**Academic writing – basic features (author: Ola Holubowicz)**

Before beginning to write, please **change the document language to English.** In this way you will avoid typos and spelling mistakes.

* Grammar:
  + Present simple (remember –(e)s when necessary – e.g. the writer describes)
  + Present perfect when describing past events when no time is given, especially when contrasted with the regular actions of present simple
    - E.g. Politicians usually introduce various measures when faced with a crisis and they realize that they have not addressed the issues before.
  + Articles à the most common mistake for us, Slavs, pay attention to these
  + Sentence structure:
    - Write in sentences – there must always be a verb.
  + Grammatical gender –
    - **Use inclusive language** 
      * i.e. do NOT use generic HE, but **THEY**
        + the least awkward is to use plural, e.g. instead of: Should anyone need assistance, he is encouraged to enroll for a course in academic writing. - wrong

But: Should anyone need assistance, **they** are encouraged to enroll for … - correct

* Vocabulary:
  + The list of forbidden words:
    - Big, nice, get, go, very, really, great
    - Avoid colloquial words:
      * Basically, definitely, totally
    - Avoid chatty style –
      * DO NOT write phrases such as: It is a problem? Yes, it, sure, is.
    - Use moderate, factual language à avoid intensifiers such as very, extremely, absolutely etc.
  + Avoid repetitions, especially in the same sentence.
    - Use thesaurus.com to find synonyms.
  + Spelling
    - Numbers in words:
      * Nineteenth century instead of 19th
    - -ful as a suffix – one L
      * E.g. beautiful, wonderful, etc.
    - Words that are often misspelled: (here proper versions!)
      * Believe (NOT belive)
      * Writing (NOT writting)
  + Use linking words: (followed by a comma)
    - To introduce ideas:
      * E.g. First of all,/Firstly
    - To add more information:
      * E.g. What is more,/ Furthermore,/ Moreover,/ In addition,
    - To present a contrast:
      * E.g. However,/ Nonetheless,/ Nevertheless, / Notwithstanding,
    - Implication:
      * E.g. Thus,/ Therefore,/ Hence
    - Conclusion:
      * E.g. – To conclude,/ To sum up,/In conclusion,/In sum,/ On balance,
  + Try using specific vocabulary:
    - Therefore, avoid: somewhere, someone, something
      * E.g. Someone might think about doing something if they go somewhere. – NO!
        + Better: Some might consider taking action/engaging in certain activities when they decide to travel to particular destinations.
* Punctuation:
  + Commas:
    - Always after linking words – e.g. However,
      * Moreover,
    - After adverbials of manner:
      * E.g. Undoubtedly,
    - Interjections separated with commas –e.g.
      * That led, however, to another war.
    - relative clauses:
      * see the difference between defining and non-defining;
        + these 2 sentences have a different meaning:

People, who are aggressive, attack each other. (All people are aggressive.)

The people who are aggressive attack each other. (Only those who are aggressive attack each other.)

* + - Inverted commas:
      * Only up in English “this way”.
* Layout
  + Paragraphs!
* Content:
  + Only relevant content: do not fill your essay with unnecessary words or clichés.
    - E.g. – Some express such an opinion, others hold an opposite view, however, I do not know, since I am no expert in this field.
  + In a summary
    - Do not describe at length how many pages books have, how many chapters there are etc. = **to the point!**
  + **Try to be concise!**
* How to write titles of books/articles:
  + Just a title – in italics
  + If you include an article or a chapter and the name of the book à the part is in “inverted commas”, whereas the whole book/journal is *Italicized*
    - All meaningful words (not grammar words) should be capitalized e.g. – *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*