Instructor

Rebecca Miner
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Online Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 10:30a-12:30p, EST

Course Description

Communication skills are essential in human interaction. In society you are perceived by how well you speak, write, gesture, listen, and effectively communicate your ideas. Effective communication skills will be especially important in your career as you interview for jobs, negotiate salary, write proposals, and give presentations. This online course provides an opportunity for you to consider these things and develop your online presence, which is clearly something for you to consider while living and working in a global economy.

In short, if you take this course seriously, you will learn how to communicate more effectively with others and have a better understanding of what is being communicated to you. I can help show you the way towards being a good communicator, but only you can discover your own communication idiosyncrasies. Only you can learn how your identity shapes your communication style and how you want to be represented by others. This course is what you make of it. Remember, you use your communicative skills not only in your classes, but in your interpersonal relationships of your daily life.

Course Goals

• Learn a rhetorical process for analyzing and producing texts using written, visual, and oral communication.
• Acquire extensive practice in revising written, visual, and oral communication.
• Analyze and produce a range of (mixed) written, visual, and oral genres and understand how a writer's purpose and sense of audience shape these genres.
• Understand how the audience and purpose in any communication situation shape effective communication.
• Enhance/complement your writing with visual and oral forms of communication.
• Experience both the personal and social/collaborative dimensions of learning and communicating.
• Acquire practice in rhetorical analysis and critical reasoning.
• Learn how processes of reflection and invention are useful in developing communication.
• Work both alone and collaboratively with others in learning and communicating.
• Learn how to conduct, communicate, and document research for a substantive piece of argumentative communication.

Required Materials

Wysocki, Anne and Dennis Lynch. Compose, Design, Advocate. 2nd Ed. 2013

Selected readings, posted on Canvas.

Policies

Canvas, email, course materials, and help:
This course is taught on Canvas. All course materials are posted there. Check Canvas regularly since I use it to post updates and offer further explanation of assignments or readings. I will post announcements there too. If you need help with Canvas, utilize the Canvas help walk-in hours at the JRVP Library: http://www.mtu.edu/ctl/instructional-resources/canvas-one-stop/one-stop/walk-in/canvas_walk-in_hours.html

I generally check my email several times during the day, but do not assume I will be able to respond to your messages immediately unless it is during office hours. I will respond to email within 24 hours Monday through Thursday. Allow 48 hours Friday through Sunday, though I will generally respond more quickly.
Regarding Attendance and Presence
Because this is a communication course, your participation is essential to the learning environment of all students. To be an active participant you must frequently follow our online discussions, ‘listen’ actively by carefully reading and processing other’s comments, read the selected readings, and volunteer thoughts and ideas in discussion posts. Your social practices grade will be based upon how I observe your participation within our online classroom environment, specifically during discussion posts and group activities.

We will be using the discussion board extensively in this class. Each week I will post questions which are considered your Discussion Prompts (DP). The DPs may be about the assigned reading, but may also be in response to a video or other presentation. The purpose of discussion questions is to help me assess your critical engagement in the course. You must respond to all questions and to each other, since after all this is a discussion. All responses are due at 11:59 pm EST on the due date. Typically discussion prompts are due on a Tuesday/Thursday schedule. If you are concerned about your participation in class, ask yourself the following questions:

- How am I contributing to discussions? Or am I just repeating what other’s have already posted?
- Do I ask questions within online discussions to contribute new and thoughtful ideas?
- Is what I write disrupting the discussion group? Or am I politely critiquing what I write in response to other’s comments?
- Am I responding to others in the group, to form a continuous discussion?
- Am I actively listening to the class discussions?
- If I disagree with a fellow classmate, how am I thoughtfully responding to their post?

Regarding Respectfulness
Because this course relies heavily on your involvement, it is important for us to have an environment where everyone can be heard without being ridiculed or harassed. We aren’t always going to agree, but it is important to understand that we need to challenge ideas thoughtfully and openly while still being respectful to one another. On the occasions when you disagree with your classmates consider using the rhetorical principles/concepts you learn in this course as a way to respond to your classmates. This not only shows me that are you learning the class concepts but you are also learning how to utilize these concepts as a strategy in communicating respectfully. Your respectfulness will affect your social practices grade.

