News 215 (3 credit hours): News Editing
School of Journalism and Strategic Communication
Ball State University — Fall 2026

I. Course Description:

NEWS 215: News Editing: Theory and practice in editing across media platforms with emphasis on the role of editors, content planning and direction; story development and organization; presentation techniques to maximize audience impact; and proper language usage.

Prerequisite: JOUR 101 or MDIA 101 and NEWS 105. This course is open only to students in the School of Journalism and Strategic Communication and the Department of Media.

II. Instructor

Kate H. Elliott
Associate lecturer of journalism
kelliott@bsu.edu
Office: AJ 381
Office phone: 765-285-6993

III. Office Hours

Wednesdays and Fridays from 11 a.m. to noon in AJ 381. Please make an appointment to meet in person or virtually outside the above office hours. Remember, **I am here for you!** Call or email me with any questions or concerns, and I will respond within 24 hours.

IV. Course Information

NEWS 215: News Editing meets Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. in AJ 326.

Withdrawal Date: You can withdrawal from this or any fall/spring class between the eighth and the 45th day of the class.

V. Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, you will:

Student Learning Outcome:	**Workplace (NACE) Competency:**
Strengthen your command of proper word usage, grammar, spelling, punctuation, structure and AP Style;	Oral / Written Communication

Write headlines and photo cutlines;	Oral / Written Communication
Edit photographs, story text and design elements through basic introduction to InDesign;	Digital Technology
Edit sentences and stories to ensure accuracy, clarity, conciseness and tone;	Critical Thinking / Problem Solving
Ensure that news content has been adequately researched, properly written and edited for the outlet's audience.	Leadership

VI. ACEJMC Professional Values and Competencies

The School of Journalism & Strategic Communication identifies NEWS 215 as substantially aligning with the following Core Values and Competencies defined by the Accrediting Council for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (ACEJMC):

- No. 5: Writing: Write correctly and clearly in forms and styles appropriate for the communications professions, audiences and purposes they serve.
- Nov. 6: Ethical Understanding: Demonstrate an understanding of professional ethical principles and work ethically in pursuit of truth, accuracy, fairness and diversity.
- No. 7: Critical Thinking: Apply critical thinking skills in conducting research and evaluating information by methods appropriate to the communications professions in which they work.
- No. 8: Qualitative Competency: Effectively and correctly apply basic numerical and statistical concepts.
- No. 9: Evaluative Competency: Critically evaluate their own work and that of others for accuracy and fairness, clarity, appropriate style and grammatical correctness.
- No. 10: Tool Competency: Apply tools and technologies appropriate for the communications professions in which they work.

VII. Texts:

Required:

- "Working With Words" (9781319201173)
- "The Elements of Style" (9780205309023). Here is free access to the text: https://www.gutenberg.org/files/37134/37134-h/37134-h.htm
- Associated Press Stylebook 2024-2026 (9780917360718). I am fine with you using any edition within the last five years or online access, which you can get online for free through Bracken Libraries' A – Z Databases or directly from the following link: http://proxy.bsu.edu/login?url=https://www.apstylebook.com/ball-state-university-a69a4be3-a7bc-457b-9074-b6fe91b4f7af.

VIII. Course Outline

What follows is a *tentative* schedule of course content. Because the schedule may shift as we get into the semester, please **follow the content order & deadlines listed in the weekly Canvas modules.** If you are absent, then it becomes your responsibility to obtain the day's notes and any assignment(s).

Week 1: Introduction and understanding journalism and the news
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 1: Understanding journalism and the news
- AP Stylebook: Punctuation Guide

Assignments:
- Introduce yourself
- First week assessment
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 1)
- Editing practice (New Yorker)

Week 2: The basics of writing for journalism
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 2: The basics of writing for journalism

Assignments:
- Commas assignment
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 2)
- The Comma Conundrum
- Editing Practice (USA Today)

Week 3: Writing news that's fit for print
Labor Day: No classes Sept. 7
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 3: Writing news that's fit for print
- AP Stylebook: A&B sections
- Elements of Style, pp. 1-14

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 3)
- Reflection: Elements of Style, pp. 1-14
- Editing practice (USA Today investment story)

Week 4: Writing news for radio and television
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 4: Writing news for radio and television

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 4)
- You Pick: Listen and reflect
- Punctuation PPT

Week 5: Writing news for digital media
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 5: Writing news for digital media
- Elements of Style, pp. 15-32
- AP Stylebook: C&D sections

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 5)
- Reflection: Elements of Style, pp. 15-32
- Grammar and Mechanics PPT
- Write a social media post about yourself

