

This is supplementary material for the webtext “Wikipedia as Editorial Microcosm” by Joshua DiCaglio et al., published in *Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy*, 29(1), available at <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/29.1/topoi/dicaglio-et-al/index.html>.

Technical and Professional Editing

ENGL 320

Semester: Spring 2022

Time:

Prerequisites: English 210

Classroom

Professor:



The Task

Few doubt the importance of STEM fields for the continued development of modern society, fueling business, and solving our multitude of problems. At the same time, the more science we develop, the more businesses we create, and the more technologies we build, the more we have to write. For those who doubt the value of the humanities, especially a degree in English, we simply need to note that for every engineer we need at least a handful of people to develop and check proposals, formulate reports, process patents, handle public outreach, and manage internal communications. There is a clear and obvious need for people who can write with clarity, precision, and versatility. Yet, just like building bridges or mapping a genome, knowing how to write well is not an easy task and those who can do so are always in demand and usually greatly appreciated.

Functioning as an *editor*, one who not only writes but can manage the writing of others (often many individuals in collaboration) and translate across different forms of knowledge and discourse (who can, for instance, translate the structure of a machine process for developing a microporous membrane into legally appropriate language required for a patent)—again, this editing ability is obviously needed and yet obviously difficult to develop. The task of this course is to help you develop this capacity as an editor who is able to function in the diverse contexts of a professional world that almost invariably deals with modes of writing that are unavoidably technical. Whether you end up as someone actually known as an “editor” or whether you end up working in law, HR, PR, management, information designer, or some other capacity (or a writer yourself), the hope is that this course will permit you to continue to develop your writing skills, your editorial sensibility,

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and your ability to translate these skills into the technical contexts that you are likely to encounter in your future careers.

Learning Outcomes – In this course, students will practice how to:

- 1) Navigate and translate between different forms of discourse in a variety of technical and professional settings.
- 2) Manage and synthesize multiple interests, demands, and rhetorical situations
- 3) Refine design, stylistic, and grammatical fluency needed to produce polished final deliverables.
- 4) Perform comprehensive editing, copyediting, and proofreading, including the use of traditional copyediting marks, digital editing, and other technologies related to editing.
- 5) Develop an awareness of writer/editor relationship including strategies for editing in collaborative setting
- 6) Understand the profession of editing including career possibilities and professional and ethical responsibilities

Skills involved in Editing – Throughout the course we will be developing our:

- 1) Conceptual capacity – to be able to handle differences in ideas and articulations
- 2) Rhetorical capacity – distill out needs and effects, in different contexts and audiences
- 3) Stylistic capacity – craft appropriate sentences, revised for tone, clarity, conciseness and continuity
- 4) Grammatical capacity – identify and maneuver grammatical choices, with an eye to consistency within given conventions
- 5) Design capacity – recognize and alter design choices, from structure to font within the document
- 6) Communicative/collaborative capacity – coordinate and facilitate editorial process with content producers (e.g. the engineer), writers, fellow editors, and other interests.

Texts

- *Technical Editing: An Introduction to Editing in the Workplace* by Cunningham, Malone, and Rothschild, Oxford University Press, 1st edition

Assignments

Resume Project	15%
Wikipedia Project	30%
Technical Client Project	30%
Grammar and Copyediting Practice	15%
Small Participation Assignments	10%

Grading Policies

We will be using a Standard Letter grading scale

A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = <60

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Contacting your Instructor

I am always happy to be in touch with students. Please feel free to email me at jdicaglio@tamu.edu or message me through Canvas. While I am holding office hours via Zoom, please do not allow this to be an obstacle to meeting with me. If slots are not available on my calendar, please reach out and we can work out alternative arrangements.

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Schedule

Check Canvas for final schedule and updates
(instructor reserves the right to modify this schedule throughout the semester)