Regarding Preparedness
We all learn from each other in this class. Class discussion revolves around the work you bring to our online environment. It is imperative that you come to class prepared with that day’s assignment, including reading the readings. I expect you to read the texts assigned and to be prepared to answer posted discussion questions about them. The readings can be found in the required textbook, in PDFs in Canvas, or through web links. If you don’t bring your best work to class then no one will benefit.

Due date/time & late work
All due dates and times are Eastern Standard Time. If you are outside EST, you will need to adjust accordingly. I will not accept late work.

Replacement work
Keep electronic copies of your work since you are responsible for it should it be misplaced.

Regarding Assignments
Assignments can be found in “Modules” in Canvas. All assignments must be submitted on time to the appropriate Assignment in Canvas and need to be in PDF format. You need to use the following naming convention for every assignment: last_name_assignment#.PDF. If you fail to name your assignment appropriately points will be deducted from your assignment because I will assume you do not know how to follow simple instructions.

The assignments you do in this class will ask you to step through multiple drafts and revisions. Drafts will not be graded; however, because multiple drafts will only benefit your assignment, points will be deducted from your final draft if you do not submit the required first draft assignment.

I will not accept late assignments. Please be in contact with me if you require an accommodation due to an illness or disability.
Group members are responsible for working as a team and possibly at a distance. Keep each other informed of current work by emailing drafts and/or progress updates at the end of each day or according to a schedule worked out by your group. Workplace teams experience, and manage, crowded schedules and conflicting commitments in electronic environments. I expect you to do the same.

**Regarding the Syllabus**
I reserve the right to change this syllabus to meet the needs of the class.

**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 to your instructor or consult a coach in the Writing Center (487-2007).

**MTU's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment**
MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americas with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you have a disability and need accommodation for equal access to education and services at MTU, please call the Dean of Students (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).

**Portfolios**
At the end of the semester you will compose a portfolio of your work. I will develop a rubric that encompasses key portfolio objectives. Your portfolio will be used for the purpose of an overall assessment of this course. You are required to include your work (a specific list of what to include will be provided). You will be required to compose and include a reflective letter describing your understanding of the course goals, the major assignments, and to reflect on the values of the class to your general education and to your learning about multimodal communication.

You must, therefore, save everything you do in this class along the way: all drafts, peer reviews, speech notes, group work materials, handouts, etc. Save everything!! This means you will need to keep separate electronic files of all of your work by naming each draft a different file name. This will help you produce a portfolio that includes all of the necessary pieces from the semester.

< Scroll to see “Grading” on next page.>
You must complete all assignments, projects, and the final portfolio to receive a **passing** grade in this course. Your final grade is determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Sequences</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Career Path Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignment 1 – Resume (20 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 2 – Rhetorical analysis (research) (50 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 3 – Identifying questions (30 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 4 – Reflection (50 pts)</td>
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<td>Prezi Map Project</td>
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<td>Assignment 5 – Pick items – research (20 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 6 – Design plan exercise (60 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 7 – Final draft of map (120 pts)</td>
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<td>Argumentative Proposal Project</td>
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<td>Assignment 8 – Formal design plan (50 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 9 – Argumentative proposal (200 pts)</td>
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<td>Portfolio Project</td>
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<td>Assignment 10 – Cover memo (75 pts)</td>
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<td>Assignment 11 – Actual portfolio (75 pts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Prompts and Social Practices</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL POINTS</strong></td>
<td>1000</td>
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By "social practices" I mean your contributions and active listening during class discussions, your peer review activities, group activities, and some informal work, as well as your professionalism, and commitment to submitting timely and complete work. See “Regarding Attendance and Presence.”

Because you have to be present to participate in class discussions, attendance is also included in your social practices grade. You must maintain an online presence in this course. See “Regarding Attendance and Presence” for more information.

No incomplete grades will be given for this course.