Week 6: Writing for strategic communications
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 6: Writing for strategic communications
- Sexism, racism and other isms
- Elements of Style, pp. 33-47

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 6)
- Reflection: Elements of Style, pp. 33-47

Week 7: Sexism, Racism and other "Isms"
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 7: Sexism, Racism and other "Isms"
- AP Stylebook: E-H sections

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 7)
- AP Style E-H assignment

Week 8: Choosing your words
FALL BREAK: No classes Oct. 12-13
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 8: Choosing your words

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 8)
- Tightening words

Week 9: Grammar basics
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 9: Grammar basics
- Watch: InDesign tutorials

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 9)
- The RIGHT word!
- Watch and reflect on InDesign tutorials

Week 10: Phrases, Clauses and Sentences
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 10: Phrases, Clauses and Sentences
- AP Stylebook: I-O sections

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 10)
- AP Style I-O assignment
- InDesign article
- Phrases, clauses and sentences review

Week 11: Subjects and objects
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 11: Subjects and objects

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 11)

Week 12: Verbs
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 12: Verbs
- Read AP Style P-R sections

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 12)
- AP Style Entries P-R assignment

Week 13: Making the parts agree
THANKSGIVING BREAK: No classes Nov. 25-29
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 13: Making the parts agree
- Read AP Style S-V sections
- WWW: Chapter 14: Modifiers and connecting words
- Read AP Style W-Z sections

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 13)
- AP Style Entries S-V assignment
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 14)
- AP Style Entries W-V assignment

Week 14: Modifiers and connecting words
Readings:
- WWW: Chapter 14: Modifiers and connecting words

Assignments:
- Reading Quiz (Chapter 14)
- AP Style Entries W-V assignment

Week 15: Getting words in the right order and punctuation
Last meeting day for regular classes: Dec. 7
Readings:
WWW: Chapter 15: Getting words in the right order and punctuation
Assignments:

- Reading Quiz (Chapter 15)
- AP Style Entries WXYZ assignment

Final exams: Dec. 8-11

- Link to UNIVERSITY FINALS SCHEDULE

Commencement Dec. 12

Other grammar topics we will discuss throughout the semester, include:

- Parts of speech
- Subject and predicate
- Direct and indirect objects
- Active and passive voice
- Sentence types
- Parallel structure
- Verbals and verb moods
- Complete sentences vs. fragments
- Independent and dependent clauses
- Punctuation (semicolons, colons, commas, dashes, apostrophes, etc.)
- Modifiers
- Tenses

IX. Course Evaluation

93-100 A	78-79 C+
90-92 A-	72-77 C
88-89 B+	70-71 C-
82-87 B	68-69 D+
80-81 B-	62-67 D
	60-61 D-

X: Assignments

Grades are based on overall effort, attention to detail, comprehensive reporting/critical thinking, strong writing, good storytelling instincts, professionalism, and thoughtful presentation.

Weekly assignments: Each week, you will have short quizzes and/or reflections (1-2 total) that will challenge you to apply knowledge to case studies and other real-world experiences. You may consult (and are encouraged to do so!) your AP Stylebook and other course-related resources.

All assignments will be posted on Canvas and due by midnight on the day listed on the class schedule/Canvas. If an assignment is more than a week late, then you will receive 50 percent of the points. No assignments will be accepted after midnight on the last day of finals' week.

Extra credit: I will award extra credit opportunities throughout the semester (midterm feedback, attending departmental/campus events, etc.). I encourage you to engage in these assignments to enhance your educational experience, but they are not required.

XI. Policies and Procedures

Ball State Statement: We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all classes except for university- and/or school-approved absences. You are allowed three unexcused absences before your grade is subject to a lower grade. I will take attendance each class via Canvas.

Absences for University Activities: The university expects its units and programs that take students away from class meetings to schedule such events in a way that will minimize hindrance of orderly completion of course requirements. Such units must provide a written statement to the students describing the activity and stating as precisely as possible the dates of the required absence. The involved students must deliver this documentation to the instructor preferably before the absence, but in no event, later than one week after the absence.

Pregnancy and Related Conditions: Ball State University provides reasonable modifications for students affected by pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. Students seeking academic, housing, or other modifications are encouraged to contact the Title IX Office as early as possible to discuss available options and support. For assistance, contact the Title IX Office at 765-285-1545 or titleix@bsu.edu.

Student Academic Ethics/Integrity Policy: Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's **academic integrity website** (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University **Student Academic Ethics Policy**.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records. Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.

