

Editing

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Fall 2006

Course: Journalism 61-224-C01
Class hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:40 - 2:50 p.m.
Room: Clow 148
Instructor: Grace Lim
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Office: Clow 126B

Office hours: MW, 8:30 to 10 a.m.; TTh, 8:30 to 9:15 a.m. and by appointment.

Required Texts:

- “Copy Editors Handbook for Newspapers” (second edition), Fellow & Clanin.
- Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual (2004 or later).

You will need your textbook and the stylebook in every class.

Highly recommended:

- “InDesign CS for Macintosh and Windows,” Cohen.

Ongoing Readings:

- *The New York Times* (daily) You can get the main stories for free online at www.nytimes.com. You’ll need to sign up. Copies of *The New York Times* can be found in the Journalism Department’s reading room and in Polk Library.
- *Advance-Titan*
- **Copied material. I will hand this out as assigned.**

Other Required Materials:

- A binder to hold the text, handouts and exercises.
- A ruler.
- A photo sizing (proportion) wheel.
- Pencils and eraser.
- A flash drive.

Course Prerequisite

To take this course, you must have completed Journalism 61-221 (News Writing) with a grade of C or better. You are expected to have the following skills and knowledge:

- Ability to gather information and produce a comprehensive news article that meets basic format and style requirements.
- Ability to use a computer for word processing and simple file manipulation.
- Grasp of standard English grammar, spelling, punctuation and word choice.
- Ability to use the terminology of news (such as attribution, inverted pyramid style, paraphrasing, editorializing, sourcing).

Course Content

This course covers the mechanics and ethics of editing.

The mechanics includes improving copy, writing headlines, handling photographs and cutlines, and designing pages. Such skills can be learned in a semester. However, understanding and applying the ethics of journalism – which has to do with standards, values and judgment – is a lifelong process. This course aims to give you a solid start on that journey.

Because this is a prerequisite course for further journalism study, you must earn at least a C grade to continue in the major (or the minor).

The role of journalism/editing in Liberal Arts education

Journalists are the eyes, ears, voice and heart of society. Journalists question status quo; they fight for the proverbial “truth, justice and the American way.” The skills students learn are not exclusively tailored to those who will become editors or journalists. These skills will enable the students to value accuracy and fairness. They will not be afraid to ask questions. They will not be afraid to prompt change.

Course Objectives

Copy editors don’t just work with words. Many copy editors are also page designers. They need to know the principles of design, as well as how to work with photos and graphics to design eye-catching news pages. Learning these skills requires an understanding of design along with a working knowledge of specialized computer software.

In addition, copy editors are expected to keep abreast with current events on topics ranging from sports and entertainment to world, national and local news. Knowing what is going on in the world is essential for good news judgment and for ensuring that the stories going into the paper are current.

By the end of this course, you will have been given the chance to learn how to:

- Make efficient use of reference sources, including the AP stylebook.
- Evaluate and improve the copy of others, identifying information gaps, fixing factual mistakes, correcting grammatical errors, and adding precision and color.
- Compile copy—rewriting leads, supplying transitions and reorganizing elements as necessary.
- Process wire copy and understand its uses.
- Use your news judgment to categorize articles and rank them.
- Spot flaws in copy, especially potential problems related to libel, invasions of privacy, copyright or community standards.
- Write headlines that are accurate, eye-catching and properly sized.
- Conceptualize and create effective page designs.
- Evaluate photographs, crop them and write cutlines.
- Create simple graphics to expand the presentation of an article.
- Describe the organization of publishing operations.

- Appreciate the critical role of editors in producing a successful publication.
- Use desktop publishing software to create newspaper pages.

Classroom Conduct

- Computer monitors must be turned off during class lectures. Students may not use the computers during lectures.
- Students may not work on homework for this class or other classes during class lectures.
- All work must be original. Students copying another person's assignment will receive a zero for that assignment. Two students turning in identical homework will each receive a zero for that assignment.
- Students caught cheating on quizzes will receive a zero for that quiz.
- Cell phones must be turned off or set to vibrate so they won't disturb other students.
- Private conversations must take place outside the classroom.

Class time will be devoted to a mixture of lecture, discussion and lab work. Each day's reading assignment should be done before you come to class.

Attendance

While you won't be graded on attendance, you will be graded on class participation (5 percent of the semester's grade). If you do miss class, you are still responsible for that day's material. You'll need to rely on a classmate for class notes. In general, however, you will **not** be able to make up missed quizzes, exams or other assignments unless you **notify the instructor before class meets** and provide an acceptable excuse, such as illness, religious observance or participation in university activities at the request of university officials.

Grades

Your final grade will be based on a 1,000 point scale. You can earn points as follows:

- Up to 250 points for lab exercises
- Up to 250 points for quizzes (current events, AP, geography, homework, etc.)
- Up to 100 points for midterm exam
- Up to 200 points final project
- Up to 100 points for final exam
- Up to 50 points for research report
- Up to 50 points for class participation

Final letters grades will be based on the following scale:			
A	930 to 1,000	BC	760 to 809
AB	890 to 929	C	700 to 759
B	810 to 889	CD	650 to 699

D 600 to 649

F 000 to 599

You must complete the assignments in each area. Even if you have enough points to receive a passing grade for the course without turning in a particular assignment, you must still do that assignment. Otherwise you will get an incomplete for the course.

