

AFTERNOON SPEAKER

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Before joining the UIS faculty, Mary worked as the director of public relations for a college in Massachusetts, as a Statehouse reporter for United Press International in Springfield and as an assistant press secretary for the Illinois Senate Democrats. She does free-lance writing and editing and has served as a writing coach, instructor, media consultant and judge for various organizations.

18 tips for clear writing

1. Don't mumble.
2. Make the organization of your writing clear.
3. Use short paragraphs, short sentences and short words.
4. Make your writing vigorous, direct and personal.
5. Avoid vague modifiers.
6. Use specific, concrete language.
7. Choose the right word.
8. Make it perfect.
9. Come to the point.
10. Write simply and naturally – the way you talk.
11. Strike words you don't need.
12. Use current standard English.
13. Don't write like a lawyer, a bureaucrat or an academic.
14. Keep in mind what your reader doesn't know.
15. Punctuate carefully.
16. Use facts (and numbers) with restraint.
17. Write so that you cannot be misunderstood.
18. Above all, keep your audience, purpose and intended tone in mind.

When the cursor blinks

Don't write this:

Write this:

<i>accompany</i>	-----	go with
<i>consequently</i>	-----	so
<i>remunerate</i>	-----	pay
<i>encomium</i>	-----	praise
<i>expedite</i>	-----	hasten
<i>for the purpose of</i>	-----	to
<i>close proximity</i>	-----	near
<i>adjacent to</i>	-----	next to
<i>ordinance</i>	-----	law
<i>prior to</i>	-----	before
<i>subsequent to</i>	-----	after
<i>additional</i>	-----	more
<i>designate</i>	-----	choose, name
<i>category</i>	-----	class, group
<i>therefore</i>	-----	so
<i>sufficient</i>	-----	enough
<i>pertaining to</i>	-----	about
<i>remain</i>	-----	stay
<i>until such time as</i>	-----	until
<i>identical</i>	-----	same
<i>due to the fact that</i>	-----	due to
<i>finalize</i>	-----	finish
<i>in the near future</i>	-----	soon
<i>in the event that</i>	-----	if
<i>necessitate</i>	-----	cause
<i>establish</i>	-----	set up
<i>initial</i>	-----	first
<i>currently</i>	-----	now
<i>purchase</i>	-----	buy
<i>stated, remarked</i>	-----	said
<i>enumerate</i>	-----	count
<i>verbatim</i>	-----	word for word