

TECM 4190: Technical Editing
University of North Texas
Linguistics & Technical Communication
Fall 2014

Instructor and Course Information

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| Time: | Monday/Wednesday 3:00- 4:20 p.m. |
| Place: | Auditorium 312 |
| Instructor: | Dr. Chris Lam |
| Office: | Auditorium 316 |
| Email: | Christopher.lam@unt.edu |
| Website: | http://courses.christopherylam.com/4190 |

Course Description

In this class you will learn how to edit technical documents, from proofreading for errors at the surface to ensuring that the document contains appropriate content, organization, and visuals for its audiences. Students will also learn how to use traditional editing marks, editing functions within word processors, and principles of layout and design.

By the end of this course you should be able to

- perform comprehensive editing, copyediting, and proofreading
- use and understand editorial terminology
- understand the profession of editing, including career possibilities and professional and ethical responsibilities
- revise for tone, clarity, conciseness, and continuity
- use traditional copyediting marks
- become familiar with project management techniques
- use technologies related to editing

Course Materials

- Rude, Carolyn R. and Eaton, Angela. Technical Editing (5th Edition). Allyn & Bacon: New York.
- Chicago Manual of Style, 15th or 16th edition. (Buy it used on for as low as \$25.)

Course Assignments

Note: See detailed descriptions with grading criteria and on the course website.

Copyediting Test, 15%

For this first assignment, you will copyedit an actual test from industry. You may edit this test on paper or electronically. The publisher gives you as much time as you like to complete the test, so you can guess that they expect perfection. In this class you only have a week and a half, so I acknowledge it won't be as perfect as if you'd had endless weeks.

You may use any reference to help answer your questions—this test is open book. However, you'll notice in the letter that the publisher uses the Chicago Manual of Style, 14th edition, but we use the 16th edition (the answer key has been updated) because that's what you need practice with. For this test, the Chicago's answer is the right answer. That's the ultimate reference I want you to use. For a dictionary, use www.m-w.com the Merriam Webster site.

Editing Job Materials, 15%

For this assignment, you will edit a **set** of job materials: either a job letter and resume or a personal statement and a resume.

You will choose your client for this project. While you cannot edit your own job materials, you are encouraged to locate someone entering your desired career field. You may also edit job materials for a family member, friend, roommate, etc.

I will evaluate your work based on the quality of your editorial suggestions and the comments' potential for improving the persuasiveness of the job materials. I will also evaluate the tone you use to phrase the editorial suggestions and the attempts you make to establish goodwill with the client.

Style Presentation, 15%

You will be assigned to one or more style topics. You will teach a 20 minute lesson covering all aspects of the style. You will also be required to provide the class with a handout that has practice exercises. Be sure to leave time for the class to complete practice exercises.

Editing Non-Native Speakers, 25%

For this assignment, you will complete a comprehensive edit, including a copyedit, of a 15-20 page document for a client who speaks English as a Second Language (ESL). I will assign your client as well as provide you with the document to be edited and information on the client's native language and academic major. After you comprehensively edit the document, you will create a video tutorial for the client that outlines three areas for improvement and provides exercises for the client to work through.

I will evaluate your work based on the quality of your editorial suggestions and the comments' potential for improving the persuasiveness of the document, as well as how you tailored the tutoring materials to your client's needs.

Likewise, the reflective memo is a substantial part of your grade. I encourage you to spend time relaying your experiences to me and connecting these ideas back to the course readings and discussion. When appropriate, follow accepted citation guidelines.

Final Project, 15%

For the final project, you will edit a document for someone in the UNT or DFW community. You are responsible for choosing your own project. I need to approve the piece before you begin working on it (you may bring it in to class or office hours or email it).

Examples of suitable projects include the comprehensive editing of brochures, Web pages, grant proposals, or employee policy manuals. You could also create a style guide for your place of work. Likewise, I will consider any project that researches a specific editorial issue.

In addition to the editing of the document, you must write a cover memo to the client explaining your changes and the reasoning behind them in detail, using the goodwill format. You'll turn in the cover memo and edited piece to me during the last class.

Homework, Quizzes, and Other Assignments, 15%

In addition to the major assignments, you will complete a series of short homework assignments and in-class activities as well as announced and unannounced quizzes on the course's content. These assignments are often given as part of your class participation and attendance.

Grading

The grading criteria serve as general guidelines for all course assignments.

