Writing Fundamentals (JMC:1600:OEX)
Spring 2021
Off-Cycle, Five-Week Course

Instructor: Lillian Martell
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Phone: 319-335-5961
Office drop-in hours on Zoom: 9-11 a.m. Tuesdays; 12:30-1:30 p.m. Thursdays; and by appointment. Check the “Announcements” on ICON for the Zoom link.
SJMC DEO: David Ryfe, david-ryfe@uiowa.edu Office: E305 AJB, Phone: 335-3486

Course description (from catalog): “The importance of grammar; recognition of common errors in the student's own writing with a focus on fixing these problems.”

Further description: This class offers an intensive review of the fundamentals of grammar and punctuation in preparation for the next level of writing classes in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication and writing assignments in other disciplines.

Required text:

The textbook is available at the University of Iowa Bookstore and will be useful not only for this class but for reference in any discipline. Students also may use the e-book.

SJMC Learning Outcomes

The School of Journalism and Mass Communication is committed to your academic and professional success. In line with this commitment, we have identified particular learning outcomes that every student should obtain by the time they earn a JMC degree. We regularly assess the curriculum to determine whether students are achieving these outcomes. This course contributes to these learning outcomes by helping you develop the abilities to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media messages across multiple media domains and to communicate effectively with the highest, professionally accepted standards in all work. Achieving these outcomes means:
- You will demonstrate an ability to anticipate and recognize ethical issues when they arise and to reason through them taking multiple perspectives and contexts into account.
- You will demonstrate knowledge of the basic tenets of media literacy and how media literacy relates to your personal media habits and professional development.
- You will develop critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret media messages through an understanding of media practices and institutions.
- You will learn how to create and disseminate media messages in various forms.
- You will demonstrate the ability to gather factual story elements, and to evaluate and express them in logical, narrative forms for multiple media and audiences.
You will display the ability to access and analyze data, report facts accurately, research and edit information responsibly and in a manner commensurate with professional standards.

You will demonstrate the ability to apply above concepts in a manner that is sensitive to audiences across all media.

Course specific learning objectives:

1. Identify and correct sentence structure errors
2. Identify and correct common word use and spelling errors
3. Identify and correctly use the different forms of nouns
4. Identify and correctly use pronouns and prepositions.
5. Use verb tenses correctly; identify and correct subject/verb agreement errors
6. Identify adjectives and adverbs and use them correctly
7. Identify and use conjunctions and interjections correctly.
8. Identify punctuation errors and use punctuation correctly in sentences.

Assignment policy: This class covers an intensive amount of material at a rapid pace. The material is presented in modules on ICON that must be completed in order by finishing each module before proceeding to the next one. Each module will include:

- Lecture material delivered through ICON using video PowerPoint presentations
- Exercises
- Discussion
- Quizzes that cover the material presented in the PowerPoints and the exercises

You must complete each module before assigned deadlines; however, you can proceed through the course ahead of deadlines and complete the course quickly if you wish to do so.

Exercises: The exercises assigned with each module will help you prepare for quizzes, but their primary purpose is to enhance your language skills; thus, the exercises often will include more material than covered by the quizzes. The formats differ from the quizzes to provide variety and deepen your thinking. Students are encouraged to do the ungraded practice exercises to become familiar with the format on ICON.

The exercises for each module must be completed before taking the quiz. Grammar requires precision, and you must proofread for typos and other errors before submitting answers. The exercises do not have a time limit, which provides time for you to consult the lecture and textbook. The textbook, the document titled “commonly confused words,” Merriam-Webster’s dictionary and the Associated Press Stylebook will determine the answer to questions that emerge from the exercises and quizzes.

Discussion: Each student must enter a comment, question or response/expansion to others’ entries during Weeks 2, 3 and 4. These posts are worth up to 5 points each with points granted based on the quality of the entry: 0 points for no entries, 1-2.5 points for basic comments or questions, 3-5 points for entries that are helpful to others in the class. Read the comments and questions before you post; if you repeat information from a previous post, you will receive a
lower score. The comments must be made before **noon on Thursdays** during Weeks 2, 3 and 4, and the instructor will review the comments with the goal of responding before 5 p.m. on Thursdays. Any questions after that should sent to the instructor by email.

Students who work ahead of schedule can enter their discussion items any time, but I may not see these entries until the dates shown on the schedule. **If you are working ahead and have a question, you should email the question to me.**

**Quizzes**: The deadline to complete each quiz is **noon every Friday**. Quizzes will be closed book and have a 10-minute limit. The time limit means that students need to be proficient with the material. However, the real reason to be proficient is to ensure future success in academic programs and professional careers. The quizzes will be proctored through Proctorio.

