Course Syllabus

The Revisions: Oral, Written & Visual Communication or "Revisions" classes are built around communications (texts) and communicating (action), both product and process. You will develop tools to analyze, understand, and use communication in complex ways, expand the concept of argument, take up ethical considerations, collaborate with others, and practice making choices about what, how, and why to communicate.

You will be asked to compose texts to fit interesting, sometimes difficult situations and audiences because the ability to understand, participate in, and produce communication that is effective is highly valued today. This course is centered around student ability to communicate multimodally—with a range of mixed oral, visual, and written texts and in a variety of genres. The student is required to learn a complex process for understanding, analyzing, and creating texts in and for a variety of rhetorical situations.

The goals of Revisions

1. To understand and experience the composing process in written, visual, and oral communication.
2. To acquire extensive practice in revising written, visual, and oral communication.
3. To learn how to enhance/complement their writing with visual and oral forms of communication.
4. To experience a range of written, visual, and oral genres and understand how a writer's purpose and sense of audience shape these genres.
5. To experience both the personal and social/collaborative dimensions of learning and communicating.
6. To acquire practice in rhetorical analysis and critical reasoning.
7. To learn how to conduct, communicate, and document research for a substantial piece of argumentative writing.
What you'll be doing

A variety of projects and papers will be assigned along with in- and out-of-class exercises designed to help you develop a more complex understanding of and responsibility towards the practice of composing complex arguments. Most of the assignments are designed to work together in steps/stages and will make use of a variety of media. All assignments are individual unless otherwise noted. This means you are expected to work through each stage yourself unless the assignment is designated a group project. Some stages of projects are collaborative and require you to solicit feedback from your peers, but you are responsible for shaping, evaluating, and utilizing that feedback.

Regardless of the medium, your final projects should be work of which you can be proud.

Projects 1, 2, and 3

Throughout the semester, you’ll work on three major projects that take turns focusing on composing in visual, written, and oral modes. In the process you will be analyzing multimodal texts to understand choices others have made in order to make smarter choices yourself.

On the three major projects, you will be invited to work on topics that interest you. This makes you an active partner in shaping the projects on which you will spend your time and attention.

Earning social practice points

Earning social practice points is easy: be in class, contribute constructively to class discussions, engage in peer reviews, do your best for your group, etc.—basically, participate meaningfully in this class.

Needless to say, if you are not in class, you are not participating, so poor attendance will affect your grade not only regarding these points, but on your overall performance in this class. I'm looking for your ability to bring relevant and productive thinking to class that is informed by the readings, your own experiences with communicating, and your development of communication skills throughout the semester.

Smaller projects

Throughout the semester you’ll be required to compose several short writings, visuals, and/or oral texts and carry out a number of smaller in-class and out-of-class exercises. All assigned work is designed to draw on the readings in the textbook, require that you work through stages of rhetorical analysis, build on the exercises that precede it, help you successfully complete the projects, and strengthen your overall ability to compose effectively and thoughtfully.

Presentations: in-person, oral, and written

A variety of presentations are built into the semester: an in-person presentation, a stand-alone oral presentation, and a portfolio & CD.

Keeping a portfolio

A portfolio of the work you did in this class is required at the end of the semester to get a grade in this class. It's your opportunity to present your composition and communication skills in one place. Keep digital and printed copies of all of the work you do. A good practice is to never "save" over your drafts, instead "save as" to a new document before making revisions, and keep all versions where you can find them easily.

It's a good idea to start both your digital and printed portfolio at the beginning of the semester and keep them updated as you go along. This will make it easier for you at the end of the semester, and will save you from redoing any work that gets lost either through inattention or computer crashes.

The portfolios will also be used for the purpose of your final grade and as an overall assessment of the Revisions course. See this site's portfolio page for more information.

Grading scale

Your final grade will depend on the work you do on projects, your social practices, other assignments, presentations, and your final portfolio. You must finish all assignments and turn in a complete portfolio to receive a grade in this class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>point distribution</th>
<th>grade-point scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>project 1........... 15 pts</td>
<td>100–95............ A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>project 2........... 5 pts</td>
<td>94–90............. AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>project 3........... 5 pts</td>
<td>89–85............. B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social practice..... 12 pts</td>
<td>84–80............. BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smaller projects.... 11 pts</td>
<td>79–75............. C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in-person presentation ...... 6 pts</td>
<td>74–70............. CD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral presentation...... 6 pts</td>
<td>69–65............. D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>portfolio CD presentation .... 5 pts</td>
<td>64–0............. E</td>
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<tr>
<td>portfolio binder........ 5 pts</td>
<td>64–0............. F</td>
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<td>total ................ 100 pts</td>
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Assessing your work

Your work will be assessed on how well you demonstrate you're accomplishing the goals of the projects and course, how well you demonstrate you understand the concepts introduced, and how well you can integrate the concepts presented in this class and the readings into your thinking and communication practices.

