WRITING FOR COLLEGE
WHY IS IT DIFFERENT?
The Most Common Writing Errors
For Formal and Academic Papers
Academic writing is different from creative writing or journalistic writing!

• Do not write the way you speak.
• Do not use slang.
• Do not expect your reader to know what you mean.
• Do not write in fragments.
• Use complete sentences.
• Always use Standard Written English (SWE)
Bad Habits to Avoid in Academic Writing

• Second person “you”
• Inconsistent person
• Inconsistent tense
• Abbreviations
• Do not use: ya, thru, wanna, gonna
• Do not use: etc., &
• Avoid ending verbs with “en” or “in” instead of “ing”: waitin, watchen
Pronoun/Antecedent Agreement and Reference

- Pronouns take the place of nouns (he, she, it, they, I, you)
- The antecedent is the word to which the pronoun refers. For example: Mary went to the store and she bought candy. (Mary is the antecedent for the pronoun she.)
Mechanical Rules

- Numbers - Never begin a sentence with a number. (Spell it out.)
- All numbers below 100 should be spelled out. Those above 100 are optional but should be consistent.
Commonly Misspelled Words

- your  you’re
- to    too    two
- there their they’re
- its   it’s
- quite quiet
- than then
- whose who’s
Unnecessary Repetition

• A round circle
• Refer back
• An eyewitness present at the scene
• The whole entire world
Words and Phrases to Avoid

• A-lot is two words – very, thing, you, I
• Avoid beginning sentences with conjunctions (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)
• Avoid contractions
• There are no such words as: theirsself, hisself, alright. Write themselves, himself, all right.
• Do not capitalize subjects like biology, math, science, history.
• Use the word “finish” instead of “done”
• Use “who” when referring to people.
• The party would (of, have) made me happy.
Parts of Speech

• Nouns – person, place, thing
• Pronouns – take the place of a noun
• Verbs – action words
• Adjectives – Describes a noun or pronoun
• Adverbs – Describes a verb, adjective, or another adverb
• Prepositions – Form a phrase modifying another word in a sentence. Usually show movement such as around, under, over, into, through, etc.
• Conjunctions – Connect words, phrases, clauses: for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so (FANBOYS)
• Interjections – Express surprise or emotion. (Oh! Hey! Wow!).
Where Can I Get Help?

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/index.html#punctuation