Composition: Written, Oral, Visual
Fall 2010 Syllabus

Instructor: Nat Gbessagee (pronounced “Bay-say-gee”)
Office & Office Hours: Walker 141 – Tues. 2:15 pm-3:15 pm and by appointment
Phone & Email: 906-487-3257; nggbessa@mtu.edu or nggbessa@mtu.edu
Course No., Section, & Credits: UN2001-R13 & R-15; 3 Credits each
Class Times & Place: T/Th 8:05-9:20 @Fisher Hall (Building 15) Rm. #231
T/Th 11:05-12:20 @EERC (Building 7) Rm. #216
Class Listserv/Group Email: un2001r13@mtu.edu and un2001r15@mtu.edu

Welcome to UN2001—Composition. In UN2001 you will learn how to construct academic and visual arguments, undertake rhetorical analyses of text and graphic, and make oral and visual presentations by undertaking a variety of class projects. You will also learn how to write with clary and grace, and work in small groups with persons from diverse social and cultural backgrounds.

Course Goals
By the end of this course, you (each student) should be able to:

- Acquire advanced writing, editing, revision, and presentation skills necessary for effective communication and success at college and beyond.
- Demonstrate clear understanding of audience analysis and how an individual audience impacts oral, written, and visual communication.
- Demonstrate clear understanding of the dynamics of academic collaboration in cross-cultural settings.
- Horn your academic research writing skills using library and online sources.
- Produce an online portfolio of selected class projects that demonstrate mastery of key concepts, theories, and practices discussed during the semester.

Course Projects
#1—Personal Narrative Project Sequence.
#2—Academic Argument Project Sequence.
#3—Visual Argument Project Sequence (e.g., short video, slideshow presentation, podcast, etc.).
#4—Guest Editorial/Op-Ed or Rhetorical Analysis Project Sequence.
#5—Electronic Portfolio Project Sequence.

Note: The word “Sequence” is used to indicate that each project contains several activities (i.e., reflective essay, library visit, bibliographic data collection, etc. Please check the assignment sheet of each project for specific details).

Required Textbook and Supplemental Materials

- Everything's an argument with readings, 5th Edition by Andrea A. Lunsford et al.
- Supplemental readings in support of textbook may be provided via internet links and/or handouts.
Course Grading

Final course grade will be awarded on the basis of the total points obtained after successful completion of ALL COURSE PROJECTS AND RELATED ASSIGNMENTS, as well as class attendance and participation (see Social and Public Engagement below) as follows:

| #1—Personal Narrative Project Sequence | = 160 pts. |
| #2—Academic Argument Project Sequence  | = 320 pts. |
| #3—Visual Argument Project Sequence   | = 250 pts. |
| #4—Guest Editorial/Op-Ed or Rhetorical Analysis Project Sequence | = 120 pts. |
| #5—Electronic Portfolio Project       | = 80 pts.  |
| #6—Social and Public Engagement Skills| = 70 pts.  |
| Total                                   | = 1000 pts. |

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<th>Final Grading Scale</th>
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Attendance and Tardiness

- You should attend all class sessions and be on time because regular class attendance weighs heavily in favor of your academic success, performance, and progress.
- The MTU Attendance Policy for students (see University Policies in online student handbook) will be implemented in this class.
- University-sponsored field trips, fine-arts performances, intercollegiate athletics, judging teams, job fairs, illness, funeral of any relative or close friend, military duty, court appearance, and personal emergencies may warrant an excused absence from class provided that the instructor is informed in advance.
- You are entitled to two absences during the semester without an excuse. However, you are still responsible for any and all assignments missed whether or not you have a valid excuse.

Late Work Policy

- Late work is discouraged in this class. All class projects should be turned in on time. Failure to turn in your class assignments on time could result in lowering your project grade or course grade by up to 25 points. A minimum of five points will be deducted for each day an assignment is late, unless prior excuse is granted by the instructor or the Registrar’s office.

Social and Public Engagement

- Social and public engagement skills include the right of each student to express himself or herself in class freely. Please don’t interrupt the thoughts of a fellow student when he or she is speaking. If you have a different point of view, please wait for your turn to speak.
- You are encouraged to actively participate in class. However, because every student is unique, active class participation doesn’t necessarily mean that each of you should automatically become outspoken in class. Be natural in class, but also try to share your ideas and views in class freely during peer reviews, group projects, discussions about assigned readings, and meetings with the instructor.
- You should turn off your cell phone or keep it in vibrate mode while in class. Where necessary, laptops may be used during class time ONLY for note-taking, except where Internet links relevant to the course are being discussed.
• You should submit all assignments for this class to the instructor in both hard copy and electronic copy (email or CD) on or before the due date for each assignment.

