

San José State University

School of Humanities and Arts

E106, Editing for Writers, Fall 2013

Contact Information

Instructor:	Mark Thompson
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Office Hours:	TTh 2:00 – 3:30; and always by appointment
Class Days/Time:	TTh 12:00 – 1:15
Classroom:	Sweeny Hall 413
Prerequisites:	E103

Canvas

All course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. will be found on Canvas.

The login site for Canvas is:

<https://sjsu.instructure.com/>

Use your standard SJSU login to access the class. We will cover basic login in class, but there are additional resources to learn Canvas here:

<http://guides.instructure.com/>

If there are any issues with your Canvas account, email me immediately.

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 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, 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 becomes more obvious when we encounter writing which has not gone through such rigorous review (I’m looking at you, bloggers!). 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.

Department 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

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. In this class you will:

- Learn the basic principles and techniques of copyediting and proofreading, including editing symbols and the use of style sheets.
- Intensely engage with English grammar, spelling, punctuation and usage so that you have both technical mastery of language and the ability to justify your editing decisions to other writers.
- Develop the ability to analyze and edit documents at higher levels of organization.
- Explore and demonstrate proficiency with the fundamentals of document design and page layout.
- Explore and demonstrate proficiency with elements of graphic design and editing graphics to support text.
- Learn and develop the professional skills of a working editor—the arts of clarity, organization, persuasion, coordination, and negotiation.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

The primary (assigned) text in this class is:

Einsohn, Amy. *The Copyeditor's Handbook*, 3rd edition. University of California Press.

Other Readings

Additionally, I will be assigning readings and assignments in .pdf form on Canvas. A large portion of these readings will come from:

Rew, Lois Johnson, *Editing for Writers*

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*, 6th edition.

These books can be found used and relatively cheap on Amazon or Powell's. I strongly recommend their purchase.

Canvas. Because I'm sensitive to the amount of paper a writing/editing class can consume, this course will make extensive use of Canvas, an online classroom management tool. Your readings and assignments will be posted as .pdfs for you to download and print (as you see fit). Additionally, I will use Canvas to communicate with you during the week.

You will still need to bring the readings to class, in either print or digital form. I will give random pop quizzes throughout the semester to test whether you have brought your readings to class.

Every semester I seem to have a student or two who can't quite figure the technology out. If you are having any problems logging on to your account, please contact me! Your success in this class is dependent on this!

Other equipment / material requirements

Red Pencils
Dictionary
Grammar Reference Book

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

Exercises and Worksheets. 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.** Occasionally, I will single out a particular exercise as a "worksheet." 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. Worksheets are to be completed and submitted to me. The work should be neat: readability counts. See the schedule for the due dates.

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 not comprehensive, but as each skill we learn builds on the next, comprehensive knowledge will be required to achieve success on these challenges. See the schedule for the exam dates.

Final Project. For your final project, you will team up with four other members of the class to produce an effective version of a really messed up instructional document of my choosing. You will begin by rethinking the draft for a specific audience and use: a textbook chapter for professionals, a quick guide for those in the field, and an online text for the general public. Once you have defined the type of document your group is producing, you will develop and submit:

1. A storyboard of the layout and content
2. An outline of the contents
3. Red-lined text
4. Analysis of the document design and editing, justifying your plan and your choices and explaining why and how they work

Grading Policy

Exercises and Worksheets	20%
Exams	45%
Final Project	25%
Participation	10%

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.

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. It is part of your job as a student to make sure that I am entering correct grades for you. (Do not email me at the end of the semester with an errant grade from week 1!)

Grading Disputes. The only time I will ever change a grade is if I botched basic arithmetic and gave you the wrong point total, or if I entered your grade incorrectly in Canvas—both of which are real possibilities. It is up to you to make sure I've calculated your grade correctly, and that you 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, any conversation will be about how you can do better on the next assignment. Obviously, there are more opportunities at the beginning of the semester to improve your grade than in the final week.

My Classroom Policies

Attendance. Attendance is not mandatory, but I guarantee that missing more than a few days will significantly affect your understanding of the material. I will be sending an attendance sheet around the beginning of every class and use it to factor into your class participation grade. This record of attendance may affect any appeals you might make concerning your grade, or whether I am able to write you a letter of recommendation in the future.

