Instructor: Lillian Martell  
Email: lillian-martell@uiowa.edu  
Phone: 319-335-5961  
Office drop-in hours on Zoom: 12:30-1:30 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Thursday and by appointment.  
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 proceeding into the journalism program may need the text in future classes.

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 successfully 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 practice 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 exercises for each module must be completed before taking the quiz. Grammar requires precision, and the exercises will require students to proofread for typos and other errors before submitting answers. Students are encouraged to do the ungraded practice exercises to become familiar with the format.

**Discussion:** Each student must enter a comment, question or response/expansion to others’ entries at least once a week during Weeks 2, 3 and 4. These entries 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. 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. Students are welcome to make additional entries any time throughout the course until noon on Thursday of the final week. 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 **midnight every Friday.** Quizzes will have a 10-minute time limit. The time limit means that students need to be proficient with the material so they can work through the questions within the set time frame. However, keep in mind that the real reason to be proficient with the material 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 time limit. The final exam will be available from 12:01 a.m. until midnight on the final Friday of the section. The exam will be proctored through Proctorio.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
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<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>
</table>

Quizzes 20 points \( \times 4 = 80 \) points (32%)

Exercises 10 points \( \times 8 = 80 \) points (32%)

Discussion 5 points \( \times 3 = 15 \) points (6%)

Final Exam 75 points \( \times 1 = 75 \) points (30%)

Total 250 points 250 points (100%)

**General expectations**

- 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.
- 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
A 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/](https://www.facebook.com/UISJMC/)

INSTAGRAM:  [https://www.instagram.com/uiowa_sjmc/](https://www.instagram.com/uiowa_sjmc/)

TWITTER:  [https://twitter.com/UIOWA_SJMC](https://twitter.com/UIOWA_SJMC)

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

OR  

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**Teaching Policies & Resources — College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**

**Information for Undergraduates**

**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 their course absence policies, which will 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, or University authorized activities ([https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/attendance-absences)). Students may use this absence form to aid communication; the instructor will decide if the absence is excused or unexcused ([https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM2019.pdf](https://clas.uiowa.edu/sites/default/files/ABSENCE%20EXPLANATION%20FORM2019.pdf)).

**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). Misconduct is reported to the College, resulting in suspension or other sanctions, with sanctions communicated with the student through the UI email address ([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 mental health, attention, learning, vision, and 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 colleges may have different policies. CLAS policies may be found here: [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook](https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook).

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 UI ([Operations Manual, III.15.2](https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies)).

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. For more information, see [https://clas.uiowa.edu/students/handbook/student-rights-responsibilities](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. Visit [https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies](https://registrar.uiowa.edu/final-examination-scheduling-policies).

Nondiscrimination in the Classroom
UI is committed to making the classroom a respectful and inclusive space for all people irrespective of their gender, sexual, racial, religious or other identities. Toward this goal, students are invited to optionally share their preferred names and pronouns with their instructors and classmates. 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 ([diversity.uiowa.edu](https://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/](https://osmrc.uiowa.edu/).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Exercises and discussion</th>
<th>Quizzes and Exam</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 24-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Module 1: Learning objectives:</strong> Identify and correct sentence structure errors. Identify and correct spelling and word use errors.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>Exercise 1</td>
<td>Module 1 quiz</td>
<td>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.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Exercise 2</td>
<td>to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises. Deadline: midnight Friday</td>
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<td>Discussion entry by noon Thursday (not required for points in Module 1)</td>
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<td>Aug. 31-</td>
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<td>Module 2 quiz</td>
<td>Chapter 11, pp. 146-162, “Subjects and Objects” Chapter 14, “Pay attention to how you use prepositions …” pp. 209-211</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>Exercise 3</td>
<td>to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises. Deadline: midnight Friday.</td>
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<td>Exercise 4</td>
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<td>Discussion entry by noon Thursday required for points</td>
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<td>Sept. 7-</td>
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<td>Module 3 quiz</td>
<td>Chapter 12, “Verbs” Chapter 13, “Making the Parts Agree” Chapter 14, “Modifiers and Connecting Words,” pp. 203-208</td>
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<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Exercise 5</td>
<td>to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises in both modules. Deadline: midnight Friday</td>
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<td>Exercise 6</td>
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<td>Discussion entry by noon Thursday required for points</td>
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<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>Exercise 7</td>
<td>to be taken after completion of lectures and exercises in both modules. Deadline: midnight Friday.</td>
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<td>Exercise 8</td>
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<td>Discussion entry by noon Thursday required for points</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 21-23</td>
<td><strong>Module 5: Review</strong></td>
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<td>Discussion is not required for points in Module 5. However, the instructor will answer questions posted on the discussion board by 5 p.m. Tuesday. Any questions after that should be sent to the instructor via email.</td>
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<td><strong>Complete the Review Exercise.</strong> You will not have access to the final exam until you have done this exercise.</td>
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<td><strong>Final exam will close at midnight, Wednesday, Sept. 23.</strong></td>
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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.