COM 293: Editing
Shippensburg University, Spring 2018
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 a.m. – 12:15 p.m., Rowland Hall 202

Professor: Kyle Heim, Ph.D.
Office: Rowland Hall 123
Office hours:
    Tue. & Thurs., 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.
    Wed., 4 – 5 p.m.
    or by appointment

Professor's email: krheim@ship.edu

Office phone: (717) 477-1152

Course website: http://d2l.ship.edu

Course description
COM 293 is a course designed for students who plan to become professional writers or editors — whether news editorial, public relations or advertising. It teaches students how to handle copy flow, how to improve written copy and how to design and lay out copy. **Prerequisite:** Students must have achieved a **C or better** in COM 285 (News Writing and Reporting) to participate in COM 293.

Course objectives
COM 293 explores copy editing and design. By the end of the semester students will be able to:
- develop news judgment and to develop a news budget
- apply AP style
- correct grammar and spelling errors in copy
- edit copy to improve story structure
- edit wire copy
- develop story ideas and make story assignments
- design and lay out pages
- write headlines and photo captions (cutlines)
- crop and place photos

Required materials
- *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook*, 7th edition, Tim Harrower
- *Associated Press (AP) Stylebook* (2016 or 2017 edition)
- *Webster's New World Dictionary* (pocket-sized edition)
- 1 gigabyte or higher Flash drive

Professional values and competencies for C/J majors and minors

The Communication/Journalism Department faculty sets the goal of developing within each student the following core professional values and competencies as defined by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC) [competencies addressed in this course are in **bold**]:

1. Understand and apply the principles and laws of freedom of speech and press, as well as receive instruction in and understand the range of systems of freedom of expression around the world, including the right to dissent, to monitor and criticize power, and to assemble and petition for redress of grievances
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the history and role of professionals and institutions in shaping communications
3. **Demonstrate an understanding of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and, as appropriate, other forms of diversity in domestic society in relation to mass communication**
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society
5. Understand concepts and apply theories in the use and presentation of images and information
6. **Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity**
7. **Think critically, creatively and independently**
8. Conduct research and gather information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work
9. **Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve**
10. **Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness**
11. Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts
12. **Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work**

Email and D2L

Please be sure to check your Shippensburg email account and D2L regularly, including before class. I use email and D2L to communicate important class information to students, including any class cancellations due to illness, inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances. When corresponding with me by email, **please include a subject line and mention that the email is regarding COM 293**. I respond to emails as quickly as I can, but **please allow 24 hours for a response or up to 48 hours on a weekend.**

Course assignments and projects (more details to follow)

➢ **NEWSPAPER/WEBSITE COMPARISON —** Students will compare and analyze the content and design of the printed newspaper and website of several news organizations. The instructor will select the newspapers used for comparison. Students will analyze the websites outside class and write their analyses in the form of a research paper. The class will be divided into groups for the analysis of the printed newspapers, which will take place during class.

➢ **COPY EDITING ASSIGNMENTS** — Students will complete several assigned editing exercises both in and out of class. These exercises will test students' knowledge of AP style, grammar, spelling and punctuation, their ability to edit stories on deadline and their ability to write effective headlines and photo cutlines. In-class assignments missed because of an absence cannot be made up unless the student notifies the instructor of the absence in advance and provides official written documentation of an illness, death in the family or official university function (documentation must be in the form of a signed, dated letter from a doctor, coach, the dean's office, etc.).

- ➢ **ASSIGNMENT EDITOR/REPORTER** — Students will work as assignment editors, developing and pitching story ideas and assigning stories to fellow students. Each student will develop and assign a story idea and edit the copy. Each student also will be responsible for writing at least one story. The stories generated by students will form a pool of stories from which students will draw copy for their final design and layout project.

- ➢ **PAGE DESIGN, LAYOUT AND EDITING PROJECT** — Students will create a four-page newspaper layout as a final project for the semester. The paper will include a front page, two inside pages with jumps and advertisements, and a section front (for sections such as sports, arts and entertainment, business, etc.) with accompanying photos and illustrations. Copy for project will be provided by students in the class and drawn from wire services. Students will edit the copy and use it in their layout. Students will write headlines and cutlines, produce page dummies and lay out the pages in Adobe InDesign. **During final exam week, class members will make a presentation to the class of their page design and layout final projects.**

- ➢ **QUIZZES** — There will be several pop quizzes throughout the semester covering editing, design, AP style, lecture material and the assigned reading. These quizzes usually will be at the start of class. Quizzes missed because of an absence cannot be made up unless the student notifies the instructor of the absence in advance and provides official written documentation of an illness, emergency or university function (documentation must be in the form of a signed, dated letter from a doctor, coach, the dean's office, etc.).

