Course Description: HU 2600 is designed to broaden your understanding of scientific and technical communication. Grounded in the knowledge that the best rhetorical theories have to offer, the course not only prepares you to write effectively in a variety of contexts, but also to be aware of the social and ethical responsibilities you must assume in the workplace.

Course Goals: Scientific and technical documents include a wide range of subjects, goals, information sources, readers, and circumstances that lead to their preparation. To be successful as a writer in the many genres that comprise the field, you need to be rhetorically informed and thus able to assess your audience and identify your own purposes. The course thus focuses on developing your abilities for critical inquiry and your understanding of transactional composing processes—writing that is used to get things done.

Course Requirements:

1. **Readings:** I expect you to read the texts assigned in the syllabus before the class session and to **actively discuss in class** the topics for a given session. Additional readings may be assigned during the semester for which you will be responsible.

2. **Written assignments:** Assignments and due dates are included in this syllabus. Formal assignments will typically go through a cycle which includes pre-writing or a proposal, a peer-reviewed rough draft, comments from me, and a final draft.

Peer reviews are essential since they prepare you for the collaborative and critically demanding work of document production, both in the classroom and the workplace. Since the reviews are a privilege and a responsibility, use them well. Come prepared, be clear, specific, and complete in your assessment of your peers’ work, and demand the same for your own.

Several of the longer documents will be written independently, others collaboratively. Shorter pieces in the document cycle will be assigned as homework and will usually be due the next class after they are assigned. See “Grade” section for point distribution.
Each assignment should be submitted in hard-copy using 12 point font, 1.5-line spaced, with 1" margins on each side. Please note that I may modify the assignment topics and due dates during the semester.

3. **Portfolios:** Throughout the semester, you should keep a running file of your work, which will serve as the basis for a portfolio you will turn in at the end of the semester. Professional writers use their portfolios to showcase their best work for possible employers and for professional awards. You'll begin yours in this class, watch it grow as you advance through the program, and present it as part of your capstone before you graduate.

4. **Teamed oral reports** You'll be assigned to a two or three member team to investigate a particular area in the profession, based on the Lutz/Storms text. In your report, you should introduce the area, explaining its applications, responsibilities and employment outlook. The presentation should not exceed 10 minutes; you should plan to devote 2 minutes of this time to audience questions.

5. **Academic honesty:** Unless the assignment calls for a collaborative effort, I expect that the work you submit to me will be yours. If you are referring to or using other sources, acknowledge them, using proper form. Evidence of copied or plagiarized work is cause for serious disciplinary action by the University.

6. **Attendance:** I expect you to attend every class meeting and every conference, ready to participate fully and thoughtfully. If you miss more than 10% of our classes and individual meetings, I will drop your final grade. If you must be absent, please contact me via e-mail or speak with me in person.

7. **Grading:** You can earn an A or B in this class if you complete all assignments and reach deadlines, do quality work and show some genuine commitment. You'll earn a C if you meet deadlines with satisfactory effort or if some of your assignments are incomplete. You'll receive a D or F if your assignments are poorly executed or overdue, or if your attendance, participation, or effort are unsatisfactory.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application letter</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation summary(ies)</td>
<td>05%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamed oral reports</td>
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<tr>
<td>Informal memos, reports, etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grant</td>
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<td>Instructions</td>
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8. **Grading standards:**

   **A (truly excellent).** A work is an example of highly effective professional writing. It makes its purposes clear, reflects concern for its audience's needs and responses, and is detailed, persuasive, effectively organized, exhibits appropriate format and tone, and is grammatically correct.

   **B (very good).** B work is effective and would succeed in most professional communication circumstances. It may lack the polish or effectiveness of an A.

   **C (satisfactory).** C work is effective though it lacks features necessary to succeed completely with a professional audience. Its purpose may not be entirely clear, it may
not be effectively organized, it may not exhibit an appropriate tone or format, or it entails grammatical errors that make it difficult to read or understand than necessary.

D (poor). D work does not communicate effectively for several reasons. It may display an inadequate understanding of purpose or audience. It may lack information or be unpersuasive. Its organization may be confusing or misleading, and its tone or format may be inappropriate. It may be difficult to understand or contain serious errors in grammar.

F (unacceptable). F work does not satisfy the requirements of the assignment.
28 August 2003
To: HU 2600 students
From: Ann Brady
Re: Application letter

You’ll find instructions for your application letter assignment below. Let me know if you have questions.

First, go to the web and find an ad for a professional writing position that you can imagine yourself in once you graduate from MTU. If you can’t find such an ad, write one yourself, using material from the Lutz/Storms text.

Second, write up a list of all your qualifications—classes you’ve taken, coops or internships you’ve participated in, jobs you’ve held, extracurricular activities that intersect with this position.

Third, extract what seem to you to be the main requirements for this position; some may be implicit—try to tease them out.

Cluster the qualifications around the requirements and you’re ready to write.

Remember the following:

• **Purpose:** get the employer’s attention and obtain a job interview by highlighting your skills and achievements;

• **Audience:** the designated contact person(s)—often, if not always—members of a hiring committee;

• **Content and organization:** selective, varied, and customized to the position being sought.

• **Format and design:** don’t use abbreviations; use active language and topic sentences; limit the letter to one page, if possible, and number additional pages, if needed; use standard letter format—single-spaced with double spaces between paragraphs; leave 1-inch margins on all four sides; use standard typefaces (e.g. Times Roman, Helvetica, Courier, and Bookman) and type sizes (between 10 point and 13 point);

• **Style and tone:** formal, polite, friendly, positive, comprehensive, clear, concise, logical, accurate, professional, ethical, and accessible.

**Heading**

Your address without your name;

Date;

Inside address including your reader’s name, position, organization, & business address;

**Salutation:** use *Dear* followed by the reader’s courtesy title and last name and a colon, not a comma. If the reader doesn’t have a courtesy title, use *Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms.*

**Body**

Intro (one paragraph) identify your source of information, the position you are seeking, state that you wish to be considered for the position;

Discussion (usually two paragraphs) summarize your background, highlight your experience; forecast your contributions;

Conclusion (one paragraph) reiterate main point; refer reader to your references or resume, request an interview; provide info about how to contact you;

Complimentary close

Signature
Week 1
August 26
Introductions
Reading: The Practice, Introduction; TRWT, chpt 1
Writing: Memo re: writing at work
Discussing: Writing at work, teamed reports, and application letter

August 28
Week 2
September 2
Reading: TRWT, chpt 2
Writing: Memo re: your education, work experiences, hobbies plus an attached job ad
Discussing: Tailoring messages to audiences

September 4
Reading: TRWT, chpt 20
Writing: Application letter draft
Discussing: Letter drafts; report assignment, organizational and sentence rhetorics

Week 3
September 9
Reading: TRWT, chpt 5 and pp 195-98
Writing: Application letter due;
Memo re: communication problem within an organization to which you belong
Discussing: Topics for a report

September 11
Library Instruction

Week 4
September 16
Library day
September 18
Reading: TRWT, chpt 18 and pp. 300-01
Discussing: Reports, successful and not

Week 5
September 23
Reading: The Practice, shpts. 1 & 2
Writing: Progress reports
Discussing: Team presentations 1 & 2

September 25
Reading: The Practice, chpts 3 & 4
Writing: Conferences, report drafts

October 2
Writing: Reports due