Rensselaer’s Communicative Competencies

Rensselaer graduates must be able to communicate effectively in a variety of media (written, spoken, visual, electronic) and in a variety of genres (reports, proposals, etc.) Whatever the medium and genre, Rensselaer students should be able to:

1. **Understand the context in which they are communicating,**
   a. Identifying the goals of and audience for their communication
   b. Using their understanding of goals and audience to choose appropriate media, language, and content

2. **Organize their work,**
   a. Establishing a clear structure or principle of organization
   b. Creating effective introductory and concluding passages in which they identify their main point and set their work in a larger context

3. **Develop content appropriately,**
   a. Displaying a clear ethical sensibility (e.g., reporting data accurately, citing sources of information)
   b. Asserting and elaborating on claims using evidence and reasoning that are appropriate for their audience and their discipline/profession
   c. Addressing the questions and/or topics that are essential for success with a given assignment
   d. Understanding, and, as appropriate, applying principles of visual communication (graphs, charts, animations, pictures) in their written or spoken work

4. **Edit their written work carefully,**
   a. Observing the conventions of Standard English (e.g., correct usage, sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation)
   b. Observing the conventions (e.g., terminology and page format) of a particular discipline or workplace