DESCRIPTION OF THIS REVISIONS SECTION

Revisions: Written, Visual, and Oral Communication is one of four core General Education classes required of all students at Michigan Tech. Here is the Statement of Philosophy from the General Education taskforce that developed the current General Education curriculum:

In our General Education program, faculty and students cultivate intellectual values essential to the practice of democracy: respect for others, desire to engage in constructive discourse, clear reasoning and communication, and careful and balanced analysis. Students learn to understand, value, and negotiate individual, intellectual, and cultural difference, and to recognize and understand the significance of historical, social, and environmental context. Every graduate should understand the diverse modes of inquiry that distinguish the sciences, humanities, social sciences and professions, and should acquire a broad knowledge of the world’s intellectual, spiritual, and artistic traditions. Together, these elements prepare graduates who can work with others to improve their communities, their societies, and their world.

(http://www.admin.mtu.edu/admin/vpinstlfrepon.htm#phil)

Growing directly out of this statement of philosophy, the particular purpose of Revisions is to help you become a stronger communicator so that you can not only be more effective in whatever career you follow but also so that you can be a more effective member of all the communities in which you participate.

To that end, we will not be focusing on the mechanics of communication in this course; instead, we will be examining closely how analyses of the purpose, context, and audience of any communication situation help you think about the most effective choices (including mechanics) to make in designing any piece of communication, no matter the medium. We will also be exploring — and reflecting upon — the particular composing habits and practices that help you strengthen your abilities as much as possible.

In this particular section of Revisions, you will choose a current social issue that matters to you and about which there is much current discussion. Throughout the semester you will conducting various traditional and creative research into the issue you choose. By composing letters, opinion pieces, posters, documentary photography books, and a piece in the medium of your choosing on this topic — as well as by composing an academic research paper — you will learn how to shape communication in different media for different audiences.

When you look at the course calendar, notice these main
assignments:

- a letter to the editor on a social issue of your choosing
- a 2-3 minute speech on that issue
- a poster about that issue
- a documentary photography book focusing on your issue
- an argumentative research paper on...
- a final group project where you work with 2-3 others on some combination of your topics

We will approach each of these assignments through planning and through multiple drafts (at least 2, if not 3 or 4).

In addition, so that the University can assess the effectiveness of the Revisions course, you are required at the end of the semester to turn in a portfolio of a significant representation of your work throughout the semester. In order for you to be able to create this portfolio, you will need to keep every single piece of work you produce in this class.