The Editing Process

COMM 3600-2 • Spring 2012 • MW 11:50 a.m.-1:45 p.m. • 2840 LNCO

"Every reporter is a hope, every editor a disappointment."
—Joseph Pulitzer (1847-1911)

Professor: Glen Feighery

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> **Office hours:**   MW 3-4 p.m. and gladly by appointment.
> **Where's my office?** 2618 LNCO (at the end of the faculty office hallway).

Overview

Materials:

> ► *The Associated Press Stylebook*, 2007 or newer *(required)*.
> Purchase a new or used hard copy; buy an online subscription or Stylebook Mobile app at http://www.apstylebook.com/; or find AP on Twitter.
> ► A USB drive—at <u>least</u> 1 GB *(required)*.
> ► *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, 4th Edition.
> The Pocket Books paperback version is cheap *(recommended)*.

☛ **Make life easier!** Bring your AP Stylebook and USB drive every day.

Course goals:

> ► Improve your ability to **edit text** (print and online) for factual accuracy, judgment of content and timeliness.
> ► Strengthen your command of **language**: spelling, grammar, syntax and style.
> ► Learn to enhance a **narrative**: textual or visual, to highlight its purpose and refine its organization, clarity and flow.
> ► Master the art of writing **headlines** (print and online), including Search Engine Optimization.
> ► Hone your skill at writing **captions** (print and online).
> ► Develop **design** skills for different media and purposes.

Why take this course?

> ► If you are majoring in English, languages, linguistics or fine arts, you might find that this class complements other coursework.
> ► If you are interested in journalism, strategic communication or similar careers, you can boost your skills as a public communicator.
> ► If you enjoy researching, proofreading, visual design or educating an audience.

<u>Our Social Contract</u>

Academic honesty:

As a student, you accept a commitment to the Student Code and the academic integrity that it promotes. As your professor, I'm responsible for enforcing it.

I don't tolerate academic dishonesty. This includes cheating, plagiarism or any false means of earning a grade. If I suspect academic dishonesty, I have a responsibility to inform you and give you an opportunity to respond. If I still have reason to believe an infraction took place, I'll take appropriate action as defined by the Student Code, and you'll have a right to appeal that action.
Read the Student Code at: http://www.regulations.utah.edu/academics/6-400.html

Accommodation:

► **ADA:** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you need such accommodation in this class, please provide reasonable prior notice to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD), or online at http://www.sa.utah.edu/ds/.

► **Content:** This course might expose you to things you find discomforting. *I will not make accommodations in course content, requirements, or expectations.* The policy is at: http://admin.utah.edu/facdev/pdf/accommodations-policy-background.pdf

Attendance:

► University policy online: http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/attend.php
Note these policies! "If you miss the first 2 class meetings, or if you have not taken the appropriate requisites, you may be required to withdraw from the course. ... Students are not automatically dropped from class(es) if they do not attend. They must officially drop their class(es) by the published deadline in the academic calendar to avoid a 'W' grade."

► You must attend all classes. You get ***<u>zero</u>*** "free days."
        • Absences ***<u>will</u>*** lower your course grade. You get points for being here. You don't when you're not. If you choose to miss class, you choose to lower your grade.
        • *Numerous unexcused absences will result in a course grade of E.*

► If you miss class because of an emergency, please notify me *within 24 hours*. Don't wait until the next class.

► If you miss a day when an assignment is due and you have a legitimate excuse, I will accept the late assignment *at my discretion*. I define what constitutes a legitimate excuse, and I reserve the right not to grant full credit—or any.

► **<u>Bottom</u> <u>line</u>:** Unexpected things happen. Don't panic, but do let me know.

Assignments:

► Unless I say otherwise, assignments will be on paper—**<u>not</u>** via e-mail.

► You must turn in assignments **<u>on</u> <u>time</u>** in order to get credit.

► Professional settings are usually collaborative, **but** all graded work must be yours alone. On each assignment, I'll tell you if you may share information.

Grades

University guidelines:
http://registrar.utah.edu/handbook/grading.php

My guidelines:
A: You preserve or improve the **tone, balance and accuracy of the narrative**. You catch all or almost all errors and improve clarity and flow. Your **design is clear, original, creative and nearly flawless**.

