

ENGL 602: Editing

Tuesdays 4:00-6:50 p.m. | Colson Hall G18

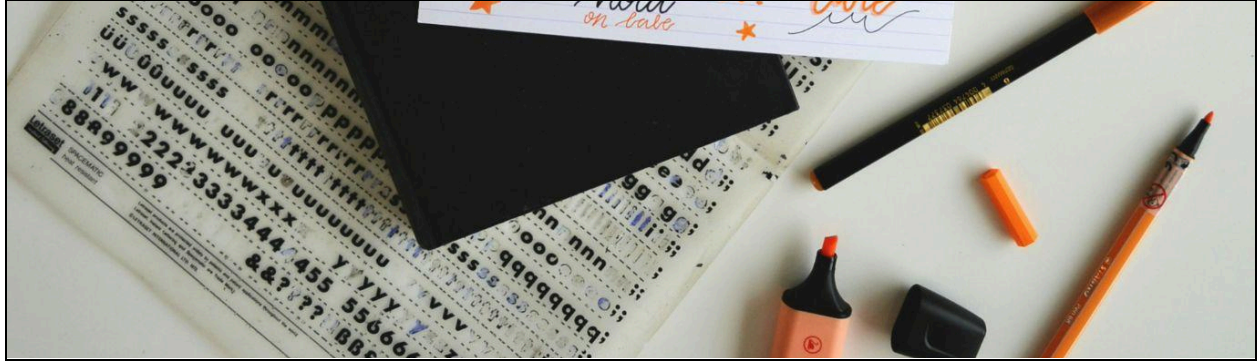


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Professor: Dr. Erin Brock Carlson, erin.carlson@mail.wvu.edu

Course Links: [Schedule](#) and [Classroom](#)

Office Hours: Mondays 3-4 p.m., Thursdays 4-5 p.m., and by appointment

Office Location: Colson Hall 227

Overview

With an emphasis on technical editing, this class will introduce you to the basic principles of effective editing and ask that you engage critically with them. Effective editors work with everything from a text's ideas and grammar/punctuation/style to its design, illustrations, organization, and progress through the publishing process. Editing skills can help you improve your own writing, do freelance work, get grant money, work more effectively with students, shape knowledge and influence progress in a field of study, and talk to your own editors more productively. This semester, in addition to the subject matter of the course that focuses on grammar and usage, we will also discuss publishing processes, project management strategies, and even industry-standard technologies.

Outcomes

At the end of this course, you will:

- Know the nuances of major debates and ongoing conversations in fields adjacent to technical editing, including Technical and Professional Communication;
- Understand the role that an editor plays in the publication process;
- Apply basic principles of proofreading, copy editing, document design, and other skills;
- Evaluate of the role of ethics and the law in professional and academic editing contexts;
- Manage complex editing projects that require cross-functional collaboration; and
- Assemble a portfolio of editing work that demonstrates your editing expertise.

Required Texts

In addition to articles and excerpts from books that I provide via Classroom, you will need to have access to the following texts:

- Dreyer, Benjamin. (2019). [Dreyer's English](#).

- Cunningham, Donald, Malone, Edward, and Rothschild, Joyce. (2019). [*Technical Editing: An Introduction to Editing in the Workplace*](#).

I have a PDF of the Cunningham text that I will share with you on Classroom. If you are a PWE MA student and/or might seek a technical writing job after graduation and can afford to do so, you might choose to purchase that text for more accessible future reference and selective reading/use. Both of these books are available through the WVU bookstore, though you can get them where you like.

Course Tools

We will work with a range of tools, but we will use Google Classroom each week to share resources and complete assignments. You can access the classroom space through [this link](#) or via this code: **h4mk4ki**. You will need to have access to a computer during many of our class meetings, so bring your own or be prepared to use a lab machine.

Assignment Overviews

Below are overviews of each major assignment. I will provide more in-depth instructions in class.

[Rhetorical] grammar/style exercise (5%)

Because a chunk of this class is developing (or refreshing) grammar and usage knowledge, we will be doing some hands-on practice in class. You will be responsible for developing an exercise (one page in length; can be in whatever format you find useful) about a particular topic that we can use in class to practice our content knowledge. Have fun!

