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Office Hours: W - 12:15-2:15, Tuesday and Thursday available in Writing Center, other times by appointment

Textbook:  
A Strategic Guide to Technical Communication, Heather Graves and Roger Graves

Course Objectives:  
• Learn a rhetorical process for analyzing and producing written, visual, and oral communication in professional communication contexts  
• Understand how audience, purpose and context shape effective communication  
• Practice formatting, document design and effective use of graphics  
• Acquire strategies for testing and assessing communication you have produced  
• Practice formats of writing in group situations for formal applications, i.e. reports, memos, presentations, how-to instructions, usability testing/reporting  
• Conduct research for and effectively communicate results of a research project visually/orally and in a formal report

Course Assignments  
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<th>Percentage of Grade</th>
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<td>Note-outline of chapters</td>
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93-100% A  
88-92 A/B  
83-87 B  
78-82 B/C  
73-77 C/D  
63-67 D  
0-62 F

Attendance: You are allowed to miss two classes for any reason. I strongly recommend you save these for illness, court dates, weddings, funerals, social events, acts of God/nature etc. Any absence over two will normally require documentation from the Dean of students. Normally your grade will be lowered by 5 percent for each absence over two. There will be a sign-in sheet for each day of class, you are responsible for signing it at the beginning of class. If you do not sign-in on the day of class, you will normally not be allowed to sign-in at a later date. It is your responsibility to make sure you sign-in. I reserve the right to mark you absent if you arrive late or leave early.

Due Dates: Work is due at the beginning of class. on the due date. Work handed in after this time will normally be marked down five points for each class period it is late.

Originality of work: There are two expectations for original work in this class: the work handed in by you will be created by you; the work will have been produced for this class and not previously handed in or graded in another class.
Assignments:

Note-outline of chapter: Due the day we discuss a new chapter; you will hand in a point-form outline of the chapter based on your reading and analysis of the information presented in the chapter. The outline should show the important points in a chapter but it is to be written in point form, rather than sentence or paragraph form. If the outline is not handed in when due, it cannot receive more than \(\frac{1}{2}\) the points available for the assignment. This may be typed, or hand-written, however, it must be legible in the eyes of the teacher.

Exam based on notes: You will have an exam on the information presented in the textbook. You will be allowed to use your point note outlines for reference during the exam.

NOTE: reading, being able to analyze, synthesize and use the information in your textbook is worth 20\% of your grade. Using the ideas presented effectively will also improve your grade when completing your other assignments.

How-To instructions: Small group project. Your group will identify a student group on campus: service group, undergraduates, graduates, international graduate students etc. and identify a need for information that this group has. (In order to identify someone else’s need you usually have to talk to them.) Once the need and group are identified you will write a how-to instruction set telling the group how to meet this need. i.e. how to choose classes for a particular major, register and what to do when the class you need is filled; how to find and rent an apartment (what they need to know, documents they’d need to fill out and so on.) Your manual will include appropriate illustrations and examples, as well as a step-by-step procedural guide. You will hand in an early draft along with the final draft, so keep original copies of your work do not save over earlier drafts.

Usability report: Before handing in the final manual, you will conduct a user test with sample members of the group you have identified. Collecting data from your user tests you will then write a usability report showing your results and identifying all changes made to your final manual as a result of feedback from the testing. The usability report will include any user-questions you asked, responses, any appropriate statistics, notes made during tests.

Presentation: Group project. As with the manual you will identify a need that a group has. This can be a similar group to the one you worked with for the manual, or a group related to your area of study. Following research you will identify a specific action, or actions, that will meet the need you have identified. You will then design and give a presentation informing the group of your work and persuading them to take the necessary action(s).

Progress reports: During the work you complete on your presentation and your final report, you will be asked for memos and reports detailing the work that has been completed to date and your agenda for completing the remaining work. While some of these documents will be short, they will also be detail oriented.

Final report: Due at the end of semester. Based on your research and presentation you will write a formal report (one report per group.) This report will include a work cited page for all research presented in the paper, along with copies of any original documents you have generated, i.e. surveys, guidelines, graphs; This report must make very clear how you identified the group/need including a brief history leading up to the need/action you identify, the report will make very clear what action(s) you recommend be taken, and be persuasive in nature (you will be marked in part on how well you show the reasoning behind why the group ought to take the action(s) suggested.) Again, details are very important; consider making an appointment by week ten to talk to someone in the writing center and have them look over a draft of your report in progress, or to make sure your outline is taking on a successful shape; an appointment at the writing center can also help with finding research material.

Michigan Tech complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office. at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head or the Affirmative Action Office. at 487-3310.
Reading Schedule:
Remember, your note-outline of each chapter is due the day the chapter is discussed in class; for every week but week one that will make your note-outline due on Tuesdays.

- Sept. 2: Introduction, syllabus
- Sept. 4: Chapter One
- Sept. 9: Chapter Eight
- Sept. 16: Chapter Nine
- Sept. 23: Chapter Five
- Sept. 30: Chapter Six
- Oct. 7: Chapter Four
- Oct. 14: Chapter Three
- Oct. 21: Chapter Seven
- Oct. 28: Chapter Ten
- Nov. 4: Chapter Two
- Nov. 11: Chapter Four
- Nov. 18: Chapter 11
- Nov. 25: Thanksgiving break
- Dec. 2: Exam
- Dec. 4: Presentations
- Dec. 9: Presentations
- Dec. 11: Final Research Report due

This reading list is subject to change according to the demands of the semester; it is your responsibility to remain informed regarding what is due each day in class.