You will know what I'll be expecting from you because we'll use grading rubrics with the criteria clearly laid out. I require you to do an assessment of your own work before turning it in to me. This will give you a chance to recognize where you could do better, and give you a chance to do so before turning in your work. We'll frequently do peer assessments as well.

Extra credit

No extra credit projects will be available. You can, however, revise any of the graded projects and submit them for reassessment. Come see me during office hours (or after class) and we'll talk through how to make your work stronger. If at any time you think your work is better than was assessed, make an appointment to talk to me. At that meeting, I'll expect you to present a thoughtful, supported argument for your claim(s).

Changing topics in the middle of a project

You are required to work through several stages and revisions of the projects. Only work that shows all the required stages will be acceptable. No late-in-game topic changes will be accepted unless all development stages are thoroughly worked through.
due dates and deadlines
Please have the assigned readings completed when assigned, and turn in your work on the due dates.

The readings are assigned to give you more background information important for the projects. I plan due dates to do two things: to give you enough time to finish the required work, and to give me time to give it the attention it deserves and return it to you in a timely manner.

Preparedness is crucial. Late assignments will affect your ability to participate in class, and we will have in-class exercises that require you to be familiar with the reading so that you bring an assignment with you to class. I don't have to tell you that catching up is difficult. If you have extraordinary circumstances that prevent you from finishing your work on time, talk to me so I know what's going on.

handling in work: the dilemma of paper vs digital
This is a computer intensive class. All assignments are to be composed on a computer unless other arrangements are made at the start of a project. All software you'll need is available to you in the ccl computer lab located in Walker 113. Project work done by hand such as hand-drawn sketches to develop drafts and ideas, collages of mixed media, etc., are perfectly acceptable when part of and integral to your project. If your project requires unconventional media (other than what is readily producible In Tech's computer labs), that's great. Let's figure out how to integrate the piece into your portfolio.

I would like to accept assignments digitally, but past experience prevents me from agreeing to this practice. The problem is this: I end up with dozens of files called "paper.doc" or "assignment.doc" or "project.jpg" or some other equally obscure name. It might make sense on your end, but on my end, its maddening to have to sort through a long list of emails with missing subject lines, no message in the body, and files attached all named the same. This is not a good use of my time.

If you have an idea that would save both paper and time, let's hear it. Here's one to consider: submit PDFs using a naming convention. This would mean printing the file to PDF and naming it something sensible. I suggest using last name followed by an underscore followed by the assignment name. (For example: kranen_ _project1.pdf). This also makes available a PDF to add to your digital portfolio.

Following these simple conventions makes emailing assignments possible. Do not email a file to be used in a class exercise. Bring a printed copy with you to class.

where to go if you could use some help organizing your thoughts on projects or if you want to develop better writing habits overall
The Michigan Tech Writing Center! It's located in Walker, room 107, and their hours are posted. You are expected to write at a level reflecting the clarity, coherence, and competence of a college student preparing to create the future. The Writing Center's mission is to work with students, faculty, and staff to address the challenges of learning and communicating in complex and culturally diverse environments. Take your assignment sheet with you when you go for coaching. The Writing Center is an excellent resource, so check them out early in the semester.

attendance policy
Because the pace of this class is quick and we do group work, hold class discussions, and perform in-class exercises designed to help you complete your major projects, attendance is crucial. If you miss class, inquire to the class email list to learn what you missed. (BTW, responding to requests is a good way to earn social practice points, but remember to CC me so I know you responded.) Each absence over three will result in a lowering of your grade by half a grade. Tardiness equals half an absence. Showing up unprepared for exercises equals half an absence.

Policy on academic integrity
The short of it is: college is hard work. However, I'm here to help you succeed in this class and the writing center is here to help you succeed with all of your writing. Help is available so you can succeed with Integrity. Everyone loses when cheating occurs, and you probably know what it's like to be cheated, so don't pass that on.

The long of it is: plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. They are defined, in part, 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 handling in papers written by students for other classes or purchasing academic papers or projects. Plagiarism and cheating not only are dishonest, but they cheat you out of learning—the primary reason you are here. If you have questions about this issue, policies are available on the University's Student Affairs web site. (The direct link is long, but here it is: https://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html.)

