

News Editing

Oklahoma City University
Fall 2014
MCMJ 3313 - 3 credit hours
11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. MW
Walker Center, Room 122

Professor

Kenna Griffin
Office: WC 117
Twitter: [@profkrg](#)
Facebook: [www.facebook.com/profkrg](#)
Email: kgriffin@okcu.edu
Office phone: 208-5043
Website: www.profkrg.com

I have an open-door policy and am happy to discuss writing with you at any opportunity. You do not have to schedule an appointment to discuss course-related matters with me. However, if you want to guarantee an uninterrupted one-on-one that will take longer than 15 minutes, I encourage you to schedule time to ensure we can provide one another our undivided attention.

Required Texts & Course Materials

Associated Press. (2014). In Christian, D., Jacobsen, S. & Minthorn, D. (Eds.), *The Associated Press Stylebook*. New York, NY: The Associated Press.

Brooks, B.S. & Pinson, J.L. (2014). *The Art of Editing in the Age of Convergence*, 10th edition. New York: Pearson.

Geisler, J. (2012). *Work Happy: What Great Bosses Know*. New York, NY: Center Street.

Gillman, Mary Louise. (1998). *One Word, Two Words Hyphenated*. NCRA Press.

Kovach, B. and Rosenstiel, T. (2007). *Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect*. NY: Three Rivers Press.

Provided handouts

Materials posted in the course Facebook group, which I will invite you to join.

NOTE: Others will be added during the semester.

Recommended Texts

Clark, R.P. and Fry, D. (2003). *Coaching Writers*, second edition. MA: Bedford/St. Martin's.

Good media practitioners (and citizens) are well-informed news consumers.

You should read *The Oklahoman* and *The Campus* every day (www.mediaocu.com). I recommend that you get into the habit of reading at least one daily metropolitan newspaper and a weekly news magazine. I also recommend that you watch at least one televised newscast each day.

In addition, I recommend that you visit and participate in discussions on my media blog, www.profkrg.com. The site acts as a resource for students and an open forum for discussion of trends in our profession. You can follow the blog on Twitter [@profkrg](#). You also may follow my blog and other industry news on Facebook at www.facebook.com/ProfKRG.

Responsible citizens are avid news consumers. Information is the key to a democratic society. Develop the habit of daily news consumption now if you haven't already.

Course Description

In this course you will study the behind-the-scenes aspects of the newsroom including staff structure and management, and properly editing copy, photos and design for today's changing platforms.

You also will learn how to apply the basic elements of Associated Press style and editing marks to writing.

You will understand how to select content, prepare copy for publication in a variety of platforms, edit photographs, write headlines, choose type, and paginate printed pages.

You will learn these aspects of journalism by participating in classroom lectures, practical editing assignments, regular readings, weekly quizzes, and comprehensive examinations.

As part of this course you will be required to write and edit copy for Student Publications.

Upon completion of this course, you will understand successful approaches to news editing and newsroom management.

Grading

I will attempt to grade all class assignments and return them to you within a week of submission. You are encouraged to visit my office to discuss any questions or concerns you have about your grades on individual assignments or in the course as a whole. You are strongly discouraged from openly discussing your grades during class sessions.

Your grade for this course will consist of grades in five categories:

- Final exam - 25 %
- Midterm exam - 20 % (45 % at midterm)
- Assignments - 30 %
- Quizzes - 15 %
- Attendance/participation - 10 %

NOTE: Be certain to sign the attendance sheet during every class session. It is the method I will use for tracking your attendance. If you will miss class for a university-sanctioned happening, I must have a notice from the appropriate university official beforehand. Failure to provide such documentation will result in your absence being counted. You are encouraged to submit due assignments before your absence. If you are unable to do so, you must make arrangements it with me and submit any due assignment on your return class session.

Exams

You will take two exams—a midterm and a final—in this course. The exams each will consist of 10 essay questions, each worth 10 points, for a total of 100 points per exam. Partial credit will be given where applicable.

The midterm exam is from **11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. Oct. 15**. It is worth 20 percent of your final grade, but is worth 45 percent at midterm.

The final exam is from **10 a.m. to noon Dec. 17**. It is worth 25 percent of your final grade.

The exams will consist of materials covered in text readings, lecture materials and handouts. You should finalize all text readings before the exams. I will address components of the exams as they are discussed in class. I also will provide a review for each exam. Please understand that I am not

interested in your ability to memorize content, therefore the exams will consist mostly of applying the knowledge you've learned in the course to "real world" scenarios.

You should plan to take the exams at the scheduled time. Make-up exams will be given only in extreme emergencies (aka: death or near death). I am unlikely to approve a make-up exam. If I do, the make-up exam will be more academically rigorous than the original.

Your exams will not be returned to you after they are graded. However, we will review them in class. I am happy to discuss any questions you have before or after your exams.

Reading Discussions

You will read two "mainstream" (non-textbook) books during the course—*The Elements of Journalism* by Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel and *Work Happy: What Great Bosses Know* by Jill Geisler.

These books can be purchased through online, in eBook format or at local bookstores. Because they are not considered textbooks and can be purchased in many formats, I did not order them through the university bookstore. There should, however, be one copy of each book in the university library.

You will bring a simple summary (or more than one, if assigned) of the assigned readings to each class session. The summary should be typed, stapled (if necessary) and include the following:

- One or two paragraphs summarizing the content,
- A paragraph on what surprised you or caught your attention in the readings, and
- A reflective paragraph that ties the readings back to the course and your future role as a media practitioner.

I will collect these summaries at the beginning of each class session. Each summary is worth 100 points. Summaries are "all or nothing" credit. If you are present on time and your summary is correct, you will receive full credit. If you are late or if your summary is poorly written (not clear, concise or containing good grammar), incomplete or inaccurate, you will receive no credit.

Readings and discussion papers are scheduled below in the course schedule.

Please also feel free to discuss these readings, quotes that stand out to you, etc. in the course Facebook group.

Weekly Story Assignments

For the purposes of the class you will be assigned an editorial beat. Your beat will be the basis for all of the stories you write for the course.

You will not receive credit for a story that is planned for any of OCU's Student Publications or already has run in one of them. You are encouraged to discuss your ideas with me before you begin the writing process.

A story from your beat is due every other Wednesday during the course. The following are the dates scheduled for news stories. I reserve the right to alter this schedule at any time during the semester.

- **Story 1** - Sept. 3
- **Story 2** - Sept. 17
- **Story 3** - Oct. 1
- **Story 4** - Oct. 29

- **Story 5** - Nov. 12

- **Story 6** - Dec. 3

Because of the extended nature of the deadlines, you are encouraged to choose topics with an extended news peg.

Stories should be single-spaced. Write until you are done. Rewrites are required.

Griffin's grades

I award writing grades based on the following standards:

- **A** - Copy is publishable with little editing.
- **B** - Copy is publishable with minor editing and revisions.
- **C** - Portions of the copy would need to be rewritten and closely edited before the story could publish.
- **D** - Copy contains major factual, structural, writing, and usage flaws. It is doubtful whether it could be published. It definitely could not be published without major work.
- **F** - Copy does not meet even minimal standards for the assignment. This grade also is received if a name is misspelled in the writing. Remember that if you don't correctly name sources it's pointless to have written the story at all.

NOTE: The AP Stylebook should be used for all writing assignments. You are responsible for using correct spelling, grammar and usage from the beginning of the semester.

Quizzes

You will complete a weekly AP Stylebook quiz at the beginning of each Wednesday's class. You must be present to take the quiz.

The quizzes will consist of you rewriting 10 sentences using correct grammar and AP Style. They are worth 100 points each. No partial credit will be given. You must attend the class to take the quiz. You are allowed to use your AP Stylebook and any other materials you bring to class on the quizzes.

The following are the dates scheduled for stylebook quizzes. I reserve the right to alter this schedule at any time during the semester.

- **Quiz 1** - Aug. 27
- **Quiz 2** - Sept. 3
- **Quiz 3** - Sept. 10
- **Quiz 4** - Sept. 17
- **Quiz 5** - Sept. 24
- **Quiz 6** - Oct. 1
- **Quiz 7** - Oct. 8
- **Quiz 8** - Oct. 22
- **Quiz 9** - Oct. 29
- **Quiz 10** - Nov. 5
- **Quiz 11** - Nov. 12
- **Quiz 12** - Nov. 19
- **Quiz 13** - Dec. 3
- **Quiz 14** - Dec. 10

Missed assignments

Missed assignments cannot be made up without my approval. I will not accept assignments sent to class with peers. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain any assignments, handouts and notes that you miss. I will not contact you regarding your absence. I also will not save copies of course materials distributed during individual class periods. If you need an extension on an assignment because of an absence, you must schedule a time to privately discuss it with me. If you

miss an assignment and are allowed to make it up, you must do so at the scheduled time or you will not receive credit.

