

# Yes, grammar and punctuation count! Polishing your own skills and marking for grammar.

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# In this workshop we will

- ▶ Go through some of the most typical grammar errors
- ▶ For more help, go to the Writing Centre website ([wlu.ca/writing](http://wlu.ca/writing)), follow us on Twitter, check out our Assignment Planner, make an appointment!

# The sentence “viruses” that ruin coherence

1. Comma splice
2. Sentence fragments
3. Subject–verb agreement
4. Pronoun agreement (The student...they...)
5. Pronoun case error (I/me, he/him, etc.)
6. Verb tense error
7. Faulty parallelism
8. Dangling modifiers

# How do you learn to mark for grammar?

- ▶ Mark sparingly, unless the goal is grammar learning
  - ▶ Mark only the grammar errors you can identify correctly
  - ▶ Don't hunt for errors in isolation
  - ▶ Focus on grammar problems that recur
  - ▶ Focus on grammar problems that create confusion
  - ▶ Give yourself time to learn the rest gradually
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# QUIZ

- ▶ Take 5 minutes to do the quiz on the handout.
- ▶ Use your own implicit knowledge of grammar and English to identify what is wrong in a sentence. Circle the error.
- ▶ You DO NOT need to name or correct the error.

# Comma Splice

- ▶ In 1952, Japan's gross national product was one third that of France, by the late 1970s it was larger than the GNPs of France and Britain combined.
- ▶ In 1952 Japan's gross national product was one third that of France. By the late 1970s it was larger than the GNPs of France and Britain combined.

# Sentence fragment

- ▶ I constantly use the spell check function on my computer. Because I am a bad speller.
- ▶ I constantly use the spell check function on my computer because I am a bad speller.

# Sentence fragments

- ▶ Tests of the Shroud of Turin have produced some curious findings. For example, the pollen of forty–eight plants native to Europe and the Middle East.
- ▶ Tests of the Shroud of Turin have produced some curious findings. For example, the cloth contains the pollen of forty–eight plants native to Europe and the Middle East.

# Subject–verb agreement

- ▶ Writing well–researched, documented term papers are every student’s nightmare.
- ▶ Writing well–researched, documented term papers is every student’s nightmare.

# Pronoun reference

- ❑ Because Senator Martin is less interested in the environment than in economic development, he sometimes neglects it.
- ▶ Because of his interest in economic development, Senator Martin sometimes neglects the environment.

# Pronoun Agreement

- ▶ Similarly, the social benefits of a new cancer drug will never be fully captured by a **firm who** produces it. **They** have no incentive to increase the amount of research and development they conduct.
- ▶ Similarly, the social benefits of a new cancer drug will never be fully captured by a **firm that** produces it. **The firm** has no incentive to increase the amount of research and development it conducts.

# Pronoun case

- ▶ Castro's communist principles inevitably led to an ideological conflict between he and President Kennedy.
- ▶ Castro's communist principles inevitably led to an ideological conflict between him and President Kennedy.

# Correct verb tense

- ▶ After I have finished my draft, I revised it until I found it satisfying and felt it was positive and concise.
- ▶ After I had finished my draft, I revised it until I found it satisfying and felt it was positive and concise.

# Correct and consistent verb tense

- ▶ In her essay “On Going Home”, written in 1966, Joan Didion showed how she is paralyzed by her home and her past.
- ▶ In her essay “On Going Home,” written in 1966, Joan Didion shows how she is paralyzed by her home and her past.

# Correct verb form

- ▶ I should not have swam across the bay on such a windy day.
- ▶ I should not have swum across the bay on such a windy day.

# Parallelism

Thinking of my vacation brings back memories of lying on the beach, ice cream, and a feeling of complete rest.

Thinking of my vacation brings back memories of lying on the beach, eating ice cream, and feeling completely rested.

Thinking of my vacation brings back memories of the beach, ice cream, and rest.

# No comma between main sentence parts

- ▶ Clarity, is very important in all academic writing.
- ▶ Clarity is very important in all academic writing.

# Comma placement

- ▶ A mind, that is stretched to a new idea, never returns to its original dimensions.
- ▶ A mind that is stretched never returns to its original dimensions. (Oliver Wendell Holmes)

# Comma placement

- ▶ Amelia Earhart who disappeared in 1937 during a round-the-world trip set new speed records for long-distance flying in the 1930s.
- ▶ Amelia Earhart, who disappeared in 1937 during a round-the-world trip, set new speed records for long-distance flying in the 1930s.

