Language has then to be seen as a persistent kind of creation and re-creation; a dynamic presence and a constant regenerative process
--Raymond Williams

Course Description

One of four core classes required of all students by the University's General Education Curriculum, Revisions is designed to help you develop and strengthen your oral, written and visual communication skills. Throughout the semester we will examine and create a variety of texts to gain better understanding of productive communication for differing contexts and audiences. The course requires extensive student participation in the form of individual writing assignments, group projects/presentations, and in-class discussion. Together we will consider the rhetorical force behind the stories we tell, histories we've created and the images that seem to shape our understanding in the world.

We will...

• Learn a rhetorical process for analyzing and producing texts using written, visual and oral communication
• Revise, that is, we will learn writing as a process which means extensive practice in revising written, visual and oral communication
• Learn how to conduct, communicate and document research for a substantive piece of argumentative communication
• Recognize how the processes of reflection and invention are useful in developing communications
• Conduct, communicate and document research toward a substantive piece of argumentative communication

Required Texts


Other Required Readings: Posted to Blackboard Course site, In “Readings” Folder

Absences

You are permitted two unexcused absences each semester. Realizing that participation is essential to everyone’s learning and crucial to your success in the course, absences will negatively impact your grade. I reserve the right to count tardiness as absence. If you do miss more than two classes 10 points per day will be deducted from your total score.

Due Dates, Deadlines & Late Work

I consider your work in this course to be your professional contribution as a student at Michigan Tech. The required assignments are process-driven and include a variety of stages and revisions. If your work is submitted late the opportunity for revision is minimal and will directly affect your overall score for the class.
Throughout the semester you will be asked to complete a variety of projects culminating in a final group project/presentation. Each assignment is intended to develop your oral, written and visual communication skills for differing audiences and within different contexts.

A portfolio of the work you did in this class is required at the end of the semester. You will need to purchase a 3-ring binder in which you will keep copies of all the drafts of the projects you complete. Because of the nature of this portfolio you MUST save ALL of your drafts, assignments, peer reviews, group work, notes, papers, etc. Missing information can result in more work for you and will negatively impact your grade. More specific information concerning the portfolio will be addressed in a separate handout.

You must finish all assignments and turn in a complete portfolio to fulfill the requirements of this class. Each assignment has a corresponding assignment sheet that will be available at the start of the semester in the folder on the Blackboard Course site called, “Assignment Sheets”.

Rhetorical Analysis Contemporary Issue 45 points
Reflections: Blackboard Responses 40 points
This I Believe, Credo, Draft, Final, Presentation, Visual 150 points
Film Response 30 points
Group Project, Proposal, Draft 1, Final Written, Presentation, Peer Evaluation 275 points
Portfolio 150 points
Participation 100 points

Total Points: 790

Grading Scale
790-752 A
751-712 AB
711-671 B
670-633 BC
632-592 C
591-554 CD
553-513 D
512-0 F

Office Hours & Email Policies
If my listed office hours do not fit with your schedule and you would like to meet please email me at lmwatrou@mtu.edu.

If you send me an email please allow 24 hours for a response. Include in the subject of your email our course number, your last name and a short subject (i.e. UN2001_Watrous_Assignment Questions).

Participation
Given that the goal of the class is to enhance your communication skills, your participation is necessary. Cell phones must be turned off or on silent during class and texting is strictly prohibited. If you are caught using your phone during class you will be marked “absent” for the day. You are welcome to bring your laptop computer to class, however if you are discovered doing things unrelated to the class during the period, you will be marked “absent” for the day. Earning participation points is fairly simple: Come to class, contribute constructively to class discussions, engage productively in peer reviews, do your best for your group, etc. If you are not in class, you are not participating, so poor attendance will affect your participation grade as well as your overall performance in the class. (See ‘Absences’ section of this syllabus for further detail concerning attendance policy and absence consequences.)
Classroom Conduct

Throughout the semester we will encounter and openly discuss a variety of subjects that may be controversial. Please be kind, respectful, considerate, and charitable to your classmates as engage in dialogue together.

MTU 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 the Dean of Students Office at 487-2212. For concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, departmental head or the Affirmative Action Office at 487-3310.

MTU 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 are dishonest and cheat you out of learning, the prime reason you are here. If you ever have questions about this issue, please talk with your instructor or consult a coach in the Writing Center.