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# Editing

Journalism 309 5 credits Fall 2013 Syllabus

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## Instructor

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and  
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p.m. and by appointment.

## Texts

- Fearless Editing: The Art of Words and Images across Media, by Dale and Pilgrim.
- Working With Words: A Handbook for Media Writers and Editors, by Brooks, Pinson and Wilson.
- The Associated Press Stylebook
- Recommended: a guide to InDesign for Macintosh or for Adobe Creative Suite.

## Supplies

A flash drive, rewritable CD or other USB storage device suitable for Macintosh computers, a ruler, pencils and an eraser.

## Software

We will be using Word for word processing, Adobe CS6 InDesign for headline writing and page design, Excel for charts, and some Photoshop.

All are for MacIntosh computers. Students are required to complete an InDesign training session before the third week of classes.

## Course covers editing, layout and graphics skills

People who work as copy editors at newspapers, as editors at magazines, as public relations practitioners creating publications, or as editors of electronic news services need to master a range of skills to do their jobs. This course aims to impart these skills:

- writing headlines and subheads;
- editing for AP news style, grammar, spelling, and punctuation;
- editing news stories for content, leads, accuracy and legal issues;
- handling columns, opinion writing and blogs;
- selecting, cropping and sizing photographs and writing cutlines;
- exercising ethical considerations with photos; stories and layouts;
- creating and editing information graphics, such as charts;
- gaining appreciation and understanding of typography;
- using InDesign to edit and lay out a range of page sizes;
- integrating principles for design with type and color;
- applying skills in a timely way to meet deadlines.

## Students' skills

Most students will feel more comfortable with some of these tasks than with others. For example, "word people" often take more readily to grammar, and "visual people" are more eager to do layouts. Professional editing draws on strengths in both areas.

One additional hour in the lab is required each week, plus considerable time on your own, to complete assignments. The journalism editing lab, CF 202, is open for students outside of class time. Mac labs open 24 hours are located in CF 161, Fine Arts 101, and Academic West 318.

Many additional practice exercises are available. Please feel free to ask questions, or to show me drafts and ask for comments, at any time before you turn in a project.

## Exercises and exams

This class does not have exams, but exercises will be done during class time twice this quarter in order to simulate journalistic working conditions with deadline pressure. These occur in the sixth and eleventh weeks.

To find the assignments and exercises in the CF 202 lab:

1. Log in to the desktop using your universal login;
2. Log in to the S drive (blue globe) and click on Journal.sys; password; OR use the Snap server code given to you in class.
3. Select the Course Material folder;
4. Go to Dale J309 Editing;
5. Select from among the numbered assignment folders.

## Catalog description

Prerequisites J207 and J307 or J380. News copy desk operations; editing; headline writing; page make-up and news graphics; and computerized editing..

## Grading and procedures

The class and lab sessions allow you to learn and practice editing skills before being graded. The skills are cumulative; successive projects require more and varied work.

Two projects will be done within a limited time period to simulate deadline pressures.

The others allow you to complete the work on your own time, though I will need to see and verify your work on rough drafts as you progress. I am happy to comment on drafts brought in ahead of the due dates, especially during office hours.

During class sessions, we will discuss projects and share suggestions. Students are encouraged to proof each other's work. But assignments turned in for grading must represent only your own individual efforts and judgment.

Late assignments are graded down 10 percent per day unless excused by an official notice. Grades are based on seven projects for a total of 330 possible points. To estimate how you are doing, use this breakdown:

- 90-100 percent A
- 80 - 89 percent B
- 70 - 79 percent C
- 60 - 69 percent D
- 59 percent and less F.

## Accuracy, practice and skill with writers are tops

When editing on deadline, it is tempting to sacrifice accuracy for speed. But striving for absolute accuracy is the point of an editor's job. You are the last line of defense!

Fact checking is quick using Journalism resources and references compiled for this class and other Internet news and archival sources. You are responsible for the factual accuracy of all stories you work with.

Good editors work positively with writers to make their stories the best they can be. As an editor, you can make a change in someone else's writing only if you can name the error.

As for grading, you have full points until errors occur and are named. An error in fact lowers a grade very quickly. So do libelous items. Errors in grammar, style, spelling and punctuation will also mean lost points. Aim for strong leads, good quotes, fairness and clarity.

Grades usually rise as more time is spent practicing skills and as students ask each other to proofread their projects. Plus and minus grades will be given.

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To speed up design and layout, or to find photos, maps and graphics, see the folders Images and Maps, Libraries, and Templates. All are located under 309 in Course Material. The templates have style sheets attached.

To save large files on the server, log out, select Editpro and use the password assigned to this class.

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## Reading assignments and topics

Please complete the reading assignments by the date listed below.

- Oct. 1 The basics of editing and story shapes, Ch.s 1 and 2 in Fearless Editing (FE); Ch. 14 in Working with Words (WWW).
- Oct. 3 Headline writing, Ch. 3 in FE; complete an InDesign training session by the end of this week. One edited story due.
- Oct. 8 Assignment #1 due; Law and ethics, Ch. 12 in FE, Ch.s 12, 13 and 16 in WWW.
- Oct. 10 Grammar, Ch.s 4 and 5 in FE and Ch. 1 in WWW; please bring this book to class.
- Oct. 17 Review of AP Style and topics in Ch.s 2-9 in WWW.
- Oct. 22 Assignment #2 due; Text-based graphics, Ch. 6 in FE.
- Oct. 24 Selecting and using photos, Ch. 7 in FE
- Oct. 29 Layout and design principles, Ch. 11 in FE.
- Oct. 31 Assignment #3 Story editing and grammar, in class.
- Nov. 7 Assignment #4 News page, due; introduction to infographics, Ch. 10 in FE.
- Nov. 14 Assignment #5, Infographics, due. Typography, Ch. 9 in FE.
- Nov. 19 Color theory, Ch. 8 in FE.
- Nov. 21 Introduction to Assignment #7, magazine design.
- Nov. 26 Assignment #6 Feature page, due.
- Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Day holiday (no class).
- Dec. 3 Creating templates and planning press runs.
- Dec. 5 Part 1 of Assignment #7 due at the end of class.
- Dec. 10 Assignment #7 due by 10 a.m. (the final exam time for class).