Composition:
Oral, Visual and Written
Spring 2010
UN 2001 Section R09
with Casey J Rudkin

Just the facts...

- Class meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 1:05 PM to 1:55 PM
- Class meets in Walker 144
- Your instructor is Casey J Rudkin
  - Office location: 313 Walker (upstairs, take a left off the stairs or elevator)
  - Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM (and by appointment)
  - Office phone number: 487-3235
  - Home phone number: 337-1546 (never before 10 AM and never after 10 PM)
  - Campus e-mail: casey@mtu.edu
- Required Textbooks:
  - 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 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 composition.
- to learn how to enhance/complement their writing with visual and oral forms of composition.
- 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 and practice your communication skills. "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 *Everything's An Argument*. It has a rhetorical 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 composition. If you are interested in shoring up your grammar issues, I would suggest Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. I would also STRONGLY RECOMMEND that you buy a dictionary — a real, live, paper dictionary. 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
- 150 points for "Hoist the Jolly Roger" Project #2
- 250 points for "Exploring Michigan Tech" 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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>540-594</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>you really don't want to go here...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Attendance Policy

I have adjusted my attendance policy in recent semesters. I no longer have a fixed number that indicates "fail." However, every absence 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 and participate, 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 a non-attendance, non-participation grade.

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 Blackboard for the remainder of the semester’s schedule. Please use this schedule to facilitate your planning, working and studying.

Week 1: Introduction, Communication & Chapter 1: Everything is an Argument

| Mon - 11 Jan | 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  
|             | For Wednesday:  
|             | Read “Chapter One: Everything is an Argument” in Everything’s An Argument (pages 3-32, including the sidebars)  
|             | Print out the Rhetoric Basics Handout and bring a copy to class.  
|             | Print out the assignment sheet for “What’s Your Style?” and bring it to class.  

| Wed - 13 Jan | You have read the first part of chapter 1  
|             | Syllabus/Introduction Quiz  
|             | Discuss “Chapter 1” so far  
|             | Discuss rhetorical strategies (Rhetoric Basics Handout)  
|             | Discuss & Assign Project #1 “What’s Your Style?”  
|             | Read “Chapter One: Everything is an Argument” in Everything’s An Argument (pages 33-44, including the sidebars)  
|             | Bring all of your books & folders to class on 15 Jan (Friday)  

| Friday - 16 Jan | Rhetoric Quiz  
|                | “What’s Your Style?” Proposal Due  
|                | Discuss “Chapter 1”  
|                | Discuss rhetorical strategies and professional journals  
|                | Read Chapters 18 (pgs 514-527) & 19 (pgs 528-548)  
|                | Bring EAA to class on 20 Jan (Wed)  

The Fine Print...

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 without my explicit permission.

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 electronic policy of which you need to be aware. I do not permit cell phones in my class – dito for Blackberries, pagers, iPods, TVs, PDAs, 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 toucas. It is distracting when I cannot see your eyes, and it is not that cold in here. 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. 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 (487-2007).
(http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.htm)

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 (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).
Disability Services (http://www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html)

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.