San José State University
Department of English, School of Humanities & Arts
English 106, Editing for Writers, Fall 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Sara West
Office Location:	Working remotely
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Email:	sara.west@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 12:30-1:30 p.m. & Friday 9 a.m.-10 a.m. and *by appointment* — I promise, if you take the time to work out an appointment time with me, we'll find something that works for you.
Class Days/Time:	Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:30-11:45 a.m.
Classroom:	Online

Course Format

Zoom Synchronous Classes

Synchronous classes will be conducted via Zoom during our regular class time. Synchronous classes will consist of some combination of lecture, discussion, and group activity. To participate during class, students should be able to use the chat functionality on Zoom and/or should enable their microphone so as to speak.

During the synchronous class sessions, students are encouraged to have their video enabled if at all possible. If you need to step away from the screen, you're welcome to cut your video during that time. If you're unable to use video, please set a profile picture of yourself on your Zoom account.

Synchronous classes will be recorded. If you are unable to attend synchronous class, you should watch the recording after the fact. Any in-class exercises will be due at 11:59 p.m. PT on the day they are assigned.

Canvas and Email

You are responsible for checking your email and the Canvas course page regularly. Since this is an online course, basically everything will be posted on Canvas. If, for any reason, Canvas is not working or a link/document is not working, please contact me as soon as possible.

You should also check your SJSU email regularly. If you do not use your official SJSU account to email me, please include your full name and student ID with your email. I will try to respond to emails on the day they are received, but emails received after 7 p.m. may not be answered until the next day. Emails received on weekends may not receive replies on the same day.

If you want a send a quick question or comment without composing a formal email, you can text me using the number above. Text messages should be related to the class. If you do not feel comfortable with communicating via this means, then rely on email instead.

Course Description

Writing is as much a craft as it is an art, and writers who excel in their fields understand the mechanics of their craft as well as the aesthetic effects their writing will have on an audience. Gone are the days where the genius author transfers her raw brilliance to paper with the lowly editor sweeping up commas and semicolons behind her. As writers in the digital age, we are not only expected to understand the rules that hold written language together, but to be able to articulate why particular constructions are more correct than others, both in our critiques of the work of others, and in the defenses of our own writing choices. For better or for worse, the tortured solitary writer is now a team player—the degree of woe determined by how well she understands the editing process. Such knowledge is crucial to ensure that one's genius reaches the light of day with as little tinkering as possible.

Additionally, there is always demand for quality editors in the workplace. Whether your goal is to become a freelance writer, copywriter, manuscript editor, technical editor, or managing editor—or just earn some burrito money while your novel finds its publisher—having an arsenal of technical and terminological expertise to back your writing ability will put you into a position for success, however you might define it.

This class is a boot camp for writers and editors in which we strip written language down to its fundamentals: grammar, punctuation, syntax, spelling, etc. As the semester progresses, we hunt increasingly bigger game, moving from phrases and sentences to paragraphs and entire documents. Our goal is to understand how to create useful texts which are geared towards achieving their goals. Thus, we look not only at technical errors of grammar, but also at stylistic choices that will improve clarity and ways of reorganizing information in documents to better suit the needs of our readers.

Lastly, this class is designed to let writers understand the function of editing in the real world, grounding abstract skills into the realm of the publishing workplace. Any piece of printed or online writing you read has most likely seen multiple layers of commenting, revision, editing, and proofing by multiple people. This process becomes more obvious when we encounter writing which has not gone through such rigorous review. A successful writer understands how editing fits into the process of getting published, as well as the potential for paying editorial gigs in the course of a writing career.

Goals and Learning Outcomes

Program Learning 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 (Student Learning Objectives)

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. By the end of this class, you will be able to:
1. Edit multiple forms of writing using the basic principles and techniques of copyediting and proofreading, including editing symbols and the use of style sheets.

2. Demonstrate a mastery of English grammar, spelling, punctuation and usage so you can persuasively justify your editing decisions to other writers.
3. Analyze and edit documents at higher levels of organization.
4. Demonstrate proficiency with the fundamentals of document design and page layout.
5. Demonstrate proficiency with elements of graphic design and editing graphics to support text.
6. Perform the duties of a working editor in terms of persuasion, collaboration, negotiation, implementation, reflection, and self-assessment.

