Written Communication: Crafting Varied and Impactful Sentences

Course Description

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

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify and control the major parts of speech, including nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and prepositions.
- Identify and control major phrase types, including Noun Phrases, Verb Phrases, and Prepositional Phrases.
- Identify and control a variety of clause types including finite and non-finite clauses.
- Identify and control the parts of a sentence, including Subject, Direct and Indirect Object, and Adjunct.
- Determine the constituency (internal hierarchy) of sentences.
- Recognize verb types including linking, intransitive, and transitive verbs.
- Identify thematic roles in sentences including Agent, Patient, and Theme.
- Use online resources to inform word and grammar choices.
- Resolve structural ambiguity in sentences.
- Improve information flow within and between sentences by applying frameworks such as Theme/Rheme and sentence end-weight.
- Demonstrate their understanding of the above fundamentals by editing their own writing.

Required Materials

- Grammar Choices for Graduate and Professional Writers by Nigel A. Caplan (you will receive the book on the first day of class)
- Access to Canvas
- A notebook for new vocabulary, handouts, and class notes

Recommended Materials

- English Argumentation and Syntax by Bas Aarts (ISBN 978-0-230-36169-0)