

EDITORIAL PROCESSES

Spring Semester 2013

COMM 313

Instructor: Ross F. Collins, Ph.D.

Good afternoon!

This is spring semester 2013 at North Dakota State University, Fargo. You are reading the syllabus for COMM 313, Editorial Processes.

You may get in touch with instructor Ross Collins at 231-7295, or by stopping at Ehly 202 during office hours, 9:30-11 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays.

E-mail: ross.collins@ndsu.edu.

Class website: Class material will be posted to the NDSU Blackboard class management system. In some cases these will also be available directly from www.rossfcollins.com.

Course objectives announced

FARGO, N.D.—A professor at North Dakota State University here today announced course objectives for COMM 313, Editorial Processes. According to Ross Collins, students are expected to learn:

- how to correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, word usage, leads, and AP style in written material;
- how to write headlines and headings;
- effective news judgment and promotional practices as they pertain to editing;
- effective handling of illustrations;
- principles of typography;
- design and make-up for print and multimedia. Basic InDesign and Photoshop software.

“My objective is to turn beginning mass communication students into precise and creative editors,” said Collins. “Editing is critical for credibility and quality in any publication or website.”

Bulletin description: Principles of print media copy editing, headline composition, publication design, photo editing, and computer editing. Prereq: COMM 200. Restricted to communication professional majors and minors.

Collins attendance policy

What can you expect?

While some professors follow strict rules regarding attendance, Ross Collins believes students should be given the opportunity to make their own decisions. “I do not take roll,” said Collins. “We’re all adults here. You decide whether you want to come to class.”

Collins warned, however, that lectures will not merely “parrot the text.” He said he tries to add information not found in the book, or cover some areas in greater detail, so that students benefit from as much information as possible. “Of course lecture material will be on the exams, so if you skip class, how will you learn that material”?

What to expect: projects and examinations

You’ll need to prepare for two exams and several projects. In-class assignments will help you master the many skills you need to edit with precision. You’ll be doing some of your work using InDesign and Photoshop software.

The final grade will be based on:

Midterm exam, 120 points; final exam, 180 points; assignments/projects, 300 points. Tentative total: 600 points.

Grade percentages: 90-100=A; 80-89.9=B; 70-79.9=C; 60-69.9=D; below 60=F.

In addition, the instructor notes that a number of in-class assignments will be given, using the sessions to practice the kinds of deadlines real editors face every day. “The deadline aspect means that you can’t make up the work outside of class. So if you happen to miss that day, you have to take an F for the work.”

Collins did admit with a sigh that students occasionally must skip class for good reasons. “So okay, I’ll give you a break: miss one daily assignment, and at the end of the semester, I’ll drop the from your final grade computation. Think of it as a bank account for emergencies.”

Vital listing

Here is a comprehensive list of tools you’ll need for COMM 313, Editorial Processes:

- Required text: Collins, ed., *Editing Across Media. Content and Process in a Converged World*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2013). This all-new text is still in press. Until it is available, I will post assigned chapters to Blackboard. Note: book sale proceeds help fund NDSU comm student scholarships.

Highly recommended:

- Brooks et al., *Working With Words*.
- *AP Stylebook*, published by the Associated Press.
- Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*. (A cute new illustrated edition of this classic is out, by the way.)

Daily bonus!

Editors learn to pay keen attention to detail. To help you improve your own skills, the instructor offers you this challenge: for every error you find in any published material, you will receive ONE HALF POINT of extra credit. This includes typos, misspellings, fact errors, grammar errors, usage errors. (Style is not included, as it depends on the publication.) Just photocopy, identify the source, correct the error, and sign your name. Ten points is worth an extra grade-A daily assignment! (20 pts. max.) Why not start now with the obvious grammar errors/typos in **this very syllabus**?

Tentative Schedule

Spring Semester 2013

EDITORIAL PROCESSES

Week One (Jan. 7-11)

Introduction, importance of editing. Read *Editing Across Media*, Intro and Ch. 1. Study online readings 1 and 2.

Week Two (Jan. 14-18)

The words. Begin study of grammar. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 2-3. Study online readings 3-6, plus the sneaky word list and proofreader's marks.

Week Three (Jan. 21-25; no class Monday, Jan. 14, Martin Luther King Day)

The words, continued. Grammar, spelling, punctuation, AP style, etc. Study online readings 7 and 8.

Week Four (Jan. 28-Feb. 1)

The words, continued, grammar, word clutter, news values. Study online readings 9-10.

Week Five (Feb. 4-8)

The words, continued, slow leads, accuracy, concise editing, editing for the Web. Study online readings 10-13.

Week Six (Feb. 11-15)

General semantics, the big picture.

Week Seven (Feb. 18-22)

Law, plagiarism and editors; heads, continued. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 4.

Week Eight (Feb. 25-March 1)

Headlines, continued; typography. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch.5 and 6. Study online readings 14 and 15, plus "10 Common Typographic Pitfalls." **Midterm exam** is Friday, March 1.

Week Nine (March 4-8)

Typography, cont. Working with photos and illustrations. Copy control and dummy sheets. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch.7. Study online readings 16 and 17.

Week 10 (March 18-22; March 11-15 is spring break week)

Work with pictures, begin page design and make-up. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 8. Study online reading 18.

Week 11 (March 25-29; no class Friday and Monday; Easter break)

Page dummyping, page layout. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 9. See "How they used to look: famous mass media, 1674-1974."

Week 12 (April 1-5)

Copy-handling, computerized pagination.

Week 13 (April 8-12)

Computerized pagination and publication design cont. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 11.

Week 14 (April 15-19)

Pagination continued; working with printers.

Week 15 (April 22-26)

Pagination, continued, advanced design and multimedia editing. Social media, multimedia, and editors. Read *Editing Across Media*, Ch. 10.

Week 16; (April 29-May 3)

Advanced design and multimedia editing, wrap up projects.

Final exam period: 8 a.m.-10 a.m. Monday, May 6.

Want to know more?

Baskette, Sissors and Brooks,
The Art of Editing.

Friend, Challenger and McAdams,
Contemporary Editing.

Artson,
Graphic Design Basics.

McClelland,
Adobe InDesign for Dummies.

Also on the instructor's website!

- Special insider's info for students
- Travel stories
- Photographs
- Self-guided tutorials.

www.rossfcollins.com

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Note: If you need special accommodations for learning, please let the instructor know as soon as possible.