

Fall 2020 Course Description

Instructor: Matt McKinney

Course: ENGL 320

Title: Technical and Professional Editing

Description: This is an applied course meant to prepare students to function as an editor in technical and professional venues. We will focus on three related skill-sets: developing a careful eye for detail and precision while working with written and visual documents; practicing commenting and marking writing in a way that is clear and useful; and developing the ability to work in multiple, unfamiliar, and often difficult genres and media. While we will go through the basics of copyediting, style, and grammar, we will also develop strategies to assist in clarifying and facilitating composition beyond grammar. We will practice the leadership and cooperation required for editorship as well as experience the challenges of working with technical subjects.

Assignments will include practice commenting and copyediting on written and visual media; a group Wikipedia editing project to practice learning conventions, teamwork, and web-based editing; and a one-on-one editing project with someone in the sciences or engineering (institutional constraints permitting). By the end of this course, students will be prepared to pursue work in a professional or technical writing as well as feel comfortable seeking freelance editing work. Students who are looking to go to graduate or professional school will also find this course useful.

Proposed Readings: