Revisions Description, general

Revisions, UN 2001, is one of four core classes that the MTU General Education Curriculum requires all undergraduates to take. This course is designed to help you develop and strengthen your comprehensive communication abilities. We will help you have a better understanding of why, how, when, where, and to whom you produce your communications so that you can make your communications more appealing, effective, and successful.

Description of this section of Revisions

In 1800 it could take 5 weeks to cross the ocean from Asia to North America; by 1900, because of steam engines, the journey was reduced to 5 days. Now it is just a long flight.

In 1800, the only way for someone in China (for example) to stay in touch with someone in the United States was by letters that traveled on those 5 week journeys back and forth. Now we pick up the phone.

This comparative ease of travel and communication — combined with changing economic and political conditions — means that if we are to be effective citizens and workers, we all must be comfortable in communicating well with people who have grown up in conditions different from our own. This means not only that we must be able to reach out to others but that we must understand our own assumptions and preconceptions about what counts as effective communication: if we do not understand how our assumptions and preconceptions shape us, then we cannot understand when they get in the way of our communicating with people shaped by other assumptions and preconceptions.

In this particular section of Revisions, we will examine our assumptions and preconceptions about our own communication practices. It will be as though we are strangers from another planet figuring out what allows humans to get along in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in fall 2005.

Textbook


Grading and other class notes

Your final grade in this class will depend on six major projects as well as on a series of smaller assignments and on your class participation. Here is how your grade will be determined:

Major assignments: 80% of total grade
Poster on Happiness 5%
Oral presentation on happiness 10%
Instruction set on how to belong to an American group/organization 15%
Rhetorical analysis of an American object 10%
Research paper on some aspect of American culture 25%
Final Portfolio 15%

Smaller Assignments: 10%
(These are assignments such as your response to the syllabus, statements of purpose, your letter to a roommate, reflection papers, design plans, and so on)

Class participation: 10%
This grade will be determined based on your attendance and participation in class discussions.

A ≥ 92%
92% > AB ≥ 87%
87% > B ≥ 79%
79% > BC ≥ 74%
74% > C ≥ 66%
66% > CD > 60%
D = 60%
F < 60%

* Look at the course schedule for due dates for all assignments.

Here are some other notes on class policies:
• You must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course.
• I will gladly write to you at your MTU email account, but not at others. Using your MTU account is a sign of your professionalism.
• I usually check my email account every other day. If you have audio-video needs for a presentation in our class or need to discuss an absence, you need to get in touch with me at least 2 days ahead.
• Save the written assignments and drafts you develop for all assignments; you must include these in the portfolio to be turned in at the end of the semester.
• For the assignments that require drafts, I will only accept final work that has developed out of those drafts.

Policies

Attendance
Because of the highly collaborative nature of this course, in which you will need to get and use lots of feedback from others through peer review, discussion, and group research, your presence in class matters. You are permitted only three absences during the semester; beyond three absences, your grade will be lowered. Sleeping, talking on your cell phone, or text messaging in class count as being absent as well, even though you might be physically present.

If you know you will be absent, let me know beforehand and bring me the work due on that date ahead of time; if you do not bring me the assignment beforehand, it will be considered
late. You are always responsible for any work you miss in the class you miss. I’m much more forgiving of absences if you are responsible about the situation.

**Late Assignments**

I do not accept late assignments unless you’ve come to me at least a week beforehand to talk about the possibility of turning in an assignment late. Any late assignments will affect your final grade.

**MTU’s Policy on Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. They are defined by this policy as “knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation.” This policy applies to copying sections or entire papers from printed or electronic sources as well as handing in papers written for other classes or by other students for other classes; it also applies to purchasing academic papers. Plagiarism and cheating are not only dishonest but cheat you out of learning, the reason you are at Tech. If you ever have any questions about what counts as cheating or plagiarism, please talk with me or consult a coach in the Writing Center (7-2007).

**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 a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). If you have other concerns about discrimination, please contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).
CLASS SCHEDULE

**Week 1**
- M 8/29 Introduction to class
- W 8/31 Talk about syllabus
  - *Due: Syllabus responses*
  - *Assignment: Read Table of Contents, Introduction, and chapter 1 of cda (pages iv–31) and bring one-sentence summary to class*
- F 9/02 Discussion Reading
  - *Assignment: A letter to your roommate (cda, p31)*

**Week 2**
- M 9/05 Labor Day Recess
- W 9/07 General discussion about the letter
  - *Due: A letter to your roommate*
  - *Assignments: Read chapter 10 of cda, on posters (pages 331-346)*
  - *Bring one of the posters that you like or dislike*
- F 9/09 K-day Recess

Using Visual and Oral Communication to consider differences in how we communicate: What is happiness — in America?

**Week 3**
- M 9/12 Discuss why you like or dislike the poster you brought.
  - *Assignment: Read chapter 2 of cda (pages 33-55)*
- W 9/14 Sketch out a design plan for a poster that demonstrates how you think most Americans define “happiness.”
- F 9/16 Peer review
  - *Due: Sketch of poster*
  - *Assignment: Read chapter 8, pages 223–261, in cda*

**Week 4**
- M 9/19 Discuss reading
  - *Due: Final version of poster*
- W 9/21 Oral presentations on posters — and happiness (class-graded)
- F 9/23 Oral presentations on posters — and happiness (class-graded)

**Week 5**
- M 9/26 Oral presentations on posters — and happiness (class-graded)
- W 9/28 Oral presentations on posters — and happiness (class-graded)
  - *Assignment: Reflection on oral presentation*
- F 9/30 *Due: Reflection on oral presentation*
  - *Assignment: Read chapter 12 of cda (pages 379–397)*
Using Written and Visual Communication together to consider differences in how we communicate: Developing instructions for culture (Group work)

Week 6
M 10/03 Discuss reading and develop ideas
Assignment: write a analysis of a group or organization to which you belong (what do new people need to know in order to fit in well?)
W 10/05 Peer review
Due: A written analysis of a group or organization to which you belong
Assignment: Read chapter 3 of cda (pages 57–78) and write the statement purpose of your instruction set
F 10/07 Due: statement of purpose for your instruction set
Assignment: Read chapter 4 of cda (pages 79–106) and write a design plan for your instruction set

Week 7
M 10/10 Due: Design plan for your instruction set
W 10/12 In-class work day
F 10/14 Due: First draft of instruction set

Week 8
M 10/17 In-class work day
W 10/19 Due: Final draft of instruction set
Assignment: Reflection on instruction set
F 10/21 Due: Reflection on the instruction set
Assignment: read pages 322–328 of cda, on rhetorical analysis and bring in an object (that combines words and pictures) that you think typifies some aspect of American culture.

Week 9
M 10/24 Discuss reading
Assignment: First draft of rhetorical analysis of an object
W 10/26 Due: First draft of rhetorical analysis of an object
F 10/28 In-class working day

Week 10
M 10/31 Due: Final draft of rhetorical analysis
Assignment: Read chapter 6 on research, pages 143–175, in cda
W 10/02 Discuss reading and decide group research topics
Assignment: Work on statement of purpose of your research project
F 11/04 Due: Statement of purpose for group research into one aspect of American culture and Research plan
Week 11
M 11/07  *Due: Research progress report*
W 11/09  Conferences - Bring rough draft to conference
F 11/11  Conferences - Bring rough draft to conference

Week 12
M 11/14  Conferences - Bring rough draft to conference
W 11/16  *Due: First draft of research paper*
F 11/18  TBA

**Enjoy your Thanksgiving break!**

Week 13
M 11/28  Receive the feedback and work on the revision plan
W 11/30  *Due: Revision plan for paper*
F 12/02  TBA

Week 14
M 12/05  *Due: Final draft of research paper*
W 12/07  TBA
F 12/09  *Due: Final portfolios*

**No Final for this class — so enjoy your break!**

**NOTE:** I reserve the right to revise this syllabus and schedule to better serve student needs.