Editing—Fall 2012
Journalism 61-224, Sage 3422
A01: Mondays & Wednesdays 10:20 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
B01: Mondays & Wednesdays 12:40 p.m. to 2:50 p.m.

Instructor: Miles Maguire   **Office:** Sage 3607
Telephone: 424-7148   **Fax:** 424-7146
Email: maguirem@uwosh.edu   **Office Hours:** MW 9:20-10:20 a.m.
NOT maguire@uwosh.edu   and by appointment.
       Website: http://www.uwosh.edu/faculty_staff/maguirem/

Required Texts
- Associated Press Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law (most recent edition preferred).
- "Watch Your Words" (third edition), Dunsky.
- You can thank me now for not requiring an editing textbook and thereby saving you upwards of $100. Don't spend it all in one place. ;~) We will use PowerPoint presentations and handouts to cover what would otherwise be covered in a textbook.

Course Prerequisite
       To take this course, you must have completed Journalism 61-221 (Writing for the Media) with a grade of C or better.

Course Content
       To succeed in the 21st century, a journalist, or more broadly a media worker, will need a mix of "old-school" and cutting-edge skills. The position of editor, traditionally defined as someone who oversees, corrects and coordinates the work of others, is disappearing, but the function of editor—preparing content for dissemination to a targeted audience—is becoming an increasingly important role throughout the profession.

       In many cases, you will be expected to be your own editor, using a mix of social, linguistic and technological skills to produce informational or promotional messages that have impact. Because you may or may not have the luxury of working with another editor to catch your mistakes or to elevate the quality of your work before it is loosed upon the universe, you will be expected to be expert in your use of the English language as well as competent in your use of a variety of software programs. This course will get you started down that path.

       We will work for much of this semester in the context of an established medium, the newspaper. But don't make the mistake of thinking that we are working on skills that are somehow out-of-date or will soon become so. The work routines and standards of newspapers are at the base of other forms of media, including magazines, broadcast news, PR communications, advertising and many websites. By learning how a paper works, you will gain insight into how other forms of media have evolved and their relative strengths and weaknesses. The final part of the course will deal with publishing on the Internet.

       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).

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will have been given the chance to improve your skills in four areas: language, critical analysis, print production and online presentation. Specific subgoals are listed below.

Language

Given a piece of copy, you should be able to:

- Spot words that are used incorrectly, especially in cases (like "lie" and "lay" or "affect" and "effect") where words are easily confused or commonly misused.
- Break the sentences down into their component parts and to identify parts of speech as well as phrases and clauses.
- Apply AP style rules, particularly those pertaining to abbreviation, capitalization, punctuation, specialized terms and numbers.
- Rephrase wording to tighten and improve clarity.
- Write appropriate headlines and catchlines for a specified medium.

Critical analysis

Given a piece of copy, you should be able to:

- Evaluate and improve its quality, identifying information gaps, reorganizing information for emphasis or ease of comprehension, and adding precision and color.
- Make efficient use of authoritative reference sources, such as the AP Stylebook, to verify facts and fix errors.
- Spot potential issues related to libel, invasion of privacy, copyright or community standards.

Given a group of news items, you should be able to:

- Use your news judgment to categorize and rank them.
- Write brief summaries that would appeal to a specified audience.

Print production

Given a group of articles, you should be able to:

- Conceptualize and create effective page designs using desktop publishing software.
- Place text in an InDesign template.
- Evaluate, size and place photographs in an InDesign template.
- Apply preset formatting to sections of type and customize text formats.
- Create simple graphics to expand the presentation of an article.

Online presentation

Given a targeted Web audience, you should be able to:

- Aggregate and curate appropriate articles.
- Set hypertext links in individual articles to maximize usability.
- Optimize headlines for search engines.
- Respond to the time demands of the online environment.
- Prepare pages for the Web using Dreamweaver.

Class Expectations

Class time will be devoted to a mixture of lecture, discussion and lab work, and your presence in class is extremely important, both for the sake of your own grade and for what you can contribute to others.

If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed in class by contacting other students. If you cannot make it to class, do not expect your instructor to accommodate your situation by providing individualized instruction.

You will not be able to make up quizzes, exams or other assignments unless you notify the instructor before class meets and provide an acceptable excuse as provided under the university's instructional policies. In some cases it may not be possible to reschedule an activity, and you may need to devise a substitute assignment, subject to instructor approval, if you miss class and wish to make up points.

You will need your Stylebook in every class, and to ensure academic integrity you will not be allowed to borrow your instructor's or a classmate's.

