BOOKS

Technical Editing, Carolyn Rude
Supplementary Readings and Materials available on line and as in-class handouts

You will need to use additional books during the course of this class. See, for example, the Chicago Manual of Style; a hardbound, college edition dictionary, also on line; usage handbook(s); Joseph Williams’s Style (Univ. of Chicago edition); The Pocket Pal (available on the web from Intl Paper) and others to be announced during the term. You may also wish to refer to web sites for the Modern Language Association (MLA) and other similar organizations concerned with standards of usage and citation. Visiting web pages of these various organizations can show a lot about style and editing, and I will refer you to the sources as we progress through the semester.

OBJECTIVES

This course focuses on preparing students for applying editing skills in a number of professional contexts. During the class you will become thoroughly knowledgeable about editing in print and electronic media. You will become skilled enough in copyediting that the day after this class ends, you could go out and get a job as a beginning copy editor. You will understand and apply comprehensive editing, know and apply information architecture, understand how editors and designers work together, and you will gain a familiarity with some of the problems editors have in dealing with writers. In addition, you will understand technical editing, and we will discuss and apply editing techniques for style and consistency. We will also delve into some theoretical questions and approaches to the editing process. While the course will be quite rigorous, many students who are intimidated by editing because it seems so technical, will be surprised and delighted to discover that editing is a whole lot of fun, and that it’s a lot more than just “bean counting with words, or putting the comma in the right place.” So get ready for an exciting and engaging semester!

We’ll be working with actual typescripts that were presented and accepted for publication and with editing exercises and tests used in the professional publishing and corporate worlds. In this class, we learn editing by doing it and thinking about the process analytically-- replicating in the classroom the on-the-job learning experiences that most professional editors undergo to learn their craft. There will be no in-class exams in this course, though there will be collaborative work. All editing tests will be take home so you can think through your responses at length. The point is to give you the opportunity to get a thorough background and feel confidence in your skills, not to enhance your sense of professional uncertainty and angst.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- Copyediting of two short editing tests, the best grade counts (10%)
- Individual copyediting of a longer typescript (5-8 pages) (20%)
- Midterm editing test (10%)
• **A group compilation project** that involves an analytical cover memo, document design, editing of multiple articles, compiling an index, and other materials associated with the project. (30%)
• **A short (2-3pp) paper** discussing an editing or usage issue (10%)
• **Final Exam:** take-home editing, with reflective essay (20%)

I’m hoping there will be opportunities in the last two weeks of the term for students to give brief oral reports for “extra credit” on issues related to the short paper assignment.

**LATE WORK**
**DO NOT GET BEHIND.** You have an automatic overnight grace period for late work; anything longer than that, ask me. Once I have graded and returned an assignment, I don’t accept late work because it confuses my grading schedule, which is a lot like an editorial schedule.

**ATTENDANCE**
I will take attendance. The class functions like a writing workshop: much work is done in groups, so you need to be here to participate. If you miss 2 classes, that should not pose a problem. If you miss more than four classes, (two instruction weeks) you will likely miss enough that it will be difficult for you to keep up. We will negotiate whether or not you stay in the class.

**SHORT PAPER TOPICS**
Previously students have written short papers about career matters (workplace issues, professional organizational studies (comparative analysis of historical grammars, usage, rhetoric, style), comparisons of different theories of style, adaptation of composition or literary research to editing practice, comparisons of editing and style in different fields and contexts, on-line editing and publishing of electronic documents, web sites, etc., issues in layout, design and other aspects of production editing. If you want to propose another topic, you certainly may do so. You must submit to me a one-page topic proposal for your paper before Week Nine. (Spring Break Week, 3/16-3/20.)

**EQUAL ACCESS**
If you have a qualified disability that requires some form of accommodation to ensure your equal access to learning in this class, please see me as soon as possible so that we can work together to address your needs.

**POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT**
The English Department confirms its commitment to the joint responsibility of instructors and students to foster and maintain a positive learning environment.
SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS

WEEKS 1-2 (1/19-1/30): Introduction to the Course. Using editor’s marks. Take-home, practice editing test. Discuss “Copy Editing—the Big and Little Pictures” Editing test #1 distributed. Discuss use of editing marks.

WEEKS 3-4 (2/2-2/13): Multi-Pass editing, The Levels of Edit
Discussion: “Macro and Micro; The Levels of Edit.”
Editing test #1 returned and discussed in class.
Lecture and discussion: “Rhetorical Editing.”
In-class work on the second minor editing assignment.
Second Editing test

WEEKS 5-8 (2/16-3/13): Words, Sentences, and Paragraphs
Lecture, discussion: “Working with the Author’s Voice.”
“Sentences and Style -- The Smaller Structure.”
Return and discuss Editing Test #2.
More on sentences. Longer individual typescript distributed.
More on sentences; justifying editing at the sentence level
Lecture/discussion: “Paragraphs and The Larger Structure.”
Longer individual typescript DUE. Students must commit to a paper topic by 3/13.) SPRING BREAK, Week Nine (3/16-3/20)

WEEK 10-11 (3/23-4/3): Working with Authors
“Jacques Barzun and ‘Behind the Blue Pencil’.” Issues between authors, editors, publishers.
More on author/editor relationships
Mid Term Examination –Take home editing test

WEEKS 12-13 (4/6-4/17): Production Editing and Document Design
Intro to the Compilation Project
Elements of page layout
Working with compositors, specifying type, marking up a dummy
Indexing and other “added value” parts of the project
Working in groups on the compilation project

Lecture/discussion: “What error? – Usage issues through time”
The English Renaissance and pragmatic prescriptivism
Enlightenment politics and aesthetic prescriptivism
The Brothers Grimm and the rise of descriptive usage in 19th century Europe
American Standards: Noah Webster and Gooold Brown
Lecture/Discussion 20th century usage
More on usage and/or group work on compilation project. Take home final.
Week 16 (5/4-5/8) TR: Oral Reports and/or work in class on compilation project.

End of the term DUE DATES:

Compilation project DUE no later than 5:00 pm, Friday, 5/8, last day of class.
Short papers and take home final DUE no later than 12pm, Monday, 12/15 (first day of Final Week). All short papers and finals to be turned in to me in my office, H.266. No late papers accepted.