

# HONORS COLLEGE GUIDE

## HOW NOT TO SEE **RED**: YOU AND YOUR WRITING

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### SOME BASIC POINTS ABOUT WRITING AND YOUR CAPSTONE PROJECT:

1. MAKE PROOFREADING A SEPARATE EXERCISE  
There is a strong temptation to expel the project, to be done with it. You should take one full day to read your Capstone project, and you should go over the project with your mentor for writing issues.
2. EXPECT TO REVISE AND RESUBMIT  
It is very rare that a project has no errors (most professional writers have to put their work through several versions and then proofread page proofs). But the cleaner the text you submit, the fewer rounds of revision you will do.
3. WHAT TO EXPECT FROM YOUR REVIEWER  
The reviewers are not going to proofread your entire Capstone. It is quite likely that, if the reviewer starts seeing a lot of mechanical problems, they will stop, send it back to you, and ask you to make corrections. You will be able to use the comments on the pages they have read as a guide, but you and your mentor must go through the entire project to make other corrections. The fact is that most errors are systematic; in other words, writers tend to make the same mistakes over and over again. Once the reviewer points out a mistake a couple of times, they will expect you to identify and correct subsequent examples.

COMMON USAGE PROBLEMS TO BE AWARE OF (writing instructors use the term “usage” instead of “grammar,” because the former better indicates that academic writing is a matter of social conventions, in this case those governing academic culture):

1. COMMA USAGE: fused sentences, run-on sentences
2. SENTENCE FRAGMENTS: dependent and independent clauses
3. COORDINATION: coordinating conjunctions versus conjunctive adverbs
4. CONSISTENCY: use of abbreviations, capitalization, hyphenation, verb tense, serial comma (the Oxford comma)
5. PARAGRAPHING AND TOPIC SENTENCES
6. TRANSITIONS

### A USEFUL ALLY: THE WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center (located on the fourth floor of the Central Library) is a very useful resource for your writing. Tutors are trained to work with students, especially on how to organize ideas and craft sentences. Tutors will also help with mechanical issues, but they will not proofread your paper. You can make an appointment by calling 817-272-2601.