Revisions
Oral, Visual and Written Communications
Fall 2008
UN 2001 Section R21
with Casey J Rudkin

Just the facts...

• Class meets Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:35 PM to 4:50 PM
• Class meets in Walker 144
• Your instructor is Casey J Rudkin
  o Office location: 312 Walker
  o Office hours: Tuesday 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM (or by appointment - call me)
  o Office phone number: 487-3235
  o Home phone number: 337-1546 (never before 10 AM and never after 10 PM)
  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 hotto@yahoo.com or learn anything too personal about you, if you know what I mean. Also, when you send attachments, I accept them named in the following format:
Yourlastname_Section_assignment_extension. If you are turning in a visual analysis of a flag, have my Revisions class and share the same last name as me, it would look something like this:
Rudkin_R21_flaganalysis.doc. I am good with .doc and .pdf and a few other formats, but check with me if it’s a weird one. I cannot open .pdf files, so please don’t send them.
  o I check my e-mail at least once a day - give me at least 24 hours to respond
  o Web site: www.hu.mtu.edu/~casey/
  o Class list: caseysrevclass-1@mtu.edu

• Required Textbooks: Diana George-John Trimbur - Reading Culture - 6th Edition
  Robin Williams - The Non-Designer’s Design Book 3rd Edition
  A three-ring binder (clear cover) with at least five tab dividers
  Your own notebook - same one, every day in class, with pen or pencil - I suggest a composition book dedicated to this class

Course Description & Goals

During this Revisions course, students are...

• expected to understand and experience the composing process in written, visual, and oral communication.
• to acquire extensive practice in revising written, visual, and oral communication.
• to learn how to enhance/complement their writing with visual and oral forms of communication.
• to experience a range of written, visual, and oral genres and understand how a writer’s purpose and sense of audience shape these genres.
• to experience both the personal and social/collaborative dimensions of learning and communicating.
• to acquire practice in rhetorical analysis and critical reasoning.
• to learn how to conduct, communicate, and document research for a substantial piece of argumentative writing.
Course Overview

This is a General Education requirement, and it is in the course schedule to help you broaden your worldview. "But why," you may ask, "would I want to do that?" This semester, I'll show you. We will be discussing communication and how your worldview affects both your outgoing and incoming communication. The idea is that by looking at ways your culture (and your audience's culture) shapes communication, you will become better at crafting your ideas into effective communication. Of course you already know how to communicate, but by analyzing and practicing what you do, you will be even more effective. In this class, you will do a lot of writing.

I am very excited about using Reading Cultures. It has a cultural focus, as well as interesting readings I believe you'll enjoy and from which you can learn a lot. I have included The Non-Designer's Design Book because it is very helpful in visual communication. If you are interested in shoring up your grammar issues, I would suggest Strunk and White's The Elements of Style. It is my hope that these texts, as well as the in-class discussions and projects, will provide you with some vital information that will benefit you in your academic, professional and personal lives.

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:

_______ 200 points for active class participation/social practices
_______ 200 points for homework and in-class assignments
_______ 100 points for "What's Your Style?" Project #1
_______ 100 points for "Hoist the Jolly Roger!" Project #2
_______ 300 points for "May the Best Candidate Win?" Project #3
_______ 100 points for the Final Portfolio

Most majors require you to get a C or better to pass. You can expect a grade breakdown to look something like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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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>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>you really don't want to go here...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Attendance Policy

Be aware that students are permitted to miss six (6) classes per semester, unexcused; subsequent absences will result in a failure from the class. Documented, excused absences will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. Even before the “fatal six,” your absences will reflect on your active participation and in-class exercise points. 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. If you fail to sign the attendance sheet for any reason, it will count as an unexcused absence.

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 have included the first week as an example. See my website for the remainder of the semester’s schedule.

Week 1: Introduction, Communication & Chapter 8: Work

| Tues - 3 Sept | Intro to course / Communication in class  
|              | Partial review of syllabus - print out your copy  
|              | How many hours will you commit?  
|              | Read letters from previous students  
|              | Why are we starting on Chapter 8? (homework assignments)  
|              | Read “Nickled and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America” in Reading Cultures (pages 406-412, including the endnotes)  
|              | Write a one-page response to the reading. Tell me why this essay does (or does not) apply to you. Use examples from the text.  
|              | Print out the Rhetoric Handout and bring a copy to class.  
|              | Print out the assignment sheet for “What’s Your Style?” and bring it to class.  

| Thurs - 4 Sept | Turn in “Nickled-and-Dimed” response  
|               | Syllabus/Introduction Quiz  
|               | Discuss “Nickled-and-Dimed”  
|               | Discuss rhetorical strategies  
|               | Discuss & Assign Arc #1 “What’s Your Style?”  
|               | Read Reading Culture “The Great Indian Dream” (pgs 413-415) and “High-Tech Hijack” (pgs 415-418)  
|               | Answer the question: “How will the issues in these essays affect me?” and use examples from the text to support your answer (1 pg)  
|               | Bring all of your books & folders to class on 9 September (Tuesday)  


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 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, iPods, TVS, 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 - even tankas. It is distracting when I cannot see your eyes, and it is not that warm in here. 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. 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, Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3510).

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 proud member of Safe Place.