COMM. 2305 -Editing & Layout (F2F)
Course Syllabus: Spring 2026

"Northeast Texas Community College exists to provide personal, dynamic learning experiences empowering students to succeed."

Instructor: Mandy Smith
Office: Humanities 116
Phone: (Office) 903-434-8254 (Cell) 903-466-6377
Email: msmith@ntcc.edu

Office Hours	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Online
	3:00-5:00	1:30-4:30	3:00-5:00	1:30-3:30		Email anytime

This syllabus serves as the documentation for all course policies and requirements, assignments, and instructor/student responsibilities.

Information relative to the delivery of the content contained in this syllabus is subject to change. Should that happen, the student will be notified.

Submit final draft of article assignment

Course Description:
3 credit hours.
Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture each week.
Editing and layout processes, with emphasis on accuracy and fairness, including the principles and techniques of design.

Prerequisite(s):
None

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the basic techniques used in writing and copy editing a story for newsprint.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the fundamental practices used for editing newspaper pages including copy reading, copy editing page designs and gain an understanding of AP style.
3. Design and layout newspaper pages for publication in the student newspaper.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of the correct format for writing and editing headlines for a newspaper.

Evaluation/Grading Policy:
Your assignments will be evaluated using the following point values:

Page copy editing assignments	20%
Writing assignments (Print, online and social media)	25%
Layout & Design assignments	20%
In class quizzes	5%
Story editing assignments	10%
Final print and digital clipbook	20%
Total	**100%**

Assignments will be graded within two weeks of receipt or before your next assignment is due.

Required Instructional Materials:
Harrower, Tim. *The Newspaper Designer's Handbook, 6th Edition* **(Copies are located in the journalism lab, so you do not have to purchase the textbook unless you want a copy of your own.)**

Publisher: Boston: McGraw-Hill; 2008   **ISBN Number:** 0-07-240761-1

The textbook provides essential information for successful completion of this course.
If you want a copy, you can purchase your textbook at the NTCC College Store.

Optional Instructional Materials:
None

Minimum Technology Requirements:
You will need access to a computer to complete the writing assignments for this class. You will be typing your assignments and submitting the assignments through Blackboard.

Required Computer Literacy Skills:
Blackboard Learning Management System, Microsoft Word processing, average email usage

Course Structure and Overview:
The goal of this course is to help students acquire a variety of skills needed for journalistic writing, editing and page layout design. Students should acquire the techniques needed to produce and edit a media publication. Students should acquire and apply these techniques to a number of journalism writing styles comprising of news, feature, opinion, sports and entertainment.

ASSIGNMENTS:
Conscientious and timely completion of assignments is essential for success in this writing course.

Writing Assignments:
During the semester, you are required to complete a variety of news writing and editing and layout assignments that will be graded for the class and could receive publication in *The Eagle* newspaper and/or on the newspaper website.
If your story is used for the newspaper, you will also be expected to submit your story to The Eagle drive in Google.
Please follow these instructions when writing your articles:
● Writing assignments must be typed in 12 pt. Times font.
● Double-space and no indent.
● News writing assignments vary in length according to the type of article assigned. Length of stories will be discussed with the instructor when the assignment is given.
● Pay attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation. Articles will be written using AP style.
● Deadlines for all writing and layout assignment will be assigned during class or lab time.
● Submit your rough draft and final articles to Blackboard.
● **Professional journalism depends on deadlines. Therefore, you will be expected to meet all writing assignment deadliness or lose points toward your final grade. Writing assignments, including rough drafts, must be submitted <u>on the due date</u> in order to receive full credit**.

Reading Assignments:
Students are expected to read all reading assignments before coming to class. Students may be asked to respond to readings by writing in class or during class discussions. Failure to read and respond effectively to the reading assignments will affect your grade in the course.

Test/Exams:
Current event quizzes will be given as pop-quizzes throughout the semester. Students should be prepared for the pop-quizzes each class period. Students will also study AP Style and may be subject to random AP style quizzes throughout the semester.

