

ENGL 3140 – Professional and Technical Editing

Instructor: Dr. Shelley Thomas

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Office: SS 336 Phone: 626-6814

Office Hours: Monday 11:00-12:00
Tuesday 4:00-5:00 (Davis Campus)
Wednesday 11:00-12:00
Thursday 1:30-2:30

Course Site: <http://faculty.weber.edu/sthomas>

Required Textbook and Materials

- Strunk and White. *The Elements of Style*. (4th ed.)
- *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th ed.) (CMS)
- Red pens or pencils, highlighter (your choice of color other than black or graphite-color)
- An active, working Wildcat email account (check this account often)
- Wireless access
- Your Wildcat card for printing

Recommended References

- Cook, Claire Kehrwald. *Line by Line: How to Improve Your Own Writing*. Boston: Houghton, 1985. (out of print, but a few copies can be found on Amazon)
- A good dictionary (do not rely on spell check)

Course Description

Technical editing is designed to strengthen your writing, editing, and visual design skills through attention to detail and application of style, grammar, and usage principles. In this class you will learn to:

- Use copyediting symbols
- Detect and correct errors in grammar, spelling, usage, and punctuation
- Recognize and correct errors and weaknesses in logic, consistency, style, and accuracy
- Create and use a style sheet
- Use and create graphics, and understand basic principles of layout and design
- Use advanced features of MS Word for editing electronic documents
- Work collaboratively as part of a team
- Develop portfolio material

Course Requirements

We will discuss copy editing, comprehensive editing, and the basics of document management and production. As you learn editing skills, we will also discuss issues about conventional correctness in language, how to avoid conflicts with authors, and how an editor can be smoothly integrated into the production process. Assignments will include a copy edit (hardcopy), a comprehensive edit with an explanation of editorial changes, a collaborative project creating a style guide for a client, quizzes and many in-class and out-of-class assignments.

Group Projects

The major project for this course is a collaborative project that requires students to work as teams to produce a project proposal and a style guide based on the proposed project.

On occasion, problems will arise with team projects. Each team is encouraged to attempt to handle within the team any interpersonal problems and problems with performance; *however*, if the team cannot satisfactorily resolve the issues in a timely manner, it is the responsibility of each team member to inform me. If any issue escalates to or appears initially to be of a serious nature, students should inform me at once.

Students are expected to report any significant issues (both resolved and unresolved) in periodic progress reports. In an effort to facilitate communication within groups, I will copy each group member on email responses. Please send questions about group project to me and CC your partner; I will "Reply to All." Each team member will receive the same grade for each collaborative assignment.

NOTE: My evaluation of your report projects will not be lowered because your team encounters difficulties.



Free Venting Voucher

This voucher is good for one free venting about your project, client, or partner.

By appointment only.

Attendance Policy

You are expected to be in class regularly. Failure to attend class will hurt your grade. Please note that you are responsible for material covered in class regardless of your presence or absence. Many of the quizzes and assignments will be completed in-class and cannot be made up.

Late Work Policy

As in the workplace, most deadlines are based on other demands, requirements, and deadlines and, as such, are frequently inflexible. For example, if you were submitting a proposal for your company or client in response to a government request for proposals (RFPs), a late proposal would not be accepted. It would be unfair to competitors submitting their proposals on time, as well as litigious, to allow you extra time to prepare your response. Our circumstances are not as extreme, but there are penalties for late projects:

- For each day you submit a major project late, your final grade on that project will be reduced by one letter for each day it is submitted late.
- Submit an email notice of your choice to turn in an assignment late (sthomas@weber.edu) and indicate when you will bring in a hard copy to my office. Your assignment will be considered late until you turn it in to me.

Carefully weigh the consequences of submitting your projects late. Again, as in the workplace, it is best to discuss problems in meeting schedules before the deadlines. I will not accept late papers after one week.

Incompletes

Incompletes are given only in rare and extreme circumstances. University policy states "An 'Incomplete' may be given by an instructor only when the student, having satisfactorily completed approximately 80% of the required work, is unable to complete the class work for a legitimate reason (such as illness or accident) and, in the opinion of the instructor, could complete the required work without re-registering for the class" (<http://documents.weber.edu/ppm/4-19.htm>).

Plagiarism and Unethical Behavior

Plagiarism and unethical behavior is not tolerated.

Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty in which a person represents someone else's ideas or written works as if they were his or her own. Whenever you use someone else's writings, arguments, data, or designs (either directly quoted or paraphrased) in an assignment submitted for a class, you must clearly cite the appropriate references in a format previously approved by your instructor. You must fully indicate the extent to which any parts of the assignment are not your own work. For instance, it would be plagiarism to credit someone else with the content of only one passage in a paper if in fact other

passages from that person were included without giving credit. It is also plagiarism to collaborate on a paper or accept collaboration from another person without specific authorization to do so by your instructor.

Any case will result in the student receiving a failing grade for the course and further University disciplinary action according to the [Student Code, Section IV:D & X:A & B](#).

Americans with Disabilities Act

Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact [Services for Students with Disabilities](#) (SSD) in Room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

Electronic Devices

During your scheduled class (electronic or otherwise) and during scheduled conferences, pagers, cell phones, and any other electronic device that will distract you from class will be turned off (or to silent notification).

Texting, IMing, emailing during class is rude and disrupts class sessions. Don't.

Electronic Classroom

Be prepared to work on documents electronically – this means bring your USB storage device to each class session.

We will have workshops and demonstrations in the using the Mac laptop cart. Each class session will allow you the opportunity to work with these machines. I recommend investing in a “click drive” or “thumb drive”; these are USB storage devices that you may purchase at the bookstore. These “click drives” hold much more information than a floppy and they are harder to damage. Keep one with you to save or access your work. Disk problems, printing problems, computer-related crashes, etc. ARE NOT excuses for late work. Remember to safeguard your work: BACKUP, BACKUP, BACKUP! (This means save your work in several places and keep hard copies.)

Be prepared to work electronically. If you are unaccustomed to working in group situations, bring in drafts to revise or handwritten copies to type. Lack of preparation for working electronically will result in an absence (see above). Remember, the computers are for **working**. Any inappropriate computer activity will be dealt with according to University policy.

Assignments and Grade Distribution

Quizzes (15%)

Quizzes will be based on reading and lectures. Because I expect you to be prepared for each class session, all quizzes will be unannounced and completed in class. Each quiz will be worth 10 points and there will be several throughout the semester. Missed in-class quizzes cannot be made up (see note on attendance). As with all assignments in this class, cheating will not be tolerated (see note on plagiarism and unethical behavior).

Exercises (15%)

In order to reinforce the concepts we learn in class, you will be responsible for completing several exercises during the semester. I will make these exercises available online. (I will indicate whether I expect these completed exercises in hardcopy or soft copy.) To access these assignments, go to the course web site. These exercises will be due at the beginning of class; no late exercises will be accepted. In addition, we will work on many in-class exercises (usually collaboratively); these exercises are due at the end of class and missed in-class exercises cannot be made up (see note on attendance).

Assignments (30%)

You will have three individual assignments that require more work and creativity than the exercises. For each project, I will provide an assignment description, and your grade will be determined based on how well you meet these criteria. Use single-spaced 12-point Times New Roman, Arial, Garamond, Georgia, Book Antiqua, or Trebuchet; double-space around headings and paragraphs for these assignments. Staple your completed work (no folders or report covers, please).

Collaborative Project (Proposal 5%, Final Document 15%)

The final project for the semester requires you to work with a team and a client to create a style guide for a real client. You will receive time in class to work on this project (and the associated documents) to minimize your need to schedule meetings outside of class. Communication with your group is vital; take advantage of email, instant messaging, or the old-fashioned telephone to make sure that you and your team members stay in close contact. All members of the team will receive the same grade for each part of this project. Should you have problems within your group, please try to resolve them (diplomatically, of course). If problems persist, you are responsible to bring them to me. I will mediate where necessary.

Exams (10% each)

There will be a midterm and a final exam for this course. Consult the schedule of assignments for dates. You must make a "B" on the midterm exam. Should you not make a "B" on your first attempt, you must retake the exam until you receive a "B."

Grade Distribution (see course web site for assignment descriptions)

Individual	
Copy edit	5%
Copy edit with explanation of changes	15%
Technical Editing Treasure Hunt	10%
Collaborative (Proposal 5%, Final Document 15%)	
Style Manual	20%
Exams (Midterm, Final @ 10% each)	20%
Exercises (in class and submitted)	15%
Quizzes (in class)	15%

Final grades will be based on the following scale.

- A: 90%-100%
- B: 80%-89.99%
- C: 70%-79.99%
- D: 60%- 69.99%
- E: Below 60%

Grades

Scale for grades (%):

A+	=	98
A	=	95
A-	=	90
B+	=	88
B	=	85
B-	=	80
C+	=	78
C	=	75
C-	=	70
D+	=	68
D	=	65
D-	=	60
E	=	58 (and below)