Instructor Information

Instructor: Luke Alvin
Office Location: 149 Walker
E-mail: lalvin@mtu.edu
Office Hours: MWF 10:00am – 11:00pm or by appointment

Course Identification

Course Number: UN 2001-R02
Course Name: Composition
Course Location: 143 Walker
Class Times: MWF 9:00am – 10:00pm

Course Description/Overview

“UN 2001 (also known as 'Composition: Written, Oral and Visual" is a sophomore-level writing and communications course. Students learn to apply rhetorical principles to compose effective, supported arguments in written, oral, and visual modes.” (Description from MTU graduate handbook). With this description in mind, this fall we are going to put our own twist on communication studies and explore the role, ways, and means by which rhetorical devices are used in relation to sports and other competitive activities. We'll examine a variety of print and digital media which will help us develop into more effective communicators.

Course Resources

Course Website(s)

• Blackboard http://www.courses.mtu.edu. Blackboard will be my primary way of providing info to you, so please get into the habit of checking it.

• The Craft of Research, 3th Edition, by Booth, Colomb, & Miller, ©2008 University of Chicago Publishing
Grading Scheme

Grading System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Grade Points/credit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93% &amp; above</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>88% - 92%</td>
<td>3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82% - 86%</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>76% - 81%</td>
<td>2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70% - 75%</td>
<td>2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CD</td>
<td>65% - 69%</td>
<td>1.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60% - 64%</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% and below</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I’ll always round up to the nearest whole point in the case of fractions.

Grading Policy

Grades will be based on the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Project</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Project</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio Project</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Presentation/ Portfolio</td>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class participation</td>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: 50% of the total in-class grade is based on in-class projects and one small homework assignment.

Total Points 1000

Late Assignments

Work is due at the start of class on the day that it is due. For each day that work is turned in late, it will be lowered a letter grade. Work turned in five days or later will receive a zero. If, for some reason, you know that you cannot meet a deadline, please talk to me well in advance, and I will take circumstances by a case by case basis.

Course Policies

A note on respect in the classroom: In this class we will be sharing our thoughts and opinions on issues that can sometimes become heated and we might have disagreements. Regardless of whether or not you agree with someone, it is expected that you remain polite and respectful. Rude, hostile, and intolerant behavior will not be tolerated and could result in me asking you to leave class, resulting in an unexcused absence.
**Attendance policy:** In this section of UN 2001, we are going to create and work on several projects in class, often in groups. These projects represent 10% of your total grade. If you miss an in-class assignment, you will get no credit for that day. Likewise, we will be having many discussions and other in-class activities which are important to attend. Thus, excessive (more than three) unexcused absences this semester will drop your grade by a letter for each additional absence you miss. If you know in advance that you are going to miss class, please talk to me and we may be able to make arrangements.

**Cell phones:** I don't care if you bring your phones to class. All I ask is that you put them on vibrate or silence at the start of class and that you are not texting, playing games, or doing anything disruptive with your phone during our class.

**Plagiarism/Academic Expectations**

According to MTU plagiarism is "knowingly copying another's work or ideas and calling them one's own or not giving proper credit or citation." Likewise, "reusing" a paper from a different course, copying, cheating, etc are all violations of MTU's academic integrity code. If you violate MTU's academic integrity code, I will refer you to the appropriate channels.

I'll let you in on my experience with people who decide to cheat, copy, reuse papers, find a website to write a paper for them, etc—they are really hurting themselves. Maybe they get away with it once or twice, but the risk is huge. I’m talking Stay Puff Marshmallow Man in Ghostbusters huge. If you decide to cheat, you run the very real risk of getting in serious trouble at Michigan Tech. **If you feel overwhelmed and the only way you can get your paper done is to cheat, please talk to me and I will be happy to work and help you on your paper/project outside of class.**

**University Policies**

If you have a disability that could affect your performance in this class or that requires an accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act, please see me as soon as possible so that we can make appropriate arrangements. The Affirmative Action Office has asked that you be made aware of the following:

*Michigan Technological University complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office at 487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, Chair/Dean of your academic unit, or the Affirmative Programs Office at 487-3310.*

**Academic Integrity:**
[http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html](http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html)

**Affirmative Action:**
[http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aae](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aae)
### Course Schedule

#### Week 1

- **M 8/29**  
  Receive syllabus

- **W 8/31**  
  Course introduction  
  In class introductory activity

- **F 9/2**  
  Read article on "Why we Love Sports" and be prepared for discussion.