"A" (90-100%): A manager would be very impressed and would remember the work when a promotion is discussed. In this course, that means work that is a pleasure to read, with excellent content, grammar, sentence structure, mechanics, and visual design. In addition, work is thorough, complete, coherent, well organized, supported sufficiently, and demonstrates a superior understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"B" (80-89%): A manager would be satisfied with the job, but not especially impressed. This means that papers are well written and well produced, and demonstrate a substantial addition to the learning process. Work is sufficiently developed, organized, and supported, and demonstrates a solid understanding of audience, purpose, and rationale.

"C" (70-79%): A manager would be disappointed and ask you to revise or rewrite sections before allowing clients and others to see the work. In other words, the paper may have clear, but underdeveloped ideas, or the paper might not engage or affect the reader. The paper may contain some errors in grammar, mechanics, or logic.

"D" (60-69%): A manager would be troubled by the poor quality of work. This level of work forces the reader to work too hard to understand the main ideas. The paper may contain incomplete information, have serious grammar and mechanical problems, lack clear organization, or be conceptually unclear.

"F" (0-59%): A manager would start looking for someone to replace you. In particular, work fails to address the tasks of the assignment, is so underdeveloped as to demonstrate incompetence, and is mechanically and grammatically incomprehensible. This grade will also be assigned for any evidence of plagiarism.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

Attendance in this course is NOT optional. You are expected to attend every class period. Each unexcused absence will result in the deduction of 5% off of your final grade. This includes not showing up for scheduled Google Hangouts. You will automatically be DROPPED from the course if you've missed 5 classes.

I understand that unforeseen circumstances often happen and you will be allowed 2 unexcused absences as long as you email me at least 3 hours prior to the course meeting time. Excused absences are allowed but MUST be backed up written documentation, including sickness. Absences cannot be excused without proper documentation.

If you are more than 15 minutes late, you will not be allowed to sign the attendance sheet and will be counted as absent.

LATE WORK

Late work is not accepted for homework, quizzes, or any other non-major assignment. In-class work cannot be made up.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

If you are absent the day an assignment is due, I will not accept any work via email. You must make arrangements with me to submit work before the deadline or put your work in my department mailbox, located on the third floor of the Auditorium building. You will lose one letter grade (or 10%) per calendar day late for major assignments. If extenuating circumstances apply, your work will be due the day after your return from your athletic event or the day after you attend the emergency appointment or funeral.

You may not use program templates (e.g., Word templates) to format any of your documents — these don't encourage you to learn the programs and generally result in dull, unpersuasive documents.

EMAIL REQUIREMENT

All students must have a valid UNT email address. I will use MyUNT to send mass emails to the class. I often use email to send class emails, including quizzes, notices, updates, and advisories. It is your responsibility to check email regularly. Not receiving an email is not a valid excuse for late or missing work. You will also need your UNT email address to check your grade throughout the semester.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

This course takes place in a computer lab. However, when I am lecturing, your computer monitor should not be on. Further, no cell phone usage will be permitted during class. Students who choose to check email and surf the Internet will be asked to leave class and will receive an absent grade for the day.

ADA

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504, Rehabilitation Act, I will work with the Office of Disability Accommodation to help reasonably qualified students with disabilities. If you have such a disability, please advise me in writing of your needs no later than the second week of class.

RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

In accordance with State law, students absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations or complete assignments scheduled for the day missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Travel time required for religious observances shall also be excused. Please see the UNT Student Handbook for information on which holidays or holy days are covered by this policy. State law also requires that students notify their teachers at the beginning of the semester if they expect to miss class on a religious holyday during the semester but want to make up the work missed. Students will be allowed to make up the work provided they have informed their teachers in writing within the first 15 days of the semester. Once again, all assignments and scheduled work must be turned in before the date of the excused absence. University policy requires that students provide their teachers with an official notification card issued by the university if they want to make up any in-class work they missed while they were involved in a university authorized activity.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

It is your responsibility to become familiar with UNT's Policy of Academic Dishonesty.

This policy defines the following forms of academic dishonesty:

- Cheating intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise. The term academic exercise includes all forms of work submitted for credit or hours.
- Plagiarism the deliberate adoption or reproduction of ideas, words, or statements of another person as one's own without acknowledgement.
- Fabrication intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- Facilitating academic dishonesty intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate a provision of the institutional code of academic integrity. If any course material is submitted that violates this policy of academic dishonesty, the assignment will receive a grade of "F" and appropriate judicial action will be filed. This action includes a report of academic misconduct to your college Dean and possible dismissal from The

University of North Texas. There are no first-offense warnings regarding plagiarism.

- It is expected that plagiarism and the correct use (citation) of other's ideas (including print, digital, images and other media) are fully understood. Contact me if you're ever confused about what constitutes academic dishonesty. Misunderstandings, miscommunication, oversights, or lack of comprehension as to what constitutes academic dishonesty is not accepted.