HU 3120: Technical and Scientific Communication  
Summer 2010  
Track A, Online

Instructor: Ann Brady, Ph.D., STC Program Director  
Email: mabrady@mtu.edu
Chat or Email Office Hours: 8-9:00 am and 4-5:00 pm, EST, M-Th  
Selected readings, as assigned, posted on Blackboard

Course Description  
Technical and Scientific Communication (TSC) is a study of written, oral, and visual communication in professional settings. It emphasizes audiences, writing processes, genres, collaboration, professional responsibility, and effective expression.

Course Goal & Objectives  
TSC seeks to familiarize you with representative communication demands of today's workplace. Specifically, its objectives are to offer you professional strategies for:

Planning, drafting, and revising  
Writing for a variety of audiences  
Collaborating with a team at a distance  
Designing visually effective texts  
Reviewing your own work, as well as that of others  
Producing rhetorically sensitive documents

Course Policies  
Blackboard, email, course materials, & help:  
This course is taught on Blackboard. All course materials are posted there. Check Blackboard regularly since I use it to post updates and offer further explanation of assignments or readings.

I will be online and available to "chat" or to respond to your emails 8-9:00 am and 4-5:00 pm Mondays through Thursdays. I'll be available to clarify assignments or course materials and to answer your questions. If you contact me at times other than these, I will get back to you, but not immediately.

If you need help with Blackboard management, contact me right away. You can also contact Blackboard support.  
Web: http://blackboard.mtu.edu  
Email: courses@mtu.edu
**Academic honesty:**
Unless the assignment calls for a collaborative effort, I expect that the work you submit will be yours. If you are referring to, or using, other sources, including your own work for another class or project, remember to acknowledge them, using proper form. Evidence of copied or plagiarized work is cause for serious disciplinary action by the University.

If you have questions about your work with other sources, mail me. I consider learning how to document sources a challenge; if you don't remember how to do this—or never learned—this is the class to secure that technique.

**Replacement work:**
Keep electronic copies of your work since you are responsible for replacing it should it be misplaced.

**Due date/time & late work:**
Be sure to note the due date and time. All due dates and times are Eastern Standard Time. If you are outside of EST, you will need to adjust accordingly. I will not accept late work.

**Collaborative work:**
Group members are responsible for working as a team and at a distance. Appraise each other of your current work by emailing drafts and/or progress updates at the end of each day. Workplace teams experience, and manage, crowded schedules and conflicting commitments in electronic environments. I expect you to do the same.

**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 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 (7-3310).

**Safe Place**
I am a member of Safe Place. Its mission statement: “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.”
While the mission statement obviously applies to real time interaction, it is also useful in guiding asynchronous work. So, I encourage you to engage in lively online discussions; I also expect everyone to be courteous and respectful.

Assignments
Reading:
I expect you to read the texts assigned and to be prepared to answer discussion questions about them. Most of the readings are short and can be found in Woelevver. Several selections are longer PDFs and can be downloaded from Blackboard. Several articles are web links on Blackboard. Check syllabus for location.

Writing, speaking, and designing:
Although I may modify the assignment topics and due dates during the semester, I plan three major assignments for this class; due dates are listed in the course calendar. I will distribute detailed assignments at the beginning of each project. Read them carefully. Save all your class materials and keep notes on your progress throughout the term.

Making Information Useful Based on Rhetorical Analysis (week 1-2)
Writing for users/user documentation (weeks 3-5)
Writing career documents (week 6-7)
Online questions and discussion topics (weeks 1-7)

Review and final drafts:
When I review drafts of your writing, send them to me as Word attachments on email. I’ll use the “comment” function and return them to you, again as email attachments. Please do not send PDFs since I can’t use the comment function in this format.

When I grade final drafts, email them to me, along with all the planning documents and drafts you have accumulated during the document cycle. I’ll reply via email. I will not post grades to Blackboard, so you should keep track of your grades as I send them to you. If you have questions about your grade at any time, email me or contact me for a “chat” during online office hours.

When peer draft reviews are scheduled, use the comment function to reply to the other students in your group and then send them your comments on email.

Grading
Making Information Useful Based on Rhetorical Analysis 25%
Library user documentation 30%
Career documents 25%
Online questions and discussion topics 10%
Online social practices (engaged, courteous, and consistent participation) 10%
Grading Standards

You can earn an A or B in this class if you complete all assignments and reach deadlines, do quality work, and show some genuine commitment. You'll earn a C if you meet deadlines with satisfactory effort or if some of your assignments are incomplete. You'll receive a D or F if your assignments are poorly executed or overdue, or if your attendance, participation, or effort is unsatisfactory.

A—truly excellent. A work is an example of highly effective professional writing, speaking, or design. It makes its purposes clear, reflects concern for its audience’s needs and responses, and is detailed, persuasive, effectively organized, exhibits appropriate format and tone, and is grammatically correct.

B—very good. B work is effective and would succeed in most professional communication circumstances. It may lack the polish or effectiveness of an A.

C—satisfactory. C work is effective though it lacks features necessary to succeed completely with a professional audience. Its purpose may not be entirely clear, it may not be effectively organized, it may not exhibit an appropriate tone or format, or it entails grammatical errors that make it difficult to read or understand than necessary.

D—poor. D work does not communicate effectively for several reasons. It may display an inadequate understanding of purpose or audience. It may lack information or be unpersuasive. Its organization may be confusing or misleading, and its tone or format may be inappropriate. It may be difficult to understand or contain serious errors in grammar.

F—unacceptable. F work does not satisfy the requirements of the assignment.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content Meets assignment</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Most aspects</td>
<td>Significant gaps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Argument</td>
<td>Interestingly and clearly advanced</td>
<td>Clearly advanced</td>
<td>May be good but only implied</td>
<td>Ambiguous or absent, generic or trite</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Insight</td>
<td>Organization Logical ordering</td>
<td>Paragraphs</td>
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<td>Valuable and sufficient support provided</td>
<td>Original and creative</td>
<td>Establishes and follows a pattern</td>
<td>Coherent and unified</td>
<td>Provided as needed</td>
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<td>Some gaps or weak support</td>
<td>Demonstrates thought</td>
<td>Follows a pattern</td>
<td>Usually coherent and unified</td>
<td>Provided as needed</td>
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<td>Some support, but weak or not clearly relevant</td>
<td>Generally follows a pattern; some gaps</td>
<td>Generally follows a pattern; some gaps</td>
<td>Some incoherent or not unified</td>
<td>Sometimes missing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poor support or connections not shown</td>
<td>Superficial or incomplete</td>
<td>Unapparent pattern or hard to follow</td>
<td>Incoherent or lacking unity</td>
<td>Enough missing to cause confusion</td>
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