Communications:
Office hours are listed on the top of the front page of this syllabus. I have also listed my cell phone. I do accept calls and text messages on my cell. Emails will be answered within 24 hours. Please note that NTCC email is the official form of communication used by the college.

Institutional/Course Policy:
To complete this course successfully, you should do the following:
● Read all of the textbook assignments
● Participate actively and meaningfully in all group discussions
● Prepare and submit all writing assignments on time
● Attend class regularly
Please try to make it to class on time. Many times we begin writing (including current event quizzes) and reading assignments at the start of class; if you're late you will not be able to make up those assignments. Please don't engage in casual conversations during our lecture, discussion and group times or while we're working on other assignments. I reserve the right to act as necessary to maintain a productive class environment, including asking disruptive students to leave, and in extreme circumstances, dropping chronic disruptors from my course. I will not tolerate uncivil behavior toward other class members during class discussions. Uncivil behavior includes interrupting others while they have the floor, rude responses to the ideas expressed by others, and the use of racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, or religious slurs.

Attendance policy:
Attendance will be taken either orally or by a sign-in sheet. If you come to class late, it is your responsibility to make sure that the instructor counts you in attendance for that day. **Students who miss more than five class periods will be subject to failure in this course.**

Course Evaluations:
Toward the end of the course you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation. Students are encouraged to fill out an online evaluation for each of their courses. This will be your opportunity to share important feedback on each of the courses you take at NTCC and the faculty member who teaches the class. Please watch for info about the evaluation on your NTCC email account and make sure you participate in evaluating your experiences in the classroom.

Withdrawal policy:
It is your responsibility to drop or withdraw from a course. Failure to do so could result in receiving a failing grade for the course.

Alternate Operations During Campus Closure and/or Alternate Course Delivery Requirements
In the event of an emergency or announced campus closure due to a natural disaster or pandemic, it may be necessary for Northeast Texas Community College to move to altered operations. During this time, Northeast Texas Community College may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include, but are not limited to, online through the Blackboard Learning Management System, online conferencing, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor NTCC's website (http://www.ntcc.edu/) for instructions about continuing courses remotely, Blackboard for each class for course-specific communication, and NTCC email for important general information.

Additionally, there may be instances where a course may not be able to be continued in the same delivery format as it originates (face-to-face, fully online, live remote, or hybrid). Should this be the case, every effort will be made to continue instruction in an alternative delivery format. Students will be informed of any changes of this nature through email messaging and/or the Blackboard course site.

NTCC Academic Honesty/Ethics Statement:
NTCC upholds the highest standards of academic integrity. The college expects all students to engage in their academic pursuits in an honest manner that is beyond reproach using their intellect and resources designated as allowable by the course instructor. Students are responsible for addressing questions about allowable resources with the course instructor. Academic dishonesty such as cheating, plagiarism, and collusion is unacceptable and may result in disciplinary action. This course will follow the NTCC Academic Honesty and Academic Ethics policies stated in the Student Handbook. Refer to the student handbook for more information on these subjects.

Plagiarism:
In any written paper, you are guilty of the academic offense known as plagiarism if you do not produce your own work by either fully copying or half-copying another person's words or sentences. You cannot mix another author's words with your own or "plug" your synonyms into another author's sentence structure. If you use words, phrases, or sentences from another source even if you are paraphrasing, you must cite the outside material within the text and on a work cited page. Written assignments created by ChatGPT or other forms of artificial intelligence (AI) are also considered a form of plagiarism because you are not producing your own work. Plagiarism usually results in an automatic grade of "F" for the assignment or the course, depending on the offense. Most written assignments for this course will be submitted to TurnItIn.com, which includes a plagiarism and AI checker. Both the similarity report and the AI report are used to determine plagiarism.

