Technical and Professional Communication

3120

Fall 2012

Course Description
A study of written and oral communication in technical and scientific environments; emphasizes audience, writing processes, genres of scientific and technical discourse, visual communication, collaboration, professional responsibility, and effective expression.

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COLLEGIATION: Throughout the duration of this course, you must conduct yourself in a manner becoming of a professional. Consider your peers and me as colleagues to whom you are expected to be cordial and respectful at all times. Please do not sleep in class, whisper to or chat with classmates, text, or yawn loudly while your peers and I are talking. Rude, immature behavior is prohibited. If you are unhappy with me or others in class, please don’t convey your displeasure publicly; instead, share your feelings with me after class. All electronic devices (with the exception of laptops and tablets) are not to be used in the classroom and should be turned off before each session. Laptop computers/tablets are allowed for course-related work only. When online, please do not play games, tweet or facebook, or engage in activities unrelated to this course. Inappropriate behavior will result in a lower classroom participation grade.

DEADLINES AND SUBMISSION STANDARDS: Please meet all deadlines and submit your assignments as specified. If you submit your work late, you will only receive half of the credit of your grade. For example, if you receive 80%, you will only be credited with 40%.

WORK ETHIC: Your work in this class should mirror the work you do in a professional environment. Every document you produce must exhibit conscientiousness. This is a key word for success in this class and in the professional world this class is preparing you for. A conscientious person carefully reads and responds to directions, invests time and effort in the project at hand, and prudently edits all documents for correctness and rhetorical appeal. Not meeting deadlines, a careless attitude, and shoddy work will result in a lower grade.

ATTENDANCE: Attend class regularly and on time. Because this class meets only once per week, a class missed equals a week missed. You are allowed one absence. For each absence beyond that, your final grade will be lowered by 4%. Your absence will only be excused if you provide a doctor’s note or an e-mail/letter from the Dean. Coming to class late or leaving class early regularly will also result in a reduction of your final grade. On days that you are absent, you are expected to make up all missed work in a timely manner. If you miss a quiz, you cannot make it up. However, I will drop your lowest quiz grade at the end of the semester.

DATA MANAGEMENT: You are responsible for saving copies of all of your work. Since deadlines are stated in the course schedule and on the assignment sheets, technological problems (e.g., missing or corrupted files, Internet failures) will not be accepted as excusable reasons for late work.

CONFERENCES: Over the course of the semester, you may encounter projects that require a conference with me to discuss your progress. Approach these conferences as you would an on-the-job meeting: be on time and prepared to discuss your work. I also encourage you to initiate your own conference times with me to share ideas and receive critical feedback for your work.

CANVAS SITE AND LISTSERV: Assignments, schedules, course information and additional readings (PDF) will be posted on Canvas. I will also periodically send out announcements and reminders using the class listserv (hu3120-r06-fa12-l@mtu.edu).
Collaborative Teams: At least on one project this semester you will be working in teams of three to five. Your team will be assigned a task and you will divide up the work so that each individual contributes responsibly to the project’s outcome. The grade the project receives will be determined in two ways: (1) the extent to which it satisfies the criteria of the task, as determined by me using assessment rubrics; and (2) each individual’s anonymous evaluation of him/herself and of the other members of his/her team. The grade for the project will be lowered for those who do not contribute meaningfully to the project at hand.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and cheating are serious academic offenses. They are defined by Michigan Tech’s policy as “knowingly copying another’s work or ideas and calling them one’s own or not giving proper credit or citations.” Plagiarism includes copying sections or entire papers from printed or electronic sources as well as handing in papers written by other students. In this class you are to avoid plagiarism at all costs.

Grades: Your final letter grade will be based on a 1000-point scale. Here are the numerical categories of each letter grade: A (1000-930), AB (929-880), B (879-830), BC (829-780), C (779-730), CD (729-680), D (679-630), F (629-0).

University Policies: Michigan Tech has standard policies on academic misconduct and complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. For more information about reasonable accommodation for or equal access to education or services at Michigan Tech, please call the Dean of Students Office, at (906) 487-2212 or go to http://www.mtu.edu/provost/faculty-resources/syllabus-policies/

*I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus, when necessary, to facilitate student learning.