Attendance and classroom etiquette

- ➢ **Attendance is mandatory**, and students are expected to arrive on time. An attendance sheet will be circulated at the start of class each day. It is your responsibility to sign the sheet. The attendance sheets will serve as the official record of attendance. If you come to class late, after the attendance sheet has circulated, you may be marked absent that day.
- ➢ **Students are responsible for keeping track of their own attendance.** I will use the attendance sheets to record attendance at the end of the semester.
- ➢ **Students are permitted two unexcused absences during the semester.** More than two unexcused absences will result in the lowering of your final course grade as follows**:**
  - o **3 or 4 unexcused absences** = final grade lowered by a half-grade — for example, from an A- to a B+ or from a C+ to a C. NOTE: Shippensburg University does not use C- or D+ grades, so a C would be lowered to a D.
  - o **5 or 6 unexcused absences** = final grade lowered by a full letter grade — for example, from a B to a C.
  - o **7 or more unexcused absences** = student automatically fails the course, regardless of his or her performance on assignments, quizzes and projects.
- ➢ **An absence will be excused ONLY** if a student (1) notifies the instructor of the absence in person or via email BEFORE class, **AND** (2) provides official written documentation of the reason for the absence (e.g., an official signed, dated note from a doctor, coach, lawyer, other instructor, etc., or from the Dean's Office). This documentation must be provided when you return to class. If you know you will miss more than one class due to illness, it is recommended that you notify the Dean's Office, which will notify all of your instructors of your absences.
- ➢ **IN-CLASS EXERCISES AND QUIZZES GENERALLY CANNOT BE MADE UP.** If you miss a class for anything other than illness, a death in the family or an official university function, you will not be allowed to make up the work and will earn a zero on the assignment. Official documentation such as a note from a doctor, coach or the dean's office is required in order to make up the work.
- ➢ Quizzes and in-class assignments often will happen at the beginning of class. Students coming to

class late will not be given extra time to complete a quiz or assignment.
➢ It is the student's responsibility to bring required materials to class. Make certain you bring your AP stylebook and dictionary to every class — yes, you will need them.
➢ Please observe basic courtesy during class. **Cell phones are to be turned off or silenced and put away. No food or drink is permitted in the computer labs**.

Grading and evaluation

COM 293 is a writing- and production-intensive course. Students should be prepared to write and edit extensively. Students' final grades will be determined by averaging grades as follows:

Page Design, Layout and Editing Project	30 percent
Copy Editing Assignments (homework and in-class assignments)	30 percent
Assignment Editor/Reporter (Pitching, writing, editing stories)	10 percent
Newspaper/Website Comparison Assignment	15 percent
In-class Quizzes	15 percent

A point system will be used to grade individual assignments. Final grades will be awarded on the following **percentage-based** scale:

Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade	Percentage	Grade
93.0% – 100%	A	83.0% – 86.9%	B	70.0% – 74.9%	C
90.0% – 92.9%	A-	80.0% – 82.9%	B-	60.0% – 69.9%	D
87.0% – 89.9%	B+	75.0% – 79.9%	C+	0% – 59.9%	F

Students should edit their work carefully and ask others to check their work before submitting it. Mechanical errors (spelling, grammar, AP style, typos, etc.) will result in points being deducted.

All work will be evaluated and graded as follows:

A/A- = This is work that is publishable or usable as is. It has no errors in editing of copy, headline writing, or design and layout. It shows a superior command of facts, news judgment, organization, writing and editing, and design.

B+/B/B- = Could be published with some revision; design and layout have some minor flaws.

C+/C = An average job. Not work, a story or layout and design that someone would stop and read or look at unless he or she really needs the information. Some basic organizational or writing problems and/or design and layout flaws.

D = A poor piece. It lacks fundamental judgmental and or writing and editing skills. May have a minor fact error or major spelling or grammatical errors or misspelling in a headline or pull quote. Omission of two or more important facts (story is not complete). Contains major problems in organization and language usage. Fails to meet basic writing and/or layout and design standards. Needs substantial editing, rewriting and reorganization. Poor editing of copy, poor design and layout.

F = Unacceptable work. Piece has too many fundamental problems in writing, editing, design and layout or fails to meet deadline. Contains a major fact error or major flaws in design and layout.

People rely on the media to provide them with complete and accurate information to help them with their decision-making. Therefore, a major factual error in a story, such as flawed or incorrect information (including misspelling someone's name or giving them the wrong title), will result in a deduction of one full letter grade for the assignment.

Deadlines

Deadlines are important in any media-related profession. All assignments are **DUE** on the deadline date. Assignments **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** past the deadline, unless they are late because of an excused absence or reasons previously arranged with the instructor. **Assignments submitted past the deadline will earn a zero.** Assignments for this class will consume a good deal of your time. Plan accordingly.

Ethical standards, plagiarism and academic dishonesty

Students are expected to complete individual and original work for this class. For the professional writer, plagiarism results in the loss of credibility and employment. In this class, plagiarism will result in an **F** for the course. It may also subject the student to departmental and/or university sanctions. The university's Academic Dishonesty Policy may be found in the Shippensburg University Undergraduate Catalog (http://www.ship.edu/catalog). All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the department, Dean's Office and Office of Student Affairs. Penalties for violation of the policy include grade reduction, assignment of a failing grade for the course, suspension and expulsion from the University.

Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) statement

Students with disabilities are not required by law to identify themselves to SU and the Office of Disability Services; however, if a student desires accommodations, he or she is obligated to complete the necessary forms and provide disability documentation at the time other requests are made. It is the policy of Shippensburg University to accommodate students with disabilities, pursuant to federal law, state law, and the University's commitment to equal education opportunities. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services at the *beginning* of the term (120 Horton Hall; 717-477-1329).

Commitment to a safe learning environment

Shippensburg University faculty support a safe campus environment for all. No one on this campus has the right to threaten you or make you feel intimidated in any way. More specifically, unwanted advances, harassment, aggressive or violent behavior, and sexual assault will not be tolerated. A comprehensive list of reporting options and support services, including confidential resources, can be found at http://www.ship.edu/no_more/.

Shippensburg University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires faculty members to report incidents of sexual violence shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator. The only exceptions to the faculty member's reporting obligation are when incidents of sexual violence are communicated by a student during a classroom discussion, in a writing assignment for a class, or as part of a University-approved research project. Faculty members are obligated to report allegations of sexual violence or any other abuse of a student who was, or is, a child (a person under 18 years of age) when the abuse allegedly occurred. Such reporting must be made to the Shippensburg University Police at 477-1444, the Department of Human Services (DHS) at 800-932-0313, and the University's Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs at 477-1308. Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are available to victims of sexual violence can be found at: www.ship.edu/No_More/Sexual_Misconduct/Sexual_Misconduct_Information/

Learning Center resources

If you feel you need extra help to improve your academic performance in this course or any of your other courses, please consider making an appointment with a tutor or learning specialist in the Learning Center (LC). The LC is located on the lower level of Lehman Library, right below Starbucks, and can also be reached at 717-477-1420.

Tentative Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change. Changes will be announced in class and via email or D2L. The timeline for the course may need to be adjusted for severe weather or other unforeseen circumstances. **All reading and homework must be completed by the date on which it is listed**.

WEEK 1 (Jan. 23 & 25)
— Course introduction
— **READ: Readings on D2L (Read before class on Thursday, Jan. 25)**
— LECTURE: What is an editor & the role of editors
— Grammar and spelling review quiz
— Distribute Grammar and spelling assignment

WEEK 2 (Jan. 30 & Feb. 1)
— **DUE: Grammar and spelling assignment due Tuesday, Jan. 30**
— LECTURE: Newsroom organization; editing for grammar and style
— In-class editing exercises
— Distribute AP style assignment and newspaper/website comparison assignment

WEEK 3 (Feb. 6 & 8)
— **DUE: AP style assignment due Tuesday, Feb. 6**
— LECTURE: Editing for grammar and style (cont.); editing for accuracy & fairness
— In-class editing exercises
— Distribute story editing assignment

WEEK 4 (Feb. 13 & 15)
— **DUE: Story editing assignment due Tuesday, Feb. 13**
— LECTURE: Ethics and taste; working with writers
— In-class working with writers exercise
— Distribute editing desk (story ideas) assignment

WEEK 5 (Feb. 20 & 22)
— LECTURE: Selecting and editing wire copy
— In-class wire editing exercise
— Distribute wire editing assignment

WEEK 6 (Feb. 27 & March 1)
— **DUE: Wire editing assignment due Thursday, March 1**
— LECTURE: Writing headlines
— In-class headline writing exercises

WEEK 7 (March 6 & 8)
— **DUE: Newspaper/website comparison assignment due Tuesday, March 6**
— Writing headlines (cont.)
— Newspaper comparison discussion and in-class assignment

March 13 & 15
— **NO CLASS (Spring break)**

WEEK 8 (March 20 & 22)
— **DUE: Editing desk assignment (story ideas) due Tuesday, March 20**
— Selection and assignment of news stories
— In-class editing on deadline exercise

WEEK 9 (March 27 & 29)
— **READ: Harrower, Chapters 1 and 4 (before class on Tuesday, March 27)**
— LECTURE: Photo editing and cutline writing
— In-class photo cropping & cutline writing practice
— Distribute photo editor assignment

WEEK 10 (April 3 & 5)
— **DUE: News stories due Thursday, April 5**
— **READ: Harrower, Chapters 2 and 3 (before class on Tuesday, April 3)**
— LECTURE: Newspaper design
— Page design basics, grids and modular page design

WEEK 11 (April 10 & 12)
— **DUE: Photo editor assignment due Tuesday, April 10**
— **DUE: Editing of news stories due Thursday, April 12**
— **READ: Harrower, Chapters 5 and 6 (before class on Tuesday, April 10)**
— LECTURE: Newspaper design (cont.)

WEEK 12 (April 17 & 19)
— **DUE: Preliminary layout dummies for final project**
— **READ: Harrower, Chapter 7**
— LECTURE: Newspaper design (cont.)

WEEK 13 (April 24 & 26)
— **READ: Readings on D2L**
— LECTURE: Editing for the Web; search engine optimization (SEO)
— Lab time

WEEK 14 (May 1 & 3)
— **DUE: Final projects (due date and time to be announced)**
— Lab time

WEEK 15 (May 7-11)
Final project presentations (date and time to be announced)