

English 106 Editing for Writers

Spring 2016

Instructor: Robert F. James

robert.james@sjsu.edu

Office: Faculty Offices Bldg 106

Phone: (408) 924-5039

Office Hours: T/Tr Noon-1:15/appt.

Classroom and Times: Clark 306, Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:15 a.m.

Course Description

Writing and editing are two sides of the same coin. As writers, we often romanticize the lifestyle: we are geniuses penning masterpieces, and we have little to no time for the mundane work of editing. However romantic our notion of writing may be, the reality is that even the best and most successful writers have to eat. Professional writers aren't just authors. We're survivors. And we've learned to carve value out of the world of words.

Every time you see an error on a billboard, in a magazine, on television, or even in a syllabus, you should see it as evidence that the world needs writers and editors. This course is all about equipping you with fundamental knowledge not only of the writing and editing processes, but also of the opportunities to make yourself indispensable in the work place.

We will be focusing our efforts on several levels. We'll start with our toolboxes and work on sentence-level editing work. But the bulk of our learning this semester will be the hands-on process of taking longer written works and editing them down into completely different formats. As such, we'll be focusing on grammar and syntax, but we'll also be visiting bigger issues of clarity, organization, and shaping content for an audience we may or may not know.

We'll be working in groups to complete the larger projects. But a healthy portion of this course will be in the form of individual efforts. Each student will participate in conversations about writing and the writing process, as well as clearly articulating (and in some cases defending) editorial choices made in exercises and projects. This is not a class to sit idly by and absorb information. This class is driven by your first steps into the world of professional writing and editing.

Department Goals

Students will demonstrate the ability to:

- Read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric.
- Write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and nature of the subject.
- Develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively.

Course Goals

The ultimate goal of this course is to give you the technical background to be a successful editor, both of your own writing and the writing of others. This goal can be understood as a set of smaller goals. In this class you will:

- Learn the basic principles and techniques of copyediting and proofreading, including editing symbols and the use of style sheets.
- Intensely engage with English grammar, spelling, punctuation and usage so that you have both technical mastery of language and the ability to justify your editing decisions to other writers.
- Develop the ability to analyze and edit documents at higher levels of organization.
- Explore and demonstrate proficiency with the fundamentals of document design and page layout.
- Explore and demonstrate proficiency with elements of graphic design and editing graphics to support text.
- Learn and develop the professional skills of a working editor—the arts of clarity, organization, persuasion, coordination, and negotiation.

Required Texts/Readings

We will be using a course reader available at Maple Press. I will let you know when it is ready for pick-up. Additional hand-outs will be provided by the professor and peers as the semester progresses.

Other equipment / material requirements:

- Red Pens. (Yes, red.)
- Dictionary (And not a tiny pocket one.)
- Grammar Reference Book (*Of your choosing*)

Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Readings. Readings form the core of the class. You are not only expected to have done the readings prior to class, you are expected to BRING the readings to class as well.

Homework and Worksheets. To prepare for each class session you will not only read the text but complete exercises to apply what you've learned. Editing is a skill, acquired only through practice. **Lots and lots of practice.** You are required to bring any completed homework in hard-copy form to every class. All edits must be made in red ink and use proper proofreading marks and editorial guidelines.

Exams. There will be three exams, one covering each of the three types of editing we are studying: copyediting, substantive editing, and document editing. These exams are comprehensive. (Anything covered up until the exam is fair game.)

Assignments. Part of being a quality editor is organization. As such, you will keep all assignments in a two-pocket folder that you bring to every class meeting. At any point, I may ask inspect your binders. You are required to keep all your work for the semester.

Final Project. The bulk of our work this semester mimics the real-world editorial environment. As such, you will be collaborating with a group of your peers to take existing material on a particular subject and transform it into a new medium. During the course of the semester, you will be presenting your work as a group to the rest of the class, culminating in a final review of the finished project.

Grading Policy

Homework and Worksheets 15%

Semester Project 45%

Exams 20%

Mid-Term 10%

Participation 10%

Please note also the following departmental policy on grading:

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale defined in the official SJSU Catalog ("The Grading System"). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A = excellent; B = above average; C = average; D = below average; F = failure. Courses graded according to the A, B, C, No Credit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for No Credit, shall replace D or F. In A, B, C, No Credit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdrawal) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point averages.

