Run-On Sentences

What is a run-on?

A run-on occurs when you join two or more independent clauses (sentences) without separating them. It is sometimes called a *fused sentence*. Please note that a run-on sentence has nothing to do with the length of a sentence; it has to do with clarity because *a run-on sentence makes it unclear where one point or thought ends and another begins*. **Examples of run-on sentences:**

- "According to Aristotle, rhetoric is concerned with finding the available means of persuasion and rhetoric, in order to be effective, must deal with the mind and the emotions."

- "I hope to go to Mexico for spring break I'm so sick of the weather here.

- Elementary education means many things to many people it remains a difficult thing to define."

- "In A Good Man is Hard to Find, Flannery O'Connor writes about mystery and she raises many interesting questions about grace."

How do I fix run-ons?

- **Split the two clauses into two separate sentences:** "I hope to go to Mexico for spring break**.** I'm so sick of the weather here."

- **Link the independent clauses with a semi-colon:** "Elementary education means many things to many people**;** it remains a difficult thing to define."

- **Link the independent clauses with a comma and a coordinating conjunction:** "In A Good Man is Hard to Find, Flannery O'Connor writes about mystery**, and** she raises many interesting questions about grace."

Any of these three fixes will work. Choose the one that best suites what you are trying to say. Creating two (or more) separate sentences emphasizes their differences as distinct ideas. The comma-and-coordinating-conjunction option emphasizes the relationship between each idea, which can be useful for ordering more complex thoughts. **Please see the Subordination and Coordination Handout for further details.**

For further information, please use the following link via Purdue OWL:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/punctuation/independent_and_dependent_clauses/runonsentences.html