

## **English 296A: Desktop Publishing and the Literary Magazine**

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**Background:** By the mid 1980s the Macintosh, and to some extent the PC, had made desktop publishing a mainstay in the world of publishing professional quality documents. At this point a significant shift occurred in the production of published materials. A key element in this production moved from the hands of the printer to the editor. Simply put, editors no longer needed to rely on printers to create their documents. Production began to move from the printing houses to the editor's desktop. Layout, typesetting, and image control are now fully available to the editor. As a result, it is important that those who traditionally were involved in the creation of print (and now digital) information be introduced to the tools that make this possible.

This course seeks to introduce the student to editorial concerns beyond those of simple copyediting to the essential questions of the manipulation of the artifact itself. The editor is not concerned solely with what the best writing is, or the best way to write a sentence is, for instance, but also with the best way to deliver the writing to its intended audience: how should the written word appear on the page (or the screen). What the type should look like and how it should be arranged must be addressed. What, if any, graphics should be used. In what order should articles be placed. It is the goal of this course to introduce interested students to these matters and others in order to better prepare students who may encounter or simply seek out the requirements inherent in desktop publishing.

**Purpose:** This course will introduce a selected number of students to the editing and production of literary magazines through the practical application of desktop publishing. Theoretical matters in connection with this course will be discussed as they apply to the actual production of literary magazines. No specific textbooks are required for the course; however, the instructor will direct the student(s) to appropriate reading materials from time to time.

**Textbooks:** The instructor will provide such texts as are needed or direct the student to appropriate sources in the library.

**NOTE:** This course is **not** a theoretical course, but a practical course in which the student(s) will participate in the actual production of two traditional literary magazines and several electronic/digital literary ventures for Penn State University.

**Permission to Register:** The course is limited to five (5) students, and each student must have the approval of the instructor and the campus DAA in order to register. Preference will be given to honors students, especially those in Liberal Arts and Communications. Experience in other student publications, such as high school newspapers, web site production and design, and

school literary magazines, are beneficial but not a requirement. Some familiarity with computers and basic word processing is a requirement.

**Evaluation:** The student will receive a grade for the course. However, no tests or papers will be required. Instead, the instructor will assess the student's work over the course of the semester and assign a grade. Accordingly, the instructor will provide an ongoing verbal (provided in writing at the student's request) evaluation to occur no less than three times at approximately equal intervals within the semester. The student will have the opportunity to question and engage the instructor in dialogue for the purpose of adequately understanding the assigned grade and its justification. Furthermore, the student will be provided quick and easy access to the DAA as first mediator should any disagreement occur concerning the grade assigned.

**Important:** The student should expect to devote 10 - 12 hours per week to fulfilling course requirements, including working directly under the instructor's supervision at least three (3) of those hours.

**What the Student Will Accomplish:** The student will learn basic formatting procedures within popular word processing programs, including Microsoft Word and Corel's WordPerfect. The student will learn to design and layout a literary magazine within the leading publishing program, Adobe's ® PageMaker ® 6.5 program, including prepress preparation, and to port the publication to Adobe's ® Acrobat ® File format for electronic publication on the ftp server for download by the public. In addition, the student will learn to create simple web pages within programs such as Microsoft's Front Page, and Adobe's ® PageMill programs as well as within Netscape Communicator.

During the semester the student will serve as student editor on either the Commonwealth College's *Best of Four* or the university's *The Palimpsest Review* literary magazine. As such, his or her name(s) will be affixed to the hard copy products on which he or she will work and to the web pages and PDF files produced under his or her tenure. Consequently, in addition to a grade for the course, the student will receive both print and digital media with his or her name affixed as verification of expertise.

**Statement of Academic Integrity:** The student will adhere to the "Statement of Academic Integrity" as set forth in the Pennsylvania State University's annual publication of *Policies and Rules, a Guide for Students*. At no time will the student knowingly misrepresent ideas, words, or other intellectual property as belonging to or possessed by anyone other than the actual author of said ideas, words, or other intellectual property.

**Agenda:** Because the course is a tutorial, no set agenda will be set forth in this document; however, the student will meet with the instructor early, during the first week of classes, and a time table will be arranged at the convenience of both the instructor and the student to meet together at least twice per week throughout the semester. By the last week of the semester the student will have prepared one or more publications for print and for Web publication. By mid semester, the documents should be half completed.