



Written Communication: Crafting Varied and Impactful Sentences

Course Description

This eight week course investigates the relationship between structure and meaning in written English sentences. In this course, students review the fundamentals of English sentence grammar within a cohesive form/function framework and learn to manipulate sentence structure to improve information flow, increase variety, and hone focus.

Student Learning Outcomes

After the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and control essential grammatical forms and functions, including:
 - a. Grammatical Forms
 - i. Parts of speech and phrase types (e.g. nouns, verbs, noun phrases, prepositional phrases)
 - ii. Clause types (e.g. independent clauses and *-ing* clauses)
 - b. Grammatical Functions (e.g. subject, direct object, adjunct)
2. Determine constituency of syntactic structures—that is, the internal hierarchy of clauses and phrases
3. Recognize verb types and the selectional restrictions of verbs
4. Identify thematic roles in sentences (e.g. agent, theme, recipient, locative)
5. Use online guides and corpora to inform word and grammar choices
6. Apply techniques to improve Information Flow (e.g. managing the position of multiple adjuncts, controlling theme/rheme patterns, managing end weight)
7. Demonstrate their understanding of the above fundamentals by editing their own writing.

Required materials

- Access to Canvas
- Access to Zoom
- A notebook for new vocabulary, handouts, and class notes

Recommended materials

- *A Student's Grammar of the English Language* by Sidney Greenbaum and Randolph Quirk (ISBN 0-582-05971-2)
- *Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers* by Nigel A. Caplan (ISBN 978-0-472-03501-4)
- *English Argumentation and Syntax* by Bas Aarts (ISBN 978-0-230-36169-0)