B: You preserve the tone, balance and accuracy of the text. You catch the vast majority of errors and improve clarity or flow. Your design is clear and creative. Superficial text or design flaws exist but are not distracting.

C: You preserve the balance and accuracy of the text. You catch some or most errors but do not improve the text. Your design is clear.

D: You fail to preserve the balance and accuracy of the story. You catch some errors but do not improve the text. Your design is unclear. Numerous editing or design flaws exist, and they're distracting. Several elements are badly done or missing. Your work would raise serious questions in a professional setting.

E: You introduce factual errors or libel. Your design is sloppy or confusing. You miss the point of the assignment or don't complete it. Most or all required elements are missing. In a professional setting, the work would be rejected.

Grading scale:

100-94 A	79-77 C+	69-67 D+
93-90 A-	76-74 C	66-64 D
89-87 B+	73-70 C-	63-60 D-
86-84 B		59- 0 E
83-80 B-		

Assignment scores:

► **Editing**

+5 to +10: considerably **improving a narrative**; adding substantial and appropriate supporting material; reorganizing or clarifying exceptionally well.

+2 to +5: clarifying or simplifying confusing text; effective transitions; catching elusive errors.

-2 to -5: tone or language inappropriate to the narrative; omitting keywords (for SEO) or missing the news in headlines/captions.

-2 to -5: adding confusion; interfering with the writer's style; failing to resolve significant organizational problems; repetition; incorrect word choice.

-10: libel, privacy violation or trademark infringement.

► **Mechanics**

-2: each **AP style** error.

-5: each **spelling** error. A typo is a spelling error.

-5: each **punctuation** error.

-5: each **grammatical** error, such as subject-verb disagreement, misplaced modifier or noun-pronoun disagreement.

-5: for a **factual error**, including a misspelled or incorrect **proper name**.

Please note:
> ► **These are guidelines, *not* a rigid rubric.**
> Use this as a checklist to remind you what's important.
> ► If you have questions, ask.

Where your course grade comes from:

Quizzes: (6 x 4 percent; drop lowest)	20 percent
In-class assignments (8 x 5 percent)	40 percent
Out-of-class project	10 percent
Portfolio	10 percent
Final project (in-class)	10 percent
Participation	10 percent
Total:	**100 percent**

• I provide materials for all assignments. On most days I'll give you stories (Word files) and images (.jpg files) that you'll incorporate in InDesign.

• The portfolio is work you already will have edited, *i.e.*, work previously done in class. You'll use my feedback to polish projects to professional quality.

• For the final project, I invite—but do not require—students to incorporate their *own* work into a project that showcases expertise in the course objectives (text editing, headline and caption writing, visual design). For example, you might create a magazine-style photo essay using your own images and text. Regardless, I'll work with each individual to negotiate something that is professionally useful. The last two weeks (eight hours) of class are dedicated to the final project.

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Important:
*Keep electronic <u>and</u> printed versions of <u>**all**</u> your work.*

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Required grammar test:

To assess part of the skills covered in this course, you will take a required grammar test.
The score will ***<u>not</u>*** affect your course grade.

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<u>Finally</u> . . .

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Learning is an interactive, continuous process. To make it easier, I've set out several policies. Please make sure you understand them. If you have questions, ask anytime. To quote University of North Carolina professor Deb Aikat:

"You are not an interruption of my work – you are the purpose of it."

<u>Weekly Schedule</u>

The Office of the Registrar keeps the official semester calendar. It's at:
http://registrar.utah.edu/academic-calendars/spring2012.php

<u>Note</u>: Life's unpredictable, so this *will* change. When it does, I'll tell you.
► Read each assignment *by* the day listed.
► Most readings are on Blackboard/WebCT.
► "AP" refers to entries in your Associated Press Stylebook.

