Course Overview:
Your goal in Composition is to respond to ideas and communicate effectively using the three main communication modes: visual, oral, and written communication. This is essential for any field. Once you are in your career, it is invaluable that you are listened to and respected. Effective communication skills can make all the difference in getting your project or idea approved and a fantastic idea being reduced to the circular file. The ideas of rhetoric and effective argument form the core of this course.

Teaching Approach:
To be a better communicator, you need to practice communication. Just like you don’t become an excellent musician or a talented shooting guard just by showing up for the concert/game time, you can’t be an excellent writer or speaker without practice. Yes you can write, yes you can speak. It’s a matter of getting up in an informal environment and doing it, practicing those skills, becoming adept at making effective arguments. That is this course. But you have to work in practice, and I expect you to show up here and contribute.

Assignments:
There are three major assignments that make up the core of this course. While they vary in length and point value, they should receive the utmost attention. There are other assignments sprinkled throughout the term, though, that should receive your full effort as well. Please remember that you must complete all assignments in order to receive a passing grade for this course.

Other Course Policies:
One of the main modes of this class is discussion, and that’s a bit hard to do when you’re not here. Attendance is essential. You are permitted two unexcused absences without any effect on your participation grade. Use them as you wish, though remember that if you miss an in-class assignment, you cannot make it up. Subsequent absences will have a detrimental impact on your Presence grade.

I do not accept late work. This is to be fair to all of us: you, your classmates, and me. I am only grading assignments at one time. Having two assignments due splits your attention.

E-Mail Policy:
Please do not send me assignments via e-mail... I will not accept them. Allow at least 48 hours for an e-mail response to questions or comments.

Points Breakdown:
35% - Presence (attendance, small graded assignments, group assignments, participation)
15% - Assignment #1
15% - Assignment #2
15% - Assignment #3
20% - Other Small Assignments & Group Work
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 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).

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, 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).

Course Schedule:

Week One: Syllabus, Introductions, Assumptions, Assign #1 assigned, Small Assign 1, Film
Week Two: Discuss Film, Discuss Articles, Peer Evaluation, Assign #1 (hand-in RD), Small Assign 2
Week Three: Final Draft Assign #1 Due, Discuss Articles, Assign #2 assigned, Small Assign 3, Visual Comm.
Week Four: Discuss News, Discuss Articles, Peer Evaluation, Assign #2 (hand-in RD), Small Assign 4
Week Five: Final Draft Assign #2 Due, Presentations, Discuss Articles, Assign #3 assigned, Small Assign 5
Week Six: What is research?, Discuss Articles, Workshop, Peer Evaluation, Assign #3 (hand-in RD), Work on Assign #3
Week Seven: Course Wrap-up, Presentations, Final Draft, Assign #3 Due

I reserve the right to change the course syllabus at any time. If you have any questions regarding course policies procedures, assignments, etc., please ask either a classmate or myself. I am available during my listed office hours and via e-mail.