

English 6400/7400: Advanced Editing

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Course Overview

Welcome to the Utah State University English 6400/7400:Advanced Editing course. As a professional communicator, some of your work probably already involves editing, although your editorial responsibilities may vary depending upon the situation in which you find yourself working. For this reason, most technical communicators need editing skills as well as knowledge of the editor's role in document production.

This course is designed to provide you with this knowledge and skills. Specifically, in this course, we'll address the editing process for various genres and fields while focusing on a particular editing project – specifically, you will work on the online scholarly journal *Kairos* (<http://english.ttu.edu/kairos>), completing a full copy-edit of an author's submission for publication in this journal. This process includes knowing the different levels of editing, from proofreading and copyediting to comprehensive editing for organization, content, and design; illustrations and graphics; and appropriate document design both print and electronic publications. We will discuss how this work applies across genres and fields as we practice. As an added benefit, you will earn an assistant editor credit by working on this particular issue.

While some of your work in this course will be hands-on editing to give you the necessary knowledge/practice to succeed as a technical writer or editor, you'll also have the opportunity to read and discuss a variety of editing theories and explore advanced editing methodologies. We'll also consider and practice principles for managing editing teams and coordinating the efforts of multiple editors. In addition, we'll consider the impact of the global marketplace on editors' roles and address the legal and ethical issues with which editors are sometimes faced.

Objectives

By the end of this course, you'll be expected to demonstrate these competencies:

- To describe the many roles editors assume in their workplaces
- To articulate editing objectives in a variety of documents and to provide a rationale for each objective
- To distinguish between proofreading, copyediting, and comprehensive or substantive editing and to demonstrate your skills in all three editing methods across various media
- To edit both hard copy and electronic documents, using both manual copymarking and online editing software
- To recognize the social, legal, and ethical aspects of the editor's role and to make effective decisions based on this recognition

Reading Materials and Technology

Required Textbook

- *Technical Editing*, 4rd Ed. (2005). Carolyn Rude. Boston: Allyn & Bacon
- A good dictionary
- Other readings listed/link from non-Syllabase course site: <<http://cball.usu.edu/classes/6400>>

Optional but Strongly Recommended Reading Material

- A style guide of your choice
- A grammar and punctuation handbook

Technology Requirements

In addition to Internet access, you will need the following required technologies to complete the assignments for this course:

- Access to a scanner or fax machine (to submit hand-edited copy)
- MSWord or Adobe Acrobat Writer (to review copy electronically)
- FTP software and web space (to review and post electronic documents)

Classroom Policies

Classroom Conduct

Since this classroom will be conducted as a community of writers, I expect you to treat each member of our community with the dignity and respect she or he deserves. No discriminatory behavior directed toward a person's race, creed, national origin, age, sex, or disability will be allowed in this classroom.

Work Submission Guidelines

Final drafts (both written and electronic) must be ready for submission at the time designated on the course schedule. Final drafts submitted after their designated time are considered late. Late paper grades will be lowered by one letter grade for every day the paper is late. All assignments must be submitted in a timely manner to receive a passing grade in the class; in other words, **any student who does not submit all major assignments will not receive a passing grade in the course.**

Any exceptions to this policy must be arranged with me before the assignment deadline. I expect all assignments to demonstrate your ability to produce professional, ethical documents.

Computer Use: Laws and Ethics

At USU, university students, faculty, and staff are expected to make legal and ethical choices regarding computer usage. Please familiarize yourself with university policies regarding the legal and ethical use of computer hardware and software and observe them thoughtfully and carefully. (See The Open Access Computing Facilities Policy Statement for more specific details on university policies. On this page you will find information or links to information about university computing policies regarding theft or failure to observe copyright of computer programs, chain letters, and sexual harassment.)

Academic and Professional Honesty

As a technical communicator and university student, you are bound to be academically and professional honest when producing your work. For a more detailed discussion of professional and academic honesty policies, please see STC's Ethical Principles for Technical Communicators and the USU student code regarding acts of academic dishonest and their consequences.

