

# JOU3202: EDITING AND COACHING

*Fall 2024*

*Section 28056*

*3 credit hours*

## WHEN AND WHERE

- Mondays, 3 to 4:55 p.m. in McCarty A — Room 3194
- Wednesdays, 3 to 3:50 p.m. in Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering B — Room 229

## INSTRUCTOR

Ethan Magoc, Associate In/Innovation News Center

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Office hours: Thursday, 8 to 10 a.m. and by appointment at [calendly.com/wuftnews](https://calendly.com/wuftnews)

## COURSE COMMUNICATIONS

I prefer to receive questions via email and will respond within 24 hours of receipt Monday through Friday but usually much faster. If you're already in the INC's Slack channel from enrollment in another course, that's a good way to reach me timely, too.

## COURSE DESCRIPTION (PER UF CATALOG)

Intermediate newsroom editing and coaching, which teaches thinking like an editor from a macro- and micro-perspective to improve critical thinking toward journalism content across platforms. Also, challenges journalists to report accurately, fairly, and more completely.

## REQUIRED OR RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS:

You need not purchase a textbook to succeed in this course, but you will rely heavily upon:

- Select course readings available on Canvas
- AP Stylebook via [apstylebook.com/smathers-libraries-at-the-university-of-florida](https://apstylebook.com/smathers-libraries-at-the-university-of-florida)

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students in this course will learn to:

1. Identify the historical and modern role of an editor in enhancing the public's information consumption and entertainment.
2. Generate ideas of interest to an audience with a sense and strategy for how to assemble different story elements and to do so across mediums.
3. Evaluate a story on a macro basis, with an ability to check its newsworthiness, structure, balance, completeness, sensitivity and ethics or libel concerns.
4. Clean a story with micro-editing — ensuring against problems with AP Style, grammar, punctuation, spelling, word usage and concision.
5. Deploy multiple fact-checking methods on a deadline-driven story to guard against mistakes.
6. Develop a self-editing ability that positions a student for employment opportunities in newsrooms and beyond.

## **PREREQUISITE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

The only prerequisite requirement is JOU3101: Reporting. From that course and other life experiences, you should be developing an understanding of how to find, pitch and improve story ideas, report them journalistically and engage in the editing process with an instructor. Three other key traits you'll need to demonstrate in this course are curiosity, a keen eye for detail and kindness toward colleagues.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

I am not an instructor who enjoys listening to himself talk for two hours straight. Lecture sessions will be informational and interactive. Your participation is encouraged and required. We will work through slide decks but also discuss in-class readings, short videos and film excerpts. Plus, you can expect guest speakers with relevant experience and insights. During the Wednesday lab sessions, my talking will be minimal, as you'll receive prompts to complete in-class assignments related to the topic explored two days prior in the lecture.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **ATTENDANCE AND MAKE-UPS**

Per the UF attendance policy, an absence is unexcused unless you provide the instructor notice in advance and documentation after the fact. Regardless of why you miss class, you must let me know beforehand for the absence to be excused. In-class work missed for unexcused absences earns you no points and may not be made up. In-class work missed during an excused absence must be made up within seven days of the absence.

This is a deadline profession oriented around being present. Late-class arrivals and early departures are noted. Missing more than 30 minutes of a class session counts as an absence.

If you miss class, get notes from a classmate. In this and every course you take, please never ask the instructor if you "missed anything important."

### **CLASS Demeanor**

Here's a key rule I expect you to follow this semester: "Be tough on the writing, easy on the writer." Journalism is a calling that's difficult enough without mixing in animosity toward your colleagues. Writing can feel very personal. And receiving feedback? Even more so. Keep this in mind as you offer and receive suggestions and revisions. Classroom discussions will be civil. We can disagree during the editing process, but I insist that we remain cordial.

The UF College of Journalism and Communications Department of Journalism embraces a commitment toward an intellectual community enriched and enhanced by diversity along a number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity and national origins, gender and gender identity, sexuality, class and religion. We expect all of our journalism courses to help foster an understanding of the diversity of peoples and cultures and of the significance and impact of mass communications in a global society.

Students are at all times to show respect for one another as well as for the instructor. If something was said concerning this class (by anyone) that made you feel uncomfortable, please talk to your instructor about it.

## DEVICES

You can use your laptop for taking notes and completing in-class quizzes and activities, but please tuck away your phone during our time together. Laptops should not receive your attention during discussions and film/video viewings.

## COURSE EVALUATION

A portion of our final class together will be set aside for your instructor to exit the classroom as you provide honest feedback on the course, its instruction and how to improve it in future semesters. Feedback can be offered at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu>.

