

RWS 3345 - *Editing*
Department of English
University of Texas at El Paso

Professor: Dr. Isabel Baca

Office Hours: By appointment, to be held in Blackboard Collaborate Ultra within 48 hours (with exceptions being announced)

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REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Hacker, Diana, and Sommers, Nancy. *A Writer's Reference with Strategies for Online Learners*, 7th ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2011. Print.

Rude, Carolyn D. and Eaton, Angela. *Technical Editing*, 5th ed. Boston: Longman, 2011. Print.
(E-textbook available, ISBN -13 978-0-205-71760-6)

TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Course content is delivered via the Internet through the UTEP Blackboard Learn course management system. You should have a UTEP e-mail account and have access to the Web. You may use any of the primary Web browsers—Chrome, Google, Firefox, or Safari. **To access videos and websites provided in the course, you may have to switch browsers. When having technical difficulties, try switching to another browser.**

You will need to have or have access to a computer/laptop, printer, scanner, a webcam, and a microphone. You will need to purchase a USB (flash drive).

You will need to download or update the following software:

Microsoft Office, Adobe, Flashplayer, Windows Media Player, Quicktime, and Java.

Once you log into the course, you can click on the **“Blackboard Student Orientation” link** in the left sidebar to access information regarding the software/hardware you will need for the course and to access Blackboard tutorials that will help you navigate the Blackboard learning system. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course. **If, during the course of the semester, you can't log in or have any other technical problems, call Tech Support at 915-747-5257. You can also consult the links “Blackboard Help” and “Tech Support Help Desk” located on the left sidebar.**

This course is designed and works under Mountain Standard Time (MST). Please keep this in mind when submitting assignments and meeting deadlines.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

RWS 3345, *Editing*, provides an overview, grounding, and practice in theories, principles, and processes of academic and corporate (non-academic/professional/workplace) editing and writing. Students work

with both academic and non-academic texts (print documents and visual texts), but they will focus on either academic or workplace writing/editing, depending on their career and preference. Students work individually and collaboratively, gaining experience in project management and teamwork.

My Teaching Philosophy and Course Objectives

Even the best of writers and authors work on revising, editing, and proofreading their texts, documents, and manuscripts. Their first draft is never their final draft. Because writing is recursive, writers continually go back to reread what they have written, and effective writers get accustomed to editing and proofreading their work. They practice reading and editing other's writing, and they welcome feedback on their own writing.

Thus, in this course, you will practice being not only writers but editors of your own and of others' texts. You will be given the opportunity to grow as individual writers and editors and learn how to collaborate and create team texts through effective project management tasks and skills. You, then, will learn strategies that will help you improve your own writing and help you help others improve their writing.

By the end of the course, you will:

- Learn and understand the difference between *revising*, *editing*, and *proofreading*, and be able to do all three by editing documents/texts at each stage of the process and at all levels – from line editing to comprehensive editing
- Practice editing for content and organization, editing graphics and document design, and editing for grammatical and surface errors
- Acquire a practical and theoretical understanding of workplace dynamics including project management skills and collaborative writing skills - “teamwork”
- Analyze the uses and applications of new communication technologies and different revision tools
- Practice both editing on a hard copy of a text and on-line editing (electronically)
- Use technology to enhance your writing and editing processes
- Create and edit both individual and collaborative texts and presentations
- Learn and practice evaluating and offering constructive feedback to others on their writing and editing
- Be familiar with the most common editing and proofreading symbols
- Understand and be aware of ethical and legal issues involved with writing and editing
- Learn and practice “good design” and learn how it applies to diverse professional documents, both academic and non-academic
- Discuss and be informed of issues derived largely from the field of professional and technical editing and writing
- Compose, evaluate, and edit written and visual texts.

COURSE ORGANIZATION

Each time you sign into the course, you will be on the Homepage. Start by reading the “Course Announcements,” checking “Course E-mail (Messages),” reading all weekly class materials, the textbook materials, other additional resources, and watching the videos. Complete all activities on time. Be sure to meet all deadlines. Work collaboratively and respectfully with other students and your team.

