

How Comm 1610 Writing Assignments are Graded

Writing assignments will be submitted to the instructor via email (husselbee@suu.edu) by the beginning of class on the due date.

Assessment of writing assignments is based on performance rather than effort. The overall journalistic quality of the story will be the primary factor in determining a grade for each story.

In addition to news judgment, please pay considerable attention to accuracy, style, grammar, punctuation and spelling. These criteria will be considered when grades are assigned.

Graded stories will be returned promptly (usually before our next class meeting). Sometimes, comments will appear in the margins as the instructor deems necessary. Errors will be highlighted in various colors, depending on the nature of the error. For example . . .

- ◆ Accuracy errors will be highlighted in **red**.
- ◆ Style errors will be highlighted in **yellow**.
- ◆ Grammar errors will be highlighted in **light blue**.
- ◆ Punctuation errors will be highlighted in **green**.
- ◆ Spelling errors will be highlighted in **violet**.

When you get your story back, you may want additional help interpreting your grade and what it means in terms of the skills you're working to develop. If you want to know how you're doing, interpret your grades like this . . .

| If you earn . . . | The grade is . . . | And that means . . . |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| 45-50 points | A | Your story could be published in the paper with little or no editing. |
| 40-44 points | B | Your story could be published but requires more than basic editing. |
| 35-39 points | C | Significant editing is required before the story could be published. |
| 30-34 points | D | Your story requires a complete overhaul and is unworthy of publication. |
| 0-29 points | F | Go back, read your textbook and notes, and start over. |

In my grading scheme, every story starts out as an A. Whether it remains an A is up to you. Always remember, this is your ball game; I just keep the score. You determine your grades by your performance. If you're unhappy with your grade, let's work together to improve your performance. If you have questions about a story or grade, please see me during office hours.

Accuracy & MFEs

One of the most important considerations in journalism is accuracy. Good grammar, spelling and punctuation are important; so is style. However, accuracy is even more important. To emphasize the importance of getting the facts correct, we have instituted the MFE policy for writing assignments. Please take it seriously.

MFE stands for "major factual error." Any MFE, such as the misspelling of a proper noun, improper identification of a municipal or governmental body, or a geographical error that, say, places Cedar City in Iowa, will result in a failing grade on that writing assignment. There is no appeal of a failing grade for an MFE.

Because MFEs are accuracy errors, they will be highlighted in **red**.