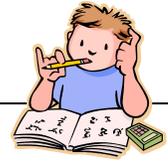


JOU 2005, Writing Mechanics

An online, one credit-hour course in grammar and punctuation



Instructor for 2013 Summer B Section 4E71

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You can contact me through the Sakai email function for this course. If you have a grammar question, post it to the General Discussion board. That way, others can benefit from seeing the question and answer – and you will learn more by taking a stab at answering others' questions.

Course Purpose

The purpose is to ensure you have sufficient skill in grammar and punctuation to write with clarity. This is applied grammar and punctuation. You won't have to define an intransitive verb, but you will need to understand how a comma can change the meaning of a sentence.

The course covers only grammar and punctuation. It does not cover spelling. And it does not cover style, such as whether to abbreviate *August* or capitalize *president* as a title.

Any Gator Can Take This Course

This class is a prerequisite for enrollment in JOU 3101, reporting. The course was created in the fall of 2011 to give students enrolling in reporting a better foundation in grammar and spelling before entering a stressful, three-credit-hour skills class. (Students heading into JOU 3101 can take JOU 2005 before, after or with JOU 3109C, multimedia writing.)

The course also is useful for any UF student in any major who wants to improve his or her job prospects in careers that value writing or who desires a better foundation for graduate school. The course does not presume you know anything about journalism or public relations.

Learning Outcomes

By the conclusion of the course, you should be able to:

- Identify basic parts of speech required to know agreement and pronoun use: adjective, adverb, antecedent, conjunction, noun, preposition and pronoun.
- Differentiate between an action verb and a linking verb.
- Detect run-on sentences and sentence fragments and know how to fix them.
- Avoid passive voice.
- Avoid “dead” construction.
- Spot sentences without parallel construction and know how to fix them.
- Detect sentences with pronouns that lack clear antecedents and know how to fix them.
- Ensure modifiers such as “only,” “not” and dates are correctly placed in a sentence.
- Use introductory clauses correctly.
- Spot ambiguous comparisons and fix them.
- Determine when to use a colon and when to capitalize the following word.

- Use dashes, ellipses, parentheses and semicolons properly.
- Convey meaning with quotation marks.
- Place punctuation inside or outside closing quotation marks.
- Use an apostrophe properly for possession, omitted letters and plurals.
- Determine whether one or two apostrophes are used for a compound subject.
- Correctly place an apostrophe involving plural possessives.
- Form plurals of common and proper nouns.
- Form a possessive involving common and proper nouns.
- Handle apostrophes involving businesses names.
- Distinguish between descriptive (no apostrophe) and possessive (apostrophe).
- Use commas correctly with conjunctions, appositions, introductory phrases, “free” modifiers, quotation marks, equal adjectives and a series.
- Distinguish between essential and non-essential clauses.
- Differentiate between “that,” “which” and “who.”
- Identify when to use a hyphen with compound modifiers.
- Discern agreement errors.
- Determine whether a word such as “family” is singular or plural.
- Ensure a pronoun agrees with its antecedent.
- Ensure a verb agrees with its subject.
- Determine pronoun use based on whether it is used a subject or an object.
- Determine which pronoun to use for compound subjects and objects.
- Determine which pronoun to use in comparisons.
- Determine when to use “who” and “whom.”
- Discern when to use “lay” or “lie.”
- Correctly use “affect” and “effect.”
- Avoid the use of incorrect phrases such as “try and catch the fish.”
- Correctly use often misused words such as fewer vs. less.

Required Equipment

Because this is an online course, you must have:

1. A Macintosh or Windows computer with Internet access.
2. A computer that either has (a) a built-in webcam with a microphone and speakers or (b) a webcam as an attachment and headphones with a microphone.

No Textbooks Required

No textbooks are required for this course. Everything you need to succeed will be taught you online. However, if you prefer a textbook to supplement your learning, I recommend two:

1. “When Words Collide” by Lauren Kessler and Duncan McDonald. This book is targeted media writers but is useful for anyone.
2. The Associated Press Stylebook, updated annually. It can be purchased as a book, a subscription [website](#) or an [app](#) for the iPhone and iPad. The punctuation guide at the end of the book is especially helpful. A spiral-bound print version is usually available only through the UF Bookstore or directly from the [Associated Press](#).

