Course Description:

This course covers the grammar and usage rules we think you should know if you plan to earn your living as a writer, an editor, or a communication specialist. The course will provide you a basic vocabulary for talking about language choices and the stylistic habits you observe in your own writing and the writing of others.

Although most successful writers wrestle with grammar and usage problems near the end of their writing process (after they have paid plenty of attention to more important rhetorical considerations such as audience, aim, organization, and development), they do carefully and deliberately attend to such matters. After all, they want their message to come across as clearly and effectively as possible for readers.

If you hope to succeed as a writer, an editor, or a communication specialist, you should be able to talk with others about these language choices and to articulate them to yourself. You will also want to be able to spot and correct those language patterns and mechanical patterns that many people consider errors.

We also want you, by the end of this course, to recognize that language choices are also social and political choices. As you gain additional control over the structural and mechanical elements of language, you
will find yourself exercising power—in both formal and informal situations, with family and friends, on behalf of those who have power and those who do not. We would like you to understand this fact and encourage you to let your humanist education influence your decisions as you work with others on projects involving grammar and editing.

**Course Goals:**

Students will develop a common vocabulary for articulating choices about structural units and grammar/mechanics in English.

Students will gain additional control over the structural and mechanical elements of English.

Students will understand that language choices are also social/cultural/political choices.

Students will learn why it is important to let their humanist education influence the decisions they make as they are as working with others on projects involving grammar and editing.

**Grading:**

The following criteria will be used to determine your grade in this course:

- Quiz #1 (15%)
- Quiz #2 (15%)
- Test #1 (20%)
- Test #2 (20%)
- Presentation #1 (15%)
- Presentation #2 (15%)
- Extra Credit
- Presentation

**Professionalism**

Professionalism will be gauged by attendance, participation, and engagement with the work of the class. All of these are crucial to making the class as a whole succeed.

Missing more than three classes this term will result in a lower course grade. Active, voluntary, and regular participation in discussions is expected of students for a passing participation grade.

**Computer Elements**

This course will require that you use several kinds of computer applications. If any of these are unfamiliar to you, please see me as soon as possible so that you can access the course materials:
listserv: hu3602-l@mtu.edu (for course updates, assignment changes, questions of general interest to all students in the course)

e-mail: cyselfe@mtu.edu (please use this address for questions that should go directly to the teacher; you will also use e-mail for several of your class assignments)

**Exercises in LB:**

For this course, I have assigned practice exercises in LB that you are to do and check on your own or in study groups. For the purposes of discussions, tests, and class lectures, I will assume you have done this work—I will not check your answers in a formal way, the tests will do that for me. Make sure that you do these exercises—if you do not, the results will show, I can promise.

**Presentations:**

There is no better way to learn grammar than to be responsible for teaching it to others—honest. So, for this course, you will be responsible for teaching at least one element of grammar to your classmates.

These class presentations will be no long than 20 minutes. They will be accompanied by an explanatory handout that you create and a set of practice exercises for which you will provide the key.

The handout will cover the basic material associated with your topic—in your own words. To create this handout, you will consult at least three different grammar books (LB can count as one), and create an effective study guide for your classmates to use when they are studying for quizzes and tests.

In your presentation DO NOT SIMPLY READ YOUR HANDOUT. Rather, you will be responsible for:

- answering any questions class members may have on exercises in LB that relate to your topic;
- sending out an electronic copy of your handout 24 hours before the class in which you are to present (send this as an e-mail attachment to the hu3206 listserv);
- bringing enough copies of this handout to class on the day you present (don’t forget two copies for the teacher, one of which will be graded);
- providing a quick gloss of key/difficult points associated with your topic.
- enriching your classmate’s understanding of your topic with some material you have found yourself, outside of class (e.g., a song about a part of speech, a visual representation of your topic, an article from a magazine or newspaper that demonstrates some unusual usage, etc.)
- providing practice exercises and (keys) that will help your classmates prepare for quizzes and tests.
Tests and Quizzes:

They are hard, but they are a fact of life in this course. If you plan to be out of town or absent on the day a test or quiz is given, please see me to set up an alternative time before the actual quiz date.

To discourage class members from missing this important part of the class, quizzes and tests given on alternative dates will be harder—I guarantee it.

Special Notes:

If you have a disability covered under the Americans with Disability Act, or any other special needs, please see me during the first week of class—or as soon as possible—so that we can arrange a reasonable accommodation.

As the instructor, I reserve the right to modify the content and syllabus of this class throughout the term to meet the needs of students.

I use some special acronyms in this class in responding to your assignments:

\[\text{AIC} = \text{Ask In Class} \] (this is something that lost of folks will benefit from seeing, hearing.

\[\text{AM} = \text{Ask Me} \] (this is something you should see me personally about).

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