Statement Regarding the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technology:
Absent a clear statement from a course instructor, use of or consultation with generative AI shall be treated analogously to assistance from another person (collusion). Generative AI is a subset of AI that utilizes machine learning models to create new, original content, such as images, text, or music, based on patterns and structures learned from existing data (Cornell, Center for Teaching Innovation). Unauthorized use of generative AI tools to complete an assignment or exam is not permitted. Students should acknowledge the use of generative AI and default to disclosing such assistance when in doubt. Individual course instructors may set their own policies regulating the use of generative AI tools in their courses, including allowing or disallowing some or all uses of such tools. Students who are unsure of policies regarding generative AI tools are encouraged to ask their instructors for clarification. **(Adapted from the Stanford University Office of Community Standards-- accessed August 31, 2023)**

Additional Information on AI Usage:

All work submitted in this course is expected to be original work for this particular class. Any previously written work, either by the student or another source, will either be considered ineligible for course credit or a percentage of the grade will be heavily deducted.

This does include the use of any artificial intelligence (AI) programs including ChatGPT. I use Turnitin's AI detector to check for AI usage for essay assignments in this course. The grade will be affected on any writing assignment that is detected with more than 20 percent AI generated material. Any paper having more than 50 percent AI-generated material will be subject to receive a zero for the assignment.

So, my advice is to please avoid the temptation to use AI generated work in any of your written assignment.

Eagle Assist

At Northeast Texas Community College, we understand that students often need support that extends beyond the classroom. "Eagle Assist" is the place to start when looking for that type of assistance. Our support system is here to help you succeed in both your academic and personal growth. www.ntcc.edu/eagleassist

Services provided:

- Mental Health Counseling
- Classroom Accommodations
- NTCC Care Center Food Pantry
- NTCC Care Center Hygiene Closet
- NTCC Care Center Cook Nook
- Financial Literacy
- Child Care Assistance
- Emergency Aid

Can't find what you are looking for? Send us a message at eagleassist@ntcc.edu
Mental Health Counseling Services are available to all NTCC students.
- Visit the following page to get your account activated: www.thevirtualcaregroup.com/ntcc
 *Dual credit students please email cstansell@ntcc.edu if interested.

ADA Statement:

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations located in Student Services and can be reached at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the special populations page on the NTCC website.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA):

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing. Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

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Assignment Calendar Spring 2026

Tentative Course Timeline (*note* instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this timeline at any point in the term):

Week 1   Welcome to the class introduction writing assignment
           Course and Syllabus review
           Receive social media and written article assignments
           Submit social media assignment

Week 2   **Discuss interviewing, copy editing and news writing techniques**
           Receive newsletter article assignment
           Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
           Submit rough draft of article assignment

Week 3   Copy editing assignment in class
           Eagle articles and/or Eagle Express Newsletter go online
           Layout assignment in class (Eagle or Lagniappe)
           Article assignment
           Submit final draft of article assignment

Week 4   Discuss various current media subjects in class
           Submit social media post assignment
           Submit rough draft of article assignment
           Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz

Week 5   Layout assignment in class (Eagle or Lagniappe)
           Submit final draft of article assignment
           Receive article assignment

Week 6   **Eagle stories and/or Eagle Express Newsletter go online**
           Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
           Work on layout in class

Week 7   **Submit rough draft of article assignment**
           Complete copy editing assignment

Week 8   **Submit final draft of article**
           Work on layout in class. (Eagle or Lagniappe)

Week 9   Receive article assignment
           Work on layout in class (Eagle or Lagniappe)
           Post social media post

Week 10   Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
           Submit rough draft of article   '
           Copy editing assignment in class

Week 11   Be prepared for current event or AP style quiz
           Eagle stories and/or Eagle Express Newsletter go online

Week 12   Continue working on article
                 Work on layout in class
                 Post social media posting assignment

Week 13   **Submit rough drafts of articles**
                 Peer edit articles in class
                 Submit final drafts of articles

Week 14   Copy editing assignment in class
                 Work on layout in class (Eagle or Lagniappe)

Week 15   **Eagle articles go online**
                  Begin working on clipbook for final

Week 16   **Submit final digital portfolio/clipbook**