

JOUR546 Advanced Editing – Spring 2012

Part of the senior semester group of courses

Carolina Reporter Newsroom Coliseum 3028
8:45 a.m.- 5 p.m. M-F. No class or
other activity may be
scheduled during this time.



Books (Required) (see also JOUR536 syllabus):

- LaRocque, P.: “Concise Guide to Copy Editing”
- Briggs, M.: “Journalism Next”
- Online AP Stylebook
- Webster’s N.W. Coll. Dictionary (4th ed.) – we have several in the newsroom
- Other readings assigned during semester

Senior instructor Doug Fisher
Room 2046 777-3315 Google voice 386-1084
Office hours: As needed to deal with issues and
problems

Books (Recommended)

- LaRocque, P: “Heads You Win”
- “Working with Words” from JOUR333

Other Material (Required):

- Local style guide (latest) from Blackboard
- Ability to download and listen to MP3 files
- CR Handbook, CR Schedule and grading rubrics from Blackboard, all part of this syllabus by reference

Other material (Recommended):

- USB headset with microphone
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PREREQUISITES: JOUR532 WITH A C OR BETTER OR APPROVAL OF INSTRUCTOR.



This is an experiential learning course in which you will be expected to show mastery of the editing and multimedia skills you previously have learned. The focus is not on reteaching those skills, but showing you how to extend and broaden them based on the philosophical underpinning of journalism in service to the public and democracy. There is an extensive editing test early in the semester – see the Carolina Reporter schedule.

Goal: To become proficient in working with writers to fully develop and execute stories across media, on deadline. This includes acting as a surrogate for the reader to make content more precise, accurate and easy to read but with sensitivity to keeping the writer's intent and voice.

A student who successfully completes this course will have shown he or she can:

- *Critically analyze* and help shape a story idea as to:
 - Its *clarity, accessibility and importance* to a *diverse audience*.
 - The resources needed, whether they are available, and alternatives.
 - Multimedia storytelling opportunities and strategies.
 - Fairness and balance.
 - Whether the message the author seeks to deliver is the one being received.
 - Whether numbers, style and language are properly used.
- Help a reporter successfully plan and execute the completion of stories, graphics and related elements in various media. This means *applying relevant theories and empirical findings* of how people perceive and process information.
- Identify and immediately address any *ethical problems*.
- Coach and mentor the writer, suggesting creative, *ethical* solutions to any problems.
- Interact professionally with others inside a working newsroom.



The student will also show:

- Command of a wide range of research resources, including online databases, and the ability to critically evaluate such resources.
- An understanding of search engine optimization and of proper linking.
- Command of a range of presentation resources, including software and online programs.
- Familiarity with technological and management issues, especially as to digital media.

Attendance: Students are expected to be in the newsroom reading in by 8:45 a.m. daily and be prepared for a news meeting at 9 a.m. or shortly thereafter. While the university attendance policy specifies that students may miss up to 10 percent of class time without penalty, the nature of the capstone experience means that absences will have a substantial impact on the working of the newsroom. As such, any absence from the class must be justified and may affect your grade. Valid reasons for absences include illness, death in the immediate family or required attendance at another university function. You will be warned if you are excessively absent or tardy, and after that, each instance will lower your grade.

If you need a scheduled absence, you must tell the faculty (including the graduate assistant) ahead of time by email. If you are absent unexpectedly, you must tell us before 9:30 a.m. that day by phone with an email by noon. Phone calls should be made to the lead faculty member (Mr. Fisher) and the editor of the day.

Deadlines and multitasking: Deadlines are firm. To get any extension, you must show you have made all reasonable efforts and have thought creatively to work your way around problems. You are expected to be progressing in all courses concurrently.

Professionalism, ethics, newsroom operations, etc.: These are detailed in the Carolina Reporter Handbook, incorporated by reference, or other handouts as appropriate. Among other things, failure to properly fill out story proposals and budgets and failure to properly file copy will lessen your grade.

Schedules: Details are in the separate Carolina Reporter Schedule incorporated by reference.

Email: Please put "CR," your name and a sense of the subject. Emails without proper subject lines will not be sorted correctly and will be ignored.

Academic integrity and responsibility

The University of South Carolina has clearly articulated its policies governing academic integrity, and students are encouraged to carefully review the policy on the Honor Code in the Carolina Community. Any instance of the following will result in grading penalties, including a possible failing grade, and pursuit of school- or university-level disciplinary action.

- Plagiarism, which includes, but is not limited to, paraphrasing or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement.
- Fabrication which includes but is not limited to, making up entire sets of facts, creating all or parts of quotations, or creating composite characters.
- Misrepresentation to others of your identity, intent, position, or purpose as a journalist in gathering information

See the senior semester handbook for a more detailed explanation of the ethical requirements of this course, including, but not limited to, the use of anonymous sources.

