Ongoing Discussions

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The following assignment illustrates how I use Slack to encourage organic, term-long conversations. The course in question is EN207: Professional and Technical Editing, and it is a fully asynchronous, 8-week course delivered using Canvas. Feel free to adapt these materials for your own use.

Editing need not be a solitary activity—we editors often ask each other for advice and help on sticky questions, and we like to laugh together about editing fails we encounter in the real world.

To that end, we will have **two discussions that remain ongoing** throughout the term and for which you will receive a grade at the end of the semester. These discussions will take place on Slack, on channels set aside for that purpose.

Here are the details:

Crowd-Sourcing Answers

At least three times this semester, you should post a question about a specific editing problem you are facing. Post the question to the `#crowd-sourcing-answers` channel on Slack. The problem can come from coursework for this class or from your larger academic and personal life, and it can relate to

- Grammar, mechanics, or usage ("What's the correct thing in this situation?")
- Clarity and conciseness ("What's the best approach to express this?")
- Style ("What's the most elegant way to express this?")
- Or any other aspect of substantive editing, copyediting, or proofreading.

Your question should be clearly stated and include all the necessary details and context to be sensical to your peers.

Additionally, at least three times this semester, you should respond to your peers' questions and/or engage in the discussion that ensues, offering your own opinion and expertise about how best to solve editing problems.

For full credit, your questions should be posted throughout the semester rather than all at once or only in the last week. Your responses should likewise be posted in a timely manner so as to be useful to the asker.

Editing in the Real World

At least three times this semester, you should create a post discussing how you've encountered class concepts in the real world (the real world includes the internet). Make your post on the `#editing-in-the-real-world` channel on Slack. Your posts could include, for example, the following:

- Typos or incorrect usage on something like an advertisement, sign, instructions, or other real-world artifact
- An example of writing that could be clarified by an editor's careful touch—such as a restaurant menu that is confusing or a website's navigation bar
- Errors that result in unintentionally funny or risqué readings
- Examples of how language use was discriminatory or otherwise unfortunate
- Anecdotes about how you acted as an editor or otherwise used your developing skills to improve language use in the world

If at all possible, include a picture of the artifact or example in question. Don't just present your example—discuss it by tying it to class readings, concepts, or discussions or by asking open-ended questions about it.

Additionally, at least three times this semester, you should respond to your peers' posts and/or engage in the discussion that ensues, offering your own opinions and observations.

For full credit, your posts should be made throughout the semester rather than all at once or only in the last week. Your responses should likewise be posted in a timely manner.