**Final exam**: After completing all the modules, you will take a final exam composed of 75 questions. The final exam will be closed book and have a 45-minute limit. The final exam will be available until noon on the final Friday of the session. The exam will be proctored through Proctorio.

The “Exams” module on ICON provides contact information for Proctorio. The instructor cannot help with technical problems. You must contact Proctorio immediately when you encounter issues.

**Grading**: Percentages will be rounded to the nearest whole number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20 x 4 = 80</td>
<td>(32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercises</td>
<td>10 x 8 = 80</td>
<td>(32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion</td>
<td>5 x 3 = 15</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>75 x 3 = 75</td>
<td>(30%)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>250</td>
<td>250 (100%)</td>
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**General expectations**

- This is a difficult course for most students. Set aside plenty of time for each module. For a 1-credit-hour course that lasts five weeks, students should spend an average of three hours each week on the course.
Read calendar posted on ICON and refer to it regularly.

Check “Announcements” on ICON regularly. Students who miss the weekly deadlines cannot make up the points.

View the lectures on ICON before doing the exercises and quizzes.

Use the textbook. The quizzes and the final exam will be based on material covered in the lectures, and the textbook will provide further explanation. The assigned readings cover additional grammar conventions that will not be addressed in class, and you should become familiar with this content so you can use the textbook for reference in your academic and professional careers.

Supplemental material can be found under the Online Resources module on ICON. Students should not use internet sources that are not in the Online Resources module.

Technology failures, mistakes or lack of access to Wi-Fi cannot be used as an excuse for missed deadlines.

Academic honesty and grading: Plagiarism and fabrication are treated with the utmost seriousness in professional workplaces and will be regarded the same way for this course. Any student who plagiarizes or fabricates information will receive a “zero” on the assignment and will be reported to the college for further disciplinary action. See the paragraph on Academic Honesty in the last section of the syllabus for further information. In addition, collaboration is not permitted unless the instructor gives specific assignments that require teamwork. Students must work independently, and those who engage in collaboration will fail the course.

SJMC Social Media:

Follow SJMC on social media to stay in the loop about activities/events, scholarships, internships, awards, current students, alumni and more:

FACEBOOK:  https://www.facebook.com/UISJMC/

INSTAGRAM:  https://www.instagram.com/uiowa_sjmc/

TWITTER:  https://twitter.com/UIOWA_SJMC

LINKEDIN:
https://www.linkedin.com/school/19128785  (Shortened version)
OR

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Information for Undergraduates Spring 2021

Absences and Attendance
Students are responsible for attending class and for contributing to the learning environment of a course. Students are also responsible for knowing course absence policies, which vary by instructor. All absence policies, however, must uphold the UI policy related to student illness, mandatory religious obligations, including Holy Day obligations, unavoidable circumstances, and University authorized activities (https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-
absences). Students may use the CLAS absence form to aid communication with the instructor who will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused; the form is located on ICON within the top banner under "Student Tools."

**Academic Integrity**
All undergraduates enrolled in courses offered by CLAS have in essence agreed to the College's [Code of Academic Honesty](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code). Academic misconduct affects a student's related grade and is reported to the College which applies an additional sanction including suspension. Outcomes about misconduct are communicated through UI email ([https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/academic-fraud-honor-code)).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**
UI is committed to an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (such as a mental health, attention, learning, vision, and a physical or health-related condition) by registering with Student Disability Services (SDS). The student is then responsible for discussing specific accommodations with the instructor. More information is at [https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/](https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/).

**Administrative Home of the Course**
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the administrative home of this course and governs its add/drop deadlines, the second-grade-only option, and related policies. Other UI colleges may have different policies for courses offered by that college. CLAS policies may be found here: [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

**Classroom Expectations**
Students are expected to comply with University policies regarding appropriate classroom behavior as outlined in the Code of Student Life ([https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/](https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/)). This includes related UI policies and procedures that all students have agreed to regarding the COVID-19 pandemic. Particularly, each student must wear a face mask when in a UI building, including a classroom. The density of seats in classrooms has been reduced, and in some instances, this will allow 6 feet or more of distance while other cases, it may be less. Regardless, wearing a face mask and maintaining as much distance as is possible are vital to slowing the spread of COVID-19. In the event that a student disrupts the classroom environment through the failure to comply with a reasonable directive of an instructor or of the University, the instructor has the authority to ask that the student to leave the space immediately for the remainder of the class period. Additionally, the instructor is asked to report the incident to the UI Office of Student Accountability, with the possibility of additional follow-up with the student. Students who need temporary alternative learning arrangements (TALA) for a future semester related to COVID-19 should visit this website for more information: [https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/temporary-alternative-learning-arrangements-tala](https://coronavirus.uiowa.edu/temporary-alternative-learning-arrangements-tala).

