Meetings: MWF in 116 Walker from 1-1:50pm
Instructor: Maura Dunne Taaffe
Office: Room 141 Walker, 487-3272
Office hours: MW 2-3
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Course description: Revisions is a writing-intensive course designed to help students develop and strengthen communication abilities and understandings through the study of written, visual, and oral rhetorics (communications). Through systematic inquiry and writing, students learn to evaluate and use rhetorical strategies. The writing assignments are designed to provide opportunities for developing skills as a writer and thinker as students adapt forms and techniques that enable them to improve writing and understanding of communication. Additionally, students will explore and consider how technology informs us and how we react to communication technology.

Computer-intensive Revisions: Because this is a computer intensive class, we will also focus our attention on different forms of writing such as hypertexts, online portfolios, emails, and web sites. As you can see, we will not be easily able to separate visual communication from these forms of writing. Oral communication will be used in class through discussions & presentations. While we will be busy, I know we will all learn together and from each other and have some fun in the process.

Revisions and General Education: The four core general education courses have interrelated goals and objectives. The other core courses include UN1001: Perspectives, UN1002: World Cultures, and UN2001: Institutions. Revisions is required of all students in their second year, and students may take the course in either semester of their second year.
Course goals: By the end of this semester, students should have:

1. acquired a repertoire of oral, written and visual communication strategies and tools;
2. assessed different communicative contexts to decide which media, strategies, and tools are appropriate for the rhetorical situation;
3. developed a range of strategies for effectively giving and getting feedback and for assessing their oral, written, and visual communicative products; and
4. learned the possibilities of and necessity for revision as a strategy for achieving specific communicative goals.


Access to Revisions Home Page for pdf readings

You will need to use your mtu.edu email account for submitting email responses to readings.

Formal assignments: All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Written assignments must be typed. Email assignments must be sent using your mtu.edu email accounts.

There are 6 main communication assignments in this course:

- Visual representation of identity
- Hypertext Essay & Presentation
- Argumentative/Analysis Paper
Project Proposal/Final Web Project/Presentation

Web Portfolio

10 Email responses to readings

Detailed descriptions of each of these assignments will be distributed on Friday of the first week of class.

Detailed schedule of activities, readings, deadlines will be distributed on Wednesday of the first week of class.

Late papers, projects: Late papers will be not accepted without PRIOR arrangements with me. Not turning in a paper on time will result in a lowering of your grade.

Attendance: Because the pace of this course is quite quick and because we will be doing a lot of group work and class discussions, attendance is a crucial part of your grade. Three absences are permitted per semester and any more will result in a lowering of your grade. You are always responsible for work missed during an absence, and if you come to class unprepared after an absence, your grade will suffer. Each absence beyond 3 will result in a lowering of your grade. Two tardies equals an absence (although I'd much rather you be late than not show up at all). If you know you will be absent, please let me know so that we can work out something. I am much more forgiving of absences if you are responsible about the situation.

Academic integrity: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. They are defined by this university as "knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation," and this 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 not only are dishonest but cheat you out of learning, the prime reason you are here. If you ever have questions about this issue, please talk with me or consult a coach in the Writing Center (487-2007).
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 call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).
Course Schedule for UN 2001 Spring Semester

1/13  Intro to class
1/15  Rhetoric of the everyday Kinross "Rhetoric of Neutrality" & response of 2 paragraphs
1/17  Visual rhetoric - McCloud’s "Show & Tell" & Email response #1
1/20  NO CLASS (Dr. Martin Luther King Day)
1/22  Visual presentations  Visual introduction due
1/24  NO CLASS - meetings with me - Email response #2 due
1/27  Intro to CCLI and web design - Read web design handouts and hypertext assignment description
1/29  Intro to Photoshop, "Pursuit of Happiness" - Read photoshop handouts & read Bellah, et al.' "The Pursuit of Happiness," and do Email response #3
1/31  Mapping exercise - Bring map for hypertext assignment
2/3   CCLI peer review  Bring draft of hypertext essay
2/5   Oral presentation strategies, part 1 - read Smith & Tague-Busler’s "Speech Anxiety" & "Outline the Speech," do Email #4
2/7   Oral presentation strategies, part 2
2/10  Ethics and communication - Bring speech plans
2/12  Hypertext presentations - read ETHICS section at the back of the book (all of it): bring speech draft to work on
2/14  NO CLASS
2/17  Hypertext presentations
2/19  [Hypertext presentations] - peer and self-evaluations due
2/21  [Visual analysis, interviews, paper discussion] - read Daly & Engleberg's "Critical Thinking & Listening"

2/24  Analysis, interviews - read Kistelnick Roberts, "Rhetorical Background, do Email #6 response

2/26  In-class mock interviews - Bring interview questions

2/28  CCLI, audience analysis exercise - read Wysocki's "Impossibly Distinct"

SPRING BREAK

3/10  Workshop on paper draft - Bring print copy of paper to class

3/12  CRAP principles - Do Email response #7; Read pp. 1-72 of Design Book

3/14  Paper draft due, revising

3/17  (St. Patrick's Day) conferences (3-16, 3-17, NO CLASS)

3/19  Work day, CCLI

3/21  Work day, CCLI

3/24  Group dynamics and committee organization - Come prepared to organize into committees

3/26  "The Merchants of Cool" - Final Draft of paper due by 5pm

3/28  "The Merchants of Cool" - read Schriver's "How Documents Engage Readers' Thinking & Feeling"

3/31  web project ideas - Bring plans/ideas of web project

45/2  FONTS - read 72 - end of Design Book

4/4  Website usability testing - handouts
4/7  committee work for web project; shocking arguments -
    Bring draft of final project proposal; read Ivinski’s “Women
    who Turn the Gaze Around”

4/9   group conferences with me NO CLASS

4/11  group conferences with me NO CLASS

4/14  Work day in CCLI - in-progress usability testing

4/16  Web project presentations

4/18  Web project presentations

4/21  Web portfolios

4/23  “  - Bring 2 sample portfolios, be ready to
    discuss them

4/25  “

4/28  Web portfolio peer reviews - Have draft of web portfolio
    ready for peer assessment

4/30  Web portfolio presentations

45/2  Web portfolio presentations

5/5   Portfolios due
Evaluation form for PROJECT #2: Paired Presentation section (20 pts.)

Presenter's name:

(Circle a rating: 1 (vaguely), 2 (adequately), 3 (effectively), 4, (superbly)

1. Did the presenter’s visual argument generate my interest and classmates’ interest?
   How (one example)?
   1 2 3 4

2. How well did the visual argument present the objective (i.e., "Make a visual argument of how you have been shaped as a communicator")?
   Explain your rating.
   1 2 3 4

3. How visible & understandable were the images?
   Comment on one you especially liked and why.
   1 2 3 4

4. How well was the visual format organized?
   Name one strategy used well to do this.
   1 2 3 4

5. How well do you feel your understanding of the presenter has increased?
   What did you learn from the presenter’s work?
   1 2 3 4

WHAT ELSE WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD?
(Praise or tips are always welcome here!)