

Grammar and Editing Essentials Course

Strengthen grammar, usage, and editorial confidence through mastery of punctuation, sentence structure, capitalization, verb forms, and pronoun agreement.

Group classes in Live Online and onsite training is available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: <https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/grammar-and-editing-essentials>



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Course Outline

Module 1: Why Grammar Matters

- Understand the role of grammar in professional credibility and clear communication
- Identify risks associated with poor grammar and miscommunication
- Improve clarity and reader engagement through correct usage

Module 2: Agreement Matters

- Apply subject-verb agreement rules with singular and plural subjects
- Handle tricky agreement cases with compound subjects and indefinite pronouns
- Understand collective noun usage and agreement in complex structures

Module 3: Energetic Writing

- Use active voice to enhance clarity and conciseness
- Identify and eliminate hidden verbs and redundancy
- Revise bloated or passive writing for energy and impact

Module 4: Using Pronouns

- Identify pronoun types and their grammatical roles
- Ensure pronoun-antecedent agreement and clarity
- Avoid vague or ambiguous pronoun references

Module 5: Modifiers

- Correct misplaced and dangling modifiers
- Apply the rule of parallel structure in lists and series
- Ensure clarity and consistency in sentence modification

Module 6: Creating Conversational Flow

- Use conjunctions and transitions to combine sentences smoothly
- Eliminate shifts in person and tense for consistency
- Write with a conversational tone appropriate for professional contexts

Module 7: All About the Comma (and a Few Other Punctuation Marks)

- Master common comma rules and punctuation usage
- Apply rules for apostrophes, quotation marks, colons, and semicolons
- Follow GPO Style Guide conventions for government writing

Module 8: Plain Writing: It's the Law

- Understand the Plain Writing Act of 2010 and its application
- Use plain language principles to improve readability
- Access plainlanguage.gov and use its resources effectively

Module 9: Editing for Impact

- Apply a two-step editing process (revising and refining)
- Use the Seven Traits of Writing to guide editing
- Balance manual and software tools for optimal editing results

Module 10: Revising

- Revise for focus, organization, and voice
- Use improvement tools to add, cut, reorder, and rewrite content
- Structure documents using an open-middle-close format

Module 11: Refining

- Fine-tune documents for plain language, sentence fluency, and grammar correctness
- Enhance formatting, white space, and visual clarity
- Polish and finalize writing for professional presentation

Module 12: Putting it All Together

- Define the role and responsibilities of an editor
- Differentiate between necessary and arbitrary edits
- Practice applying all editing concepts using the Seven Traits Checklist