**Class Recordings: Privacy and Sharing**
Some sessions of a course could be recorded or live-streamed. Such a recording or streaming will only be available to students registered for the course. These recordings are the intellectual property of the faculty, and they may not be shared or reproduced without the explicit written consent of the faculty member. Students may not share these sessions with those who are not enrolled in the course; likewise, students may not upload recordings to any other online environment. Doing so is a breach of the Code of Student Conduct and in some cases is a violation of the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

**Communication and the Required Use of UI Email**
Students are responsible for official correspondences sent to the UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for all communication within or with UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](https://dos.uiowa.edu/policies/code-of-student-life/)).

**Complaints**
Students with a complaint about an academic issue should first visit with the instructor or course supervisor and then with the Chair of the department or program offering the course; students
may next bring the issue to the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. See this page for more information: https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities.

**Final Examination Policies**
The final exam schedule is announced around the fifth week of classes; students are responsible for knowing the date, time, and place of a final exam. Students should not make travel plans until knowing this information. No exams of any kind are allowed the week before finals with a few exceptions made for particular types of courses such as labs or off-cycle courses: https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies.

**Nondiscrimination in the Classroom**
The University of Iowa is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for people of all gender, sexual, racial, religious, and other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited in MyUI to optionally share the names and pronouns they would like their instructors and advisors to use to address them. The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination and harassment against individuals on the basis of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and other identity categories set forth in the University's Human Rights policy. For more information, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity (https://diversity.uiowa.edu/eod; +1 319 335-0705 or diversity.uiowa.edu)

**Sexual Harassment**
Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and threatens the well-being of students, faculty, and staff. All members of the UI community must uphold the UI mission and contribute to a safe environment that enhances learning. Incidents of sexual harassment must be reported immediately. For assistance, please see https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/.
**Start date: Monday, Jan. 25; end date, Friday, Feb. 26**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Exercises and discussion</th>
<th>Quizzes and Exam</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Jan. 25-Jan. 29 | **Module 1: Learning objectives:** Identify and correct sentence structure errors. Identify and correct spelling and word use errors. | **Module 1 quiz** to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises. Deadline: noon Friday | Textbook, “Understanding in More Depth” pp. 129-135  
Chapter 10, pp. 136-145, “Phrases, Clauses and Sentences”  
The “Commonly Confused Words” and “One Word or Two” document on ICON. |
|               | Exercise 1  
Exercise 2  
Discussion entry by noon Thursday (not required for points in Module 1) |                  |                                                                                                                                            |
| Feb. 1-Feb. 5  | **Module 2: Learning objectives:** Identify and correctly use the different forms of nouns. Identify and correctly use pronouns and prepositions. | **Module 2 quiz** to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises. Deadline: noon Friday. | Chapter 11, pp. 146-162, “Subjects and Objects”  
Chapter 14, “Pay attention to how you use prepositions ...” pp. 209-211 |
|               | Exercise 3  
Exercise 4  
Discussion entry by noon Thursday required for points |                  |                                                                                                                                            |
| Feb. 8-Feb. 12 | **Module 3: Learning objectives:** Use various verb tenses correctly; identify and correct subject/verb agreement errors. Identify adjectives and adverbs and use them correctly. | **Module 3 quiz** to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises in both modules. Deadline: noon Friday | Chapter 12, “Verbs”  
Chapter 13, “Making the Parts Agree”  
Chapter 14, “Modifiers and Connecting Words,” pp. 203-208 |
|               | Exercise 5  
Exercise 6  
Discussion entry by noon Thursday required for points |                  |                                                                                                                                            |
| Feb. 15-Feb. 19 | **Module 4: Learning objectives:** Identify and use conjunctions and interjections correctly. Identify punctuation errors and use punctuation correctly in sentences. | **Module 4 quiz** to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises in both modules. Deadline: noon Friday. | Chapter 14, “Modifiers and Connecting Words,” p. 209, pp. 211-214  
Chapter 15, “Getting Words in the Right Order and Punctuation”  
Review the “Commonly Confused Words” and “One Word of Two” document on ICON. |
| Feb. 22-Feb. 26 | **Module 5: Review**  
Discussion is not required for points in Module 5. However, the instructor will answer questions posted on the discussion board by noon Thursday. Any questions after that should be sent to the instructor via email.  

**Complete the Review Exercise before starting the final exam.** | **Final exam will close at noon Friday, Feb. 26.** |

Students are welcome to work ahead but must complete the modules in sequence. Students who work ahead of schedule can enter their discussion items any time, but I may not see these entries until the dates shown on the schedule. If you are working ahead and have a question, you should email the question to me at lillian-martell@uiowa.edu.