COURSE PARTICIPATION

As a required part of this course, you will:

- Spend a minimum of 6 hours per week on the course Website retrieving e-mail, reading and reviewing materials, completing exercises and activities, and participating in discussion boards and team forum blogs. Each week begins on Monday morning at 8:00 a.m. (Mountain Standard Time) and ends on Sunday, 10:00 p.m. (MST).
- Spend an additional 3-5 hours per week on- and off-line working on your writing and editing assignments for the class.
- Work collaboratively with your classmates on assignments.
- Correspond with your instructor concerning questions or concerns.

COMMUNICATION

Because this is a completely online course, all communication is through the Blackboard learning management system. In addition to the course materials (syllabus, assignments, learning modules, etc.), you will find the following links available to you.

Course Announcements –I will post updates, any changes to lessons/assignments, emergencies/important notifications, and reminders of course activities. **READ THESE FIRST! Make it your routine to check announcements at the beginning of each day.**

Discussions- A specific number of discussion boards (DB's) are planned for the course, but I will add extra discussion boards if I see the need to address other issues, topics, or the readings themselves. This course is meant to be highly interactive, and the Discussion Board is one means to achieve this. I expect for all students to keep up with and complete all the assigned readings, and all **students must meet the deadlines for the discussion boards and assignments**. As teams, you will also conduct your own group discussions and collaborative writing through the team discussion boards. You will find instructions on how to access and add discussion boards in the link "Communication Forum" in the left sidebar. Please remember that the Discussion Board is reserved for meaningful classroom discussion. You will not receive credit for a post if you simply say, "I have nothing to add," or "I have no questions," or just a "yes" or "no" answer. It is not appropriate to use the Discussion Board to talk about topics not related to this course, to complain, to promote your business, or to sell anything. I reserve the right to delete any message that I feel is not on topic or that contains controversial or insulting language. Failing to meet the deadlines or requirements for each discussion board will result in a loss of points. **Make sure you edit your responses before you post to the discussion boards.**

Course E-Mail (Messages)-Occasionally, we will be communicating with each other via e-mail. To be consistent and avoid confusion, we will use the Course E-mail (Messages), the messaging system within Blackboard. You will find this tool in the left sidebar. To send me and/or your classmates messages, please use Course E-mail (Messages). Only when it is an emergency and/or Blackboard is down and not working, should you contact me through the university's e-mailing system, Outlook, at ibaca@utep.edu. **Check your Course E-Mail (Messages) on a daily basis. You will not be notified that you have new messages automatically. You MUST check Course E-Mail (Messages)!**

Access Your Group- You will be assigned to teams. I will organize and set up the teams and group links accordingly. As teams, you will use the discussion board set up as team (group) discussion boards. Here, you and your team members will hold conversations and discussions on team assignments and tasks. You

may also exchange and upload files to revise, edit, and proofread together. **I will be included as a member of each team's discussion boards, blogs, and wikis**, giving me access to all your team discussions and team communication. Only when I deem necessary, I will participate in your team discussions.

Should you experience technical difficulty submitting your assignments via the Blackboard system, use regular UTEP e-mail (Outlook) as the alternate plan.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources and assistance can be found by consulting the various links located on the left sidebar. Under the link “**Blackboard Student Orientation**” you can access helpful resources. Under this link, you are provided with guidelines and additional resources for the following:

- **Locating Your Course**
- **Communication Tools**
- **Assignment and Assessment Tools**
- **Netiquette**
- **University Resources**

Please take the time to visit these links and become familiar with the information provided. Make sure that you also visit the rest of the links on the left sidebar, since these too will provide you with contact information for your library liaison and resources for library research and assistance.

UNIVERSITY AND COURSE POLICIES

Please familiarize yourself with university and course policies.

Americans with Disabilities Act- UTEP's Center for Accommodations and Support Services

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 915-747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in the UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at <http://sa.utep.edu/cass>. CASS staff members can validate and authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Academic Dishonesty

The *UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures* defines plagiarism as “the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another’s work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one’s own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors. It is the official policy of the university that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students.

