EDITING, LAYOUT & DESIGN
COMA 323
Late Spring 2011
Dr. Doreen Marchionni
Mondays/Wednesdays 3:40 - 5:25 p.m.
Ingram 115B
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OFFICE HOURS:
Ingram 135

* 2:30-3:30 Mondays *and* Wednesdays
* By appointment

Please silence cell phones and put away laptops and other electronic devices before class begins. Thank you.

THE COURSE:
Coach. Drill sergeant. Confidante. Master grammarian. Psychologist. The newsroom copy editor serves as last line of defense in the journalism process and fills myriad roles, sometimes all on the same story edit. More than anyone else in the newsroom, the copy editor is responsible for quality control, and that is a huge, at times heavy, burden. Precision and attention to detail is *everything*.

The purpose of "COMA 323: Editing, Layout and Design" is to teach you the most important aspects of copy editing, with emphases on grammar and AP style. You'll learn how to improve writing (your own and others'); how to deal with writers; how to sharpen and focus stories; and how to deal with ethical concerns involved in editing. You'll also learn the practical aspects of newspaper publication, including headline writing and principles of layout and design.

Class sessions will include lectures, discussions, practical exercises (including hands-on editing) and possibly small-group work. Your final grade will be based on points for exercises/assignment, a grammar exam (roughly mid-term), an AP style exam (two-thirds into term) and a final hands-on complete story edit (end of term).

Much of the course materials will be managed on PLU's online class-management site, Sakai. **Go to this link for access: *https://sakai.plu.edu/portal*. Please also check your student e-mail periodically for any updates beyond the syllabus posted on Sakai.**

DEADLINES:
The importance of deadlines cannot be overemphasized. Professional reporters and editors who miss deadlines are not professional reporters or editors for long. Meet the stated deadline, whether it be for an in-class or out-of-class assignment. Late assignments will not be accepted, except for excused absences.

ATTENDANCE:

You're required to attend each class session on time. In the event of illness or other emergency, contact me before class. Three *unexcused* absences will result in a drop of one full letter on your final grade. Three or more *excused* absences could also prove detrimental.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
Bring the *AP Stylebook* and *Working With Words* to **EVERY CLASS**. If you don't, you may not be able to complete assignments. Note, you should finish assigned readings for the class day listed in the syllabus. In other words, if a chapter is listed under "Wednesday, May 4," you should finish the reading *by start of that class*.

-- *Working with Words* by Brooks, Pinson & Wilson (Sixth Edition)
-- *The Associated Press Stylebook and Libel Manual* (2009 or more recent edition)

Under Sakai/Resources, you'll also find additional readings for some weeks that go beyond the textbooks. See "Class Schedule" below for details.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:
-- *Creative Editing for Print Media*, 6th Edition (2010) by Bowles and Borden (many chapters on Sakai)
-- *Copy Editing for Professionals* by Rooney & Witte (a few chapters on Sakai)
-- *Elements of Style* by Strunk & White

GRADES:
Final grades will be determined based on these points:
• Hands-on assignments/exercises/quizzes: 75 points (5 points for each of 15. Grade includes class participation)
• Grammar exam: 100 points
• AP Exam: 50 points
• Final story edit: 50 points

Your FINAL course grade will be based on your point total at the end of the semester and assigned in the following manner:

Point Total	Grade		Point Total	Grade		Point Total	Grade
275-261	A		215-206	C+		165-156	D-
260-246	A-		205-196	C		155-146	E
245-236	B+		195-186	C-			
235-226	B		185-176	D+			
225-216	B-		175-166	D			

Points awarded for various grades will follow these criteria:
"A": Professional quality work. The student has addressed major problems, corrected grammar and style errors, and improved the sentence, paragraph, story and/or layout.
"B": Good quality work, but the student has left gaps in organization, clarity and/or grammar and style.

"C": Student fulfilled the assignment, but had major problems with organization clarity and/or grammar and style.
 "D": There are excessive problems, indicating inattention to the assignment and a lack of effort.
 "E": The assignment was not completed, not turned in by the deadline or had serious errors.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
Please review this link: http://www.plu.edu/academics/integ.html
You will note that even if you merely witness an abuse of academic integrity at PLU, you may be liable for sanctions if you do not report the abuse. You will be responsible to uphold the university's highest standards of academic integrity in this class. I will assume you fully understand your responsibilities as an honorable member of this community. The PLU Department of Communication and Theatre takes its ethics seriously. *We believe that public communicators have an added responsibility to uphold ethical standards and to tell the truth in every circumstance.*
Please see me if you have any questions about the academic violations described in the Code in general or as they relate to particular requirements for this course.

SPECIAL NEEDS:
If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with me or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please see me **as soon as possible**.

CLASS SCHEDULE (Subject to Change. Please Review Often.)