Editing cases (30%)

As a way to practice the hard skills that we are developing in this course, you will complete three different small cases/projects during the semester. Each will help you develop multiple strengths: proofreading and copy editing; comprehensive editing and visual design; and overall project management. I will provide you with more details for each.

Legal, ethical, or theoretical position paper and presentation (25%)

Though editing might seem like a straightforward field, there are seemingly endless legal, ethical, and theoretical concerns that editors must take up in their daily work. You will select an issue of relevance to the field that you think you might eventually enter and write a 2 single-spaced page paper investigating that topic. You will also present your findings informally to the class.

Editing portfolio and editorial values statement (30%)

In order to put our skills into practice in a meaningful way, you will complete an individual editing project. On your own, you will assemble a portfolio of documents that can benefit from editing, plan that work, and perform that work, complete with project management documents (e.g. style sheets, letters of transmittal, and the like). You can navigate this in a variety of ways: this material can be delivered and actually used, or a “shadow” project which is just practice. You could work with a group on campus or in the community; you could gather documents that are publicly

available from a business or nonprofit organization; you could even work with a peer in our program and their materials. You will also submit an editorial values statement (2 single-spaced pages) that captures your approach to editing that you've developed this semester.

Class preparation and in-class activities (10%)

This class will require a lot of engagement during our meetings, as we'll do a range of activities. You can earn up to 5 points each week for class preparation work; I also sometimes assign points to in-class activities. If you miss activities in class that are worth points, you cannot make those points up. Class preparation for each week will vary; most of the time it will be completing practice exercises from the textbook, but they might also take the form of a short reading response; it might be a collaborative reading response a la dialectic notebook format (if you know, you know); or something else.

Course policies

I follow all of [WVU's standard policies](#), but there are a few that I'd call your attention to.

Community

I believe that graduate courses can be a generative and transformative space in an institution that is steeped in bureaucracy and power inequities; however, to make it such a space requires our full engagement. This means that I expect you to come to class having done the readings and ready to discuss them, question them, and build with them.

Our course will be a respectful and supportive environment—a space that I hope can be simultaneously safe and brave for all of us. You are expected to treat everyone in our community with kindness and respect. I have a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment in all forms, and you will be asked to leave class if you engage in this sort of behavior and the Office of Student Conduct will be notified.

Accessibility

I strive to make my courses as accessible and accommodating to all persons as I can. If you require any specific accommodations, please send me an email within the first week of the term in order to discuss any necessary adjustments, or as needed throughout the course. For more information, consult the [Office of Accessibility Services](#).

Intellectual property and academic honesty

Intellectual property is an increasingly relevant concern in both academic and professional spaces given the impact of digital technology. I expect that the work you submit in this course will be your original intellectual contribution. Any academic dishonesty (including, according to [WVU's standards](#), plagiarism, cheating, and fabrication/falsification) will result in a failing grade of 1% for the assignment.

In regards to generative AI: AI is here to stay and there are beneficial uses for it; however, outsourcing all of your writing is not an effective practice and will not yield the results that this

course is designed to deliver. There are also a plethora of ethical issues tied up in AI (low-paying content moderation jobs; environmental impacts; data privacy issues; etc.) that I would prefer to not contribute to during our time together. So, unless explicitly stated otherwise for the purpose of an assignment, AI-generated work is not accepted in this class.

Community health and absences

If you are sick, do not come to class. If you don't feel well or have been around other folks you know are ill and attend class, please wear a mask and respect others' personal space. There are folks in class (including me!) that are high risk or live with high risk individuals.

If you miss **three** classes, that will present a significant barrier in your contribution to the course and you will need to meet with me after that third absence to make arrangements for moving forward. If you miss four or more classes, I will advise you to drop the course.

Student success, mental health, and basic needs

WVU has a number of resources and offices dedicated to student success. Of special note, when it comes to writing, is the [Eberly Writing Studio](#), located here in Colson Hall. (On a personal note: I was a writing center consultant during my BA and MA, and wouldn't have been able to write my dissertation without visiting the writing center each week, from prospectus to final edits. It's a wonderful space and I encourage you to take advantage of it.)