Make-Up and Late Work

No incomplete work will be accepted. No late work will be accepted. This includes posting late on discussion boards. However, you may submit work before the due date. Meeting deadlines is an important part of a professional (technical) writer's and editor's life. Please follow the course calendar, and when in

doubt about assignments, deadlines, and/or course material, contact me. For technical difficulties, contact Technical Support (the Help Desk).

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Final Course Grade: The grade you earn will be based on the quality and quantity of your work. **You must complete all minor and major assignments to pass the course;** this includes doing all the required readings, watching all the provided videos, completing all editing and grammar exercises, participating fully and actively in all discussion boards, and submitting all editing and writing assignments.

NOTE:

If you fail to participate on a weekly basis and/or do not meet the deadlines, you may be dropped from the course. You should notify me within 24 hours if a situation arises that impedes you from participating and/or meeting a deadline.

Tentative Assignments

Probable Weight in Points

<i>Editing and Your Career</i> Writing Assignment	5
Marking a Hard Copy Exercise	10
Locating a Poor Visual Text & Summary	15
Team Project Proposal	15
Individual Progress Report	10
Team Performance Evaluation	10
Team Client Project Portfolio	45
Team PowerPoint Presentation	10
Discussion Boards – Posts and Comments on Classmates’ Posts (6 discussion boards, 10 points each – 5 pts. for posting, 5 pts. for commenting)	60
Collaboration (Contributions to each team assignment, performance on team tasks, editing team members’ writing, team blogs/discussion boards, team evaluation, and project management)	10
Participation (grammar exercises, videos, and all other class activities)	10
TOTAL POINTS:	200

FINAL GRADING SCALE

180-200 = A

160-179 = B

140-159 = C

120-139 = D

119 and below = F

The following is a grading system as it relates to the workplace environment:

- A:** Manager would be impressed and remember the work when a promotion is discussed.
- B:** Manager would be satisfied with the job but not be necessarily impressed.
- C:** Manager would ask employee to revise or rewrite sections before allowing those outside the department or company to see it.
- D:** Manager would be troubled by the poor quality of the work and would consider hiring more competent help.
- F:** Manager would replace the employee.

Readings

The purpose of the readings is to help you learn and understand the different aspects of writing, revising, editing, and proofreading. It is essential that you complete the weekly readings within the course modules and the assigned textbook readings. These will assist you with the assignments as well.

Discussion Boards

Discussion boards will allow you to interact with your classmates and me, your instructor. In posting on the discussion boards, be sure to address the full question and follow instructions. Your posts must demonstrate genuine reflection, clear writing, and critical thinking. I encourage you to cite and refer back to your textbooks and weekly readings in your posts. Posts must be at least 150 words long, and your comments to classmates' posts must show critical thinking and/or be helpful to them. Revise, edit, and proofread your writing in the discussion boards before you post. Adhere to the due date/time for posting and commenting to receive credit. If need be, more discussion boards will be added to the course.

Grammar Assessments and Other Class Activities

You will complete readings on grammar and usage. To show your understanding of these readings, you will complete grammar exercises (assessments). You will be informed of how many and which items on each exercise are incorrect. You will NOT get a grade for these exercises at the time you complete them. You will earn credit for completing these, and this will be reflected on your Participation grade (10 points). Blackboard Learn keeps track of all activities and grammar exercises you complete.

EXTRA CREDIT

For your final team project, you will submit a client project portfolio and a team PowerPoint presentation. You have the option of making this project a REAL project by selecting a REAL client to work with and producing/editing REAL documents/texts for this client. **You will receive 10 extra points to your overall grade if you select to do this.** To receive these 10 extra points, you will need to locate a client and create a **contract** with your client where you list and describe the texts/documents you will be creating and editing by a specific due date (typically close to the end of the semester). This contract must be signed by the client and all team members, and it has to be approved by me. Once this contract has been submitted and approved, your team is committed and obligated to complete all work listed on the contract. Failure to do this will result in not only not getting the 10 extra points, but also in having 10 points deducted from your final grade in the course. Selecting this option will not only give you extra credit but will also give you experience working with a real client, practicing meeting a real client's needs, getting real feedback, and having your documents be used in a real setting by real people in the community.

Feel free to contact me at any point in the semester if you have any questions or concerns about your grade or progress in the course.