Special Needs and Accommodations

Please inform me within the first two class weeks if you are a student with a special need or disability that requires making accommodations to this course outline. I will be happy to discuss options with you that will allow for your effective learning of the course materials.

Assignments and Participation Requirements

In order to promote on-going conversation about the required readings and issues raised by the class, you are required to participate weekly in a variety of ways. Each week you will be asked to read from the textbook and online articles and to respond to these readings in our asynchronous discussion forums. In addition, I will occasionally ask you to complete practice exercises and graded assignments. The information that follows in this section outlines my expectations for your participation through the discussion forums, editing exercises, and assignments.

But, first, a note about time commitments

Each Monday morning I will open the forum for that week and be online to respond to any questions from the weekend. Each Friday I will read through and respond to that week's discussion forum. I will try to check the online forums on Wednesdays to see if there are any pressing questions or guidance I can offer. If you have a question you feel is specific to you (and not the class in general) and which needs immediate attention, you may email me. Please note that I do not check email after 5pm Mountain Time and rarely on weekends.

I expect to participate in the online discussions about 3-4 hours a week. (The other 6-7 hours a week that I have allotted to teach this class are spent in reading, preparing assignments, grading, answering your emails, and completing other teaching-administrative tasks.) I expect similar hourly commitments from you (approximately 10 hours a week, depending on the length of assignments, etc.).

Assignments, their values, and due dates

Below you will find a table outlining the course's major assignments, their values, and their due dates.

Assignment	Value	Due Dates and Time
Discussion forums	25%	Ongoing
Editing Assignments (#1-3)	5% each (15% total)	Ongoing, on Mondays
Editing Assignments (#4-7)	10% each (40% total)	Ongoing, on Mondays
Final project	20%	Monday, May 1
Total	100%	

Discussion forums.

In order to be present in this online class, you must participate regularly in the discussion forums. This section outlines the kinds of participation I expect, as well as the participation that you can expect from me. Each week, your discussion forum responses are required take three forms:

- **statements/queries** about the assignment,
- **response to your peers' statements/questions**, and
- **reading of all posted responses in each week's forum.**

Your total written contribution to discussion forums each week must average between 500 and 1000 words. Both of these assignments are described in detail below:

1. Statements/queries:

By Wednesday of each week, please read or complete the assignment and post a 250-500 word statement or query about the week's assigned topic or assignments. In your statement, avoid summarizing the reading's or exercise's contents. Instead I suggest you choose a specific passage or section of the reading (or a series of exercise questions) on which to focus your response. Keep in mind other course readings and our discussions, and try mapping this reading/these ideas with others. Use this assignment as an opportunity to work out your own critical re-reading of the work—contextualizing it with your own perspective and experiences and those of others that interest you.

More specifically, in your comments, you might answer the following questions:

- What, in particular, do you consider the critical insight on editing of this reading?
- What questions does this reading raise or leave unanswered?
- What, if anything, will you adopt or adapt from this reading for use in your place of employment or course assignments?
- How does the critical insight offered in the reading align with your own workplace experiences?

2. Response to Peer Statements/Questions:

By Saturday of each week, read your peer's statement or questions and respond to at least three of these comments. Your response to your peers should be between 250-500 words. (To fulfill this assignment, you may write two responses or a series of short responses. However you divide your attention, your total response should meet the 250- to 500-word requirement.)

3. Reading Posts:

Throughout the week, you should read entries your classmates have written, whether you decide to respond to these entries or not. At the beginning of each, be sure to check the previous week's posts to read any messages posted over the weekend.

In addition to these required readings and responses, I will also generate forums where you may discuss exercises as you complete them and where you can post editing problems you find in Rude's *Technical Editing* textbook or in any other of the assigned texts.

Editing exercises.

The editing exercises for the class will take two forms at various times during the semester: ungraded and graded editing exercises.