Policy on discrimination and harassment
Michigan Tech 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 Michigan Tech, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Dean of Student Affairs (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310). Policies are made available on the University's web site www.mtu.edu. (Direct link: http://www.admin.mtu.edu/oao/d6Info.htm.)
### Course Schedule

#### Week 1
- **Monday 9/3**: Labor Day; classes start tomorrow
- **Wednesday 9/5**: Introductions
- **Friday 9/7**: Read pages 1-10 in CDA so we can discuss key course terminology

#### Week 2
- **Monday 9/10**: Read pages 11-16 in CDA; we'll talk about being communicators
- **Wednesday 9/12**: Read pages 97-103 in CDA; meet in the call to get started using Photoshop; a brief in-class writing assignment will be due at the end of class
- **Friday 9/14**: Read pages 17-21 and 90-96 in CDA; we'll have an in-class visual introductions assignment to work on that will be due by the end of class

#### Week 3
- **Monday 9/17**: Read pages 23-30 and 85-89 in CDA; we'll discuss your visual introduction pieces, the rhetorical process; and we'll talk about project 1 and what it entails
- **Wednesday 9/19**: Read pages 33-41 and 301-304 in CDA; bring written up "sense of purpose" for your project and we'll have an in-class responsibilities to writing assignment
- **Friday 9/21**: Read in CDA pages 42-54, and pages 57-68; due today in class is a written up design plan for your project 1 to use for an in-class exercise

#### Week 4
- **Monday 9/24**: Read in CDA pages 61-76 and pages 263-269 and write up a revised "statement of purpose" for your project 1 and revise the rest of your design plan; in class we will hold a feedback session to help you think more complexity about your plan do a feedback exercise in small groups as we look at the rubric, and there might be some time to work on projects
- **Wednesday 9/26**: Read in CDA pages 79-85 and pages 270-300; revise your design plan and bring in printouts of your visual arguments for in-class discussions and an exercise analyzing draft visuals to help developing strategies [can work in lab last 1/2 of class; in-class conf.] read in CDA pages 305-311; peer assessments
- **Friday 9/28**: Read in CDA pages 112-115 in CDA so we can discuss key course terminology

#### Week 5
- **Monday 10/1**: No class today; individual 15 minute conferences (sign up for a time); work on projects
- **Wednesday 10/3**: No class today; individual 15 minute conferences (sign up for a time); work on projects
- **Friday 10/5**: Project 1 is due; peer review of final arguments

#### Week 6
- **Monday 10/8**: Read pages 111-115 in CDA and we'll discuss project 2
- **Wednesday 10/10**: Read pages 143-146 in CDA; in-class exercise
- **Friday 10/12**: Read pages 147-150 in CDA; bring a written up design plan for project 2 to use in an in-class exercise

#### Week 7
- **Monday 10/15**: Read pages 151-160; library research
- **Wednesday 10/17**: Read pages 161-174 in CDA; bring draft 1
- **Friday 10/19**: Read page 320 in CDA; class discussion and exercise doing analysis

#### Week 8
- **Monday 10/22**: Read pages 321-326 in CDA; discuss analysis portion of project 2
- **Wednesday 10/24**: In-person presentations
- **Friday 10/26**: In-person presentations

#### Week 9
- **Monday 10/29**: No class today; individual 25 minute conferences (sign up for a time); bring draft 2 to conferences
- **Wednesday 10/31**: No class today; individual 25 minute conferences (sign up for a time); bring draft 2 to conferences
- **Friday 11/2**: No class today; individual 25 minute conferences (sign up for a time); bring draft 2 to conferences

#### Week 10
- **Monday 11/5**: Read pages 188-195 in CDA; discussion and in-class exercise
- **Wednesday 11/7**: Read pages 198-208 in CDA; class discussion and in-class exercise
- **Friday 11/9**: Read pages 209-222 in CDA; class discussion

#### Week 11
- **Monday 11/12**: Project 2 is due—in-class assessments
- **Wednesday 11/14**: Project 2 is due—in-class assessments
- **Friday 11/16**: Portfolio review day

11/16-11/25—Thanksgiving recess

#### Week 12
- **Monday 11/26**: Discuss project 3
- **Wednesday 11/28**: Read pages 238-240 in CDA; class discussion
- **Friday 11/30**: Read pages 241-245 in CDA; class discussion

#### Week 13
- **Monday 12/3**: Read page 251 in CDA; discuss rubric
- **Wednesday 12/5**: Read pages 252-255 in CDA; class discussion
- **Friday 12/7**: Read pages 259-260 in CDA; class discussion

#### Week 14
- **Monday 12/10**: Project 3 is due; in-class assessments
- **Wednesday 12/12**: Project 3 is due; in-class assessments
- **Friday 12/14**: Portfolio due; concluding our class

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*This schedule is still tentative after week 5*