#### Week 2

- **M 9/5**  
  NO CLASS!! Enjoy Labor Day.

- **W 9/7**  
  Sport writing basics—grammar, terms, spelling, resources.

- **F 9/9**  
  NO CLASS!! Enjoy K-Day

#### Week 3

- **M 9/12**  
  Rhetoric—why we care about an old Greek word in the sports world.

- **W 9/14**  
  Ethos, pathos, logos. Be prepared to discuss article, "Ethos, pathos, logos: Three Ways to Persuade". How do these terms apply to us when we look at sports?  
  *HW: "Pick a Player"—Due Friday.*

- **F 9/16**  
  Discuss our choices in the pick a player assignment. Talk about research paper.
**Week 4**  
*M 9/19* Research in unlikely places—fantasy football, scouting reports, video games, other forms of gaming. Is this research similar or different from "academic" research? Be prepared to discuss.

*W 9/21* Visit/Tour of Van Pelt Library (Tentative)

*F 9/23* Bring research proposal to class (see research paper handout for description). We will be reviewing our proposals with our classmates, so bringing a laptop may be helpful for revisions.

**Week 5**  
*M 9/26* Sports magazines and newspapers online. Present website group teach assignment.

*W 9/28* In-class workshop for website exploration group teach.

*F 9/30* Group teach presentations.

**Week 6**  
*M 10/3* Copyediting and proofreading styles and strategies.

*W 10/5* Come to class with draft of research paper. Work on proofreading and editing in class.

*F 10/7* No Class!! Have a fun Homecoming.

**Week 7**  
*M 10/10* A different dimension to sports—gay athletes in professional sports. Read article, "Sports appear ready to accept gay athletes in locker rooms." Do you agree with the article? Would you be comfortable playing sports with someone who is openly gay? We will discuss these topics in class.

*W 10/12* Title Nine in sports. Read article, "Football needs to start making Title IX sacrifices." If you were an athletic director, would you cut football? What does Title IX tell us about attitudes towards women’s sports? What about women in general?

*F 10/14* RESEARCH PAPER DUE AT START OF CLASS

**Week 8**  
*M 10/17* Introduction to concept of visual design. Introduce visual project.

*W 10/19* Sports symbols and their impact on visual design.
Read chapter 15 of *The Craft of Research*. Be prepared to discuss the role of graphics and statistics with sports. How can stats be helpful? How can they be manipulated?

**Week 9**  
*M 10/24*  
PowerPoints and similar programs. What visual elements make a “good” PowerPoint? What elements make a “poor” PowerPoint?

*W 10/26*  
In-class group project: "Who can make the worst PowerPoint?" Please bring a laptop to class, if you can.

*F 10/28*  
**VISUAL PROJECT DUE AT START OF CLASS**

**Week 10**  
*M 10/31*  
Introduction to audio elements of design. How are audio elements used with sports?

*W 11/2*  
Music videos and sports. What role do peoples’ choices of music tell us about their perceptions?

*F 11/4*  
Non-verbal communication in sports.

**Week 11**  
*M 11/7*  
Radio and the relationship with sports.

*W 11/9*  
Stereotypes in sports. What does the language about stereotypes in sports tell us about peoples’ values?

*F 11/14*  
Sports and money. What role does money play in sports? How does this impact "the game"? If money was not an issue, how would sports be different?

**Week 12**  
*M 11/17*  
Sports and nature—hunting, fishing, diving, etc. How can these sports impact nature in both positive and negative ways? How can they help nature? Be ready to discuss.

*W 11/16*  
**AUDIO PROJECT DUE AT START OF CLASS**

*F 11/21*  
No Class!! Enjoy Thanksgiving and good luck if you are deer hunting.

- **THANKSGIVING BREAK (11/19 - 11/27)** -
**Week 13**

*M 11/28* The ethics of rhetoric with sports. Language and discourse about professional athletes.


*F 12/2* Sports and performance-enhancing drugs. How is this an ethical issue? What does it tell us about our values in a wider sense? Be ready to discuss.

**Week 14**

*M 12/5* First round of final presentations. You need to attend, even if you aren't presenting!!!

*W 12/7* Second round of final presentations. Attend even if you already presented.

*F 12/9* Optional Q&A for electronic portfolios. Come if you have questions.

**Finals Week**

*Electronic portfolio due by 6 PM on 15 December. The portfolio takes the place of a final paper/exam.*