

Editing—Fall 2008
Journalism 61-224, Clow 148
Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:20 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

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Required Texts

- Associated Press 2008 Stylebook and Briefing on Media Law.
- “Watch Your Words” (second edition), Dunsky.

Textbooks must be brought to class every day. In addition to the textbooks, students may use reliable Internet sources as reference tools.

Course Prerequisite

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

This course is designed to teach you the necessary skills to produce error-free, attention-grabbing and inviting news pages that conform to high journalistic standards. To that end, you will not only receive instruction and practice in the technical aspects of editing and page design, but you will also participate in discussions and exercises to help you make appropriate judgments with respect to newsworthiness, inclusiveness, community standards and potential legal problems.

Although this course is focused on newspaper editing and design, the fundamentals you will learn apply to magazines, online media, advertisements and public relations copy. Additionally, the role of the traditional editor is diminishing and reporters are increasingly being relied upon to edit their own writing, so strong editing skills are essential in today's media environment.

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Evaluate and improve written texts by identifying information gaps, fixing factual and grammatical errors, and adding precision and color.
- Make efficient use of AP Stylebook and other references.
- Select credible references with which to check facts
- Use your news judgment to select and rank articles.
- Spot flaws in copy, including potential problems related to libel, invasions of privacy, copyright or community standards.
- Write headlines that are accurate, attention-grabbing and properly sized.
- Select and edit photographs and write cutlines.

- Create simple graphics.
- Conceptualize effective page designs and create them using publishing software.
- Appreciate the critical role of editors in producing a successful publication.

Attendance and Late Assignment Policy

Your presence in class is expected and important, both for the sake of your own grade and for what you can contribute to others. If you are absent for any reason, you are still responsible for that day's assignments. In most cases, you will not be able to make up quizzes or exams unless you notify the instructor before class meets and provide an acceptable excuse as provided under the university's instructional policies. Assignments handed in late without a valid excuse will (at minimum) receive a 10% reduction for each day they are late. Failure to turn in assignments may result in an incomplete for the course, regardless of the amount of points a student has earned.

Invest in a USB flash drive to save your work and back your files up on the class server. I will not accept a computer problem, such as a lost or inaccessible file, as an excuse for late work.

Grades

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

- Up to 150 points for participation, including class discussions and exercises.
- Up to 150 points for editing critiques.
- Up to 300 points for lab exercises.
- Up to 100 points for Newsroom 101 quizzes.
- Up to 100 points for the midterm exam.
- Up to 100 points for the editing project.
- Up to 100 points for the final exam, which will be based on the editing project.

Final letter grades will be based on the scale below. The cutoff points for grades are not negotiable.

A	930 to 1,000	C	700 to 759
AB	890 to 929	CD	650 to 699
B	810 to 889	D	600 to 649
BC	760 to 809	F	000 to 599

I. Participation (150 points).

All students are expected to contribute to class discussion and activities and participate in editing drills conducted from time to time. Use of computers during class for purposes other than this course will result in participation point reductions.

II. Editing Critique (150 points).

You will have three assignments in which you will evaluate the work of professional editors and share with the class what you have found. You will be required to hand in a copy of the example along with a written critique of the editor's work.

III. Lab Exercises (300 points).

During the semester you will have a series of graded lab exercises designed to reinforce skills from class lectures. They cover both text editing and the use of publication software.

IV. Newsroom 101 Quizzes (100 points).

Newsroom 101 is a set of online exercises in English grammar, vocabulary and AP style. You will complete 20 of these exercises over the course of the semester and take five quizzes based on them.

The URL is <http://newsroom101.com/> .

V. Midterm Exam (100 points).

The midterm will focus on basic language skills, including vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and AP style.

VI. Editing Project (100 points).

Over the course of the semester, we will work on an editing project that will require you to apply all of the skills you have learned in this class as you put together a front page and inside page of a newspaper. You will be given class time to work on this project, but it may require time outside of class.

VII. Final Exam (100 points).

As a test of what you have learned over the semester, you will receive a breaking news story that you will have to incorporate into the pages you have created for your editing project.

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

Earn up to 30 points by finding and correcting errors in printed matter and signage in the world around you. Your instructor will provide details.

BONUS: Students who find errors in this syllabus (except for the calendar) get 15 points per error, but only the first student to find an error gets credit. (There is at least one error.)

You cannot earn an A in this class on the basis of extra credit.

The following schedule is intended as a guide and may be subject to change.

Course Calendar

DATE	TOPIC	READING	LABS/ASSIGNMENTS
9/4	The editor's job		
9/9	The editorial process		Editing drill; News values.
9/11	Editing project	Project articles.	Project budget lab.
9/16	Punctuation and parts of speech	Watch Your Words	Newsroom 101 quiz (1-2) WYW self-test
9/18	Precision & accuracy		Editing drill
9/23	Grammar	Watch Your Words	Article lab; WYW self-test
9/25	InDesign		Layout lab
9/30	Usage.	Watch Your Words	Newsroom 101 quiz (2-7) Article lab
10/2	AP style.	Watch Your Words	Edit drill. Article lab
10/7	Diversity & inclusiveness	Handout.	Newsroom 101 quiz (1-10) Article lab
10/9	Legal issues		Edit drill. Article lab. Editing Critique 1 due 10/14
10/14	Newspaper tests	Freep.com Jobs Page	Dow Jones Editing Test; article lab
10/16	Story editing		Practice midterm
10/21	MIDTERM EXAM		
10/23	Intro to photos		
10/28	Photo cutlines		Photo lab
10/30	Verbal & visual.		Graphic lab Editing Critique 2 due 11/4
11/4	Page design		Newsroom quiz (16-20) Photo lab 2
11/6	Editing project, front page design		Edit drill; final story budget
11/11	Headline intro		Headline lab 1
11/13	Page design 2, inside pages		Briefs lab
11/18	Editing project, jumps		Project layouts
11/20	Headlines 2		Headline lab 2 Editing Critique 3 due 11/25
11/25	Web editing.		

11/26	THANKSGIVING BREAK		
12/2	Editing project.		Work on editing project
12/4	Editing project.		Editing project due
12/9	Class wrap-up.		Newsroom quiz (11-15).
12/11	FINAL EXAM		

About the Syllabus

To ensure consistency within the journalism curriculum, this syllabus has been developed in conjunction with other members of the department, and the course will share certain exercises and approaches with the other Editing sections that are being taught this semester.