Grades

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

- Up to 50 points for participation, including class discussions and exercises.
- Up to 50 points for discussion posts on media news developments.
- Up to 50 points for our Vocab Confabs.
- Up to 200 points for article labs.
- Up to 100 points for print production labs.
- Up to 100 points for online production labs.
- Up to 100 points for online quizzes.
- Up to 50 points for student authored style quizzes.
- Up to 100 points for a language skills exam.
- Up to 100 points for the editing project.
- Up to 100 points for the final exam.

Final letter grades will be based on the following scale:

A	940 to 1,000		C	700 to 775
A-	920 to 939		C-	650 to 699
B+	890 to 919		D+	600 to 649
B	840 to 889		D	550 to 599
B-	820 to 839		D-	500 to 549
C+	776 to 819		F	< 500

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 899 will translate into a B and will not be rounded up to a B+. 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.

I. Participation (50 points).

You will be graded on your ability and willingness to contribute meaningful information to class projects and discussions.

II. Media news posts (50 points).

The media world is changing every day thanks to innovations in technology and strategy, and it is critical that you supplement what you learn in the classroom with additional information that you take in on your own time. For 10 weeks of the semester, you will be expected to make a post on D2L about a significant news development affecting the media. An easy way to stay on top of such developments is to visit http://www.iwantmedia.com/ or, better yet, sign up for daily e-mail alerts from that site. The discussion forum will close at 10 a.m. each Tuesday, and we will discuss these news developments during class that day. <u>This is a first-come/first-served assignment, meaning that only the first person (in each section) to post on a given development is guaranteed to get credit.</u>

The class will discuss the stories in small groups, and each group will report to the full class on a story that it finds particularly interesting or unusual. A vote of the class will award five extra credit points a week to the student who comes up with the "best" story.

It's possible that two (or more) students will come up with the same story. There won't be an automatic penalty, but if the rest of the assignment is not clearly your own work, you will be dealt with according to the university's rules on academic misconduct.

This project will run for 10 weeks, with the first assignment due Sept. 10.

To get full credit for this assignment, you must make each weekly post. At the end of the semester, you will hand in a one-page essay that will discuss two questions: What was the most significant news story that you posted about, and what was the most significant news story that another student posted about. In this essay you will explain what the news stories were about and why you found them to be important.

III. Vocab Confab (50 points).

The English language has about 5 million words, and the typical college student knows no more than 40,000 of them. This isn't a big problem for living day to day. But if you wish to prepare for a career in communications, one of your priorities should be improving your language skills. A good place to start is with vocabulary.

For this project, each student is expected to contribute to an effort to expand our common vocabulary by bringing to class (on the second class meeting of the week) a word that you have learned in the last week. It's likely that you will encounter new words in your classes or through your reading. But if you don't, you can always turn to the dictionary.

For each word:

- Give its part of speech (noun, verb, etc.).
- Provide a definition that uses only commonly understood words.
- Tell where the definition came from (e.g. which dictionary you used).

- Trace the entry of the word into English (its etymology).
- Tell where you came across the word.
- Use it in a sentence.

Here's an example:

Metatarsal

According to Webster's New World Dictionary, this is an adjective that refers to the metatarsus, which is the part of the human foot consisting of the five bones between the ankle and the toe. The word comes from the Greek words "meta," meaning "after," and "tarsus," meaning "the flat of the foot."

I found this word in my human physiology textbook.

Example: Doctors warn that metatarsal pads in high heels can cause foot problems.

The written portion of this assignment must be entered into the appropriate discussion forum on D2L. It must be in your own words (not a cut-and-paste from another source) and must be written in grammatical, complete sentences. Otherwise points will be deducted from your score.

For full credit you must include all of the bullet items above.

The class will discuss the words in small groups, and each group will report to the full class on a word that it finds particularly interesting or unusual. A vote of the class will award five extra credit points a week to the student who comes up with the "best" word (but only two points if it's mispronounced).

It's possible that two (or more) students will come up with the same words. That's OK, but if the rest of the assignment is not clearly your own work, you will be dealt with according to the university's rules on academic misconduct.

This project will run for 10 weeks, with the first assignment due Sept. 12.

To get full credit for this assignment, you must make each weekly post. At the end of the semester, you will hand in a one-page essay that will discuss two questions: What was the most interesting word that you posted about, and what was the most interesting word that another student posted about. In this essay you will explain what the words were and why you found them to be interesting.