1. Ungraded exercises:

At the end of each chapter in *Technical Editing* are a series of exercises that will allow you to practice what you learn in the chapter. For each chapter, I will recommend certain practice exercises. You are not required to submit these exercises for a grade but completing them will prepare you more fully for the graded exercises. You may also find that these exercises provide fruitful discussion topics or queries for our weekly discussion forums. I may also offer you other ungraded exercise practice to prepare you for graded exercises. I will post these practice exercises in the discussion forum for your use.

2. Graded Assignments:

During the course of the semester, you will complete and submit seven graded editing assignments. These assignments are designed to test your abilities from editing paper documents by hand to editing collaboratively with digital-only documents. Each assignment is progressively more difficult, requiring you to use what you've learned so far to complete the assignment.

All of the graded exercises are due on Mondays.

Individual assignments

- Assignment #1: Read *Kairos* webtexts, write brief review, and assign editorial boards members
- Assignment #2: Copy-marking exercise (hand-edited)
- Assignment #3: Copy-editing print text

Collaborative assignments

- Assignment #4: Write letter to authors; revise in groups using electronic markup
- Assignment #5: Comprehensive copy-edit *Kairos* text (written text) with list of changes
- Assignment #6: Comprehensive copy-edit *Kairos* text (design) with list of changes
- Assignment #7: Write author query for *Kairos* text

3. Final Project.

This project is a culmination of most of your editing assignments throughout the term. You will turn in your edited *Kairos* webtext and an introduction to the text that might be used as a "letter from the editor." The introduction will require you to collaborate with all of your classmates, not just your groupmates for your specific webtext.

Kairos: The Project

Kairos is an online, peer-reviewed scholarly journal in the field of writing, rhetoric, and technology. This fall marks the journal's 10th anniversary, and most of your editing assignments will revolve around completing the steps necessary to publish one webtext (*Kairos'* term for hypertextual articles) for that special issue.

I have been an editor at *Kairos* for five years and have learned an incredible amount about how to edit complex, technical documents for online distribution. Because, no doubt, you will have to edit documents for online distribution, I wanted to bring this project to you to extend the treatment of editing online documents in the textbook. (It's a good start, but there's so much more!) And if you haven't yet experienced working in editing teams or through an entire editing process, this hands-on project will give you that experience. (If you have had the benefit of working in similar capacities, then I hope you will bring that expertise to the class via the discussion forums. We all stand to learn from each other.)

This project -- as well as many of the assignments that lead up to the final project -- will require you to work in collaborative groups. I will choose these groups for you because, sometimes, you never know who you have to work with, especially when working at a distance. (Consider, for instance, that my co-editor and I are still learning how each of our editing styles contributes to the journal in unique -- and sometimes confusing -- ways, and we have to manage and accommodate and learn by doing, even after five years together. We've met face-to-face three times, for an hour, during those five years!)

I hope you find this editing experience eventful and informational. And, before we start, I ask that you keep in mind the ethical responsibilities of editors. Specifically, we will be working with real texts that have been written by real authors, and part of an editor's duty is respecting the privacy of authors. So, please don't share private information about your assigned webtext outside of the class. Thank you.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Course introduction and introduction to editing (Jan. 9-14)

- Review website contents
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 1
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 2
- “Editing is Magic”—Bush
- review *Kairos* website
- Write 300- to 500-word introduction to the class, describing yourself and your previous editing experiences.
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 2: Editing as collaboration and administration (Jan. 16-21)

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 3
- “Social Theories, Workplace Writing, and Collaboration: Implications and Directions for Research”—Allen and Thompson
- “Situational Rhetoric: A Rhetorical Approach for the Technical Editor”—Beuhler
- Assignment #1: Read *Kairos* webtexts, write brief review, and assign editorial boards members
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 3: The editing process; copymarking and proofreading (Jan. 23-28)

- “Chapter 6: Types of Editorial Review”—Tarutz
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 4
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 13
- The Technical Editor as Diplomat: Linguistic Strategies in Balancing Clarity and Politeness”—Mackiewicz and Riley
- Participate in discussion forum.
- Assignment #2: Copy-marking exercise (hand-edited)

Week 4: Copyediting: introduction and consistency (Jan. 30-Feb. 4)

I will be out of town/away from Internet Feb 2-4, and will respond to forum when I return.