Week 1	**Monday, Jan. 9**	Intro: Syllabus and schedule. **Read:** This syllabus.
	Wednesday, Jan. 11	Editing: Why learn it? **Read:** "How to InDesign on Deadline." **Exercises:** Survey questions; intro to InDesign; build your InDesign template.
Week 2	**Monday, Jan. 16**	NO CLASS—MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY.
	Wednesday, Jan. 18	Editing basics, content judgment and narrative. **Read** *for Quiz*: P-Sheet. **Read** *for Editing basics*: "Author and Editor." **Quiz 1:** Punctuation.
Week 3	**Monday, Jan. 23**	Editing for content and style. **Read** *for Quiz*: "AP style to know cold." **Quiz 2:** AP style to know cold.
	Wednesday, Jan. 25	**Read** *for Content*: Friend, Ch. 3 (selected pages); ProPublica, "Podcast: Susan White on Editing." **Exercise:** Content editing (graded).
Week 4	**Monday, Jan. 30**	Grammar. **Read** *for Quiz*: **AP,** A-E (entries on abbreviations and acronyms, composition titles, courtesy titles). **Read** *for Grammar*: Bender, Ch. 3; "Grammar and Usage"; "Grammar1." **Quiz 3:** AP style, A-E (Part 1). **Exercise:** Grammar review.
	Wednesday, Feb. 1	**Exercise:** Grammar review; content and style editing (graded).

| *Week 5* | **Monday, Feb. 6** | Grammar and style.
Exercise: Finish grammar review. |
| | **Wednesday, Feb. 8** | GRAMMAR TEST (*required*). |

| *Week 6* | **Monday, Feb. 13** | Headlines.
Read *for Quiz*: **AP,** A-E (entries on datelines, dimensions, directions and regions, distances).
Read *for Headlines*: TBA.
Quiz 4: AP style, A-E (Part 2).
Exercise: Writing headlines (practice). |
| | **Wednesday, Feb. 15** | Headlines.
Exercise: Writing headlines (graded).
Assignment: Out-of-class project (*due* Monday, Feb. 27). |

| *Week 7* | **Monday, Feb. 20** | NO CLASS—PRESIDENTS DAY. |
| | **Wednesday, Feb. 22** | NO CLASS. |

| *Week 8* | **Monday, Feb. 27** | Photos, graphics and captions.
Read: TBA.
Exercise: Photos and captions (practice).
Due: Out-of-class project. |
| | **Wednesday, Feb. 29** | Photos, graphics and captions.
Exercise: Photos and captions (graded). |

| *Week 9* | **Monday, March 5** | Design 1: Print/tabloid.
Read *for Quiz*: **AP,** F-O (entries on fractions, governmental bodies, highway designations, holidays and holy days, legislative titles, legislature).
Read *for Design*: TBA.
Quiz 5: AP style, F-O. |
| | **Wednesday, March 7** | **Exercise:** Integrated editing and design (graded). |

| *Week 10* | **Monday, March 12** | SPRING BREAK. |
| | **Wednesday, March 14** | SPRING BREAK. |

Week 11	**Monday, March 19**	Design 2: Print/broadsheet. **Read** *for Quiz*: **AP,** P-Z (entries on parentheses, party affiliation, political parties and philosophies, temperatures, time element, times). **Read** *for Design*: Sara Dickenson Quinn, "Design monotony." **Quiz 6:** AP style, P-Z.
	Wednesday, March 21	**Exercise:** Integrated editing and design (graded).
Week 12	**Monday, March 26**	Design 3: Magazines. **Read:** TBA.
	Wednesday, March 28	**Exercise:** Integrated editing and design (graded).
Week 13	**Monday, April 2**	Design 4: Tablets (*e.g.*, iPad). **Read:** Barb Palser, "The Ins and Outs of iPad Apps."
	Wednesday, April 4	**Exercise:** Integrated editing and design (graded).
Week 14	**Monday, April 9**	NO CLASS.
	Wednesday, April 11	Individual consultations in our classroom. Makeup, portfolio or final project work. Deadline for passing grammar test.
Week 15	**Monday, April 16**	Portfolio/final project workshop.
	Wednesday, April 18	Portfolio/final project workshop.
Week 16	**Monday, April 23**	Portfolio/final project workshop.
	Wednesday, April 25	LAST DAY OF CLASS. Portfolio/final project workshop. **Due:** Portfolio and final project by the end of class.