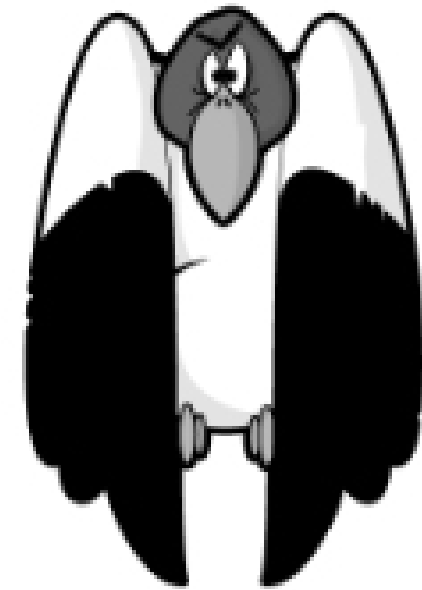


Vulture portfolio assignment

ENG 483, Spring 2006, Bradley Dilger

For this assignment, you will become an editorial vulture. Assemble a portfolio of ten to twelve found documents which need editing. Select six pieces to edit. Perform the editing tasks, write up a brief description of the work you completed for each piece, and collect the edited work in a portfolio.



Begin with one of each of the following documents:

1. A feature or opinion article from the *Western Courier*.
2. A syllabus or assignment.
3. A flier or other one-page text from a community or campus organization.

Fill out your portfolio with other documents of your choice. Anything is fair game—signage, church bulletins, take-out menus, a textbook excerpt—whatever you come across in your daily life (though you should *not* use documents we edit in class). Please strive for a variety of texts, cultivating a wide range of styles and content.

You will edit six of the documents in this portfolio, engaging in multiple types of editing. Before beginning your editing, look over each piece carefully, and think about its strengths and weaknesses. Which levels of edit seem reasonable? What problems or weaknesses seem most pressing? Refer to your notes and course texts as you look over the documents you've collected.

Plan for two of each of the kinds of edit Amy Einsohn describes: light, medium, and heavy. Obviously, this will influence your decision about which documents you should edit—and perhaps which you should include in your portfolio.

When editing, use standard editors' marks, and follow the editorial practices we discuss in class—be neat, polite, systematic, and methodical. Refer questions about editorial style to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (yes, even for the newspaper article). If your editing raises questions which cannot be answered by *Chicago*, visit the WIU library or my office hours to consult one of the references Amy recommends (such as *Garner's Dictionary of American Usage*). When you write editorial queries, do your best to conceptualize the writer accurately, though you are working without real clients. If you need some guidance, I can help.

If you select documents that are difficult to mark up legibly, use techniques which ensure your edits can be easily understood—transcribe the copy, use a breakout or bubble technique, enlarge the document using a photocopier, or all of the above. See our course texts and your notes for other suggestions—neatness matters when editing, and you need to start good editorial habits now.

The draft

You **must** perform your draft edits on copies of your original documents. You may need to re-edit the documents to make clean final copies, or if you make mistakes, and this isn't possible if you've marked up your originals.

The draft is worth 75 points, and is evaluated using three criteria:

1. Are all parts of the assignment present and complete?
2. Does the draft provide evidence of reasonable effort?
3. Do the documents presented meet the assignment criteria?

Presentation

Place your collected, edited documents in a binder or folder of some kind. Paper-clip any edit-pieces with multiple pages. If you edit a single article or document out of a larger piece, please copy or cut it out. In other words, do whatever is necessary to achieve a professional presentation. But don't bind your work in a manner which makes it difficult to annotate.

The first page of your portfolio should be an annotated table of contents which names your edit-pieces and the level of edit applied, followed by one or two paragraphs describing the issues you focused on, and your reasons for selecting the relevant level of edit.

When submitting the final portfolio, include your draft, as well as comments from reviewers (mine as well as your peer editor).

Schedule

This is subject to change. Check the course web site for updates.

Assignment distribution	Feb 7
Assignment discussed in class	Feb 9
Peer preview	Feb 16
Draft portfolio and peer review	Feb 23
Final portfolio	March 9

Assessment

For this assignment, focus on: (1) finding a variety of documents; (2) performing accurate, complete, high-quality editing; (3) presenting that editing professionally. See below for more specifics.

<i>Area evaluated</i>	<i>Optimal</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
Thorough editing, given the level of edit (50)	One or fewer minor problems which should be addressed are not corrected	Several minor or one major problem remain which should be addressed at the given level	Numerous serious problems remain in document—far more than appropriate for edit level
Match of level claimed and performed (25)	Level of edit noted in table of contents clearly shapes editorial decision-making	Editing of document either too intensive or not intensive enough for level claimed	Far too much or too little editing performed; edit level seems randomly selected
Presentation (25)	Well-organized and presented, with a professional appearance, and clear and detailed annotations in table of contents	A few problems with presentation or organization, and perhaps low detail, but nothing which interferes with understanding	Problems with formatting or appearance; few or no annotations in table of contents; disorganized
Accuracy in editing (20)	No errors introduced by editing; style and content are altered only if absolutely necessary	Some errors introduced; style or content are affected in minor ways, or strongly in a few places	Editing introduces several new errors; style of author unnecessarily affected
Neat and standard marking (15)	Conventional editing marks used; systemic and neat marking	Editing marks sometimes irregular or illegible; occasional sloppiness	Editing marks often hard to follow, due to non-standard or sloppy marking
Diversity of documents selected (15)	A heterogeneous collection of content, several different lengths of text, and a variety of problems and qualities	Some of the documents presented are more or less interchangeable	Little or no diversity in length, content, or quality of edit-pieces

"Vulture portfolio" name inspired by Bill Williamson (wj dot williamson at uni dot edu).