

## Leland Essay Contest editing

ENG 483, Spring 2005, Bradley Dilger

Each year the Western Writing Program conducts the Bruce H. Leland Essay Contest, which is designed to recognize the best student writers in English composition courses (and to put the lie to the old saw that college students can't write). You will be assigned one of the winning contest essays. Perform a light edit on the essay to prepare it for publication in the anthology *Western Voices 2005*.

I will provide one paper copy of the essay to you. Assignments and classes vary considerably, so I can't provide general information about your essay, except to note it if was written for ENG 100, 180, or 280 in Spring or Fall 2004.

Some of you were assigned essays longer than 6 pages. In these cases, I have assigned the essays to two people. Divide the work as you see fit; just let me know how you elect to do so.

**Sticking to a light edit is the most critical part of this assignment.** You must not affect the authorial voice of the student whose essay you are editing. Follow Einsohn's definition of a light edit, performing the following tasks:

- ✓ Using standard copyeditors' marks, correct all spelling, punctuation, syntactical, word usage, and grammatical mistakes.
- ✓ Correct any serious blunders in language which can be easily corrected.
- ✓ Make a list of any serious problems (fact errors, ambiguities which might embarrass the writer) which you think merit additional attention or communication with the student writer.
- ✓ Ensure the essay conforms to MLA style. (If you don't have a handbook with MLA style information, you may consult my MLA style manual, or the copy in the WIU libraries.)

### **You should also do the following:**

- ✓ Pick a "raised quote"—one or two sentences in length—to be used in the layout of the essay in *Western Voices*. If your essay is long, select two quotes.
- ✓ Write a one-paragraph statement describing your reaction to the essay, which presenters can read at the awards ceremony in April. (This is the "Oscar blurb.")

Turn in your marked-up essay March 29, at the start of class. **This is an absolute deadline.**

### **Tips**

- Please note the revised deadline.
- Copy your essay and use pencil if you think you might need help with marks.
- If you'd like to have the computer file for your essay, contact me.
- Refer to your copy of *Western Voices* for examples of Oscar blurbs, raised quotes, and other apparatus, and to get an idea of the way essays will look in final form.
- If you encounter multiple problems while editing your assigned essay, contact me immediately for guidance. If necessary, we'll schedule a conference with the student writer.
- See the reverse side of this page for information about assignment assessment.

## Assessment

Your work will be assessed using the following criteria.

<i>Area evaluated</i>	<i>Optimal</i>	<i>Adequate</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
<b>Quality of editing (40)</b>	One or two minor problems which should be addressed are not corrected; no errors introduced by editing	Several minor or one major problems remain which should be addressed, or errors introduced by editing	Numerous serious problems remain in document, or editing introduces serious errors
<b>Proper editing level (30)</b>	Authorial voice and content are not altered	Style or content are affected in minor ways, or strongly in a few places	Style of author seriously affected, or far too much editing performed
<b>Use of standard marks &amp; polite queries (20)</b>	Conventional editing marks used; marks are legible; queries, if any, are well-formed	Editing marks sometimes irregular or illegible; queries deviate from Einsohn's suggestions	Editing marks often sloppy, inconsistent, or hard to follow; queries rude or condescending
<b>Raised quote &amp; "Oscar blurb" (10)</b>	Appropriate quote of proper length selected; blurb ready to be read at awards ceremony	Quote questionable, or too long or short; blurb needs editing before it can be read	Quote and blurb not representative of essay quality, and/or not professional