Revisions: written, visual and oral communication


Tuesday-Thursday. 12:35 - 1:60 pm
Room. G11W. Wadsworth Hall
Some classes in Walker CCLI Computer Lab. Room. 113

Instructor. Mandie Rose Danielski
Office. Walker Humanities Building. Room. 314
Office Hours. Monday 11:00 am – noon and Thursday 2:00 – 3:00 pm
and by appointment
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Why am I in this course?

This University (“UN”) course is aimed at helping you develop and refine your written, verbal, and visual communication skills so that you can effectively read, discuss, present, and compose your ideas. These are fundamental skills you can expect to utilize in the "real world" setting, too. We will also study the integration of technology with communication. Whether you are writing journal articles in your field, writing technical instruction manuals for novices, pitching the latest computer model to your boss, or delivering your data to colleagues, you’ll need writing skills, verbal skills, visual skills, critical thinking skills, and technological skills. Much of this class then will be devoted to understanding and critically analyzing the following:

• the interaction of written, verbal, and visual communication;
• the needs and expectations of specific audiences;
• your voice, power, and responsibilities as a writer/composer;
• the context of the work – how, where, and why the work is being read, viewed, and/or heard.
• how technology can positively and negatively influence your work.

Since this course is computer intensive, I hope you’re as excited as I am that we will be using various computer technologies throughout the semester to achieve our course goals. We’ll use the Internet and email frequently, in addition to trying out digital photography and the software program Photoshop, for example. We will be using both PC and Mac platforms in the CCLI computer lab in Walker, room 113.

What materials do I need to succeed in this course?

Jane E. Aaron’s The Little Brown Essential Handbook for Writers
Robin Williams’ The Non-Designer’s Design Book
Diana George and John Trimbur’s Reading Culture: Contexts for Critical Reading and Writing
at least one Zip Disk (100MB or higher)
some CD-Rs for storing large files
Do I have to come to class?

Yes! Because this course is rooted in developing communication skills, class discussions are vital to your individual success here, and to the class' development. You should make your best effort to attend all classes so that you may contribute to class discussions and group work, as well as learn from class activities. Remember, too, that you have something to teach me and the rest of the class, but only if you're here! Also, missing lab time in the CCLI will be difficult to make up.

As the university policy stands, students may miss two classes per semester without penalty. In this course, you will lose one point from your final grade per absence after three absences, and you will fall after five absences.

In the unfortunate event of a family or other emergency, please notify me and/or the Dean of Student Affairs as soon as possible so we can talk about making up missed work. It is your responsibility to see me about missed work. Since I take roll every class period, it is also your responsibility to make sure I did not mark you absent if you come to class late.

**BONUS!** If you attend every class session (on time) and have completed all assignments, I will add two points to your final grade.

What's the grading system like?

I'm not going to give you a grade in this class, you are going to earn one. Starting the class, you have 100% - a.k.a., an A. Throughout the course it is your job to retain this grade. If you want to keep an A - which stands for exemplary work - you must do more than the minimum I ask in assignments. People who will earn an A in this class typically will have:

- attended every class, on time, awake and prepared;
- taken an active role in class, contributing thoughtfully and enthusiastically to discussions and bringing in ideas and techniques they have discovered through their own explorations;
- constantly explored media and cultures around us, and openly share their findings with the class;
- come to office hours and/or to the Writing Center to discuss ideas they have for assignments and projects and to get feedback on drafts of work in progress;
- started assignments and projects well ahead of due dates, so that they can get feedback from me and others to make revisions;
- hand in completed work in time every time;
- completed extra-credit assignments when they are offered.

**You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.** You will have a chance to revise your work based on the feedback you receive from me and from your classmates. Your effort to revise will heavily affect your final grade. We will arrange conferences at least once this semester so we can discuss your standing in the course. Remember that I have an "open-door" policy, meaning, come and talk to me at any time during the semester! I won't bite... probably...

**What if my work is late?**

I absolutely cannot accept late work on major projects. If there is an emergency (and I don't mean a broken printer or a broken heart), then you must talk to me at least 24 hours before the work is due. I will allow one late reading response without penalty. That late response is then due the next class period.
Where can I get some extra, free help?

