Common Grammar Errors

The phrase “Big Ten” isn’t for football only. Writing consultants at the Bloomfield College Writing Center informally consider the Big Ten of common grammar errors to be the following: run on sentences, sentence fragments, subject-verb agreement errors, misuse of articles, dangling modifiers, mixed sentence structure, verb tense inconsistency, omission or incorrect use of apostrophes, faulty sentence structure, and pronoun agreement errors. We are certain that instructors and professors have other “favorites” as well.

Instructors have various strategies for dealing with faulty grammar. For instance, brief grammar brush-ups can be interspersed into classroom activities. Specified grammar issues can be designated as “grammar focal points” in upcoming essays, or students can be directed to the Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) or printed grammar and style manuals for remediation, among other strategies.

Grammar issues are tackled head-on at the Writing Center. One strategy that consultants typically use is to flag the first instance of an error and deliver a quick summary of the rule involved. To reinforce learning, students might then be asked to spot similar errors on their own as they occur and, under the consultant’s guidance, apply fixes. Students are often encouraged to make a follow-up visit to check on improvement.