Syllabus for UN 2001—Revisions: Oral, Written, and Visual Communication
The Politics of Poverty and the Environment
Summer 2008, Track B

Instructor: Robert D. Hunter
Meeting Time: 11:05 a.m.-12:20 p.m., Mon.-Thurs.
Location: Walker 116
Office Hours: Wed., 12:30-2:30 and by appointment in Walker 316
Contact by email: rdhunter@mtu.edu

Course Goals and Purpose: Oral, Written, and Visual Communication. This is a writing-intensive course which builds on students' previous courses by providing advanced, direct instruction in communication. Students will learn to critically analyze and respond to various forms of media and apply what they learn to their own spoken, written, and visual communication. Class projects ask students to compose original work that is organized to meet the rigors of interesting, and sometimes challenging, situations and audiences.

Required Textbooks:

- Reading Culture: Contexts for Critical Reading and Writing
  Diana George and John Trimbur
  Pearson Longman, 2007

- The Non-Designer’s Design Book: Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice
  Robin Williams
  Peachpit Press, 2004

- Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World
  Alan Weisman
  Chelsea Green Publishing, 1999

Weekly Schedule:

Jun. 30-Jul. 3: Introduction and overview of course. Media Literacy and issues of Culture and Representation: Separating facts from opinions (an imperfect science). Establishing credibility (who has it and how is it developed?). Evaluating textual content for cognitive depth and cultural affect.

Assignments: Selected readings from Chapters 1 & 2 of Reading Culture and selected readings from Course-Pack; Exploratory writings of reading selections.

Jul. 7-10: Ideology and Hegemony: What are some of the unspoken/underlying constructions of Ideology and how does the concept of Hegemony support them? Linguistic and visual analysis (introduction to critical discourse analysis and exploration of ideological filmic representations).

Assignments: Selected readings from Chapters 3 & 4 of Reading Culture and selected readings/activities from Course-Pack; Exploratory writings and interrogative visual analysis presentation.
Jul. 14-17: The Dialectic Approach: How does form contribute to substance? The question of authority. How are truths from 'lesser authorities' sometimes suppressed? How do various sources of media (re)invent the world? How does selective reporting shape public consciousness?

Assignments: Selected reading from Chapter 5 of Reading Culture, as well as selected readings from The Non-Designer’s Design Book and selected readings/activities from Course-Pack; Exploratory writings and rough draft of introductory argument for research paper.

Jul. 21-24: To Be Determined/Announced

Jul. 28-31: To Be Determined/Announced

Aug. 4-7: To Be Determined/Announced

Aug. 11-14: To Be Determined/Announced

Grading Policy: Attendance is expected. Failure to attend class will result in a lower grade. Since assignments are guided in part by classroom discussion and will frequently involve a process of peer evaluation, it is necessary to attend class. Summer courses are condensed and meet a fewer number of times than do Fall and Semester courses. Therefore, one missed class may be counted as an excused absence. If additional days are needed, please contact the instructor via email for prior approval. Please also remember to be courteous to others. The use of cell phones during class time promotes distraction. It is expected that all phones will be switched off during instructional time. Likewise, the use of laptop or notebook computers is discouraged during instructional time.

The following standard scale will be used to evaluate each formal assignment:

93-100 points = A
88-92 points = A/B
83-87 points = B
78-82 points = B/C
73-77 points = C
68-72 points = C/D
60-67 points = D

Required Assignments:

Journal of exploratory writings (25% of final grade): The textbook Reading Culture defines exploratory writing in contrast to summarizing (pg. 58):

“A summary is an attempt to record a shortened version of what is said in the writing. In exploratory writing, you are following your response and seeing if it will lead to connections or ideas for future writing or research”

The exploratory writing journal is a brief (approximately ½ page) daily response to a particular assigned reading on each given day. You will select one piece of exploratory writing to hand in at the conclusion of each week (for instructor feedback). All exploratory writings are to be organized in a journal format to be handed in at the conclusion of the course.

Presentations (30% of final grade): Presentations promote opportunities for both visual and oral communication. A variety of media is acceptable (from poster to PowerPoint presentations). At least
one presentation will be individual; at least one, collaborative. Presentations will include the use of key content/vocabulary from readings and discussions and will range from visual analysis to visual argumentation.

Research Paper (35% of final grade): The research paper synthesizes key concepts learned in class and their application to current social or environmental issues, such as poverty and the environment. What is the relationship of one to the other? The book *Gaviotas* chronicles these issues and provides a model synthesis for detailed consideration. The paper will be written in progressive stages, from introductory argument to rough and final draft forms. The final draft will consist of 3-5 pages (excluding references and title page).

Ten percent of the final grade is based on class participation.

**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 also cheat you out of learning, the prime reason you are here. 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).