Required & Suggested Texts/Readings

Textbooks

- Required: Class Reader, Available at Maple Press (330 South 10th Street). You can pick up in-store or order online through their website.
- Suggested: Williams, Joseph M. *Style*: *Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace, 6th edition and up.*
- Suggested: A grammar handbook of your choice
    - Consider *St. Martin's Handbook, Wadsworth Handbook, The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation, The Grammar Bible*
- Suggested: A dictionary

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 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. Our class reading provides a "gloss" of major considerations; if you need more explanation, your grammar handbook should provide some more information. And, of course, you're always welcome to meet with me!

Homework, Worksheets, and In-Class Exercises

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 turn in completed homework before class time, and this work will be graded on completion

Occasionally, I will single out particular exercises as "worksheets." These exercises will require you to demonstrate your mastery of several skills we've studied—and put it all together to edit a full text. See the schedule for the due dates.

In-class exercises will be completed after the lecture to reinforce any concepts discussed. Students will be able to work in groups to complete these exercises during the class time. If students miss synchronous class, in-class exercises will be due at 11:59 p.m. PT on the day they are assigned. These are also graded on completion.

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.)

Exams will be conducted online and will be available for 24 hours on the day of the exam. Alternate exams can be provided on other dates on a case-by-case basis.

The final exam is cumulative.

Assignments

When submitting work online, students should submit as a Microsoft Word file unless otherwise noted (homework can be submitted as a different file type depending on how you chose to submit—rewriting, scanning, completing on tablet, etc.). Word is still an industry standard, and you will need to be able to engage with the program at some level as an editor. SJSU students can get a free copy of Word (in MS Office) here: http://its.sjsu.edu/services/software/microsoft-students/index.html

Delineation of Workload for 4-Unit Course

Course Component	Student Work	Instructor Engagement
Regular 3 Units (9 hrs/week)	Reading and corresponding homework assignments, work on worksheets, studying for exams, engaging in individual and group in-class activities, major assignments	Class contact hours, prepare in-class activities, evaluate student work and provide feedback, meet with students, evaluation of projects
Activity 1 unit (3 hrs/week)	Additional work in two major editing projects. These projects ask students to engage in copyediting, developmental editing, organizational editing, and document design. Students will be working with editing and document design software. In addition, students will be working with production teams on these projects and will need to correspond schedules and workflow.	Guidance to students during project work time and additional scheduled meetings, evaluation and assessment of projects, mediating group issues as applicable, one-on-one work with editing and document design software

Grading Information

Assignment	Course Objective(s)	Points
Homework	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	100 pts
In-Class Exercises	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	50 pts (5 pts each)
Worksheets	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	150pts (50 pts each)

Exams	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	350 pts (100, 120, 130)
Article edits	1, 2, 3, 6	150 pts
Final Project	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6	200 pts

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.

Grading Criteria: Most grades are points-based for right or wrong answers. However, the following sums up my criteria for grading assignments.

Assignments are assigned letter grades, from A+ to F.

An "A" is awarded to work that is consistently excellent, professional, and publishable.

A "B" is awarded to work that is consistently above average—and occasionally excellent. Despite some bright spots, a client or editor would probably pass it back for more editing.

A "C" is awarded to work that is developing. Though the potential is there, a client or editor would pass on this.

A "D" is awarded to work that is incomplete or way off the mark.

An "F" is generally awarded to work that is not turned in. This usually comes in the form of a zero.

Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Grades on Canvas

Because I want you to know how you are doing in the class at all times, I will be updating your grades on Canvas as I give them. It is part of my job as an instructor to return work in a timely fashion. Though I try my best to check and doublecheck grades, it is part of your job as a student to make sure that I am entering correct grades for you. If you see an error in a grade, please come to me immediately; don't wait until the end of the semester when things get crazy.

Grading Disputes

Again, though I doublecheck my grading, please do your part to make sure I've calculated your grade correctly and bring any errors on my part to my attention immediately. (Obviously, if I erred in your favor, I'm not expecting you to speak up. That's on me.) Otherwise, if you are concerned about a grade you received, our conversations will be about how you can do better on the next assignment.

