Technical and Scientific Communication
Spring 2008
HU 3120 Sections R03 & R04

Frazz

Just the facts...
• Class R03 meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday 1:05 PM to 1:55 PM
• Class R04 meets Monday, Wednesday, Friday 2:05 PM to 2:55 PM
• Class meets in Walker 134
• Your instructor is Casey J Rudkin
  o Office location: 312 Walker
  o Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM
  o Office phone number: 487-3236
  o Home phone number: 337-1546 (not before 10 AM and not after 10 PM)
  o Instructor’s website: www.hu.mtu.edu/~casey/
  o 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_R03_resume.doc. I am good with .doc and .pdf and a few other formats, but check with me if it’s a weird one.
  o I check my e-mail frequently – give me 24 hours to respond
• Textbook: Kristin R. Woolever – Writing for the Technical Professions 3rd ed (or 4th or 2nd editions)

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. I highly value creativity; keep that in mind.
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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100 points for active class participation/social practices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 points for reading, homework and in-class assignments</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>100 points for the Newsletter</td>
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<tr>
<td>200 points for Resume and Cover Letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>100 points for Science Writing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>150 points for Instructions</td>
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<tr>
<td>100 points for Report</td>
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<tr>
<td>150 points for the Final Portfolio</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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

- **A**: 935-1000 points
- **AB**: 865-934 points
- **B**: 795-864 points
- **BC**: 725-794 points
- **C**: 665-724 points
- **CD**: 595-664 points
- **D**: 540-594 points
- **F**: don't go here...

Get Fuzzy

![Image of Fuzzy illustrations]

Attendance Policy

Be aware that students are permitted to miss three (3) classes per semester, unexcused; subsequent absences will negatively affect your grade. I will lower your grade 75 points for each unexcused absence after three. 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. **I strongly recommend e-mailing each assignment to yourself and keeping it.** This will save you in case of a computer problem. This responsibility has two main benefits:
  1. You can get me another copy should I misplace your work.
  2. 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 workday. Technology excuses are generally not acceptable in this class.

- Late assignments are generally not accepted in this class. If you are going to be late on an assignment, I will accept it for up to one week past the due date, provided you write me a detailed progress memo clearly stating the reason for the delay, the status of the project at present and your plans to complete the assignment. This memo would be due in lieu of the assignment for that day.

- 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 as we go along.

Week 1: Introduction to the Course, Each Other & Rhetoric

| Monday - 14 Jan. | Intro to course / Communication in class |
| Read letters from previous students |
| Newsletter assignment |
| For tomorrow, bring your résumé |

| Wednesday - 16 Jan. | Print out syllabus, bring with you / How many hours will you commit? |
| Newsletter naming |
| Why Tech Comm is so important |

| Friday - 16 Jan. | Initial Resume Due |
| Introduce a classmate |
| A reconsideration of your own résumé – author a one page critique of your résumé including planned revisions |

Week 2: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

No classes for today - enjoy your day off, prepare for your term and please take a moment to consider some of the amazing things Dr. King accomplished.
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 culminates 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 some 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, iPods 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 of 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.

Goals for Technical and Scientific Communication
There are a number of skills and arts I hope you will learn and/or practice over the semester. These are the gems you will display in your final portfolio. Often, good communication skills are the difference between getting a job and continuing your search. I once heard someone from the Engineering Department here at Tech describe the difference as this: "Engineers who can’t write work for those who can." If we, here at Tech, truly “Create the Future,” then we better be able to accurately, ethically and creatively document it. Consider these skills as you progress through the semester:

Visual Design
Organize
Style
  o Word Choice
  o Use of Active Voice
  o Tone
Group Work
Editing
Peer Review
Persuasive Writing

Audience Analysis
Rhetorical Strategies
Problem Solving
Document Planning Process
User Instructions
  o Task Analysis
  o Project Constraints
  o Usability Testing
Collecting and Analyzing Data
Oral Presentations