IV. Article labs (200 points)
Over the course of the semester we will edit a series of articles, looking for particular kinds of errors and learning how to improve copy. Part of your grade will be based on completing the lab, and part will depend on how good your editing is.

V. Print production labs (100 points).
You will learn how to use print production software, and these labs will test to see how well you are absorbing these lessons.

VI. Online production labs (100 points)

The Internet presents a variety of challenges and opportunities for content producers. In these exercises, we will look at some of these issues from a conceptual perspective, with just a little bit of technology thrown in.

VII. Online quizzes (100 points).

You will complete 10 quizzes in D2L covering specific problem areas related to grammar, style and punctuation. The quizzes will be available for a week at a time and will close at 10 a.m. on the date listed on the syllabus. For example Quiz 1 will close at 10 a.m. on Sept. 17.

VIII. Student style quizzes (50 points).

Working in small groups, students will take responsibility for teaching specified sections of the AP Stylebook to the rest of the class. Your group will select out key points, present them to the class and then quiz the class on what it learned. Each group will get to go twice.

The Stylebook will be divided up as follows:

IX. Language skills exams (100 points).

This exam will focus on basic language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and AP style.

X. Editing project (50 points).

For several weeks we will concentrate on producing a newspaper page using InDesign desktop publishing software. You will be given class time to work on this project, but you may also have to work on it outside of class.

XI. Final exam (100 points).

As a cumulative test of what you have learned over the semester, you will be asked to handle a breaking news story—perhaps for print, perhaps for online, perhaps for both.

Course Policies

To the extent possible, class sessions will be conducted in a manner simulating the style and atmosphere of a working newsroom. Among other things, this means:

- You should get in the habit of addressing your instructor by his first name.
- You don't necessarily have to show up for class on time but should expect to be severely penalized (as much as 100 percent) for any assignments on which you fail to meet deadline. At a minimum late assignments will be penalized at the rate of 10 percent of the total points available per day.
- You had better have an extremely good reason for missing class. Unless you come to class, you will not learn the skills you need to carry out the assignments on which you will be graded.
- 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.
- You should expect the unexpected.

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."

Protect Your Work Files

The software that we will be using this semester is generally stable, but it is not crash-proof. The editing project will involve multiple steps, and if your computer fritzes out on you, you could lose a significant amount of work. The solution is to save your files—and to save frequently. (Get in the habit of resting your left thumb over the Apple key and hitting the s key with one of your fingers. This is the keyboard shortcut for saving a file.)

You will also need to store various kinds of files that will be distributed to you for the project. The easiest way to do that is by using TitanFiles.

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 website is http://www.uwosh.edu/dean/disabilities.htm.

The schedule on the next page is intended as a guide and may be subject to change.

Course Calendar

Read "Watch Your Words" chapters as indicated below.

DATE	TOPIC	LAB SKED	ONLINE	READING	MISC.
9/5	Intro				
9/10	Fact errors				NP1.
9/12	Parts of speech	Article 1.			VC1.
9/17	Usage	Article 2.	Quiz 1	Usage.	NP2.
9/19	AP Style	Article 3.		AP.	VC2.
9/24	InDesign intro	Print 1.	Quiz 2		NP3.
9/26	Sentence structure	Article 4.		Grammar.	VC3; SQ1.
10/1	Photoshop intro	Article 5.	Quiz 3	Punctuation.	NP4.
10/3	Heads	Print 2.			VC4; SQ2.
10/8	Modifiers	Article 6.	Quiz 4		NP5.
10/10	Punctuation	Article 7.			VC5; SQ3.
10/15	Verbs (voice)	Print 3.	Quiz 5		NP6.
10/17	Review				VC6; SQ4.
10/22	Language exam				
10/24	Planning	Article 8.	Quiz 6		VC7; SQ5.
10/29	Page Design	Article 9.			NP7.
10/31	Cutlines		Quiz 7		VC8; SQ6.
11/5	Graphics	Print 4.			NP8.
11/7	Centerpiece	Article 10.	Quiz 8		VC9; SQ7.
11/12	Inside pages/jumps	Print 5.			NP9.
11/14	Briefs		Quiz 9		VC10; SQ8.
11/19	Edit project				NP10.
	THANKSGIVING BREAK—GOBBLE TILL YOU WOBBLE!				
11/26	Aggregation/curation		Quiz 10		SQ9.
11/28	Law & ethics	Online 1.			Essays (NP/VC).
12/3	Dreamweaver/links	Online 2.			SQ10.
12/5	SEO	Online 3.			
12/10	Timing	Online 4.			
12/12	Final exam				