Technical and Scientific Communication

Spring 2007
HU 3120 Section R04

with Casey J Rudkin

Just the facts...
- Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11:05 AM to 12:20 PM
- Class meets in Walker 116
- Your instructor is Casey J Rudkin
  - Office location: 312 Walker
  - Office hours: Thursday 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM
  - Office phone number: 487-3235
  - Home phone number: 337-1546 (never before 10 AM and never after 10 PM)
  - Instructor's website: www.hu.mtu.edu/~casey/
  - Campus e-mail: casey@mtu.edu
    Note: Please e-mail me ONLY from your MTU account. I don't want to see e-mails from hottie@yahoo.com or learn anything too personal about you, if you know what I mean. Also, when you send attachments, I will only accept them named in the following format: Lastname_Section_assignment.extension. So, if you are turning in a resume, have my tech comm class and share the same last name, it would look something like this: Rudkin_R04_resume.doc. I am good with .doc and .pdf and a few other formats, but check with me if it's a weird one.
  - I check my e-mail at least once a day - give me 24 hours to respond
- Textbook: Kristin R. Woolever - Writing for the Technical Profession 3rd ed

Course Overview
Technical and Scientific Communication is a study of written, visual and oral communication in technical, scientific and professional environments. I will emphasize audience, rhetoric, writing processes, genres of technical and scientific discourse, visual communication, collaboration, professional responsibility, clarity, creativity and artistry.
Grading Policy
I base your grade in my course on a 1000-point system. Remember, you must complete all assignments to receive a passing grade in this course. Expect the basic breakdown to look like this:

- 100 points for active class participation/social practices
- 100 points for reading, homework and in-class assignments
- 150 points for Resume and Cover Letter
- 250 points for Instructions
- 250 points for Recommendation Report Cycle Case
- 150 points for the Final Portfolio

You can expect a grade breakdown to look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>935-1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>865-934</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>795-864</td>
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<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>725-794</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>665-724</td>
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<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>595-664</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>540-594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>don't go here...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance Policy
Be aware that students are permitted to miss two (2) classes per semester, unexcused; subsequent absences will negatively affect your grade. I will lower your grade 100 points for each unexcused absence after two. Documented, excused absences will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. This policy is in effect because, as this is a course on communication, you will need to be present to pick up the nuances of terminology, the applications for the coursework and class discussion. I strive to provide a rich environment for learning, a place full of possibilities. All I ask is that you attend, so you can add your valuable and unique perspective to the discourse. Because arriving late disrupts the class, two (2) tardies will add up to one full unexcused absence. If I have to stop class when you enter, or back up in any way to include you in the conversation, it will be considered a tardy. If you fail to sign the attendance sheet for any reason, it will count as an unexcused absence.
Other Course Policies

- You are responsible for keeping complete copies of all of your work for the semester. This responsibility has three main benefits:
  1. You can get me another copy should I misplace your work.
  2. You will have copies for the final portfolio.
  3. You will be able to measure your own progress during the course.

- When working collaboratively, your group is responsible for sharing the most current versions of your work. You may want to get into the habit of e-mailing your group's most current drafts to everyone in the group at the end of each work day. Technology excuses are generally not acceptable in this class.

- Late assignments are generally not accepted in this class.

- I expect all work to meet the standards of the university's Academic Integrity Policy (see final page of this syllabus).

Course Schedule

Let me begin with the following caveat: I reserve the right to revise the syllabus and/or course schedule to better serve student needs. Ideally, things will go smoothly, but we all know things happen and conditions change. In the event I need to make a revision, I will give you as much notice as I possibly can. I am including the first week for your convenience, the rest of the schedule may be found on my website.

Week 1: Introduction to the Course and Each Other

| Tues – 16 Jan | Intro to course / Communication in class
|              | Hand out syllabus
|              | How many hours will you commit?
|              | Read letters from previous students
|              | Browse Chapter 17 (pgs 441-468) paying particular attention to 450-459
|              | Bring your resume to class on Thursday 18 January

| Thurs – 18 Jan | Initial Resume Due
|               | Introduce a classmate
|               | Discuss why I chose to begin at the end of the book
|               | Introduction to rhetorical principles (Revisions review)
|               | Reread pgs 450-459 – critique the resume based on these pages
|               | Bring critique to class on Tuesday 23 January
|               | Consult website for remaining schedule |
The Fine Print...

A Note About Assignment Structures
Several of your assignments in this course require you to work through multiple drafts, steps and revisions. I will only accept work that develops out of these processes. In other words, don’t throw me a curve ball; you may not change your subject or your scope late in the game.

Seventy Words About Your Final Portfolio
This course cumulates in a final portfolio, a project to showcase your best work of the semester. Because of the nature of this beast, you MUST save ALL of your drafts, assignments, peer reviews, group work, notes, papers, etc. You will be using all of these materials to compose your final portfolio. Missing information can result in a redundancy of your efforts, a lower grade or worse (use your imagination).

Pet Peeves & Other Important Stuff
I have an electronics policy of which you really need to be aware. I do not permit cell phones in my class – ditto for Blackberries, pagers, radios, TVs, PSPs, laptops or any other electronics you may possess that I haven’t even heard of yet. If an electronic item beeps, buzzes, whirs, sings, or chirps, you will be marked absent for the day; I will assume you were paying attention to it, as opposed to the class. If you have an emergency, and your electronic device HAS to be on, please talk to me before class begins. I instituted this rule to make it easier for all of us to communicate in the classroom.

Second, please do not wear hats or sunglasses to class. It is distracting when I cannot see your eyes. Eye to eye contact is very important communication, and I want a lot of it during this course. Besides that, I was raised in the era of dinosaurs and not wearing hats indoors. Humor me.

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. If you ever have questions about this issue, 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 reasonable accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean eX Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310).

Safe Place
Safe Place’s Mission Statement is: “The GLBT Safe Place Program strives to reduce homophobia and heterosexism on Michigan Tech’s campus. Through education, advocacy, and awareness, the program contributes to an open campus climate that is safe and accepting to all members of the University community” (from www.safeplace.mtu.edu). I am a member of Safe Place.