	<p>1/19: The Technical Editor Read: TE chp 1 Exercise: Join TechWhirl list @ www.techwr-l.com/join.html</p>	<p>1/21 – Levels of Editing Read: TE chp 3 Forum: Job ads for Tech/Prof writing</p>
<p>1/24 – Basic Tasks and Tools Read: TE chp 12 Copyediting Exercise #1 Due Work on Cover Letter and Resume if you don’t have one.</p>	<p>1/26 – Facilitating a writing process: Audiences Read: TE chp 2 Exercise: Open Heart surgery activity Exchange Cover Letters and Resumes</p>	<p>1/28 – Sample Resume edits Exercise: Examine sample comments Copyediting Exercise #2 due</p>
<p>1/31 – Making better comments Have initial comments for resumes and cover letters</p>	<p>2/2 – Document Design Read: TE Chp 10 Exercise: Practicing Document Design</p>	<p>2/4 – Exchange Comments on Resumes and Cover letters Copyediting Exercise #3 due First project in Sunday 2/6</p>
<p>2/7 – Begin Wikipedia project Read assignment overview</p>	<p>2/9 – Wikipedia’s Problem Selecting Articles Post article possibilities by end of the day Thursday 2/10</p>	<p>2/11 – Wikipedia’s Editing Culture – Policies and Procedures Post to discussion</p>
<p>2/14– Getting to a better article: What is a “bold edit”? Exercise: Finding Model articles and bold edits</p>	<p>2/16 – Organization Read: TE chp 4 Look at history of articles After class: Post organization exercise from class</p>	<p>2/18 – Work /Grammar Day - Verbs Read TE chp 13 Complete Exercises 2 through 4 in Chp 13 Articles finalized by today</p>

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<p>2/21 – Working with other editors</p> <p>Exercises: Tracing existing communication</p>	<p>2/23– Navigation, Reuse, and Specialized Issues</p> <p>Read: TE 5</p> <p>TE Chp 11 – Editing for reuse</p> <p>Post to Talk pages as needed</p>	<p>2/25– Work/Grammar Day – Verbs part 2</p> <p>Read TE chp 13</p> <p>Complete Exercises 5 through 9 in Chp 13</p>
<p>2/28 – NPOV</p> <p>Exercise on Canvas</p> <p>Initial substantive edits posed or implemented</p>	<p>3/2 – Verifiability, NOR</p> <p>Exercise on Canvas</p>	<p>3/4 – Style: What is it? How to work with it?</p> <p>Read: TE chp 8</p> <p>Complete Exercises 3 & 4 in Chapter 8</p>
<p>3/7 – Style on Wikipedia: What is Encyclopedic Tone?</p> <p>Exercise on Style in Wikipedia</p>	<p>3/9 – Making way for future editing</p> <p>Read TE Chp 6</p>	<p>3/11 – Work/Grammar Day – Subj-Verb</p> <p>Read TE chp 14</p> <p>Complete Exercises 1-5 in Chp 14</p>
MARCH 14 - 18: SPRING BREAK		
<p>3/21 – Transitioning to Client Project</p> <p>All Wikipedia Materials Due</p>	<p>3/23 – Handling Technical Information</p> <p>Technical Information Exercise</p>	<p>3/25 -- Practice Proposal Part 1</p> <p>Practice Proposal Activity Part 1</p>
<p>3/28 – Practice Proposal Part 2</p> <p>Practice Proposal Activity Part 2</p>	<p>3/30 – Practice Proposal Part 3</p> <p>Practice Proposal Activity Part 3</p>	<p>4/1 – Technical Definitions and Models for your Client’s Document</p> <p>Complete Exercise on Canvas</p>
	<p>4/6 – Situating Arguments</p>	<p>4/8 – Grammar Day – Nouns</p>

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<p>4/4 – Comments and Communication Complete: Conference paper proposal activity</p> <p>Aim to have met with your client by today.</p>	<p>Complete: Situating Arguments exercise</p>	<p>Read TE chp 15 Complete Exercises 2-4 in Chp 15</p> <p>Aim to have editing contract</p>
<p>4/11– Organizing large arguments</p> <p>Complete: Organization Activity exercise</p>	<p>4/13 – Grammar Day – Pronouns</p> <p>Read TE chp 16 Complete Exercises 1-6 in Chp 16</p>	<p>4/15 – Reading Day – No Classes</p> <p>Recommended date for initial comments to Author</p>
<p>4/18 – Double checking for accuracy</p> <p>Read: TE chp 7 Complete: Double checking for accuracy exercise</p>	<p>4/20 – Style in Academic Writing</p> <p>Complete: Style in Academic writing exercise</p>	<p>4/22 - Grammar Day – Punctuation</p> <p>Read TE chp 17 Complete Exercises 1-5 in Chp 17</p> <p>Recommended date for second meeting with client</p>
<p>4/25 – Editing technical Graphics</p> <p>Read TE chp 9 Complete: Technical Graphics Activity + Copyediting Exercise #4</p>	<p>4/27 - Manuals of Style and journal requirements</p> <p>Complete:</p>	<p>4/29 – Work Day/Copyediting</p> <p>Copyediting Exercise #5</p>
<p>5/2 Presentations on Final Editing Projects</p> <p>As scheduled with Dr. DiCaglio</p>	<p>5/3 (Tuesday) Presentations on Final Editing Projects</p>	<p>Final Project Portfolio due by the end of the day 5/8</p>

