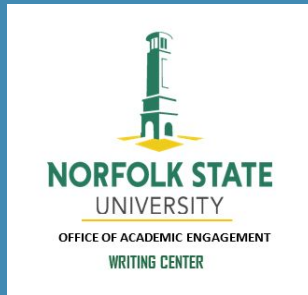


GRAMMAR 101: Eliminating Awkward Sentences

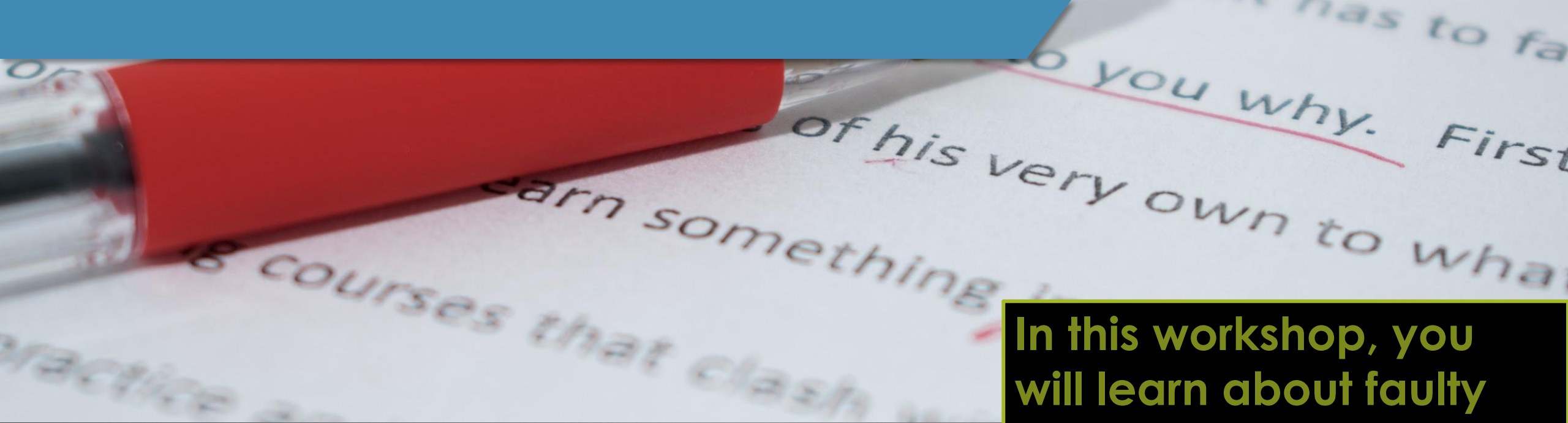


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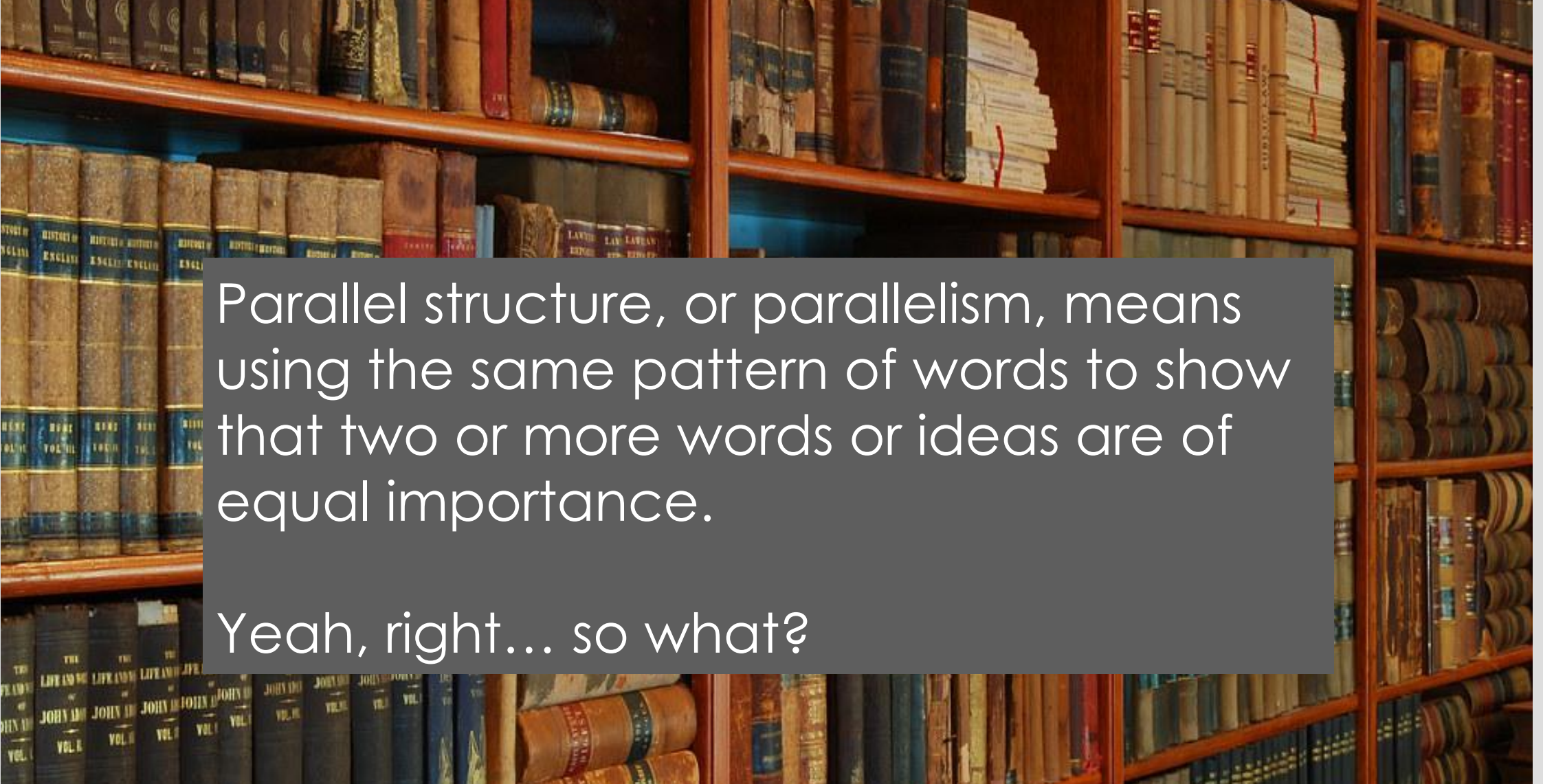


In this workshop, you will learn about faulty parallel structure and tips to help identify and revise awkward sentences in your writing.



Introduction

What is Parallel Structure?



Parallel structure, or parallelism, means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more words or ideas are of equal importance.

Yeah, right... so what?



Question: How do you find parallel structure in your writing?

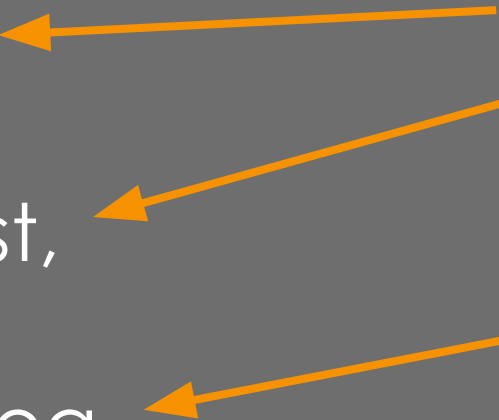
Answer: Whenever you include a list of actions or items, you must use equal grammatical units.

- If the first item is a **noun**, then the following items must also be nouns.
- If the first action is a **simple past tense verb**, then make the other items **simple past tense verbs** too.
 - ◆ “Lions, tigers, and bear, oh my!”

Example of Faulty Parallelism

Every morning, we
make our bed,
eating breakfast,
and feed the dog.

Do these
phrases
follow the
same pattern
of words?



Example of Faulty Parallelism

This is an awkward sentence construction because these phrases are **not** parallel.

- ... *make our bed* = *present tense verb + object*
- ... *eating breakfast* = *verb + -ing*
- ... *feed the dog* = *present tense verb + object*

Fixing Faulty Parallelism

Faulty parallelism (also sometimes called **parallel structure error** or a **parallel construction error**) occurs when the structure of a sentence is not grammatically parallel. This error occurs most often in sentences that contain lists.



Every morning, we make our bed, eating breakfast and feed the dog.

Corrected:

Every morning, we make our bed, eat breakfast and feed the dog.

Fixing Faulty Parallelism: Example

The writer interviewed two subject matter experts, editing four drafts, and she intends to compose two press releases.

...interviewed two subject matter experts,
...editing four drafts, and
...she intends to compose two press releases.

**Do these phrases
follow the same
pattern of words?**

Corrected:

The writer interviewed two subject matter experts, edited four drafts, and composed two press releases.

The pattern is past tense verb + plural object

Fixing Faulty Parallel Structure

Example

She mowed the lawn, trim the shrubs, and edging the sidewalk took her two hours to complete.

Possible Revision

Fixing Faulty Parallel Structure

10

Example

My grandfather's favorite activities are taking a walk around the old neighborhood, chatting at the barber shop, he listens to jazz in Downtown Norfolk, and goes to Joe's Crab House for dinner.

Possible Revision

Fixing Faulty Parallel Structure

11

Example

He has shown signs of improvement in his ability to focus and behavioral changes.

Possible Revision

Review

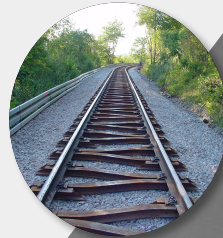
Parallel structure, or parallelism, means using the same pattern of words.

.....

Look for long sentences. Re-read and check parallelism.

.....

Read your paper aloud. If you stumble when reading, the sentence may have faulty parallelism.



Reflection

Student Workshop
Evaluation



Faculty Workshop
Evaluation



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