The Writing Center is a wonderful resource for all students working on any writing or composition assignment, at any stage in your writing process. (And I'm not just saying that because I am a coach there this year!) You don't have to go to the Writing Center with a draft to get help. Just going to talk to a coach about an assignment can get you generating ideas about your projects — certainly a good start. I encourage you to take frequent advantage of this free help! You can utilize the Writing Center to:

- work on written drafts at any stage, from brainstorming and revising;
- discuss reading assignments;
- design visual arguments;
- rehearse oral presentations;
- work on using and integrating sources to support your argument;
- discuss documentation / citation;
- prepare applications, resumes, business letters.

Sessions are by appointment and the Center is located in the Walker Arts and Humanities Building, Rm 107. Contact Director Nancy Grimm @ 487-2007 if you have any questions, or consult the Center's site @ www.hu.mtu.edu/wc/.

Plagiarism? What’s that?

I trust that the issues of plagiarism and cheating are not new to you; at the same time, I want you to be sure of how seriously I take these academic offenses. They are defined by the university's policy 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 are dishonest and cheat you out of learning, the prime reason you are here. If you're feeling pressured about an assignment or if you're unclear about citing others' works, come talk to me before risking suspension, or worse, expulsion. If you ever have questions, see me or consult another coach in the Writing Center. Also see pages 141-155 in your handbook on "Taking Notes and Avoiding Plagiarism."

What’s up with discrimination & harassment policies?

I'm sure I don't have to address this problem either, but you should know I absolutely do not tolerate discrimination and harassment in (or out of) the classroom. We are here to learn from each other, so the utmost respect is expected from everyone.

In addition, 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 concern about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).

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NOTE! I reserve the right to revise the syllabus and/or course schedule to better serve student needs. Make sure you check with me or with classmates about changes if you're absent... or if you tune out on me.

WEEK ONE.
8.26 & 8.28
Read intro to RC, 1 - 6, and intro to Images Chapter in RC, 173 - 181.
Read "In the Shadow of the Image," 182 - 186 in RC.
Spend one hour on #2 under Suggestions for Writing on page 186.
Bring in one example of a visual text that strikes you, impresses you; be prepared to talk about it in class.

WEEK TWO.
9.2 & 9.4
Read "Hype" in RC 199 - 201. Complete #3 under Suggestions for Writing on page 201. 1-2 pages typed, single-spaced.
Read Perspectives on Branding in Style Chapter in RC, 240 - 265.
Work on advertisement spoofs. Be prepared to share them with the class.

WEEK THREE.
9.9 & 9.11
Read "A Way of Seeing..." in RC, 211 - 216.
Bring a photograph from a national newspaper or a news website.

WEEK FOUR.
9.16 & 9.18
Meeting in CCLI for intro to Adobe Photoshop and intro to digital photography.

WEEK FIVE.
9.23 & 9.25
CONFERENCES WITH MANDIE.
Complete Photography Essay assignment.

WEEK SIX.
9.30 & 10.2
Bring in completed Photographic Essay, either in print or in PowerPoint, and bring in typed rhetorical review of your design choices. Be prepared to present your essay to the class.
Read ND book, 1 - 72; 73 - 123.
Bring in an advertisement from a local newspaper that you see needs improvement.

WEEK SEVEN.
10.7 & 10.9
Complete and print a redesign of that local advertisement according to the principles and practices described in ND.
Bring to class a children's book, a comic book, a graphic novel, or a textbook.

WEEK EIGHT.
10.14 & 10.16
Meet in CCLI to play with online interactive storytelling web sites.
Write a 2-page reflection comparing/contrasting another group's storytelling site with your print book of choice.
Read "Television Conventions" in RC, 38 - 40.
Study one national news story in one particular medium. Be prepared to report back on what/when/how you learned and felt.

WEEK NINE.
10.21 & 10.23
Complete assignment in RC, #5 under Suggestions for Writing on page 42. Due via email by 12:35 pm, Thursday, 10.23.
Write a quick response on how the documentary you viewed in class compares with others you've seen.