

## Exercise: Identifying Common Problems of Style and Form

Given below is a list of common problems of style and form that occur in ECE 3534 reports. For each excerpt that follows this list, identify the principal problem.

### Style

Needless complexity (pp. 83-90\*)  
Ambiguity (pp. 90-96)  
Improper tone (pp. 97-101)  
Unspecified "this" (pp. 93-94, 129-141)  
Stagnant sentence rhythms (pp. 129-137)

### Form

Run-on sentence (pp. 258-259)  
Error in verb tense (p. 261)

\*Page numbers in *The Craft of Scientific Writing*, which is on reserve in the library

#### 1. *Ambiguity*

If you receive an e-mail titled "Win A Holiday," do *not* open it. It will erase everything on your hard drive. Forward **this e-mail** out to as many people as you can. This virus is very malicious and not many people know about it.

#### 2. *Stagnant sentence rhythms*

**We conducted** a test on the 74HC138 decoder chip. **We wrote** a small program to have a continuous read loop. **We used** the oscilloscope to display the outputs of the decoder. **Y6 was** at logic high, which was correct because Y6 should be activated only when a write operation has occurred. **Y7 displayed** a continual series of active low pulses. **We verified** that the E clock was working. **We also made sure** all the output pins of the decoder chip were at logic high except Y7.

#### 3. *Improper tone*

The results of our work on this lab were **absolutely flawless**. We **basically** ran into no problems at all. **All in all**, this lab could not have gone more smoothly. **Thankfully**, we did not encounter one serious problem along the way. Our programs operated **perfectly** after only a few trials of debugging. Not only did we not experience any hardware failures that would have impeded our progress, but getting our programs validated was quick and easy because there was no wait to get on a computer as there sometimes is in the labs.

#### 4. *Run-on*

For the most part, the assembly program worked **correctly, however**, there were significant problems getting the branch statements to function as expected. (*replace comma with period or semicolon*)

#### 5. *Needless complexity*

Enormous, high-tech, modern mining companies are both continuing operations at old gold mines, such as the case of the Homestake Mine in Lead, South Dakota, which has operated continuously since 1877 and is continuing to increase its operations [Hinds and Trautman, 1983], and opening new gold mines, often in very disturbing locations, such as the proposed, and for now, postponed, New World Mine, whose proposed location was about 2.5 miles from the border of Yellowstone National Park, near Cooke City, Montana. (*too many ideas in one sentence*)

#### 6. *Unspecified "this"*

After the delay, the value in memory was read again into the A register, rotated, and stored. **This** occurred until the machine powered off.

#### 7. *Verb tense error*

For this part of the lab, we were required to write a program that was to be loaded at memory location \$B600 in the HC11's EEPROM. This program had to run in standalone operation. As soon as the EVBU **powers** up or **resets**, the program **starts** and **runs** until the power **shuts** off. The program was to take an eight-bit value stored in the memory, shift the bits to the right, and display the number for 3 seconds.