Attendance

Journalists must be reliable. Missing deadlines can cost you your job.

Course attendance and participation are required and will be counted as 10 percent of your final grade. You are expected to arrive to class on time and leave when class is complete.

At this point in your academic career you should understand the concept of decisions and consequences. You are free to make your own decisions regarding your attendance. However, it's important that you are aware that lack of attendance in any class will result in you missing important material that will not be repeated. In addition, repeat absences will result in the lowering of your final grade.

If you cannot avoid missing class, you must notify me prior to the class session. Do not assume that I know you will not be present. Communicate with me regarding every necessary absence. Notification of an absence from anyone but yourself will not be considered adequate. Do not send word of your absence via another classmate. I will give excused absences on a case-by-case basis.

Remember: ***You make choices. You live with the consequences.***

Participation

You are required to participate in class. Participation could include commenting on readings, interactive lecture, and careful and active note taking.

Asking questions always is encouraged. Discussion of things unrelated to class is discouraged.

You are not allowed to be disruptive in any way that takes class value away from your classmates.

In addition, you must always attend class prepared for participation. This includes having paper, copied notes, writing utensils, etc.

Engagement & Note-taking

You are allowed to use a laptop, iPad or smart phone to document and/or live tweet class notes during the course session. If you choose to live tweet the course session, please use the #mcmj3313 hashtag. Also, you should review and adhere to the classroom social media policies, which are linked to the course site.

Technology

You are not allowed to have your cell phone ringer or alert notification on during class. Students found texting or using cell phones or computers for anything other than note taking during class will be asked to discontinue this practice or leave. Repeated issues will result in lowering of your attendance/participation grade.

Printing

Writing assignments must be completed outside of class, unless otherwise directed. All assignments must be typed and stapled.

You will not be excused from class to print assignments. Do not come to class to discuss printing with me. It is up to you to determine if you should be late to class to print.

If you do not have access to a computer and/or printer, you are welcome to use the mass communications computer lab at the front of our department.

Malfunctions of the equipment in the computer lab will not constitute an excuse for a late assignment.

Course schedule

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. Please complete the readings before the class session for which they are assigned. I will move ahead in the lecture if we complete a subject early.

WEEK 1

Monday, Aug. 25 - Course introduction

Wednesday, Aug. 27:

- Discussion: *The State of the News Industry*
- Editing Quiz 1

WEEK 2:

Monday, Sept. 1 - Labor Day. No Class.

Wednesday, Sept. 3

- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 1, The Challenges and Joys of Management*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 2, What Employees Never Forget*
- Discussion: *Journalism as a Profession*
- Editing Quiz 2
- Story 1 due

WEEK 3:

Monday, Sept. 8

- Discussion: *The Changing Editorial Job*
- Read:
 - *AOE: Chapter 1, Editing for Today's Changing Media*
 - *AOE: Chapter 2, The Editor and the Audience*
- Reading Discussion 1 due

Wednesday, Sept. 10

- Discussion: *The Changing Editorial Job*
- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 3, How to Tap the Power Grid of Leadership*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 4, Manage Yourself, So You Can Lead Others*
- Editing Quiz 3
- Story 2 due

WEEK 4:

Monday, Sept. 15

- Discussion: *Manager v. Leader*
- Reading Discussion 2 due

Wednesday, Sept. 17

- Discussion: *Manager v. Leader*

- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 5, You and Your Big Mouth*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 6, To Win the Battle for Your Time*
- Editing Quiz 4
- Story 2 due

WEEK 5:

Monday, Sept. 22

- Discussion: *Why Coach?*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 4: *Macro Editing for the Big Picture*
- Reading Discussion 3 due

Wednesday, Sept. 24

- Discussion: *Why Coach?*
- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 7, You Should Not Treat Everyone the Same*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 8, Motivation that Really Matters, Boss*
- Editing Quiz 5

WEEK 6:

Monday, Sept. 29

- Discussion: *Coaching Personalities*
- Reading Discussion 4 due

Wednesday, Oct. 1

- Discussion: *Coaching Personalities*
- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 9, The Secret to Performance Management*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 10, You Can't be too Nice for Tough Talk*
- Editing Quiz 6
- Story 3 due

WEEK 7:

Monday, Oct. 6

- Discussion: *Coaching the Process*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 3, *The Editing Process*
- Reading Discussion 5 due

Wednesday, Oct. 8

- Discussion: *Coaching the Process*
- Read:
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 11, Stop Fixing, Start Coaching*
 - *Work Happy: Chapter 12, Change is the New Normal*
- Editing Quiz 7

WEEK 8:

Monday, Oct. 13

- Reading Discussion 6 due

- Midterm Review

Wednesday, Oct. 15 - Midterm Exam

WEEK 9:

Monday, Oct. 20 - Fall Break. No Class.

