SEMICOLONS AND COLONS

; SEMICOLONS SEPARATE

1. Use a semicolon to separate two complete thoughts (a subject and verb that could stand alone as sentences) *without* using a conjunction such as *and, but, or, nor, for, so, yet*:

> **The Writing Center is air-conditioned; we have grammar and mechanics class in there.**
> compared to
> **The Writing Center is air-conditioned**, so **we have grammar and mechanics class in there.**

2. Use a semicolon to separate items in a list or series *when the items themselves use commas as part of their meaning*:

> **In alphabetical order by last name, the first three students in the Discourse class are Dorothy Cao, New York; Erin Cook, Akwesasne; and Cornelia DeLee, Syracuse.**
>
> **Three architecture firms are competing for the bid: Perez, Philips, and Santiago; Meredith and McNeal; and Tyler, Logan, and Wallace.**

: COLONS CONNECT…AND INTRODUCE

1. Use a colon to connect additional information—often of a surprising, explanatory, or amplifying nature—to the end of a related complete thought:

> **Zelda had a sudden thought: maybe the paper she was working so hard on wasn't due until tomorrow night.**

2. Use a colon to connect a *full* quotation from a source to a sentence that introduces it and/or explains its significance:

> **According to Richard Torres, one line of Sylvia Plath's "Lady Lazarus" refers to the plight of repeatedly sinking into depression during her life: "I've done it again/ One year in every ten I've managed it" (13).**

3. Use a colon to introduce a list:

> **The governor invited top thinkers to his conference on education: Masiel Veras, Nertila Koni, and Yongquan Wang.**

***However**, do NOT use a colon before a list if the list is immediately preceded by a verb or preposition for which the items in the list are objects:*

> **The governor invited Masiel Veras, Nertila Koni, and Yongquan Wang to his conference on education.**
> **The faculty members will travel with Masiel, Nertila, and Yongquan.**