REVISIONS: ORAL, WRITTEN, AND VISUAL COMMUNICATION
(tentative syllabus)

Section R16 – TR -- 8:05-9:20
Location: room 134 Walker
Instructor: Merle Kindred
Office hours: TR 9:30-11 in the CCLI (1st floor Walker), Café Rozsa, or by appointment
Official office: 312 Walker
Home phone: 482-7803
MTU: mkindred@mtu.edu
Home: mkindred@charter.net

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This class will help strengthen your abilities in all areas of communication by a combination of individual and small group assignments based on class discussions, background reading in texts and online sources, and from research. You will be increasing in awareness of the impact and effectiveness of the oral, written, and visual communication of yourself and others to determine what kinds of communication media and strategies are appropriate for different situations. The goal is to empower you as a multi-dimensional communicator.

COMMUNICATION
We will communicate about the details of each week’s work later in class, electronically, and by conferencing either individually or in small groups. Our class listserv is: revisions16-10@mtu.edu. Since this is a computer intensive (CI) section, we’ll learn and exchange as much work as possible online.

COURSE MATERIALS
RC - Reading Culture, 5th edition, Diana George and John Trimbur (used $41.25)
(Both books shrink-wrapped – both new - $62.75.)

ATTENDANCE
Regular attendance is critical to success in learning. Since we are meeting twice a week for longer sessions, you are allowed two excused absences with reasonable justification (e.g. illness, accident, field trips, job interviews, death in family, etc.) without penalty with the understanding that you acquire a friend in class whom you can contact for a summary of the class, details about assignments, and copies of any handouts. Please let me know the reason for your absence either via e-mail or in class. Except under extreme circumstances (e.g. accident, extreme illness, death in the family and distant travel, etc), more than two absences will drop your grade one notch for each absence (e.g. A to A/B, A/B to B, etc.)

GRADING
You are expected to exert maximum effort in all areas of exchange:
20% class and online participation
45% three major written assignments (15% each)
10% oral presentations
10% final oral presentation (individual grade)
15% final research report (grade shared by research group)

MTU'S POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
Cheating and plagiarizing will not be tolerated. MTU's Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation," and the 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. Resist the temptation. All work is to be original with full documentation for quotations and paraphrases. If you ever have any questions about this issue, or about how to cite someone else's work properly, please talk with me or consult a coach in the Writing Center. Know that you will be confronted directly by me if any assignment that is a radical departure from your usual style is submitted.

MTU'S POLICY ON 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 contact Dr. Gloria Melton in the Dean's Office (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may talk with your instructor, your advisor, a department chair, or the Affirmative Action Officer (487-3310).

CLASS CALENDAR

WEEK 1 - January 11th & 13th

Tuesday

Introduction: syllabus & texts, demographics & geographic origins of class, how we learn as a species, basic rhetorical principles, and synchronicity. NDDB 1. "The Joshua tree epiphany."

Assignment: "Introduction, Reading Culture," RC pp. 1-6. You've been at Tech for probably nearly two years or more now. Please write a two-page assessment in MS Word (500 words, double-spacing, 1" margins, 12 pt.) about the current status of your personal communication skills. What is the ease and effectiveness of your written communication? What is your comfort level and experience with public speaking? How do you define "visual communication" and has it played a part of you life, personal or academic, thus far? Send your ruminations to me via e-mail attachment by Wednesday, 6 p.m.

Thursday


1st major assignment: Start as of today with an electronic journal in MS Word with expressive entries - minimum of one page (approximately 250 words, double-spacing, 1" margins, 12 pt.,
plus visuals) for each class day—and record reflections on aspects of image and visual examples with reference to readings, class discussions, and general observations. This will be due February 3rd via e-mail attachment.

**WEEK 2 - January 18th & 20th - Images: formal considerations and cultural concerns**

**Tuesday**

Discuss **RC Images** introduction and bring an image of something meaningful in your life—online, a transparency, in text form, or the actual object—and be prepared to discuss why you chose this particular image.

Discuss **NDDB Proximity**.

Continue expressive journal entries. You can include an extended discussion of the image you presented in class.

**Thursday**


Continue journal entries with reference to the above selections as well as other observations and thoughts you are generating about the role of images in our culture.

**WEEK 3 - January 25th & 27th - Images: a deeper look at impact and meaning**

**Tuesday**

Discuss "Hype," pp. 199-201. Document how many and what kind of ads you experience in half an hour and state the circumstances. E-mail the results and your thoughts on the experience to me before class. Bring a particularly clever, annoying, captivating, or bad ad (from your half-hour of concentrated effort or whenever) and share it with the class either online, as a transparency, or in textual form and have reasons for your critique based on something you've learned about images thus far.


Continue journal entries with awareness of proximity and alignment as you construct your pages of text and visuals.

**Thursday**

Discuss Visual Essays "Rewriting the Image" and "Public Health Messages," pp. 202-210. Bring a parody of an ad to class to share and give us the genesis of the idea and reason for the parody OR prepare your own public health message with attention to proximity and alignment.

