

Department of Marketing  
College of Business  
Illinois State University

Standards for Student Written Work

As Marketing students and future business professionals, effective communication is critical. As such, it is imperative that you practice professional standards of writing. To this end, all written assignments must meet minimum standards to be acceptable. These standards address spelling, punctuation, format and basic grammar. These standards for written work refer to technical English errors and errors of form. Specifically, the errors include the following:

1. each different word misspelled
2. each sentence fragment
3. each run-on sentence or comma splice
4. each different mistake in capitalization
5. each serious error in punctuation
6. each error in verb tense or subject/verb agreement
7. lack of conformity with written assignment format
8. each improper citation

Papers with more than three of the errors identified above and marked by the instructor on any one page, or more than ten in the entire document are unacceptable. The instructor will stop reading when either figure is exceeded and will return the paper to the student without a grade.

If a paper is returned to you for failure to meet these standards, you must correct it and return it to the instructor by the next class meeting. Grades on all papers that are returned due to your failure to meet these standards will be reduced by one full letter grade. It is, therefore, in your interest to use available help before you submit your paper the first time. A paper that still fails to meet these standards after it is returned and resubmitted can receive a grade no higher than a “D”. Please note: For word-processed papers/final exams where the paper is turned in at the end of the semester and the paper cannot be reasonably revised, final scores on papers/exams that fail to meet these standards will be penalized by not less than 20%.

Many of these mistakes outlined above can be identified and corrected by carefully proofreading your paper before submitting it to your professor. It may be advantageous to have someone else proofread your paper, perhaps another student. If you are not sure how to correct your paper, seek advice from the **University Center for Learning Assistance (UCLA)** in 133 Stevenson Hall or visit their website at <http://www.ucollege.ilstu.edu/ucla/>. Another way of avoiding some of these errors is to use the spelling and grammar software available in most word processing programs (also available in the COB computer lab). These software packages will identify many (but not all) errors for you so that you may correct them. However, please remember that it is imperative that you proofread your paper in addition to using spelling and grammar software.

This document borrows heavily from the Southern Illinois University – Edwardsville School of Business Fatal Error Policy (with permission from Professor Doug Eder – Southern Illinois University-Edwardsville).