Instructor Dan W. Lawrence  
E-mail: dwlawren@mtu.edu  
Office Hours: M, 12-1pm, or by appointment

Course Description: UN2001: Composition is a general education, university-wide class designed to inform students about effective communication practices in a world where communication is increasingly multimodal.

Overview: The theme of this class is “Visions for a Human Future Amid Apocalypse.” Global catastrophe is on the public mind: in our art, science, media and consciousness. We are concerned about economic, environmental, agricultural, and political collapse. Our resources are limited, yet global capitalism keeps churning. What is the role of writing, language, science, and technology at a time philosopher Slavoj Žižek calls the “zero-point,” a possible end of all human history in our near future?

Goals: The goal of this class is to take a rhetorical approach to composing in the digital age. Students will learn how rhetoric can inform meaningful communication across the disciplines and to conduct ethical research, while practicing digital composing techniques in the creation of a media project. Students will reflect on profound personal, social, and global issues while we investigate the intersection of science and the humanities.

Required Reading: Carl Sagan, Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space. Occasional additional readings on Canvas. This text will be used as a jumping-off point for discussion, research, and writing.

Grading: These are the important due dates for the course that you will want to note. I will not accept late work.

| Attendance          | 20%  |
| Canvas Reflections | 15%  |
| Project One        | 15%  |
| Project Two        | 15%  |
| Project Three      | 15%  |
| Portfolio          | 20%  |

Attendance: Missing class will harm your grade. This is because there will be a substantial amount of in-class interaction, material, prompts and discussions. I strive to make every class meaningful and worthwhile. Notify me ahead of time if you cannot make it to class. I allow two of these excused absences in the course, because I understand that unexpected life issues happen. Unexcused absences, or absences beyond those two excused will result in ½ of a letter deduction in your final class grade, and subsequent absences will compile further deductions.

Devices: Keep laptops away during class. Phones and other noise-makers should be silenced or on vibrate mode. Some tasteful ringtones may be excused, especially works by Iron Butterfly, Stravinsky, or Woody Guthrie. Please leave the room if you need to use a communication device. I advocate for the productive use of technology, so if we ever need figures, facts, or info from the Internet, I may understand the use of mobile devices in class. Why keep ourselves in the dark, right?

Plagiarism: I consider plagiarism a serious ethical offense. I will not accept work that is not your own, or work that is improperly or insufficiently cited. It is a waste of my time and a waste of your mind. Do your own work.

University Policies: Familiarize yourself with these policies.
Academic Integrity: http://www.mtu.edu/dean/conduct/policy/academic-integrity/
Disability Information: http://www.mtu.edu/dean/disability/policies/  
Undergraduate Policies: http://www.admin.mtu.edu/catalog/university/academic/#policies

This syllabus may be altered by the instructor at any time if warranted.