Continue journal entries with increasing emphasis on what you're learning about the power of images as rhetorical devices and makers of meaning in our culture.
WEEK 4—February 1st & 3rd—Images: Ruminations about old looks and new looks and what it all means

Tuesday

Discuss "A Way of Seeing: An Introduction to the Photographs of Helen Levitt," pp. 211-216. We'll divide the class into groups for Checking Out the Web (pp. 217-218) in preparation for Thursday. Groups will explore and come prepared to share images from the American Memory Project, Adbusters, and the Duke University Ad*Access Project. Journal entries can include results of these quests. Discuss NDDB 4. Repetition, pp. 49-62.

Thursday

Discuss online searches and results.

1ST MAJOR ASMT. DEADLINE:
Submit electronic journals relating to images by the end of the day. Your expressive writing should include reflections on the readings and class discussions and understanding of the value of proximity, alignment, and repetition in integrating verbal and visual content.

WEEK 5—February 8th—Style: what is it? (Winter Carnival February 10th-13th)

Tuesday


Your 2nd major assignment will involve formal research. Pick a contemporary example of digital or any new technology in the design and style of a particular product or service that you can compare with an earlier predigital or older technological product or service. What has been gained or lost in the change? What is the impact on society, positive and/or negative? (Readings assigned for Tuesday the 15th will give you ideas for topics. Also "Checking Out the Web" on p. 262 might be useful.) You will be producing a 3-4 pages (750-1000 word) paper plus a Works Cited page (we will review how to construct references using the MLA format). You will be expected to incorporate graphics in your research paper and show evidence of understanding the CRAP principles. Please submit your topic proposal by Monday the 14th at 6 p.m. so I can respond via e-mail prior to class. The assignment is due Thursday the 24th as an online attachment.

WEEK 6—February 15th & 17th—Style: product design and cultural impact
Tuesday


Discuss NDDB 6. Review, pp. 79-86.

Thursday


**WEEK 7- February 22nd & 24th - Style: branding and cultural implications**

Tuesday

Discuss “No Logo,” pp. 240-249. What are the cultural implications of branding on societies?

Discuss NDDB 7. Extra tips & tricks, pp. 87-104.

**2ND MAJOR ASMT. DEADLINE:**
Submit assignment as e-mail attachment by the end of the day. Prepare a 3-minute presentation with visuals (online, transparencies, or textual) of the essence of your research on an aspect of product development in relation to style.

**WEEK 8- March 1st & 3rd - Storytelling: the ancient art**

Tuesday

Return of 2nd assignment and general critique.

Discuss Storytelling introduction, pp. 312-315.

Discuss NDDB 7. Extra tips & tricks, pp. 105-122.

**3rd major assignment:** Think of the power of storytelling in our lives. This assignment will be an exploratory essay (a mixture of expressive and informative writing) of 750-100 words (3-4 pages) with double-spacing, 1" margins, 12 pt., and visuals. You'll explore an aspect of storytelling. “Checking Out the Web,” p. 354 or suggestions for writing at the end of each essay might provide ideas. E-mail me your topic and method of development by Friday the 4th, 6 p.m. so I can respond and you can get started.

Thursday

Discuss “The Hook’ and Other Teenage Horrors,” pp. 315-323. Most of us have heard a version of one of the stories in this essay. E-mail me your version or an example of another urban legend by Wednesday, 6 p.m.
(Start thinking about a group research project as an argumentative/persuasive paper based on a chapter of choice. E-mail your first, second, and third choice of chapter chosen by 6 p.m. Monday, March 14th so groups can start forming on Tuesday)

***Spring Break: Friday, March 4th, 10 p.m. – Sunday, March 13th***

**WEEK 9 - March 15th & 17th - Storytelling: the fascination of narrative**

**Tuesday**

Discuss "I Heard It Through the Grapevine," pp. 323-329 and "Why We Crave Horror Movies," pp. 329-332. Come prepared to tell a rumor or horror story from your own experience – 2 minutes.

Discuss NDDB 8. Type (& Life), pp. 123-130.

Guidelines for final group research projects in argumentative/persuasive mode. Formation of groups.

**Thursday**


**WEEK 10 - March 22nd & 24th - Storytelling: the visual and the verbal**

**Tuesday**


Discuss NDDB 9. Categories of type, pp. 131-142.

**Thursday**

Share an aspect of your exploratory essay on storytelling in a 3-4 minute oral presentation with a visual component demonstrating awareness of CRAP principles.

3rd MAJOR ASMT. DEADLINE:
Submit assignment as e-mail attachment by the end of the day.

**WEEK 11 - March 29th & 31st**

**Tuesday**

Return of 3rd assignment and general critique.

Discuss NDDB 10. Type contrasts, pp. 143-159.

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE
Settle on topic and mode of presentation.

Thursday

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE
Conferencing with instructor in class on the above plus timeline and division of labor.

WEEK 12- April 5th & 7th

Tuesday

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE

Thursday

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE
Submit first draft of paper to instructor for critique in preparation for revision.

WEEK 13- April 12th & 14th

Tuesday

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE
Meet with instructor for response to first draft.

Thursday

GROUP WORK IN CHAPTER OF CHOICE
Continue preparation for oral presentations and final written report due next week.

WEEK 14- April 19th & 21st

Tuesday

Final oral presentations by half of groups.

Thursday

Final oral presentations by remaining half of groups.
Submission of written report for group research project.
No final exam.