HU2820 Communication and Culture

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Texts:
M. Barnard, *Graphic Design as Communication*, 2nd ed.
Pdfs as assigned (available on Canvas)

Course Description:
Introduction to the ways that communication creates and maintains culture. Considers a variety of perspectives on the significance of communication. Explores the importance of communication for understanding culture.

Rationale:
Communication is not only about transmitting intended meanings but is in itself a process of making meaning in cultural contexts. We will explore the process of semiosis: how and why signs make meaning, shape possibilities, and are the focus of cultural struggles.

Objectives:
• Understand semiotics as a way to study culture and communication
• Apply key concepts of a constitutive view of communication and ideology
• Use semiotic tools to examine the work of signs in real-world experience especially in creative problem-solving

University Learning Goal:
This course is a HUFA 2000-level course that meets University Learning Goal #4 Critical and Creative Thinking. The assessment rubric is at [http://www.mtu.edu/assessment/program/university-learning-goals/Goal%204_Critical_CreativeThinking.pdf](http://www.mtu.edu/assessment/program/university-learning-goals/Goal%204_Critical_CreativeThinking.pdf)
Student work products (exams, essays, projects, etc.) may be used for purposes of university, program, or course assessment. All work used for assessment purposes will not include any individual student identification.

Policies:
• Plagarism will be reported to the Dean of Students so carefully document any sources you use for your presentations. Please refer to the MTU Academic Integrity Policies at [http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html](http://www.studentaffairs.mtu.edu/dean/judicial/policies/academic_integrity.html)

• I encourage you to contact me about any questions or suggestions. In addition, please see me about any particular accommodations in accordance with MTU’s ADA policy:
MTU complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) 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 906-487-2212. For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action Office at 906-487-3310.

This class is conducted in accordance with the following MTU policies:

- **Affirmative Action Policies:** [www.admin.mtu.edu/aaio/](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/aaio/)
- **Disability Services Policies:** [www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html#disability](http://www.admin.mtu.edu/urel/studenthandbook/student_services.html#disability)
- **I am part of the MTU Safe Place Allies network ([http://safeplace.mtu.edu/](http://safeplace.mtu.edu/)) whose purpose is “To foster a university climate in which each individual is treated with dignity and respect, based on the assumption that all living, learning, and working environments should be safe and free from discrimination, prejudice, and harassment.”

**Requirements and Grading**

- **4 Exams (25% each)**
  - Exams will include two forms of assessment: (1) recognition items (true/false, multiple choice) that test your understanding of major concepts and arguments in the class and (2) short essays that demonstrate your ability to apply the concepts from class.

- **Participation and process:**
  - Inclass preparation and participation: Please have readings done on time, pay attention during class, contribute productively, and take the issues raised in class seriously.
  - Cellphones, laptops, and other e-devices: I will send you a cautionary email if I observe you using e-devices in ways that distract you from the class. After two emails, I will deduct 5 points from your final grade.
  - Online participation: Please attend to online assignments and due dates. I ask that you notify me as soon as possible if you have any problems with the online materials.
  - Regular class attendance: I will keep attendance. After 3 absences (except for University excused absences), your grade will be lowered for each additional absence. The MTU excused absences and epidemic policies will apply if necessary. See [http://www.mtu.edu/flu/](http://www.mtu.edu/flu/)
  - Completion of all exams is required to pass this class.

**Final Grading Scale:**
100-93 = A; 92-88 = A/B; 87-83=B; 82-78=BC; 77-73=C; 72-68=CD; 67-63=D

**Schedule** (subject to change with notification in class or on Canvas)