Please notify me if you are unable to attend class. Absences are excused if (1) you provide a doctor's note, (2) you provide proof of attending a professional conference or interview, (3) you notify me of a religious holiday that you observe BEFORE the fact, or (4) your advisor emails me about a health- or family-related emergency.

Lateness. Fun fact about your instructor: it drives me insane when people are habitually late to class. You know where the building is. You know what time class starts. What's the problem? I understand that we're all late every now and then, but a routine failure to arrive on time will significantly affect your participation grade in this class. If there is something that will make you late to class, whether reoccurring or not, please let me know.

Grading class participation. I expect everyone to participate in class. This means you are awake and engaged, having done the readings and the homework, are actively participating in discussion and are working constructively when we break into small groups. A participation grade allows me to reward those students who are actively engaged in each class, while being able to account for students who are routinely late, absent, sleepy, or engaged in non-class related activity during our brief time together. An "A" means always engaged, a "B" means mostly engaged. A "C" is sometimes engaged.

Late work. I don't accept it. Part of being a writer is, though the Earth itself may be aflame, you meet your deadlines. All of them. I understand your life is complicated, with many responsibilities pulling you in multiple directions. If you are unable to attend on a day that an assignment is due, it is up to you to make sure that you get me your work before the beginning of class.

Acting with academic 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 which 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 earn you an automatic "F" in my class, and I will push to see that you are removed from this university and all records of your attendance here are burned and cast into the South Bay in a mock burial of your academic career. Yes. It's that serious. Just do your own work.

Technology use. You should treat the classroom as a professional workspace. I'm allowing use of tablets, laptops, and even phones—whatever you'd prefer to read on. This has worked fine for me in the past, but I realize the temptation to refresh your Twitter feed as we delve into the intricacies of dangling participles may be strong. Emailing, texting, and engaging in unrelated activities are discourteous and distracting to me and your classmates. I begin the semester assuming you are adults with adequate impulse control, and will continue to treat you as such until proven wrong. Please don't turn me into a technology cop. There is a reason I teach college instead of high school.

Food and beverages. You are allowed to bring food and beverages with you to class. If said food happens to be a home-cooked meal from your grandmother, please bring extra for your instructor.

Transparency: 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. Just talk to me after class, send me an email, or arrange to meet with me outside class. **COME TO MY OFFICE HOURS!** My highest compliments from students have always come from the one-on-one help I give out of class.

After this class. In addition to my assistance in this class, I extend to all my students an offer to help with any future writing issues which may arise once this class is over. In the past, I have assisted former students with cover letters, updated resumes, grad school applications, and have even helped with the abstract of a scientific paper. Additionally, for all students who receive an A in this class, I will happily write a letter of recommendation for any grants, schools, programs, or internships you may be applying to. Also, if you receive an A in this class, you may include me as a reference in any jobs you might apply to—as long as you haven't committed any felonies in the interim.

University Policies

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

- “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.”
 - It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor's process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
 - 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 S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> 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. The [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

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](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

In 2013, the Disability Resource Center changed its name to be known as the Accessible Education Center, to incorporate a philosophy of accessible education for students with disabilities. The new name change reflects the broad scope of attention and support to SJSU students with disabilities and the University's continued advocacy and commitment to increasing accessibility and inclusivity on campus.

Student Technology Resources

Computer labs for student use are available in the [Academic Success Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/asc/> located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and in the Associated Students Lab on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library.

A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. 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 Peer Connections

Peer Connections, a campus-wide resource for mentoring and tutoring, strives to inspire students to develop their potential as independent learners while they learn to successfully navigate through their university experience. You are encouraged to take advantage of their services which include course-content based tutoring, enhanced study and time management skills, more effective critical thinking strategies, decision making and problem-solving abilities, and campus resource referrals.

In addition to offering small group, individual, and drop-in tutoring for a number of undergraduate courses, consultation with mentors is available on a drop-in or by appointment basis. Workshops are offered on a wide variety of topics including preparing for the Writing Skills Test (WST), improving your learning and memory, alleviating procrastination, surviving your first semester at SJSU, and other related topics. A computer lab and study space are also available for student use in Room 600 of Student Services Center (SSC).