Wednesday, Oct. 22

- Discussion: *Law and Ethics*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 5, *Macro Editing for Legality, Ethics and Propriety*
- Read:
 - *Work Happy*: Chapter 13, *What's It Really Like to Work Here?*
 - *Work Happy*: Chapter 14, *Management is a Team Sport*
 - *Work Happy*: Chapter 15, *For Great Bosses, It's Always about the Values*
- Editing Quiz 8

WEEK 10:

Monday, Oct. 27

- Discussion: *Micro Editing*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 6, *Micro Editing for Grammar and Usage*
 - AOE: Chapter 7, *Micro Editing for Style, Spelling and Tightening*
- Reading Discussion 7 due

Wednesday, Oct. 29

- Discussion: *Micro Editing*
- Read:
 - *Elements*: Chapter 1, *What is Journalism For?*
- Editing Quiz 9
- Story 4 due

WEEK 11:

Monday, Nov. 3

- Discussion: *Headlining Stories*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 9, *Writing Headlines, Titles, Captions and Blurbs*
- Reading Discussion 8 due

Wednesday, Nov. 5

- Discussion: *Headlining Stories*
- Read:
 - *Elements*: Chapter 2, *Truth: The First and Most Confusing Principle*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 3, *Who Journalists Work For*
- Editing Quiz 10

WEEK 12:

Monday, Nov. 10

- Discussion: *Capturing Images*
- Read:

- AOE: Chapter 10, *Using Photos, Graphics and Type*
- Reading Discussion 9 due

Wednesday, Nov. 12

- Discussion: *Capturing Images*
- Read:
 - *Elements*: Chapter 4, *Journalism of Verification*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 5, *Independence from Fiction*
- Editing Quiz 11
- Story 5 due

WEEK 13:

Monday, Nov. 17

- Discussion: *Editing Pages*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 11, *Editing for Newspapers*
- Reading Discussion 10 due

Wednesday, Nov. 19

- Discussion: *Editing Pages*
- Editing Quiz 12
- Read:
 - *Elements*: Chapter 6, *Monitor Power and Offer Voice to the Voiceless*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 7, *Journalism as a Public Forum*

WEEK 14:

Monday, Nov. 24

- Discussion: *Editing Online*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 13, *Editing for Web*
- Reading Discussion 11 due

Wednesday, Nov. 26 - Thanksgiving Break. No Class.

WEEK 15:

Monday, Dec. 1

- Discussion: *Editing Video*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 14: *Editing for Broadcast Media*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 8, *Engagement and Relevance*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 9, *Make the News Comprehensive and Proportional*

Wednesday, Dec. 3

- Discussion: *Editing Video*
- Reading Discussion 12 due
- Read:
 - *Elements*: Chapter 10, *Journalists Have a Responsibility to Conscience*
 - *Elements*: Chapter 11, *The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizens*
- Editing Quiz 13

WEEK 16:**Monday, Dec. 8**

- Discussion: *Bringing it All Together*
- Read:
 - AOE: Chapter 8, *Holistic Editing*
- Reading Discussion 13 due

Wednesday, Dec. 10

- Discussion: *Bringing it All Together*
- Editing Quiz 14
- Final Exam Review

FINALS WEEK:**Wednesday, Dec. 17 - Final exam from 10 a.m. to noon****Mass Communications Departmental Policies****LATE WORK:**

- No late work will be accepted for full credit without prior arrangement with the instructor.
- Work is due at the beginning of the class session.

EXAMINATIONS:

- No makeup examinations will be given unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.
- **NO FINAL EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN EARLIER THAN ANNOUNCED BY THE INSTRUCTOR. NO EXCEPTIONS.** Students who make travel plans without confirming the scheduled finals date for this class do so at their own risk. Students who travel prior to the scheduled final exam will be unable to take the examination and must accept a zero test score.

