Advanced Practicum in Tech Writing  
Spring 2003  
Instructor: Michael Martin  
E-mail: msmartin@mtu.edu  
Office: Walker 312  
Office Hours: MW 12:30-2:00; and by appt.  
Text: Technical Writer's Companion, 3rd ed. Alred, Brusaw, Oliu; Professional Writing and Rhetoric, Peeples  
Classroom/Time: Walker 116; 2:05 to 2:55 p.m.  

Purpose of Course: (a) To practice such skills as time management and tasks expected of professional technical communicators, and (b) to briefly introduce theoretical and research elements of technical communication.

What is the Course Attendance Policy?  
Students are expected to attend all classes. The instructor will allow four class absences for common illnesses, plant trips, personal reasons, etc. More than four class absences will usually drop grades one level (B to C; C to D, etc.). Missing six classes (two weeks) is grounds for failure. Confer with the instructor as soon as possible if you have mitigating circumstances (e.g. hospitalization; family emergencies, etc.).

As a Disabled Person, What Are My Rights?  
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 a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students, (7-2212). 
For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, the department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

What are Commentaries?  
These are one-page informal responses to the readings we will do in this class, and occasionally to questions posed by the instructor. Submit a commentary whenever you see Read in the syllabus. The purpose of a commentary is to encourage thought about the topic before we meet in class for discussion.

No commentaries will be accepted later than the class meeting immediately following the due date.

You may discuss any aspect of the material in your words, but try to avoid repeating the material, or writing a descriptive abstract. Instead, focus on such areas as the usefulness of the information, the completeness, the questions you had that were or were not answered by the material. Grading will be pass/fail on individual commentaries, with the number of commentaries you submit providing the letter grade (e.g., if you submit all assigned commentaries your grade will be an A; all but three, a B, etc.).

Usually I will read every commentary, but I won’t always comment. If you have specific questions about the class, the assignments, etc., e-mail is the most effective method.

What if I forget a commentary?  
Bring it to the next class meeting, or you may leave it in my mailbox (3rd floor, highway side of Walker) no later than the class day after the date it is due.

How will Peer Reviews Help Me?  
Peer evaluations offer at least two advantages: First, they strengthen writing skills by asking class members to watch for specific problems in your drafts, thereby realizing how they themselves may have made certain errors; second, they help writers by offering an opportunity to correct major errors before the instructor evaluates it.

Note: Assignments will not be accepted without an attached peer review.

What If I’m Unable to Finish My Draft in Time for the Peer Review?  
You must find someone in class willing to review your work outside class and complete the form. Your reviewer must be a regular class member. Do your best to complete the work on time. If you run into time management difficulties, inform the instructor as soon as possible. He might be able to help in some way.

What is the Latest I May Submit an Assignment?  
Assignments received more than a day late will be marked down; those more than two weeks late will not be graded unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Where Will I Find the Class Readings?  
If the syllabus indicates page numbers, the reading is from our class text, Technical Writer’s Companion. Otherwise, the readings are on reserve at the Van Pelt Library reserve desk.
Advanced Practicum in Technical Communication  
**HU 4634, Section 1: Fall 2002**

### Course Calendar

**Jan**  
13 Intro to the course.  
15 Discuss Major Projects  
20 Discussion on projects  
21 (Tue.) Email me by 1 PM the project topics you are considering.  
22 Discuss Proposals. **Read** pp. 144-50.  
24 Discuss Readings/proposal writing  
27 Proposal writing (cont.)  
29 **Read** pp. 262-67.  
31 **Due:** Draft of proposal; peer review.

**Feb**  
3 **Due:** Final draft of Proposal. Discuss Employee Handbook assignment.  
5 **Read** pp. 102-7. Handbook (cont.)  
7 **Due:** Draft of Employee Handbook; peer review.  
10 **Due:** draft of Employee Handbook; peer review.  
12 **Due:** final draft of Employee Handbook; Discuss Technical Training Assign.  
14 No class Winter Carnival **Read:** *PWR* pp.11-37 for Monday Write response  
17 Work in groups on Tech Trng assign.  
19 **Read:** *PWR* pp. 61-71, 80-99  
21 Technical Training Presentation #1  
24 Technical Training Presentation #2  
26 Technical Training Presentation #3  
28 Technical Training Presentation #4  

#### Spring Break

**Mar**  
10 Discuss Progress Reports. **Read:** pp. 141-2, 210-214.  
12 **Read:** *PWR* pp.287-318;  
14 **Due:** Progress Report #1; peer review  
17 **Due:** Progress report #2. Discuss

#### Procedures Writing.  
19 Discuss formal reports. **Read** pp. 29, 31, 156 (titles), 161-188, 206.  
21 **Read** "Revising Functional Documents: The Scenario Principle."

24 No Class work on Project  
26 **Due:** Procedures assignment; peer review.  
28 **Due:** Final draft of Procedures assign. Discuss final oral presentation.

**Apr**  
2 Class does not meet. Work on Project.  
4 Class does not meet. Work on Project.  
7 Begin oral presentations.  
9 Oral presentations.  
11 Oral presentations (cont.)

15 Do Taxes!! Portfolio Workshop  
17 Reading Discussion **Read:** *PWR* pp.183-202  
19 **Class Discussion**

22 Visual Media Discussion  
24 TBA.  
26 **Due:** Project formal report draft; peer review.  

**May**  
3 Portfolio Presentation.  
5 Course Evaluation. Bring a #2 pencil.

### Grading

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grading</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commentaries</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal Proposal</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tech Trng. Assign.</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Procedures</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Major Project</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Progress. Reports</td>
<td>(3@5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-Oral Presentation</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>-Pres. Notes *</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Grade includes feedback from client.</em></td>
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</tbody>
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*Grading comments are subject to change based on student performance.*

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*Course schedule subject to change based on student performance.*