Course Structure

The course has 12 modules that are roughly equivalent to what would occur in a regular 50-minute class period. Each module has a downloadable handout summarizing the applicable grammar principles.

Each module has between two and nine chapters, for a total of 61 chapters. Each chapter has an instructional video, usually less than 10 minutes long. After you watch the video, you can take a practice question.

At the conclusion of each module, you will take a graded quiz of five questions. After the first three modules, you will take a midterm. After all 12 modules, you will take the final exam.

Pacing: You Can Work Ahead

Each module has a deadline (posted on the course website) by which the material must be viewed and the quiz taken to keep you on track. But you can always work ahead. You can complete the entire course in the first week of the semester if you wish.

Deadlines Are Firm; No Extensions or Makeups Allowed

Deadlines are firm. Because you can work ahead in this course, extensions or makeups are never allowed, no matter the reason – whether illness, emergency, court dates, death in the family, etc. Instead of waiting until the last minute and getting derailed by an unplanned event, work ahead.

Let's say that you wait until an hour before a quiz module closes only to discover that the Internet is down or your computer has died. Deadlines are firm, so you'll have to count that as a quiz score to be dropped. No extensions are possible, no matter the reason.

Or let's say the midterm deadline falls on a religious holiday you observe. Take the test before that religious holiday. The fact that the religious holiday happens to coincide with the last possible day to complete the assignment does not mean the deadline will change.

Assignments: Pre-Test

The course begins with an ungraded pre-test so you can see what's expected in the course.

Assignments: Quizzes

At the end of each of the 12 modules, you will take a quiz of five questions drawn at random. You'll have seven minutes to take each quiz. Each quiz is cumulative. The highest 10 of 12 possible scores will count for 20 percent of the grade. The two drops are allowed to cover computer glitches, etc. No other drops will be given, no matter the circumstances.

Please pay attention to the quiz code starting with Module 4. As the course will explain, the correct answer for the comma and the apostrophe will differ based on your academic sequence:

- A. If you are a JOU or a PUR major, choose Form A.
- B. If you are any other major, choose Form B.

Assignments: Midterm

After the third module, you will have a 30-minute midterm with 20 questions drawn at random. The purpose of the midterm is to ensure that you're keeping up with the material – and if not, encourage you to adjust your study habits. The midterm is worth only 10 percent of the grade and will not require an outside proctoring service. Cheating, however, is prohibited.

Assignments: Final Exam

The final exam is 70 percent of the grade. You will have 60 minutes to answer 40 questions worth 2.5 points each and drawn at random by Sakai.

You can take the final exam twice if you desire. If you take it twice, only the better of the two scores will count toward your grade. You cannot take the final exam more than twice.

Each time you take the exam, you will pay a \$24 test fee to [Proctor U](#). This is an online test-taking service that requires you to take the exam on a Windows or Macintosh computer with a Web browser running Adobe Flash Player. Your computer must either have a webcam, microphone and speaker built in or you must have a webcam along with headphones and a microphone. If you're unsure whether your computer and webcam setup are suitable, you can run a [test](#) ahead of time.

Contact Proctor U at least 72 hours before when you want to take each exam to schedule a time. You can take the exam at home or in any quiet, well-lit, private room. You'll need to have a photo ID to take the exam as well as a reflective surface to show the edges of your monitor to the proctor.

When taking an exam, no books, handouts, cheat-sheets, notebooks, scratch paper, cellphone, PDA, tablet, music player or anything else will be allowed. You will not be allowed to use your computer to see or reference anything other than the exam.

When you take the exam through Proctor U, the online proctor will verify your identity and then release the exam to you. As with the quizzes, choose the exam according to your academic major:

- A. If you are a JOU or a PUR major, choose Form A.
- B. If you are any other major, choose Form B.