Students spend roughly half the semester as editors. During that time they:

- Work with reporters to help develop their story ideas and serve as a sounding board and mentor.
- Supervise and assemble multimedia elements for delivery concurrent with any text elements. (Note: An editor's involvement in actually gathering those elements should be minimal.)
- Edit all story elements to a level ready for publication.
- Prepare graphics. (Graphics are graded for both JOUR529 – technical and aesthetic elements – and JOUR546 – language issues.)
- Lay out pages. (As with graphics, layouts are graded both for JOUR529 and JOUR546).
- Submit a journal every Friday: 150- to 300-word elaborations of what worked for you and what didn't in the previous week and how you and we can improve. Text in the body of the email – no attachments. Subject line must be: **CR Journal-lastname-mm/dd** (or my filter may miss it and you will get a zero).

Text editing is on computer using available track changes features in whatever software we are using. You get 60 to 90 minutes for most stories.

Grading:*Undergraduates*

Stories/multimedia editing and edit test = 70 percent of your total semester grade.

Graphics/captions/layout and design and any other assignments = 15 percent.

Final portfolio = 10 percent.

Journals = 5 percent.

Your professionalism score, from +10 to -10, is added to the total produced by the first four items.

Graduate students:

Stories/multimedia editing and edit test = 60 percent of your total semester grade

Graphics/captions/layout and design and any other assignments = 15 percent.

Journals = 5 percent.

Final paper (in lieu of final portfolio - see details later) = 20 percent.

Your professionalism score, from +10 to -10, is added to the total produced by the other items.

For all elements in this course as well as the final course grade:

92-100 = A

70-75 = C

86-91 = B+

60-69 = D

80-85 = B

Less than 60 = F

76-79 = C+

My assessment is based on:

- Evaluation of all the story elements you submit for publication. Among the things considered by me:
 - For text: Focus, ease of reading, conciseness, completeness, accuracy, fairness, legal and language issues. Especially important: Has the story answered readers' likely questions? Has the editor recognized problems and found solutions?
 - For multimedia, aesthetic, technical and storytelling aspects: A separate rubric will be provided.
 - An editor's note (see details below) with JOUR533 stories that explains your reasoning behind the major changes and any further work needed that you could not research on your own.
 - A comparison between the original and the edited version submitted for publication.
- Professionalism as observed by faculty in the newsroom (aided by input from other class members) with particular emphasis on meeting deadlines, pitching in to help others, working as a team, dressing appropriately and being here on time.
- Any tests, quizzes or other assignments.
- Journals and participation in class meetings.
- Your final portfolio.

Item grading

- Story and multimedia packages total 100 points each, 80 percent from editing and 20 percent from multimedia. You and the writer get the same multimedia grade if there has been an equitable division of the work. If either person does all or most without my approval, the grade will be no higher than a 75.
- Graphics are worth 100 points each.
- Photo captions (most of which you will do as a JOUR533 or JOUR536 reporter, but which apply to your JOUR546 grade) are graded in groups of five or less – each is worth 20 points, and the grade is the percentage of the total points available. (Example: You have three photos with captions, a total of 60 possible points. You get -4 total across all three, or 56/60. That equals 93 percent, or a grade of 93.)
- Quizzes, tests and other items are graded as a percentage of the total points available.
- You will be given a separate grading rubric for your final portfolio. The grading for this will be the same across all senior semester classes.

Any factual error is -40 off your total grade for that project/story. This includes misspelled names. I may deduct less if I feel there is an ambiguity or other explanation. Grades will be adjusted downward if such errors come to our attention after publication. (Failure to report an error reported to you is considered akin to dishonesty and will be dealt with under the university's ethics code.)

Any late item is -10 off your total grade, with increasing penalties as time passes (see CR Schedule).

Any error, if repeated, gets points deducted for each time the error is made.

Detailed grading rubrics are provided separately. However, it may be helpful to understand how the story/multimedia package grade is calculated:

- A "top-line" editing grade (out of 100) is awarded based on things such as whether the lede is supported, flabbiness has been removed, quotes are tight, structure is good, information all there but in the right amount, etc.
 - Especially important is your editor's note, which should explain major changes (moving grafs, changing quotations – even a little bit) as well as missing information that could not be immediately obtained by you or the reporter and what you are doing to try to get it.
- From the top-line grade are deducted any language errors, any linking problems, and any problems with the text message/tweet you do (SMS). This is your "editing" grade that counts for 80 percent of the total story grade.
 - You may have one or more "queries" in your copy. These usually are in red – they always are circled. These carry from five to 20 points off (to get your attention), and you should take them seriously. They are things I think are suspect or that I know are off-kilter but I want you to check out.
 - Here's why they're important – if you get back to me with the answer, I usually give some or all of the points back. But it's up to you to come see me when I have my grade book (don't just stop me in the newsroom) to discuss and make any adjustment.
- The multimedia is graded separately (but in the context of the item) and counts for 20 percent of the total story grade. Up to 50 points will be deducted from the multimedia grade for any material not properly sourced. Relevant hyperlinks are required but are not sufficient as part of multimedia. At least three relevant links must accompany each story, but grading may suffer if more would be appropriate. Students should also link back to previous relevant Dateline Carolina stories (beyond the minimum three). If there is extensive background material, consider creating a microsite. The writer should supply the links, but it is the editor's job to make sure they are accurate and the most relevant. Three may not be enough if the subject matter calls for more. They should be in a link list at the end of the story.

Filing copy for grading

(This is a little complicated, but please take time to read and understand – improperly filed copy can get a zero.)

There are two times as an editor when you will file copy for grading.

- First: You will prepare any multimedia elements (including graphics) and work with the reporter to file those as part of the reporter's package (see JOUR533 and JOUR536 syllabuses for details).
- Second: Once you have edited the story, you will file a version for grading.

The reporter's package – which also has your multimedia – will get a "VG" version and go into the "VG-forgrading" folder on the Carolina Reporter server. Once the story has been cleared for editing, the reporter will change the version V1 on the story only and move it into the "Stories_V1-UnedOrig" folder on the server. (Other elements such as photos, multimedia, etc., will be cleared separately).

As an editor, you will take the V1 version of the story and edit it. You will advance the version to a V2 and put it in the proper folder (Stories_V2-firstedit), and at that point I will grade it. (See the CR Handbook for detailed instructions on all the production folders, slugs, file names, etc. *It will take a little time to learn this system, but you must for proper copy flow.*)

For grading, you will *print out* and staple together a package in this order:

1. A printout of the edited story without track changes showing (i.e. "Final" in Word)
2. A printout of the story with track changes showing (i.e. "Final showing markup" in Word)
3. Link list (make sure Word's auto-change function is off so that these stay as text and do not become actual hyperlinks). The link list is the last page of the story.
 - a. For any link over 35 characters long or with more than two virgules, provide both the original and a shortened version
 - b. There must also be a short description of why this link is valid – I will be very keen on who operates it, its credibility, deep linking, etc.
4. The SMS version: A maximum 140-character (including spaces) texting/tweeting version of the story. Use the **SMS form (PDF)** on Blackboard. It automatically limits you to 140 characters if opened in Adobe (do not open it in Mac Preview). Follow the guidelines we have talked about for a good SMS.

(Backstop this on the Blackboard dropbox – NOT the CR server – so I have a copy if I need to get to it electronically.)

5. Your editor's note (this is really important to your grading, so please do it right).
 - a. One page, 150-250 words, preferably 1 1/2 spaced (use CMD-5 on a Mac).
 - b. It is critical this not be made part of the electronic story file. It should be kept totally separate (though as a backstop, please put a copy on the Blackboard dropbox). Do not use the standard slug or file name – we want to make absolutely sure it is not accidentally printed. But do put some descriptive title at top, like "Lost dog story note."
 - c. The note should explain any major problems and how you fixed or tried to fix them. This is not a line-by-line recounting of each change. If there are open questions, explain what they are, how we are fixing them and what we'll do if we can't fix them (especially if you have changed anything in quotes. Don't tell me you're going to have the reporter pursue it, however, if all you had to do was look it up or make a quick call.) I'm looking for recognition of key issues.

Graduate students complete the same assignments as undergraduates, but are expected to produce higher-quality work and are graded accordingly. Grad students will also have additional readings dealing with current industry issues and must complete a critique of each printed and weekly online edition and lead at least one critique session. The critique includes marking up the paper or Web site printout and a three- to five-page printed explanation. The critiques are due the Monday following publication. Grading will be based on clarity and completeness of each critique - does the student articulate both what works and what does not and explain why and how to improve, and in doing so, does the student successfully integrate current practices and concepts as evidenced in the readings?

Readings

Will be provided in a separate list.



There's nothing like seeing that paper on the porch with your work, even if it's a virtual paper on a virtual porch.

"We don't own the news anymore." – Richard Sambrook, BBC

"In the 21st century, large is no longer in charge" – Sumner Redstone, Viacom/CBS

The community of scholars at the University of South Carolina is dedicated to personal and academic excellence. Every School of Journalism and Mass Communications graduate will embrace the principles of the Carolina Creed, and will:

1. *Demonstrate the ability to conduct research, gather information, write clearly and correctly and present relevant news or persuasive information at a professional level.*
2. *Think critically, creatively and independently; evaluate their own work and the work of others for accuracy, fairness, clarity, style and correctness.*
3. *Understand the history of journalism and mass communications, the diversity of groups in a global society in relationship to communications and the role of journalism and mass communications in society.*
4. *Understand the ethical concepts and the legal implications, considerations and practices that guide the mass media professions.*
5. *Demonstrate the ability to apply tools and technologies appropriate for the production, editing and presentation of visual, aural, textual or other media content.*
6. *Apply basic numerical and statistical concepts and methods appropriate for the communications professions.*