This statement shall be included in all Department of English syllabi.

My Classroom Policies

Attendance. As per university policy, attendance is not mandatory. I can, however, guarantee that missing more than a few days will significantly affect your understanding of the material. If you miss class DO NOT EMAIL ME AND ASK WHY YOU MISSED. Refer to the syllabus and your classmates.

Late Assignments. They are not accepted. If you must miss class, arrange to submit your work ahead of time. Treat this class like your job. Communication is key.

Grading class participation. I expect everyone to participate in class, which means more than parking your body in a seat and breathing. You must be engaged and demonstrating a knowledge of the material we're working on. I shouldn't have to coax you to speak. You should be clamoring to be heard. Again, treat this space like work. You don't need to raise your hands. You need to get your point across clearly and concisely.

Acting with academic integrity. In both your academic and professional careers, you are expected to act with integrity. I don't tolerate plagiarism, even accidental. You're writers and editors. I shouldn't have to explain the value of your own words and ideas.

Technology use. You should treat the classroom as a professional workspace. I'm encouraging the use of tablets, laptops, and even phones—whatever you'd prefer to read on. However, I will ask that you refrain from using your devices to browse the web, surf your favorite social media sites, or text your friends. Again, this is a work space.

University Policies

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](#) is

available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

In 2013, the Disability Resource Center changed its name to be known as the Accessible Education Center, to incorporate a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities. The new name change reflects the broad scope of attention and support to SJSU students with disabilities and the University's continued advocacy and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include DV and HD digital camcorders; digital still cameras; video, slide and overhead projectors; DVD, CD, and audiotape players; sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

SJSU Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

Visit [Peer Connections website](#) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the [Writing Center website](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling Services website](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

E106 / Editing for Writers, F16, Course Schedule

I view this course as dynamic. While many of the assignments here will stick to the schedule, much of the work will be assigned on a class-to-class basis as needs arise. As such, make certain you keep up with course assignments and check in with me regularly. If you miss a class, please communicate with a classmate to make sure you know what is due the following session.

You also will notice that the “Reading” for each class is left blank. You will be assigned chapters from the course reader, as well handouts, each class session. You should be writing down these assignments in the space provided.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Jan 28	Course Introduction
2	Feb 2	Discussion: The Working Editor Reading: Due: Proofreading diagnostic
2		Discussion: Semester Project and Group Assignment Reading: Due: Editing exercise
3	Feb 9	Discussion: Wonders of the Grammatical World (Yes...Grammar) Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
3		Discussion: Proofreading and Editing Marks Reading: Due: Group Presentations on Semester Project Ideas
4	Feb 16	Discussion: Proofreading and Editing Application Reading: Due: Group Presentations on Common Grammatical mistakes
4		Discussion: Indexing Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
5	Feb 23	Discussion: Style Guides Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
5		Exam #1 Due: Individual index from a popular magazine: 35 entries minimum
6	March 1	Discussion: Visual Arguments

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Reading: Due: Group Style Guide for Semester Project
6		Discussion: Visual Arguments (Continued) Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
7	March 8	Discussion: Flat Planning Reading: Due: Group Presentations of Print Advertisement with Analysis
7		Discussion: Flat Planning (Practical) Reading: Due: Group Presentations for Semester Project Editing Exercise
8	March 15	Discussion: The Editorial Meeting Reading: Due: Individual Analysis of Print Advertisement
8		Mid-Term Exam
9	March 22	Discussion: Editorial Meetings (Semester Projects) Reading: Due: Flat Plan Final
9		Discussion: Editorial Meetings (Semester Projects) Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
10	April 5	Exam #2
10		Discussion: Editing for Content (Audience Analysis) Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
11	April 12	Discussion: Editing for Clarity Reading: Due: Individual Rewrite #1
11		Discussion: Editing for Clarity Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
12	April 19	Discussion: Editing vs Proofreading

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		Reading: Due: Individual Rewrite #2
12		Discussion: Editing vs. Proofreading (Practical Application) Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
13	April 26	Discussion: Initial Review of Semester Projects Reading: Due: Proofreading Exercise
13		Discussion: Initial Review of Semester Projects Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
14	May 3	Exam #3
14		Discussion: Macro/Micro Review Process Reading: Due: Editing Exercise
15	May 10	Discussion: Project Post-Mortem Reading: Due: Final Project Presentations
Final Exam		Final Project Presentations