Final Grading Scale

A plus: 1000-980 points

A: 979-940 points
A minus: 939-900 points
B plus: 899-870 points
B: 869-840 points
B minus: 839-800 points
C plus: 799-770 points
C: 769-740 points
C minus: 739-700 points
D plus: 699-670 points
D: 669-640 points
D minus: 639-600 points
F: 599 and below

Additional Policies

Attendance

Missing more than a few days of class will significantly affect your understanding of the material because we spend a lot of time in class digging into the concepts and doing in-class activities about those concepts. *If you miss class, please consult the syllabus and your classmates.*

I would appreciate that you notify me if you are unable to attend class. Please, please, please don't disappear on me. If you are dealing with something major that's getting in the way of regular attendance, LET ME KNOW. You don't need to give me details, but let's discuss so we can come up with a game plan.

If you attend class, you should be planning to stay the entire duration. If you need to log in late or sign off early, please let me know.

Late Work Policy

I do not accept late work for this course. Professional writers and editors in the workplace are expected to make and/or keep up with deadlines, and part of the purpose of this class (and the others in the PTW program) is to prepare you for that reality. If you know that a particular deadline will be a problem, please speak to me ahead of time.

(That said, I have an open-door policy for a reason—come talk to me if something is up.)

Acting with Academic and Professional integrity

In both your academic and professional careers, you are expected to act with integrity. You are in this class for more than a grade, you are here to emerge with actual skills—skills that are not developed through cheating. Though it most likely will not be an issue, any plagiarism, homework copying, or unauthorized borrowing from your neighbor's brain will not be tolerated in this class and will be reported directly to Student Conduct and Ethical Development.

Classroom Conduct

Be kind to each other. You are to treat the instructor, any guests or substitute instructors, and your classmates with respect and courteous behavior. Keep in mind that we likely come from different backgrounds, honor different belief systems, have access to different tools, struggle with different concepts, and excel at different tasks and responsibilities. And that's okay.

Even though we're online, you should *still* treat the classroom as a professional workspace. In fact, online workspaces are the norm during this time and likely will continue to be used more often. It's easy to divide your attention in front of the computer screen, and if you choose to do that, you should make sure you're checked in enough to be able to respond when called upon.

Basic Needs Security

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact SJSU Cares. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess. SJSU also has the following initiatives:

- CalFresh Outreach Program
- Emergency Funds
- Emergency Housing
- Food & Shelter Program
- Mental Health Services
- Other: Food Resources
- Student Health Services

My open-door policy

I'm happy to talk with you at any time about the readings, assignments, and any other aspect of the course. Because I understand that sometimes office hours are difficult to get to, I'm always happy to meet with you at another time if you send me your availability.

University Policies

General Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

As members of the academic community, students accept both the rights and responsibilities incumbent upon all members of the institution. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with SJSU's policies and practices pertaining to the procedures to follow if and when questions or concerns about a class arises. To learn important campus information, view University Policy S16-15 and SJSU current semester's Policies and Procedures. In general, it is recommended that students begin by seeking clarification or discussing concerns with their instructor. If such conversation is not possible, or if it does not address the issue, it is recommended that the student contact the Department Chair as the next step.

Timely Feedback on Class Assignments

Per University Policy F13-1, all students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

University Policy S14-7 states that San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the Academic Calendars webpage. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes (Late Drop Information). Information about the latest changes and news is available at the Advising Hub.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

University Policy S12-7, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- "Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material."
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- "Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent."

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7 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. Visit the Student Conduct and Ethical Development website for more information.

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 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs and other resources for student use are available in:

- Associated Students Print & Technology Center at http://as.sjsu.edu/asptc/index.jsp on the Student Union (East Wing 2nd floor Suite 2600)
- The Spartan Floor at the King Library at http://library.sjsu.edu/about/spartan-floor
- Student Computing Services at http://library.sjsu.edu/student-computing-services/student-computing-services-center
- Computers at the Martin Luther King Library for public at large at https://www.sjpl.org/wireless
- Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from [Collaboration & Academic Technology Services](#) located in IRC Building. 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 Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is still conducting tutoring sessions online. 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. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.

SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services are providing services online. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide confidential 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 and Psychological Services website](#) at http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling