

Leland Essay Contest editing

ENG 483, Spring 2006, Bradley Dilger

Each year the Western Writing Program conducts the Leland Essay Contest, which recognizes the best student writers in composition courses (and debunks “College students can’t write” crapola). You will be assigned one of the winning contest essays. Perform a light edit on the essay to prepare it for publication in the anthology *Western Voices 2006*.

I will provide you two copies of the essay. Assignments and classes vary considerably, so I can’t provide general information about your essay, except to note it if was written for ENG 100, 180, or 280 in Spring or Fall 2005.

Sticking to a “light” edit is the most critical part of this assignment. You must not affect the authorial voice of the student whose essay you are editing. Follow Einsohn’s definition of a light edit, performing the following:

- Using standard copyeditors’ marks, correct all spelling, punctuation, syntactical, word usage, and grammatical mistakes.
- Correct any serious blunders in language which can be easily corrected.
- Make a list of any serious problems (fact errors, ambiguities which might embarrass the writer) which you think merit additional attention.
- Ensure the essay conforms to MLA style. (If you don’t own a handbook with current MLA style information, you may consult my *MLA Style Manual*, or use one in the WIU libraries or the University Writing Center).

You should also do the following:

- Pick a “raised quote”—one or two memorable sentences—to be used in the layout of the essay in *Western Voices*. Edit your quote to ensure it works out of context. If your essay is long, select two quotes.
- Write a one-paragraph statement introducing the essay. (This is the “Oscar blurb.”)

I will provide some sample essays from *Western Voices* later this week. If you aren’t sure what I mean by these things, please borrow a copy of the book from me to look at more.

Turn in your marked-up essay no later than March 28. **This is an absolute deadline.** Include hard copy of your problem list (if you have one), raised quote, and Oscar blurb. Email me a word processor file of this information as well.

See the reverse side of this page for information about assignment assessment.

Assessment

Your work will be assessed using the following criteria.

| <i>Area evaluated</i> | <i>Optimal</i> | <i>Adequate</i> | <i>Unsatisfactory</i> |
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| Quality of editing (40) | One or two minor problems which should be addressed are not corrected; no errors introduced by editing | Several minor or one major problems remain which should be addressed, or errors introduced by editing | Numerous serious problems remain in document, or editing introduces serious errors |
| Proper editing level (30) | Authorial voice and content are not altered | Style or content are affected in minor ways, or strongly in a few places | Style of author seriously affected, or far too much editing performed |
| Use of standard marks & polite queries (20) | Conventional editing marks used; marks are legible; queries, if any, are well-formed | Editing marks sometimes irregular or illegible; queries deviate from Einsohn's suggestions | Editing marks often sloppy, inconsistent, or hard to follow; queries rude or condescending |
| Raised quote & "Oscar blurb" (10) | Appropriate quote of proper length selected; blurb ready to be added to essay | Quote questionable, or too long or short; blurb needs editing before it can be included | Quote and blurb not representative of essay quality, and/or not professional |