INCOMPLETE:

Incomplete grades are not a student option except under extreme circumstances. Students seeking an incomplete must submit a written request supported by documentation verifying the need for this extension. The student must be performing at a passing level and have a legitimate reason to receive an "I." Students cannot be assigned an "I" because they have excessive unexcused absences or because they are failing the course. If an incomplete is given, the instructor will submit information which specifies what work must be done to remove the "I" and the grade to be assigned if the work is not complete. The student is responsible for submitting the work by the deadline assigned by the instructor. Incompletes are given for a limited period of time, not exceeding one year.

TARDINESS/ATTENDANCE:

Students are expected to be in class on time. Entering the classroom late is unprofessional and disruptive. Repeated tardiness is unacceptable. Students should be punctual and prepared, since these are the qualities expected by the business community. Attendance will be taken at each class session. Students are expected to attend all class sessions.

GRADING SCALE:

93.0 - 100	=	A	
90.0 - 92.99	=	A-	
87.5 - 89.99	=	B+	
82.5 - 87.49	=	B	
80.0 - 82.49	=	B-	
77.5 - 79.99	=	C+	
72.5 - 77.49	=	C	
70.0 - 72.49	=	C-	
67.5 - 69.99	=	D+	
62.5 - 67.49	=	D	
60.0 - 62.49	=	D-	
Below 60.0	=	F	Not I or W

CHEATING/PLAGIARISM:

STANDARD OF RESPONSIBILITY

Oklahoma City University was founded upon strong values and high standards. Honesty in academics is a priority. Students should be advised that cheating and plagiarism are not tolerated. The Academic Honesty Policy can be found online at <http://starport.okcu.edu/ad/aa>

Cheating is defined as using, or supplying information that is not authorized by the instructor in taking an examination or completing any other assignment. Cheating also includes turning in another's work and representing it as being your own.

Plagiarism is defined as a unique form of cheating where persons turn in another's work and represent it as being their own. This would include: 1) purchasing term papers and turning them in as if they are original work; 2) using a paper that has previously been turned in; 3) copying passages verbatim from books, articles, etc.; 4) submitting material for grades in which the student has not done the work required; 5) collusion – the unauthorized collaboration with another person; 6) misrepresentation of actions and 7) falsifying information.

Every student is expected to observe the highest standards of conduct, both on and off the campus. The University cannot accept the responsibility for the education of any student who is not in sympathy with the purposes and the regulations of the University.

Mass Communications students should be aware that this department considers the above-described conduct to be dishonorable and dishonest. Students found cheating or plagiarizing will receive a grade of “0”, which is an “F”, on the involved examination, project or paper and, at the professor's discretion, may receive a failing grade for the entire course.

EXAMINATION EQUIPMENT:

Students are not permitted to use or access the following items during an examination:

- Dictionaries
- Electronic spellers, translators, dictionaries or calculators
- Computers
- Class notes, books

Once any examination has begun, if a student wishes to leave the room they must be prepared to turn in their examination paper and/or blue book. And, it will not be returned to them for additional work.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

If you believe that you need accommodations for a documented physical, psychiatric, or learning disability, please contact the Disabilities Services Coordinator at (405) 208-5090 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. The Student Disabilities Services Coordinator is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students a documented Access Plan, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact the Student Disabilities Services Coordinator as soon as possible. To speak with the coordinator about other concerns, such as medical emergencies or arrangements in case of a building evacuation, please make an appointment as soon as possible.

PREVENTING SEXUAL HARASSMENT:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds, including federal loans and grants. Title IX also prohibits student-to-student sexual harassment. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk with your professor or with the Title IX Coordinator at 405-208-5075. Visit <http://www.okcu.edu/hr/titleIX/> for more information.

EVACUATION POLICY:

The evacuation plan for Walker Center is as follows: Everyone on the first floor proceeds out the north doors to the north parking lot. Everyone on the second floor must exit down the north stairway, out the north doors to the parking lot. The shelter locations for Walker Center are as follows: WC 143, WC 144, and the men's and women's restrooms on the first floor. These rooms are on the east side of the first floor.

POLICY STATEMENT

I have read the above stated policies for the academic year 2014-15 for the Mass Communications Department.

I understand the policies and agree to abide by them.

Name

B#

Date

Course Name and Number