The cutoff points for grades are not negotiable. In other words, an 889 will translate into a B and will not be rounded up to an AB. It is possible that you will come within a handful of points for a higher grade, but if you wish to receive that higher grade, you must earn it, which you can do by putting maximum effort into each assignment.

Unless you have a worksheet or specific instructions that call for you to write in your answers by hand, all assignments for this class must be typed. You should expect to lose points for material that is written by hand or not in complete sentences.

Academic Integrity

Don't cheat. The university has rules and procedures that could lead to severe disciplinary action, including expulsion, for academic misconduct.

The university's student code of discipline states that "examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to: cheating on an examination; collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course; submitting a paper or assignment as one's own work when a part or all of the paper or assignment is the work of another; submitting a paper or assignment that contains ideas or research of others without appropriately identifying the sources of those ideas; stealing examinations or course materials; submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course; tampering with the laboratory experiment or computer program of another student; knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above, including assistance in an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed."

Special University Services

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to providing reasonable accommodation to students with special needs. Contact the Dean of Students at 424-3100 (voice) or 424-1319 (TTY). The Web site is <http://www.uwosh.edu/dean/disabilities.htm>.

Edit the World!—Extra Credit

You have the opportunity to earn extra credit by finding printed errors in the world around you. For the first seven weeks of the course, you can get two points toward your final grade for an error found in a newspaper, magazine or Web site and four points for errors found in other kinds of publications (such as menus, course syllabi, posters, fliers, church bulletins, etc.). For the final seven weeks, the point awards will fall to one and two, respectively.

You will not get more than 10 points from any given publication or for the same type of error. In the final two weeks, you may earn no more than 30 points total.

You must document each error, saying what's wrong—using complete sentences—and showing how you'd correct it. You should also give the name of the publication and the date of publication, approximating if necessary. Incomplete submissions will not receive credit.

Since it is expected that this will be your own work, and not the result of collective enterprise, please include the following statement, followed by your signature, on each extra credit submission:

I am submitting this report based solely on my own work. No other student assisted me, and I am providing this information to no other student.

The instructor reserves the right to amend the rules as the semester progresses.

Schedule of Readings and Activities

Note: Course schedule may change depending on the pace of the class, the pace of the instructor, guest speakers or forces beyond human control.

Week 1: Thursday, Sept. 7

Discussion: Introduction to class, the copy editor's role in the newsroom

Readings: Chapter 1, Working on the Desk

Week 2: Tuesday, Sept. 12, Thursday, Sept. 14

Discussion: News judgment, grammar, editing

Readings: Chapter 2, Understanding News Judgment

Chapter 3, Editing for Grammar (guest speaker)

Week 3: Tuesday, Sept. 19, Thursday, Sept. 21

Discussion: Editing, AP style

Readings: Chapter 4, Editing for Precision and Accuracy

Chapter 6, Editing for Style

Week 4: Tuesday, Sept. 26, Thursday, Sept. 28

Discussion: AP style, editing, headline writing

Readings: Chapter 5, Editing for Language

Chapter 9, Writing Headlines with Impact

Week 5: Tuesday, Oct. 3, Thursday, Oct. 5

Discussion: Wire service copy, headline writing, editing, AP style

Readings: Chapter 7, Selecting and Editing Wire Service Copy

Week 6: Tuesday, Oct. 10, Thursday, Oct. 12

Discussion: Ethics, diversity, libel, headline writing, editing, AP style
Readings: Chapter 8, Editing for Libel and Ethical Issues

Week 7: Tuesday, Oct. 17, Thursday, Oct. 19

MID-TERM THURSDAY OCT. 19

Week 8: Tuesday, Oct. 24, Thursday, Oct. 26

Discussion: Photos, infographics, headline writing, editing, AP style
Readings: Chapter 10, Using Pictures
Chapter 11, Creating and Using Infographics and Sidebars

Week 9: Tuesday, Oct. 31, Thursday, Nov. 2

Discussion: Creating and Using Infographics and Sidebars (cont.)
Design, headline writing, editing, AP style
Readings: Chapter 11 (cont.) Chapter 12, Designing Pages

Week 10: Tuesday, Nov. 7, Thursday, Nov. 9

Discussion: Final Project
Design, headline writing, editing, AP style
Readings: Chapter 13, Words and Images on the Web

Week 11: Tuesday, Nov. 14, Thursday, Nov. 16

Discussion: Design, headline writing, editing, AP style

Week 12: Tuesday, Nov. 21, Thursday, Thanksgiving

Discussion: Final project, design, headline writing, editing, AP style

Week 13: Tuesday, Nov. 28, Thursday, Nov. 30

Discussion: Final project, design, headline writing, editing, AP style

Week 14: Tuesday, Dec. 5, Thursday, Dec. 7

Work on project No class discussion

Week 15: Tuesday, Dec. 12, Thursday, Dec. 14

Final exam / Final project due at the end of class on Dec. 14.