• Independent work is encouraged in this class. Please do independent work unless you are assigned to work in pair or in a group. You are also encouraged to read all scheduled class readings prior to class.

• You are encouraged to seek clarification from the instructor about any class assignment or project you do not understand prior to doing the assignment or project.

**Notable MTU Policies**

**Academic Integrity Policy:**

• "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 handling in papers written by students for other classes or purchasing academic papers. Plagiarism and cheating not only are dishonest but 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 (7-2007)."

**Discrimination and Harassment Policy:**

• "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, Associate Dean of Students (7-2212). For other concern about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (7-3310)."

**Special Notes**

• Course syllabus is tentative, and it is subject to changes and adjustments by the instructor at anytime to facilitate active student learning.

• For the electronic portfolio to be submitted at the end of the semester, drafts and revisions of some written projects may be submitted, with names removed, to the UN2001 Program Director for assessment purposes.
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<th>Week 5</th>
<th>Issues in Writing Argument</th>
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| 9/28  | Issue and information questions.  
1) Issue questions and information questions in argument.  
2) Using the “because clause” in structuring argument.  
3) Class Exercise: Small Group discussion on generating issue questions and information questions.  
**Assignment:** As a group, bring to next class a list of 2-3 topics or subjects you would like to do further research on for your academic argument project. |
| 9/30  | Writing arguments.  
1) Selecting a subject or topic for your argument.  
2) Generating idea for your argument (Free writing, Brainstorming, pro and con because clauses, and exploratory tasks).  
3) Informal Writing/Discussion: Free writing and exploratory tasks on research questions.  
**Assignment:** Read Chapter 6 on academic argument, especially pages 139; 141-145, and the two sample academic argument essays by Liu and Xue. |

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<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Writing the Academic Argument Paper</th>
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| 10/5  | **Class workshop:** Each group meets with instructor in class at prescheduled times to discuss the focus and direction of your academic argument paper (e.g. topic, research questions, etc.).  
**Assignment:** Prepare a list of initial research questions and annotated bibliographies for your group’s academic argument paper. |
|       | **Note:** Read Chapter 19 along with handouts on annotated bibliography and finding and documenting sources. |
| 10/7  | **Contextualizing the use of logos and ethos in academic argument.**  
1) Using Ethos and Logos (see chapters 3 and 4).  
2) Dealing with disagreements about values, beliefs, and assumptions in argument.  
3) Dealing with fallacies in argument (see chapter 17).  
4) Class Exercise: Small group discussion on use of logical fallacies in argument.  
**Assignment:** Read Chapter 13 on style in arguments and chapter 20 on documenting sources. |

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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Incorporating Sources in Academic Argument Paper</th>
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| 10/12 | **Finding, evaluating, and documenting sources.**  
1) Identifying creditable sources for your research project.  
2) Reviewing documentation styles—MLA and APA.  
3) Tailoring and providing concrete support for your argument.  
**Assignment:** Read Chapters 19-20 and Handouts again and jot down any questions you may have for me or the librarian during our library visit on 10/14. Make a list of your research topics and questions and bring two copies with you to the library—one copy for me and one for you. |
| 10/14 | **Class meets in the MTU Library** (arrive no later than five minutes before regular class time).  
**Assignment:** Prepare the draft of your academic argument paper. |