- Turn in Assignment #2 by Monday, January 30.
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 7
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 8
- “Chapter 10: How to Write a Style Guide Writers Will Want to Use.”—Tarutz
- “Seek and Ye Shall Find—and Replace”—Hart
- Participate in discussion forum (style guides)

Week 5: Copyediting: spelling, capitalization, abbreviations, grammar and usage (Feb. 6-11)

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 9
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 10
- “Breaking the Rules”—Gallagher
- Participate in discussion forum.
- Complete Assignment #3: Copy-editing text

Week 6: Copyediting: punctuation and qualitative and technical material (Feb. 13-18)

- Assignment #3 due Monday, Feb. 13
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 11
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 12
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 7: Electronic markup; Comprehensive copyediting (Feb. 20-25)

I will be out of town and away from Internet Feb. 23-27.

I will respond to this week’s discussion when I return on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 6
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 14
- “Chapter 8: Levels of Edit”—Tarutz
- Substantive Editing: Break It to Them Gently”—Hart
- Review *Kairos* ed board revision suggestions
- Assignment #4: Write letter to authors; revise in groups using electronic markup
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 8: Comprehensive editing: style (Feb. 27-Mar. 4)

- Assignment #4 due Monday, Feb. 27
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 15
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 16
- “Masters, Slaves, and Infant Mortality: Language Challenges for Technical Editing”—Brodie Graves and Graves
- “Dueling Modifiers”—McGinty
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 9: Comprehensive editing: organization (Mar. 6-11)

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 17
- “Perceiving Structure in Professional Prose: A Multiply Determined Experience”—Colomb and Williams
- “Editing Effective Lists”—Bush
- Participate in discussion forum.
- Assignment #5: Comprehensive copy-edit *Kairos* text (written text); write up list of changes

Spring Break: No classes (Mar. 13-18)

Week 10: Comprehensive editing: visual design and illustrations (Mar. 20-25)

I will be out of town March 21-26. I am unsure of my Internet access during this time.

- Assignment #5 list of changes due Monday, March 20
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 18
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 19
- “Color: The Newest Tool for Technical Communicators”—White
- “Editing Tables and Graphs”—Hart
- Participate in discussion forum (print vs. online graphics and design)
- Assignment #6: Comprehensive copy-edit *Kairos* text (design); list of changes

Week 11: Editing online documents (Mar. 27-Apr. 1)

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 5
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 21
- “Electronic Editing in Technical Communication: A Survey of Practices and

Attitudes”—Dayton

- “The Technical Editor and Document Databases: What the Future May Hold”—Albers
- “Editing Web Pages”—Hart
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 12: Comprehensive editing: global contexts (Apr. 3-8)

- Assignment #6 list of changes due Monday, April 3.
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 20
- “Aligning International Editing Efforts with Global Business Strategies”—Leininger and Yuan
- “Graphic Design with the World in Mind”—Locke
- Participate in discussion forum.
- Assignment #7: Write author query for *Kairos* text

Week 13: Legal and ethical issues in editing (Apr. 10-15)

- Assignment #7 (author query) due Monday, April 10.
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 22
- “Ethics for Editors”—Allen and Voss
- “Is This Ethical? A Survey of Opinion on Principles and Practices of Document Design”—Dragga
- “Ethics and Visual Rhetorics: Seeing’s Not Believing Anymore”—Allen
- Participate in discussion forum.

Week 14: Management & Production (Apr. 17-22)

- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 23
- *Technical Editing*, Chapter 24
- “Chapter 14: Managing Projects and Time”—Tarutz Estimating Editorial Tasks: A Five-Step Method”—Cormier
- Participate in discussion forum.
- Write an introduction to the *Kairos* text

Week 15: Final project (Apr. 24-29)

Complete author query responses in *Kairos* text
Turn in final *Kairos* text on Monday, May 1.