WEEK 1
Monday, March 28, 2011
- Introductions
- The Copy Editor's Role/ How the Copy Desk Works
- Overview: 10 Big Writing Problems in Journalism (Start)
- Learning Goal: Understand role of a copy editor and major writing problems in news copy

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *WWW*Chap 1 and 2; *CopyEdit*Chap1 (Sakai)
    -- In-class grammar exercise 1
    -- Familiarize yourself with the *AP* Stylebook

Wednesday, March 30, 2011
- Overview: 10 Big Writing Problems in Journalism (Continued)
- Copy-Editing/Proofreading Symbols
- Learning Goal: Know proofreader's marks and major writing problems you'll face as editor

Assignments for this day:
   -- Read *WWW*Chap 3 through 5, 12 (also "copy-editing marks" on back flap of book)
   -- In-class symbols exercise
   -- In-class grammar exercise 2

WEEK 2
Week of April 4: SPRING BREAK. NO CLASSES.

WEEK 3
Monday, April 11, 2011
- Overview: 10 Big Writing Problems in Journalism (Finish)
- News Writing 101: Ledes/Nutgrafs/Quotations (knowing a good quote/paraphrasing/correcting grammar/attribution, etc.)
- Learning Goal: Know a good lede and quote when you see one. Know how to fix if needed.

Assignments for this day:
   -- Read *WWW*Chap 6 through 9, 13, 14
   -- In-class grammar exercise 3
   -- In-class critique on good **and** bad ledes/nutgrafs (Bring example to class)

Wednesday, April 13, 2011
- In-Class Grammar Exam (1 hour)
- Overview: What You Should Know About *AP* Style (Start)
- Learning Goal: Recognize 10 % of rules cover 90 % of style questions

Assignments for this day:
   -- Read *WWW*Appendix

WEEK 4
Monday, April 18, 2011
- Overview: What You Should Know About *AP* Style (Finish)
- Learning Goal: Recognize 10 % of rules cover 90 % of style questions

Assignments for this day:
   -- Read *WWW*Appendix (same as previous class)

Wednesday, April 20, 2011
- Story Holes: The Copy Editor as Researcher/Reporter

- Learning Goal: Know how to spot story holes and inaccuracies; distinguish good (credible) sources from bad for fact-checking material

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chap. 4 and 5 (Sakai)
    -- In-class exercise on *Thomas Guide* locations
    -- Out-of-class exercise on factchecking (bring to class)
    -- In-class exercise on *AP* Style Book (Sections A through I)

WEEK 5
Monday, April 25, 2011
- Journalism Math: When Numbers Don't Add Up
- Learning Goal: Know how do to basic calculations on figures in stories

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *CopyEdit*Chap 7 (Sakai)
    -- In-class exercise on math
    -- In-class exercise on *AP* Style Book (Sections J through R)

Wednesday, April 27, 2011
- Writing Great Headlines for Print and Online
- Learning Goal: Know how to write and punctuate headlines with taste and intrigue

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chap 9 (Sakai)
    -- In-class exercise on headline writing
    -- In-class exercise on AP Style Book (S through Z)

WEEK 6
Monday, May 2, 2011
- Ethics, Editing and the Law: An Overview (Start)
- Learning Goal: Recognize and reason through ethical and legal problems in stories

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chaps 6 and 7 (Sakai)
    -- In-class *AP* Style exam (1 hour)

Wednesday, May 4, 2011
- Ethics, Editing and the Law: Hypothetical Scenarios (Finish)
- Learning Goal: Recognize and reason through ethic and legal problems in stories

Assignments for this day:
    -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chaps 6 and 7 (same as above/Sakai)
    -- In-class exercise on libel/privacy laws

-- In-class exercise on ethics

WEEK 7
<u>Monday, May 9, 2011</u>
- Principles of Newspaper Design (Start)
- Guest Speaker: *Seattle Times* page designer Teresa Scribner
- Learning Goal: Understand basic principles of design and role of news judgment

Assignments for this day:
      -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chap11 (Sakai)

<u>Wednesday, May 11, 2011</u>
- Principles of Newspaper Design (Finish)
- Learning Goal: Apply what you've learned about layout principles to the real world

Assignments for this day:
      -- Read *CreativeEditing*Chap11 (same as above/Sakai)
      -- Out-of-class exercise on layout (bring tearsheets to class for critiques)

WEEK 8
<u>Monday, May 16, 2011</u>
- Layered Editing: From Abstract Concepts to *AP* Style Nits
- Learning Goal: Apply what you've learned from the semester on an editable story

Assignments for this day:
      -- *CreativeEditing*Chap 5 (again/Sakai)

<u>Wednesday, May 18, 2011</u>
- Pulling It All Together: What You've Learned and What Hiring Managers Look For
- Learning Goal: Finding work as a professional editor

Assignments for this day:
      -- Final story-edit project due end of class