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	As scheduled with Dr. DiCaglio Copyediting Exercise #6	
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University Policies

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

The English Department and the University Rules expect that you will complete classwork and submit all assignments in the sequence they are assigned, by the deadlines posted on Canvas. You are also expected to attend class regularly. However, due to the constraints of COVID, attendance will not be a part of your grade. Note, however, that if you miss class, you won't be able to participate in our activities or conversation; try to catch up with a classmate about any missed class and contact me to keep me on board with your status. If you find yourself missing more than one class. For the sake of record keeping and so I can help, please let me know in advance of any foreseen absences for travel, illness, or any other reason, and please let me know as soon as possible if you must miss class unexpectedly.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in Student Rule 7, or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.1](#)).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7, Section 7.4.2](#)).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

You must have a University-approved excuse in order to make up a missed in-class writing activity or turn in any other assignments without a penalty. You are responsible for providing evidence to substantiate "authorized absences" if the instructor requests and for doing so in a timely manner. If you must miss time in the course and its activities, it is your responsibility to inform your instructor early and often.

Late Paper Policy (unexcused absences)

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Please be in touch with your instructor if you foresee any trouble turning in work on time. Every student is welcome to one no questions asked extension of 48 hours; extensions must be asked for at least 24 hours in advance of the due date. For all other major assignments, unless I have granted an extension, after a 24 hour grace period, you will lose 10% of the final assignment grade for every day past the due date; after 5 days, the assignment will no longer be eligible to receive credit. Please be in contact with me proactively so that we can plan to help you succeed. The Late Paper Policy for this course follows the guidelines described in the University Student Rules, “Section 7. Attendance” (<http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule07>).

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

“An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do.”

“Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one’s work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case” ([Section 20.1.2.3, Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, please contact Disability Resources in the Student Services Building or at (979) 845-1637 or visit disability.tamu.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

On Access and Accommodation

This course is intended for all TAMU students. If you have a disability or a personal circumstance that will affect your learning in this course, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can discuss the best ways to meet your needs. I am happy to meet with you to discuss various ways of expanding access in the classroom that are not only mandated by law. I am committed to working with you, so please do not hesitate to come talk.

Title IX and Statement on Limits to Confidentiality

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit gender-based discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking.

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With the exception of some medical and mental health providers, all university employees (including full and part-time faculty, staff, paid graduate assistants, student workers, etc.) are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Title IX Office if the employee experiences, observes, or becomes aware of an incident that meets the following conditions (see [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#)):

- The incident is reasonably believed to be discrimination or harassment.
- The incident is alleged to have been committed by or against a person who, at the time of the incident, was (1) a student enrolled at the University or (2) an employee of the University.

Mandatory Reporters must file a report regardless of how the information comes to their attention – including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Although Mandatory Reporters must file a report, in most instances, you will be able to control how the report is handled, including whether or not to pursue a formal investigation. The University’s goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and to ensure access to the resources you need.

Students wishing to discuss concerns in a confidential setting are encouraged to make an appointment with [Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#).

Students can learn more about filing a report, accessing supportive resources, and navigating the Title IX investigation and resolution process on the University’s [Title IX webpage](#).

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors that influence a student’s academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in proper self-care by utilizing the resources and services available from Counseling & Psychological Services (CAPS). Students who need someone to talk to can call the TAMU Helpline (979-845-2700) from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. weekdays and 24 hours on weekends. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the National Suicide Prevention Hotline (800-273-8255) or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Students and faculty can report non-emergency behavior that causes them to be concerned at <http://tellsomebody.tamu.edu>.

University COVID-19 Statement

To help protect Aggieland and stop the spread of COVID-19, Texas A&M University urges students to be vaccinated and to wear masks in classrooms and all other academic facilities on campus, including labs. Doing so exemplifies the Aggie Core Values of respect, leadership, integrity, and selfless service by putting community concerns above individual preferences. COVID-19 vaccines and masking — regardless of vaccination status — have been shown to be safe and effective at reducing spread to others, infection, hospitalization, and death.