If you wait until less than 72 hours to schedule an exam, you'll pay Proctor U a \$5 late fee. If you need to reschedule an exam for any reason, you will have to pay Proctor U a \$5 rescheduling fee.

For more information on Proctor U, see the course handbook on Sakai.

Sample Questions

All graded questions are multiple-choice with four answer options. For example,

1. Choose the best answer.
 - a. The quart of strawberries are on the table, ready for whoever wants a snack.
 - b. The quart of strawberries are on the table, ready for whomever wants a snack.
 - c. The quart of strawberries is on the table, ready for whoever wants a snack.
 - d. The quart of strawberries is on the table, ready for whomever wants a snack.

Usually two items are manipulated in each question. Above, those two items were are/is and whoever/whomever. A and B answers offered “are” while C and D offered “is.” The second item, whoever/whomever, was manipulated so that A offered “whoever” and B offered “whomever,” and the pattern was repeated for C and D. The options were given in alphabetical order.

You can see that pattern in the next sample question:

2. Choose the best answer.
 - a. Mary felt bad about asking her sister to work full time this summer.
 - b. Mary felt bad about asking her sister to work full-time this summer.
 - c. Mary felt badly about asking her sister to work full time this summer.
 - d. Mary felt badly about asking her sister to work full-time this summer.

By the way, the correct answers are 1c and 2a.

Grading

Pre-test (ungraded)..... 0%
 Quizzes (top 10 out of 12 scores)..... 20%
 Midterm 10%
 Final (best out of two tries) 70%

Grading Scale

	Percent		Percent		Percent		Percent
		B+	89-87%	C+	79-77%	D+	69-67%
A	100-90%	B	86-80%	C	76-70%	D	66-60%

The minimum score to enter JOU 3101, reporting, is 70. Scores are rounded to the nearest whole point: 89.4 rounds down to 89 (B+) while 89.5 rounds up to 90 (A). More details on the university’s grading policy can be found in the undergraduate catalog [online](#).

The grading scale is firm. The cutoff for a passing grade is 70, not 69. (Note: It used to be 73.)

Grading FAQs

Q. What if I have a really good reason for why I missed a quiz?

A. You can drop only the low two scores no matter the reason, and no makeups are possible.

Q. I missed the midterm because the Internet went out just before the midnight deadline, so it’s not my fault. Can I still take it?

A. No extensions are possible in a course in which everything can be done as early as you wish. Next time, work ahead rather than tempting Murphy’s Law by waiting until the last minute.

Q. I was sick a lot of the semester and unable to keep up with my work. Can I get an incomplete?

A. An incomplete doesn't apply to a course like this in which no final papers or projects are due. If an extended illness precludes you from attending to your coursework, you can petition for a medical withdrawal through the Dean of Students Office.

Q. What can I do for extra credit to boost my grade?

A. No extra credit is available, no matter the circumstances. Besides, your grade is already boosted by being able to drop the two low quiz scores and having two tries at the final exam.

Q. I got an 89 and need an A to keep my scholarship. Isn't an 89 close enough?

A. Sorry about the scholarship, but the grading scale is firm.

Q. What if I end up with a 69 and just miss a C by one point? Isn't there something I can do?

A. Sorry, but the grading scale is firm.

Academic Integrity

University of Florida students live by an [honor code](#) that prohibits academic dishonesty such as cheating. Students have an affirmative obligation to know what those policies prohibit. If you are unsure, ask the instructor in advance. When cheating is discovered, the policy is to fail all students involved for the course and refer the details to the Dean of Students Office.

Students with Disabilities

If you would benefit from disability-related accommodations, contact the [Disability Resource Center](#) as early in the semester as possible. The center will provide documentation so appropriate accommodations can be made. The center is in Reid Hall, 392-8565.

Help With Coping

The UF [Counseling and Wellness Center](#) is a terrific, free resource for any student who could use help managing stress or coping with life. The center, at 3190 Radio Road on campus, is open for appointments and emergency walk-ins from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. To make an appointment or receive after-hours assistance, call 352-392-1575.

Course Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted [online](#). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester but students will be given specific times when they are open.

Summary [results](#) of these assessments are available to students.