# Semicolon or comma

- ▶ A competent reader should understand a clear text on first reading; other readers may not understand what it means.
- ▶ A competent reader should understand a clear text on first reading, **yet** other readers may not understand what it means.

# Comma after introductory phrase or clause

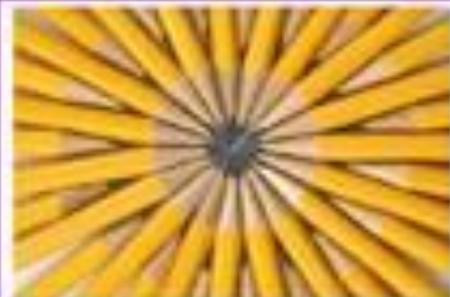
- ▶ If a passage is ambiguous it has at least two possible interpretations.
- ▶ If a passage is ambiguous, it has at least two possible interpretations.

# Correct use of the apostrophe

- ▶ The sociology student's room was messy.
- ▶ The sociology students' lounge was full.
- ▶ Charles' books were in the bag.
- ▶ The women's studies group met last night.

# BONUS: Dangling modifier!

- ▶ Fermenting in copper barrels, the technician ran a check on the ethanol content of the mash.
- ▶ Fermenting in copper barrels, the mash was checked for ethanol content by the technician.
- ▶ The mash fermenting in copper barrels was checked for ethanol content by the technician.



# Writing Centre Workshops

## Fall 2013

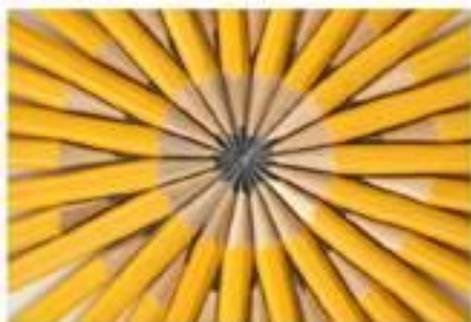
### WRITING WORKOUTS

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Student Leadership Centre  
(2nd Floor of the Fred Nichols Campus Centre)  
4:30-5:30pm

- |         |  |
|---------|--|
| Sept 17 | Warm Up: University Writing  |
| Sept 24 | Avoid Injury: Writing, Academic Integrity, and Academic Misconduct |
| Oct 8   | Build Strength: Use Sources Effectively                            |
| Oct 22  | Increase Stability: Thesis or Hypothesis?                          |
| Nov 12  | Stay in Shape: Writing Arguments                                   |
| Dec 3   | Build Endurance: Writing Essay Exams                               |

Free for all students. Add to your Co-curricular Record.



# ATTENTION ALL GRAD STUDENTS!

## Writing OGS, SSHRC, and NSERC Proposals

### A Writing Centre Workshop Series

#### What:

We use samples of successful OGS, SSHRC, & NSERC proposals written by Laurier graduate students to identify common features of successful scholarship proposals. We teach you how to apply winning writing strategies in your own proposal.

#### When and Where:

SBE	Mon. Sept. 23	10-11:30am	SBE1230
English & Film Studies	Mon. Sept. 23	1-2:30pm	Library Learning Lab (main floor)
Science & Math	Tue. Sept. 24	10-11:30am	Library Learning Lab (main floor)
Social Work	Tue. Sept. 24	2-3:30pm	120 Duke St., Rm. 203
Seminary	Wed. Sept. 25	10-11:30am	Library Learning Lab (main floor)
Psychology	Wed. Sept. 25	1:30-3pm	232 King St. Rm. K224
International Policy & Global Governance	Thur. Sept. 26	10-11:30am	Balsillie
Geography 691	Thur. Sept. 26	2:30-4pm	
Brantford	Fri. Sept. 27	9:30-11am	GRH 105
Arts	Fri. Sept. 27	12-1:30pm	P3027

Questions? Laurier Writing Centre: 519-884-0710 x 2220 | [wlu.ca/writing](http://wlu.ca/writing)

# The Writing Centre

- ▶ Location: DAWB 1-102
- ▶ Hours: Mon-Fri 10-4
- ▶ Drop-in: Mon-Wed 4-8 pm;  
Thurs, Sun 1-4
  
- ▶ Web site: [www.wlu/writing](http://www.wlu/writing)
- ▶ Appts.: Book online or in person