**The Four Rules of the Semicolon**

1. **Use to connect two closely related main clauses without a conjunction.**

*Example: Mary Shelley’s works are entertaining; they are full of engaging ideas.*

1. **Use before conjunctive adverb that connects two main clauses. Follow conjunctive adverb with a comma.**

*Example: I understand and respect your point of view;* ***however****, I still disagree.*

1. **Use before coordinating conjunction that connects the independent clauses in a compound sentence if/when either/both contains commas already.**

*Example: It took us hours to read the text, outline the lecture notes, and meet with our study groups; but we are now satisfied that we’re prepared for the exam.*

1. **Use to separate items in a series when each item contains a comma.**

*Example: On my road trip across the country, I visited Albany, New York; Melbourne, Florida; Houston, Texas; and San Diego, California.*