Any student who faces challenges securing their food, housing, or other elements of wellbeing, and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Student Advocacy Center for support. Please notify me if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide or connect you with any resources.

Being a student is really hard, and it's often a big adjustment from whatever you were doing in your previous life. WVU does have resources available on campus, and most are available at no-charge. [The Carruth Center for Psychological and Psychiatric Services](#) (CCPPS) offers consultations, short-term individual therapy, group therapy, and various mental health-related workshops. Virtual and in-person (outside of pandemic situations) services are available. Crisis services are also available 24/7/365: you can text "WVU" to 741741 for support from a trained Crisis Counselor.

However, I do want to acknowledge that the stressors of being a graduate student, instructor, and scholar are different from the pressures that most undergraduate students face. The mental health of graduate students is [deeply overlooked](#), so I want to encourage you to be cognizant of your own wellness and to advocate for yourself in every space, including this class. I am a resource to help you work through the difficulties of balancing these different roles; however, those different roles include being an active and committed participant in our course. If you do not feel like you can fulfill that role, I will encourage you to drop the course.

Week 1: Introduction to editing

Tuesday, January 14

Reading	
Writing	
In-Class	Introductions

Week 2: Approaches to editing & publishing technologies

Tuesday, January 21

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Preface & Chps. 1 & 2 Schreiber, "What is technical about technical editing?" (PDF) Mallette, "Preparing future technical editors for an AI-enabled workplace" (PDF)
Writing	1. Complete brief intro survey 2. Grade your pre-test; come to class with ideas for the [rhetorical] grammar/style exercise 3. Complete Exercise 7 (Chp. 1) on p. 19 of <i>Technical Editing</i>
In-Class	Publishing platforms

Week 3: Copyediting & proofreading

Tuesday, January 28

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chps. 12 & 18 <i>Dreyer's English</i> , Intro and Chps. 1–2 Das, "Words Matter: Copyediting as a process for (or against) social change"
Writing	1. Brief reflection on Das and the other readings (no more than 300 words) 2. Sign up for [rhetorical] grammar/style exercise 3. Complete Exercise 4 (Chp. 12) on p. 319 in <i>Technical Editing</i> 4. Complete Exercise 5 (Chp. 18) on p. 494 in <i>Technical Editing</i>
In-Class	Wikipedia editing (Sign up for an account before class!)


Week 4: Grammar, pt. 1

Tuesday, February 4

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chps. 13 & 14 <i>Dreyer's English</i> , Chps. 3–7 Micciche, "Making a case for rhetorical grammar"
Writing	1. Editing Case 1 due 2. Two discussion questions on the reading 3. Complete Exercises 1-2 (Chp. 13) on pp. 346–351 in <i>Technical Editing</i>
In-Class	Grammar/style exercises : Kacie, Jakob, Clara

Week 5: Grammar, pt. 2 and punctuation

Tuesday, February 11

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chps. 15, 16, & 17 <i>Dreyer's English</i> , Chps. 8–13
Writing	1. Two discussion questions on the reading 2. Complete Exercise 4, Chp. 15 (pp. 415-416); Exercise 3, Chp. 16 (pp. 439-440); and Exercise 5, Chp. 16 (p. 471)
In-Class	Grammar/style exercises : Moe, Colleen, Ally Q.  Class meeting 2/11 shifted to Zoom (link to join here)

Week 6: Style, pt. 1

Tuesday, February 18

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chp. 8 Ronald, “Style: The hidden agenda” (PDF) Smith, “Corpus linguistics and technical editing” Kirsch, “Suppose a grammar uses invention” (Moved from last week)
Writing	1. Bring a piece of writing with a clear style that you’d like to talk about in class 2. Complete Exercises 7 & 8 (Chp. 8) on pp. 190–191 in <i>Technical Editing</i>
In-Class	Grammar/style exercises : Moe