No Generative AI Use (No GenAI use permitted for any coursework): All work conducted and/or submitted in this course should reflect your own ideas and demonstrate your current knowledge, abilities, and skills. Therefore, generative AI should not be used to complete any portion of the assignment(s). Doing so constitutes a violation of *Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy.*

University Grade Appeal Policy: If you believe you received a final course grade that does not reflect your performance due to fairness or a procedural issue, you have the right to file an appeal within 5 school days after final grades are posted by the Office of the Registrar. Review the **University Grade Appeal Policy and Process**.

SJSC Writing Statement: The School of Journalism and Strategic Communication regards writing proficiency as essential to the satisfactory completion of all journalism courses. Therefore, school instructors must monitor writing performance and language usage proficiency in all journalism courses. Student grades must reflect both criteria. This means you will be graded on your spelling, punctuation and sentence structure.

Professional in Residence: The School of Journalism and Strategic Communication may provide virtual professional development and networking seminars each semester to provide industry insight and encouragement for our student majors. These events provide

an opportunity for you to connect classroom instruction with current professional practices. They also help expand your professional network. The school may offer in person and/or Zoom presentations.

Disability Statement: If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's ***Disability Services*** office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or ***dsd@bsu.edu***.

Add/Drop or Withdrawal: According to Ball State University policy, registration matters and/or withdrawal from a course remains your responsibility. Dropping or withdrawing from the course may affect your financial aid. Please visit the Scheduling & Registration web page for additional information.

Student Rights: It is your responsibility to be familiar with your rights and responsibilities as a BSU student. Please visit the following site for relevant information: www.bsu.edu/studentcode Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities. This code includes appendices that contain Ball State's policies on academic dishonesty, policy and procedures for appealing final grades, student leaves for funerals, etc.

Freedom of Expression: *In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's* **Statement on Freedom of Expression**, *the resources on Ball State's* **Freedom of Expression webpage**, *and* **Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.**

Title IX: *Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit* **bsu.edu/titleix** *or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at* **titleix@bsu.edu**.

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

What happens after I report? The Title IX Coordinator will email the person who experienced sexual harassment (complainant) and invite them to schedule a meeting. If the complainant **chooses** to meet with the Title IX Coordinator,

- Title IX Coordinator will offer supportive measures (e.g., counseling, extensions on deadlines, course-related adjustments, changes to work or class schedules, and/or referrals to campus offices), review the policy, and discuss options to move forward.
- If a complaint is filed by the complainant or the University, an investigation will begin following University policy.

CCIM Student Success and Advising: For academic advising and student success support, visit the **CCIM Student Success and Outreach Hub in BC 210**. Schedule an appointment with an academic advisor through Navigate or walk in during business hours for assistance from Student Success staff.

The Learning Center: The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to **bsu.navigate.eab.com**.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

Supplemental Instruction is available in select courses. If you have an SI leader for your course, that person will provide students with information the first week of school regarding weekly study sessions. For more information about Learning Center programming, visit **bsu.edu/learningcenter** or call 765-285-1006. Follow us on Instagram: **BallStateLC**.

The Writing Center: All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing.

The Writing Center offers free planning, feedback, and accountability sessions (in person and online) to all students composing essays, reports, reflections, research projects, web content, lesson plans, slideshows, poster presentations, resumes, and other digital or print texts. To schedule a free appointment to discuss your writing, go to **bsu.edu/writingcenter**. Online and in-person appointments are available; however, plan ahead because appointments book quickly!

The Basic Needs Hub: If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the **Basic Needs Hub**. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and

provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a **Basic Needs Assistance Form**.

The Counseling Center: The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

At the Ball State Counseling Center, we see students for a variety of reasons, some of which include homesickness, relationship concerns, anxiety, and depression. At your first appointment, you will work with a therapist to create a plan that will connect you with resources that best fit your needs. We assist students with getting connected to therapy at our Center as well as connecting students to self-help resources, other on-campus resources, and community-based resources. All Ball State students also have access to several on-demand, self-help resources through a variety of different platforms. All of these resources, including a direct link to our website, can be found **here**.

The Speaking Center: The **Speaking Center** is a free resource available to all members of the BSU community wanting to improve their public speaking abilities. We offer personalized coaching designed to help you become a more confident and effective speaker. Our trained coaches provide constructive feedback and support throughout the entire speech preparation process, whether you are in the early stages of brainstorming ideas and organizing your thoughts, or you need to practice your delivery and refine your message.

The Center is in the David Letterman Communication and Media Building, room 302. To schedule an appointment, please access us through your Navigate app or use this **direct link** to sign up for a time**.** Appointments are available both in person and on Zoom. Appointments are available in person, on Zoom, and in virtual reality (VR) for those interested in practicing in an immersive speaking environment.