## UNIVERSITY POLICIES

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty shall not be tolerated in this course. That includes – but is not limited to – using any work done by another person and submitting it for a class assignment; submitting your work done for another class; copying and pasting text written or published by another person without attribution; illicit fabrication or use of artificial intelligence (such as ChatGPT).

UF Student Honor Code: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Call 352-392-4357 for help resolving computer-related and other technical issues related to Canvas, WIFI/VPN connectivity, email or GatorLink authentication issues.

**UF Computing Help Desk:** <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu> or [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu)

**Walk-In Support:** HUB 132

### STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter, which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

### COUNSELING CENTER

Personal or health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, career uncertainty or relationships can interfere with your ability to function as a student. UF's Counseling and Wellness Center (CWC) offers support for students in need. CWC is located at 3190 Radio Road and open weekdays from 8 to 5.

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Assignment	Number	Points (1,000 total)	How to succeed
Attendance	24 class sessions	100	Attendance is required. Show up on time to the Monday lecture and Wednesday lab sessions. Multiple unexcused absences will double in penalty: Five points deducted for your first absence, 10 points for your second, 20 for your third, etc.
Participation/ lab activities	12	300	Complete a series of deadline-driven editing tasks during lab meetings. These are to be submitted by Wednesdays at 4 p.m. Each is worth 25 points.
Quizzes	10	100	Take a 15-minute Canvas quiz about the previous week's lecture, readings and/or lab material. These are open-book quizzes and will be completed at the start of each lecture. Each is worth 10 points.
Short essay	1	100	Read excerpts from Marty Baron's 2023 book and write an 800-to-1,000-word reflection on three key moments from his tenure at the Washington Post. This is due Nov. 22 but can be submitted at any point in the semester.
Final project	1	400	This project will tie together core skills learned this semester. You will edit a pre-written story for structure, concision, taste, grammar, accuracy and its multiplatform elements. You'll rewrite its headline, enhance photo captions and craft social promos and push notifications.

### GRADING SCALE:

- 930-1,000, A
- 929-900, A-
- 899-870, B+
- 869-830, B
- 829-800, B-
- 799-770, C+
- 769-730, C
- 729-700, C-
- 699-670, D+
- 669-630, D
- 629-600, D-
- 599 and below, E

## COURSE SCHEDULE

- **Week of Aug. 26**
  - Monday lecture: Course introduction and the universe of editing opportunities
  - Wednesday lab: Discussion on why we edit
- **Week of Sept. 2**
  - Monday: Labor Day/no class
  - Wednesday: Idea development and pitching exercise
    - In-class quiz: Why we edit
- **Week of Sept. 9**
  - Monday: Macro editing overview
    - In-class quiz: Assessing the pitch
  - Wednesday: Restructuring stories
- **Week of Sept. 16**
  - Monday: Micro editing overview
    - In-class quiz: The big picture
  - Wednesday: Cleaning and polishing copy
- **Week of Sept. 23**
  - Monday: A brief history of editing and how we got here
    - In-class quiz: AP Style
  - Wednesday: Chasing concision
- **Week of Sept. 30**
  - Monday: Digital news editing
    - In-class quiz: Editing history
  - Wednesday: Writing for SEO and packaging different elements
- **Week of Oct. 7**
  - Monday: Broadcast news editing
    - In-class quiz: Newsworthiness
  - Wednesday: Getting scripts ready for air
- **Week of Oct. 14**
  - Monday: Magazine editing
    - Guest speaker TBD
    - In-class quiz: Building rundowns
  - Wednesday: Pruning a Q&A for publication
- **Week of Oct. 21**
  - Monday: Editing breaking news
    - Guest speaker TBD
    - In-class quiz: Brainstorming a magazine package
  - Wednesday: Fact-checking on deadline

- **Week of Oct. 28**
  - Monday: Editing enterprise and feature
    - In-class quiz: Correction policy
  - Wednesday: Polishing political speeches
- **Week of Nov. 4**
  - Monday: Standards and ethics, including libel, slander, legality and propriety
    - In-class quiz: Packaging a special report
  - Wednesday: No class meeting/Election Day opportunity
- **Week of Nov. 11**
  - Monday: No class/Veterans Day
  - Wednesday: Election Day review and coverage evaluation
- **Week of Nov. 18**
  - Monday: Brand strategy and management
    - Guest speaker TBD
  - Wednesday: Edit a colleague
  - Assignment due: Short essay on “Collision of Power” by Marty Baron by Friday at 6 p.m.
- **Week of Dec. 2**
  - Monday: The places you could go: Exploring editing career opportunities
    - Guest speaker TBD
  - Wednesday: No class, but final project is due at 6 p.m

**Disclaimer:** This syllabus represents my plans and objectives on day one of the semester. Plans may change to enhance our learning opportunities. Such changes, communicated clearly and akin to a newsroom’s breaking news pivot, are not unusual and should be expected.