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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Proofreading the Academic Argument Paper</th>
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| 10/19 | **Polishing the academic argument paper.**  
1) Proofreading and editing basic (see handout).  
2) Transitions (see handout).  
3) Plagiarism (see appendix 1).  
**Assignment:** Complete draft of academic argument paper for peer review. |
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<td>10/21</td>
<td><strong>Workshop on group project drafts.</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) Depending on group size, each group should bring 4, 5, or 6 hard copies (1 for each group member and 1 for instructor) of the complete draft of your group project to class for peer review and instructor feedback.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Make suggested changes to group project as recommended by peer reviewers, and bring to consultative meeting with instructor both peer-reviewed copy and revised copy of draft.  &lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;Note: Read handout on “preparing yourself to talk” in preparation for oral presentation on your academic argument paper.</td>
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<td>Wk 9</td>
<td><strong>Oral Presentation and Writing Visual Argument</strong></td>
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<td>10/26</td>
<td><strong>Group presentation on academic argument paper.</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) Group A&lt;br&gt;2) Group B&lt;br&gt;3) Group C&lt;br&gt;4) Group D&lt;br&gt;5) Group E&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Write individual reflective essay for academic argument paper and read chapter 14 on visual argument. Also bring to class a visual element of your choice (i.e., photo or webpage).</td>
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<td>10/28</td>
<td>*Academic argument paper with individual reflective essay due.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Introduction to visual argument.</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) Genres of visual argument.&lt;br&gt;2) Visual argument design, type, and elements.&lt;br&gt;3) Class Discussion: Analyzing visual arguments.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Read Chapter 2, 3, and 4 and come to class prepared to discuss the subject or topic for your visual argument project (e.g., video, podcast, standalone PowerPoint slides).</td>
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<td>Wk 10</td>
<td><strong>Planning a Visual Argument</strong></td>
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<td>11/2</td>
<td><strong>Workshop on constructing your own visual argument.</strong>&lt;br&gt;You will work alone or in group (limit group membership to 2 or 3 persons) to prepare a design plan for your visual argument project.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Complete design plan and prepare a draft of your visual argument.</td>
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<td>11/4</td>
<td>*Design Plan for visual argument due.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>More discussion on visual argument.</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) Pathos, ethos, and logos in visual argument.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Complete visual argument project for peer review.</td>
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<td>Wk 11</td>
<td><strong>Finalizing Visual Argument Project</strong></td>
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<td>11/9</td>
<td><strong>Peer review workshop on visual argument project drafts.</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) For peer review and instructor feedback, each person or group should bring to class screen shots (copies for peer reviewers and the instructor) or workable prototypes (1 copy each for peer reviewers and instructor) of the visual argument project.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Complete visual argument project for oral presentation in class.  &lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Oral presentation</strong>&lt;br&gt;1) Informal oral presentation of visual argument project.  &lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;<strong>Assignment:</strong> Complete reflective essay for visual argument.</td>
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### Wk 12

**Rhetorical Analysis and Editorial or Op-ed Writing**

11/16

*Visual argument project with reflective essay due.

**Overview of rhetorical analysis and editorial or op-ed.**

1) Understanding rhetorical analysis (chapter 5).
2) Example rhetorical analysis (see Bok’s article, p. 118).

**Assignment:** For this project, decide if you want to do rhetorical analysis of a text or video or write an editorial or op-ed for a local newspaper. Bring to class the topic for your rhetorical analysis or editorial/op-ed.

11/18

**Workshop on rhetorical analysis and editorial or op-ed.**

2) Textual effect: Freewriting, brainstorming, and generating ideas for your rhetorical analysis or editorial/op-ed.
3) Small group discussions on video and brainstorming exercise.

**Assignment:** Prepare initial draft of editorial/op-ed or rhetorical analysis.

### Wk 13

**Writing the Rhetorical Analysis or Guest Editorial/Op-Ed**

11/30

**More examples of rhetorical analysis and guest editorial/op-ed.**

1) Using proposal argument for guest editorial/op-ed (see chapter 12, especially Deshpande’s essay on campus accessibility along with Dillon’s essay (p. 603-606) on campus sorority.
2) Using causal argument for rhetorical analysis (see chapter 11, especially Hardin’s cultural stress essay along with Patel’s essay (p. 897-899) on each other’s business.
3) Small group discussion of essays read in class.

**Assignment:** Complete draft of guest editorial/op-ed or rhetorical analysis.

12/2

**Peer review of draft project.**

1) Small group discussions on individual or group drafts.
2) Revise draft and write reflective essay for project.

### Wk 14

**Preparing the E-portfolio**

12/7

*Guest editorial/op-ed or rhetorical analysis project due with reflective essay.*

Open for consultation with instructor and/or completion of any pending project missed. 

**Assignment:** Read handout on final portfolio for this class and begin writing the reflective essay for the course.

12/9

**Preparing the final portfolio.**

1) Putting together an academic portfolio—what should be included?
2) Writing the reflective cover letter for your portfolio (content and format).

**Assignment:** Assemble items for e-portfolio as discussed in class and specified on handout.

### Wk 15

**Submitting the Final E-portfolio**

12/14

Submit e-portfolio and give brief informal oral presentation of e-portfolio elements.

12/16

**Complete and submit final e-portfolio.**

Open for last minute consultation with instructor and final e-portfolio submission.