Commas

The comma was invented to help readers. Without it, sentence parts can collide into one another unexpectedly causing mis-readings. The use of commas can dictate the success or failure of your delivery. Use the following list of common comma uses for reference while writing!

Use commas:

- **Before "FANBOYS" (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) that join two complete sentences:**
    - The Writing Center helps students become better writers**,** <u>and</u> we enjoy what we do!
- **After an <u>introductory clause or phrase</u>:**
    - <u>When students prepare for a Writing Center appointment</u>**,** they usually collect any material they want to share with their tutor.
- **To set off <u>transitional phrases</u> (these are kind of like introductory clauses):**
    - <u>In addition</u>**,** sometimes students prepare questions for their tutor in advance of an appointment.
    - The Writing Center is a peer-tutoring organization; <u>therefore</u>**,** we provide a comfortable environment for students.
- **Between all items in a list:**
    - We can help you understand an <u>assignment</u>**,** <u>brainstorm</u>**,** with <u>thesis statements</u>**,** and much more!
- **Between adjectives not joined with "and":**
    - You will find <u>kind</u>**,** <u>helpful</u> tutors in the Writing Center.
- **To set off <u>nonessential elements</u> in a sentence (if you can read the sentence without it, then put commas around it):**
    - The Writing Center**,** <u>located in 264 Bancroft</u>**,** is a peer-tutoring organization.
    - Tutors are required to take a class and intern in the Writing Center**,** <u>which can be a bit intimidating at first</u>.
    - One of the Graduate Assistants in the Writing Center**,** <u>Josh</u>**,** really enjoys helping other students with creative writing.
- **With expressions like "<u>he/she/they said</u>":**
    - <u>She said</u>**,** "I always feel better after a Writing Center appointment!"
    - <u>My HMXP professors said</u>**,** "I will give you extra credit if you go to the Writing Center."
- **When you have a conditional or "<u>If then</u>" phrase:**
    - <u>If</u> you come to the Writing Center**,** <u>then</u> you'll learn skills to become a better writer!