

What is the GSP online tutorial?

The Grammar, Spelling and Punctuation online tutorial is a review of your ability to use language accurately and at a level high enough to succeed at the School of Journalism. It is also important preparation for your career in journalism or public relations. Language errors can be as damaging to your credibility as content errors. All Broadcast and Digital Journalism and Print and Digital Journalism must complete the GSP online tutorial during the semester they first take ASCJ 200 Navigating Media and News in the Digital Age, JOUR 201 Culture of Journalism: Past, Present and Future and JOUR 207 Reporting and Writing I. All Public Relations majors must complete the GSP online tutorial during the semester they first take PR 209 Effective Writing for Strategic Public Relations. If you do not complete the online tutorial, you will not be allowed to progress in the program.

When do I take the GSP online tutorial?

You will begin the GSP online tutorial sometime during the semester in ASCJ 200/JOUR 201/JOUR 207 or PR 209. It will last eight weeks and should be completed by the last day of class.

What's the format of the online tutorial?

The GSP will require you to review various topics and edit a number of sentences that may or may not have errors in grammar, punctuation and/or spelling. Some sentences will not require any edits.

What topics will be covered?

The test will cover common problems that the School's faculty often sees in student work. It will not include trick sentences or sentences that could only be edited by a grammarian or a spelling bee contestant. Topics will include (but aren't limited to):

- **Verbs** – including subject/verb agreement; tenses
- **Pronouns** – I/he/she/they vs. me/him/her/them; subject-pronoun agreement; that vs. who; who vs. whom; that vs. which; recognizing gerunds (his ringing the bell vs. him ringing the bell)
- **Sentences, clauses, phrases, misc. grammar** – including sentence fragments; compound sentences; run-on sentences; dependent clauses; parallelism; dangling modifiers; pronoun/antecedent agreement; restrictive vs. nonrestrictive phrases
- **Punctuation** – including commas; ellipses; colons and semicolons
- **Word usage** – including plurals; frequently misused words and phrases (e.g., its/it's; who's/whose; they're/their)
- **Frequently misspelled words**

See the complete list of topics on page 4.

How do I prepare for the GSP online tutorial?

This document includes a list of recommended books and websites you can use to review the topics and evaluate yourself on your own.

Is tutoring available?

Yes. The School's writing coaches are available by appointment throughout the year.

BOOKS

The following books are available from Amazon.com, BarnesandNoble.com and other online booksellers. They might be available at your local public or university library.

Note: If you buy these books, check the ISBN to ensure you're buying the correct edition.

1. **Inside Reporting**

Tim Harrower

ISBN-10: 0073526177; ISBN-13: 978-0073526171

Publisher: McGraw-Hill Education

Website: www.mhhe.com/harrower1

Harrower is a required textbook for JOUR 202. The website includes grammar quizzes.

2. **The Associated Press Stylebook – 2016 edition**

ISBN-10: 091736063X; ISBN-13: 978-0917360633

Publisher: The Associated Press

Associated Press (www.apstylebook.com)

The AP Stylebook is a required textbook for most School of Journalism classes. You will be learning AP style in your newswriting, reporting and copy editing classes, but AP style questions will not be on the GSP.

However, the AP Stylebook does include some topics on grammar, punctuation, spelling and word usage (e.g., use "all right," never "alright").

3. **Watch Your Words: The Rowman & Littlefield Language-Skills Handbook for Journalists**

Marda Dunsky, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University

ISBN-10: 1442214651; ISBN-13: 978-1442214651

Publisher: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers

This book is a concise guide with quizzes. It's designed to be used with the AP Stylebook.

4. **Public Relations Writing: Form and Style (Tenth Edition, 2013)**

Doug Newsom and Jim Haynes

Publisher: Wadsworth Series in Mass Communication and Journalism

ISBN-10: 1133307310; ISBN-13: 978-1133307310

Newson/Hayes is a required textbook for PR 209.

5. **Merriam-Webster Dictionary**

Merriam-Webster

ISBN-10: 087779295X; ISBN-13: 978-0877792956

Merriam-Webster is a required textbook for PR 209.

WEBSITES

1. **The Tongue Untied: A guide to grammar, punctuation and style for journalists**

Kellee Weinhold, University of Oregon
grammar.uoregon.edu/intro.html

2. **The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation**

Jane Straus
www.grammarbook.com/

3. **Editing Guidelines**

www.copydesk.org/guidelines.htm

Includes spelling, grammar and punctuation tests in addition to tests on topics that won't be tested on the GSP (e.g., AP style, general knowledge, U.S. government and history, math, headline writing).

4. **Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary**

<http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

This dictionary is the official reference for JOUR 207, JOUR 302, JOUR 303 and JOUR 307 assignments, midterms and finals.

GSP topic list

1. adverbs
2. capitalization
3. homonyms, homophones and other word usage problems—a vs. an; awhile vs. a while; among vs. between; palate vs. pallet vs. palette; anyone vs. any one; affect vs. effect; born vs. borne; capital vs. capitol; complement vs. compliment; convince vs. persuade; each other vs. one another; emigrate vs. immigrate; everyday vs. every day; farther vs. further; it's vs. its; less vs. fewer; gantlet vs. gauntlet; poured vs. pored; number vs.

- amount; principal vs. principle; prophesy vs. prophecy; someday vs. some day; than vs. then; their vs. there vs. they're; theirs vs. there's; who's vs. whose; your vs. you're
4. dangling participles and misplaced modifiers
 5. parallelism – verb tenses; words/phrases; clauses; lists after a colon
 6. pronouns – I/he/she/they vs. me/him/her/them; subject-pronoun agreement; that vs. who; who vs. whom; that vs. which; recognizing gerunds (his ringing the bell vs. him ringing the bell)
 7. punctuation – apostrophes (contractions, possessives, fake possessives); colons; commas (too few, too many); hyphens in multiple-word adjectival modifiers; question marks; questions in quotes; quotes; semicolons
 8. sentence structure – fragments; run-ons
 9. subject-verb agreement – neither/nor; either/or; none/one; singular subject with plural (e.g., pride of lions)
 10. subjunctive – if...were

Spelling errors will come from the most commonly misspelled words list at <http://www.yourdictionary.com/library/misspelled.html>. The following words are likely to appear on the test.

- accommodate
- harass
- definitely
- embarrass
- separate
- a lot
- appearances
- among
- around
- attendance
- defendant
- dependent; independent
- excellence
- evidence
- privilege
- proceed
- receive
- recommend
- supposedly
- through
- tonight
- weird