Peer Connections is located in three locations: SSC, Room 600 (10th Street Garage on the corner of 10th and San Fernando Street), at the 1st floor entrance of Clark Hall, and in the Living Learning Center (LLC) in Campus Village Housing Building B. Visit [Peer Connections website](http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu) at <http://peerconnections.sjsu.edu> for more information.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All 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](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter) 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. (Note: You need to have a QR Reader to scan this code.)

SJSU Counseling Services

The SJSU Counseling Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Fernando Street, in Room 201, Administration Building. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide 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 Services website](http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>.

E106 / Editing for Writers, F13, Course Schedule

Although the exams and due dates for assignments are solid, the rest of this schedule is subject to change, and most likely will change. I will notify you of any changes to the schedule in class, via a new document. I will make sure that there is ample time for you to make any changes to your schedule that you might need to.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	Aug 22	Introductions, Syllabus, and Diagnostic Exercise
2	Aug 27	<u>Intro to Editing</u> READ: Einsohn 3-28, Rew1.pdf, DO: Ex1.pdf
	Aug 29	<u>The Professional Editor</u> READ: Einsohn 29-56, Rew2.pdf DO: Ex2.pdf
3	Sept 3	<u>Grammar Review</u> READ: Rew3.pdf, Einsohn 335-376 DO: Ex3.pdf
	Sept 5	<u>Punctuation</u> READ: Einsohn 71-120 DO: Ex4.pdf
4	Sept 10	<u>Punctuating in Action!!!</u> READ: Rew 4.pdf DO: Ex5.pdf
	Sept 12	WORKSHEET #1
5	Sept 17	<u>Punctuation within Sentences</u> READ: Rew5.pdf DO: Ex7.pdf
	Sept 19	<u>Spelling and Hyphenation</u> READ: Einsohn, 121-145. DO: Ex8.pdf
6	Sept 24	<u>Capitalization, Numbers and Numerals. Review for Midterm</u> READ: Einsohn 151-195. DO: Ex9.pdf
	Sept 26	Exam 1: Copy Editing
7	Oct 1	<u>Word Choice.</u> READ: Rew6.pdf DO: Ex10.pdf
	Oct 3	<u>Concision.</u> READ: WilliamsCohesion.pdf DO: Ex11.pdf
8	Oct 8	<u>Building Effective Sentences.</u> READ: Rew7.pdf DO: Ex12.pdf
	Oct 10	<u>Effective Sentences, pt. 2.</u> DO: Ex13.pdf
9	Oct 15	<u>Clarity 1: Actions.</u> READ: WilliamsClarity1.pdf. DO: Ex14.pdf
	Oct 17	<u>Cohesion and Coherence.</u> READ: WilliamsCohesion.pdf DO: Ex15.pdf
10	Oct 22	<u>Developmental Editing.</u> READ: Rew8.pdf DO: Ex16.pdf

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	Oct 24	WORKSHEET #2
11	Oct 29	<u>Organizational Editing</u> . DO: Ex17.pdf
	Oct 31	<u>Editing Graphics</u> . READ: VisualDesign1.pdf DO: Ex18.pdf
12	Nov 5	Exam 2: Substantive Editing
	Nov 7	WORKSHEET #3
13	Nov 12	<u>Document Design</u> . READ: Rew9.pdf DO: Ex19.pdf
	Nov 14	<u>Document Design pt. 2</u> . READ: DocDesign1.pdf DO: Ex20.pdf
14	Nov 19	<u>Document Design pt. 3</u> . READ: DocDesign2.pdf DO: Ex21.pdf
	Nov 21	WORKSHEET #4
15	Nov 27	<u>Indexes, TOC, etc</u> . READ: Einsohn 297-308, DO: Ex22.pdf
16	Dec 3	<u>Putting it All Together</u> . READ: PUIT.pdf
	Dec 5	Final Project Due , Informal Presentations, Review for final
Final Exam	Dec 13	Reg Classroom, 9:45-12:00