

RWS 5317 – Editing

Department of English
University of Texas at El Paso

Professor: Dr. Isabel Baca

Office Hours: Online via e-mail. Response time within 48 hours (with exceptions being announced)

Telephone: 915-747-6245

Fax Number: 915-747-6214

E-mail: ibaca@utep.edu

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 Blackboard learning 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—Explorer, Google Chrome, Firefox, Safari, etc. **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 **“Ready for Online Learning?”** 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” 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 5317, 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/digital texts). Students work individually and collaboratively, gaining experience in project management and teamwork.

My Teaching Philosophy and Learning Outcomes

Even the best of writers and authors work on revising, editing, and proofreading their texts and documents. 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. For your final project, you will be working with a real "client," someone in the community/workforce, giving you the experience of creating and editing real texts for a real audience for a real purpose and context. Be thinking of whom you would like to have as a client; you can select individuals from nonprofit organizations, businesses, schools, etc. This must be a real client you can contact and with whom you can negotiate a contract for a writing and editing project.

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 print and digital 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,” reading all weekly class materials, the textbook materials, other additional resources, and watching the videos. Work collaboratively and respectfully with your classmates and your team members as required. Complete all activities on time. Be sure to meet all deadlines. You will have deadlines to meet throughout each week, not just at the end of the week. Deadlines will be given at the beginning of each week in the Course Announcements.

COURSE PARTICIPATION

As a required part of this course, you will:

- Spend a minimum of 1-2 hours per day on the course Website retrieving e-mail, reading and reviewing materials, completing exercises and activities, and participating in class discussion boards and team (group) discussion boards/blogs/wikis. Each week begins on Monday morning at 8:00 a.m., Mountain Standard Time (MST) and ends on Sunday, 11:59 p.m. (MST).
- Spend an additional 8-10 hours per week on- and off-line working on your writing and editing assignments for the class and for your client.
- Meet assignment/discussion board deadlines throughout each of the seven weeks of the course. **Please note that deadlines take place on different days/times of the week.**
- Work collaboratively with your classmates on assignments.
- Correspond with your instructor concerning questions or concerns.

COMMUNICATION

Because this is a fully 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, deadlines for assignments, discussion boards, and activities, and emergencies/important notifications. **Read the Course Announcements first!** Make it your routine to check announcements at the beginning of each day. You will receive announcements, when necessary, during the week as well.

Discussion Boards - 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. Each post must be at least 150 words long. Cite and refer back to your textbooks

and weekly readings in your posts. Be sure to revise, edit, and proofread your responses before you post them. 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. Discussion boards will be graded.

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.

COURSE POLICIES

Please adhere to the following course policies.

Make-up and Late Work

Meeting deadlines is an important part of a professional writer's life and editor's career. No incomplete work will be accepted. No late work will be accepted. This includes posting late on discussion boards. When you don't post by the deadline, you are not involved in the class discussion, and no one has the opportunity to read and respond to your posts. No credit is given to late posts. You may always submit work before the due date. 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).

Teamwork and Collaborative Writing

You will be working in teams during this course. As editors, you must learn to collaborate with writers, researchers, clients, and other entities involved in the document/text production. Thus, you will be graded on collaboration and your teamwork efforts. This involves practicing project and time management. You will be working with several individuals' schedules and availability; you must work on timing yourself and the project/tasks at hand. Communication, trust, organization, responsibility, and commitment to the team and projects are essential for successful teamwork. All team members are

expected to contribute to each of the team/writing assignments. Workload should be distributed equally and fairly among team members. All team members must contribute to the writing and editing of every team assignment.

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.

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.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Additional resources can be found by consulting the various links located on the left sidebar. Under the link “**Ready for Online Learning?**” you are provided with guidelines and additional resources for the following:

- **Communicating Effectively Online**
- **Checking your Technology for the Course**
- **Getting help from the University Writing Center (UWC)**
- **Accessing Blackboard Tutorials**

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.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

The following sections describe the different course activities/assignments and how you will be graded in this course.

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 and will strengthen your discussion board posts by citing and referring to the readings.

Grammar Assessments and Other Class Activities

You will complete readings on grammar, usage, and style. To show your understanding of these readings, you will complete grammar exercises (assessments). You will be informed on 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.

Discussion Boards

As explained earlier in the syllabus, discussion boards will be graded. Each assigned discussion board (including the Team Discussion Board, DB 2.2 in Week 2) is worth 10 points. Each discussion board consists of your response (post) and comments to your classmates' posts. Points earned will be based on the quality of your posts. Late posts will receive no credit. If need be, more discussion boards will be added, and the point scale will be revised. Edit and proofread your responses before you post them!

NBC Learn and Other Videos

Throughout the course modules, you will be asked to view numerous videos related to the week's objectives. You are required to watch all the assigned videos. These will assist you with your assignments and give you a better understanding of course content. To access the NBC Learn videos, you must go to the left sidebar, click on NBC Learn, search for the video by title, and view the video. Due to technical difficulties with NBC Learn, I am unable to provide you with a direct link to each video.

Final Course Grade

The grade you earn will be based on the quality and quantity of your work. You must complete all major and minor assignments to pass the course. The following is a list of tentative assignments and their tentative weight in points.

Assignments

Probable Weight in Points

<i>Self-Introduction Video</i>	5
<i>Course Expectations Writing Assignment</i>	5
<i>Editing a Hard Copy</i> (classmates' course expectations assignment)	15
<i>Locating and Editing a Poor Visual Text</i> - including a summary explaining the changes/revisions made	15
<i>Team Project Proposal</i>	20
<i>Team Performance Evaluation</i>	10
<i>Discussion Boards</i> – Posts and Comments on Classmates' Posts	
• DB 1.1: Self-introduction video	10
• DB 1.2: What is your writing process?	10
• DB 2.1: How can you facilitate the process of collaborative writing?	10
• DB 2.2: Facing challenges as editors- Ex. #1, pp. 40-41 (TE) -This is a team discussion board, not a class discussion board. -Each team will be assigned a specific scenario.	10

- DB 4.1: Describing your proposed team client project and your specific, individual contributions to the project 10
- DB 6.1: Reporting your progress on the team client project 10
- DB 6.2: Ethical and Legal Dilemmas as Editor – Ex. #1a, pp. 330 (TE) 10

Collaboration (Contributions to each team assignment, performance on team tasks, editing team members’ writing, team blogs/wikis/discussions, team evaluation, and project management) 15

Participation (practice exercises, quizzes/assessments, activities) 10

CLIENT PROJECT PORTFOLIO – 65 points consisting of the following:

- *Edited Text(s) (Already existing) 25
- *New Text(s) 25
- *Project Management 5
- *PowerPoint Presentation 10

TOTAL: 230

FINAL GRADE SCALE

- 207-230 = A
- 184-206 = B
- 161-183 = C
- 138-160 = D
- 137 and below = F

Feel free to contact me at any point in the course, if you have any questions or concerns about your progress, team, performance, and/or grade.