Week 7: Style, pt. 2

Tuesday, February 25

Reading	Whitburn, et al. “The plain style of technical writing” Tebeaux, “Pillaging the tombs of non-canonical texts” Jones & Williams, “Social justice impact of plain language” Rogers & Lee-Wong, “Reconceptualizing politeness...”
Writing	1. Collaborative reading response 2. Ideas for end-of-semester portfolio project
In-Class	Grammar/style exercises : Erin H., Andrea, Colleen

Week 8: Comprehensive editing: organization

Tuesday, March 4

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chps. 4 & 5 Whitney, “Please provide the following information...” DiCaglio et al., “Wikipedia as editorial microcosm”
Writing	1. Editing Case 2 due 2. Complete Exercise 4 (Chp. 4) on p. 81 in <i>Technical Editing</i> 3. Complete Exercise 5 (Chp. 5) on p. 121 in <i>Technical Editing</i> ^ You do not have to write a letter; just look at the site and jot down notes.
In-Class	Grammar/style exercises : Ally Q., Ally P., Erin L.

	<p>Note: Sometime before we meet, request a download of Adobe Creative Cloud so that we can start to experiment with this in class this week and/or next</p> <p>Note dos: Friday, March 7 at 7 p.m., screening of Small Town Universe featuring EBC as a panelist for discussion following the film; Oglebay/Ming Hsieh Hall G20</p>
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Week 9: Comprehensive editing: other concerns

Tuesday, March 11

Reading	<p><i>Technical Editing</i>, Chps. 6 & 7 Mehlenbacker & Mehlenbacker. "Misinformation as genre function" York, "Deceptive by design" Ahmed, "Making feminist points"</p>
Writing	<p>Collaborative reading response (yay!) Be thinking on your portfolio project and your case</p>
In-Class	<p>Please have InDesign accessible on your computer in some capacity</p>

Week 10: Spring Break!

Tuesday, March 18

Reading	
Writing	
In-Class	

Week 11: [Project management](#) & workflows

Tuesday, March 25

Reading	<p><i>Technical Editing</i>, Chps. 3 & 11 Panek et al., "Using innovative tools and lean writing workflows..." Retelny et al., "No workflow can ever be enough..."</p>
Writing	
In-Class	<p>Special guest: Colleen Nagel, Project Manager All4</p>

Week 12: Developing portfolios and taking a breath fr

Tuesday, April 1

Reading	<p>All to-be-edited documents for final portfolio should be collected sometime this week, for ease of completing that project (if you actually started this week, you'd have over a month to complete that work)</p>
Writing	<p>Scope of work</p>
In-Class	<p>We will not be meeting tonight; use this time for other things, including making progress on your portfolio and working on Case 3. 🧑🏻</p>

Week 13: Working with visuals and page design

Tuesday, April 8

Reading	<i>Technical Editing</i> , Chps. 9 & 10 Carradini, "The effects of multimodal elements on crowdfunding..." Brumberger, "The rhetoric of typography" Liddle, "Commemoration and context..."
Writing	Style sheet draft
In-Class	

Week 14: TBD based on class interests (or intellectual property?)

Tuesday, April 15

Reading	A scholarly reading of your choice related to an editing topic/concept that you're interested in
Writing	Editing Case 3 due Come prepared to share what you learned and how it is shaping your thinking
In-Class	Position paper brainstorming Don't forget about Week of Writing Activities, available on this schedule !

Week 15: Diving in and practicing those editing skills

Tuesday, April 22

Reading	
Writing	
In-Class	No class meeting; EBC will be available in her office between 4 and 5:15/30ish if you want to talk to her about any of your ongoing work

Week 16: Reflections

Tuesday, April 29

Reading	
Writing	Position paper full(ish) draft
In-Class	Conclusions and position paper presentations We will meet at EBC's house (905 Southpoint Cir, 26501) at 4:30 , so that she can feed you pizza and snacks.

Week 17: Finals

Position paper and editing portfolio (including editorial values statement) due anytime on Tuesday, May 6 And please fill out your SPOT survey if you would like to let me know what was effective about the class and what you think could make it better in the future.	
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