Revisions: Oral, Written, & Visual Communication

UN2001, Section R17, Fall 2005
Walker Building, Room 116
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:35-1:55

Instructor: Heather Hoffman
Email: hlhoffma@mtu.edu
Office: Walker 146
Phone: 7-2435
Office Hours: Monday, 12-1, Thursday, 11:30-12:30, and by appointment

Required Textbook:

This text will be our guide throughout the semester. You will be asked to read and reflect upon certain chapters and selections for in-class discussion and group activities. Even though it is still in the production stage, this book will be an essential part of this course and your learning. (So, you should plan on obtaining a copy immediately, if you have not already done so. Hint, Hint.)

Course Description:
One of four core classes required of all students by the University’s General Education Curriculum, Revisions is designed to help you develop and strengthen your communication skills and understanding. We will examine oral, written, and visual texts in order to gain insight into productive communication for differing audiences.

Course Objectives:
Throughout the course of this semester, you will learn how to: write a statement of purpose; identify the context and audience of a communication; determine the best medium to use; arrange ideas and concepts in the most persuasive and effective sequence; develop strategies to achieve your communication goals.

Assignments and What to Expect:
We will divide this course into three separate, yet related, assignment sequences. The first sequence will result in a visual rhetorical analysis, the second will result in an argumentative research project, and the third will be an argumentative object project. You are expected to carry the knowledge gleaned from the first sequence into the subsequent sequences and so on. Each sequence will be worth 25% of your overall final grade.

These assignments will require you to step through multiple drafts and revisions, which are built into the assignment sequences. I will only accept final work that has developed out of those drafts. Basically, you cannot suddenly change topics or approaches as the final due date nears. I need to see the process that leads up to the final project.

You must complete all major projects to receive a passing grade in this course. Also, I will not accept late work unless you have a University Excused Absence and/or talk with me ahead of time. Information regarding a University Excused Absence can be found online at <http://www.sa.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/attendance.html>.

**Attendance:**
This class is interactive. We will be working in groups, doing hands-on activities, and using class discussion to facilitate our learning. When you miss class, you miss valuable information and opportunities for learning. Although students are permitted to miss 2 classes per semester without any questions asked; subsequent absences will affect your participation grade.

**More on Participation:**
Because this class relies so heavily on discussion, group work, and in-class activities, participation is crucial and will count as 10% of your final grade. To help narrow that focus, I will ask you to type a response to each assigned reading. These will vary in length (usually about one or two pages), but are designed to get you thinking about topics that will be covered in discussion.

**Final Portfolio:**
The final 15% of your overall grade is determined by your performance on the final portfolio for Revisions. Detailed requirements for the portfolio will be handed out at a later time, but please save all of your drafts, assignments, peer reviews, group work, notes, and etc. composed throughout the semester. You will be using these materials to complete the final portfolio. Also, please make 2 copies of graded assignments. These final portfolios can have no identifying marks on them and I will be commenting on the work that I will be grading. So, before turning in an assignment, remember to print out an extra copy for your own records.

**Grading Scale:**
The following is the percentage breakdown for this course:

93-100% = A  
88-92% = AB  
83-87% = B  
78-82% = BC  
73-77% = C  
68-72% = CD  
63-67% = D  
58-62% = DF  
0-57% = F

Course Schedule:
Although I reserve the right to revise the syllabus and/or course schedule to better serve student needs, the following schedule will be used during the semester to accomplish our goals:

Week One – Introduction to Identity (Who are you in the world?)
Tuesday, 8/30: “Choices” discussion and nametag activity
Thursday, 9/1: Review syllabus questionnaire, develop classroom policies, discuss communication strengths and weaknesses, & discuss ways (media?) we communicate

Visual Identity – How we show ourselves to each other visually
Week Two
Tuesday, 9/6: Lego activity and discussion about communication
Thursday, 9/8: Rhetorical Process Discussion (Were there any questions?) & “How have you been shaped as a communicator” presentations and student assessment

Week Three
Tuesday, 9/13: In-class analysis of “Common Scents,” Introduce first major project assignment
Thursday, 9/15: Poster discussion from pages 347-348

Week Four
Tuesday, 9/20: Documentary Photography discussion from page 365
Thursday, 9/22: Discuss your choices for analysis, sign up for conference times

Week Five
Tuesday, 9/27: Conferences
Thursday, 9/29: Rhetorical Analysis Due at beginning of class, begin presentations

Written Identity – How we show ourselves in writing
Week Six
Tuesday, 10/4: If necessary, finish presentations, “Higher Education” discussion
Thursday, 10/6: TBA

Week Seven
Tuesday, 10/11: TBA
Thursday, 10/13: TBA

Week Eight
Tuesday, 10/18: TBA
Thursday, 10/20: TBA

Week Nine
Tuesday, 10/25: TBA
Thursday, 10/27: In-class revision of research paper

Prioritizing Identity – Emphasizing certain aspects of identity for effective arguments

Week Ten
Tuesday, 11/1: Collect Finalized Research Paper
Thursday, 11/3: Begin Argumentative Object Project Discussion

Week Eleven
Tuesday, 11/8: Argumentative Object
Thursday, 11/10: Argumentative Object

Week Twelve
Tuesday, 11/15: Argumentative Object
Thursday, 11/17: Argumentative Object

No Class This Week
Tuesday, 11/22: No Class
Thursday, 11/24: No Class

Week Thirteen
Tuesday, 11/29: Discuss Final Portfolio in more detail, continue with Argumentative Object
Thursday, 12/1: Argumentative Object Project DUE

Week Fourteen
Tuesday, 12/6: Final Portfolio discussion and group work
Thursday, 12/8: Final Portfolios DUE, closing Discussion

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,” 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 not only are dishonest but cheat you out of learning, the prime reason you are here. If you ever have questions about this issue, please talk with your instructor 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 reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).