Incorrect word choice sometimes occurs when two words are similar in spelling and/or sound. Here are some examples:

1. **their/there/they’re**
   - The students got straight As on their midterm. (possessive adjective)
   - Last year there were 787 international graduate students from China studying at SFU. (pronoun)
   - They’re going to Hawaii for Christmas. (a contraction of “you are”; often followed by the present participle verb form ending in -ing)

2. **your/you’re**
   - What’s your major? (possessive adjective nearly always followed by a noun)
   - You’re going to be late! (a contraction of “you are”; often followed by the present participle verb form ending in -ing)

3. **advice/advise**
   - Peer educators advise their students on how write better essays. (verb)
   - If you need help writing a better essay, make a consultation to get some helpful advice from a peer educator. (noun)

4. **another, other, others, the other**
   - One kind of natural disaster is a tsunami; another type is an earthquake. (another is used only with singular nouns)
   - Other natural disasters are typhoons and tornados. (other means more of the group and can modify either uncountable nouns of plural nouns)
   - Some students like to study in the library; others prefer the cafeteria. (The plural pronoun others means different members of a group)
   - One sibling likes to get up early; the other one likes to sleep late. (adjective; the other means the rest of the group)
   - One sibling likes to get up early; the other likes to sleep late. (pronoun; the other means the rest of the group)

5. **already/all ready**
   - Are you all ready to go? (all ready means entirely ready.)
   - I’ve already eaten. (already means previously)

6. **affect/effect**
   - The recession has had a negative effect on sales. (effect is a noun)
   - The recession negatively affected sales. (affect is a verb)
2. Some pairs of groups of words are confusing because they are similar in meaning. Here are some examples:

a) during/while
   - During Spring semester the campus sometimes closes due to snow (the preposition during is followed by a noun object).
   - Many students have part-time jobs while they are going to school. (The adverb while is followed by a clause)

b) between/among
   - Relationship between parents and their children are often very complex. (between shows a relationship of two things)
   - SFU is among the top-rated universities in Canada. (among shows a relationship of three of more things)

c) amount, number, quantity
   - Vancouver and Seattle have almost the same amount/quantity of rainfall each year. (amount and quantity are used with uncountable nouns)
   - An increasing number of students on campus are multilingual. (number is used with countable nouns)

d) too, very
   - If the roads become too icy, the campus will close. (too usually expresses a negative result caused by something excessive)
   - The temperature on top of Burnaby Mountain is very cold. (very means excessively but does not always express a cause-result relationship)

e) as, like
   - Many SFU students volunteer as peer educators. (The preposition as means in the role of function of)
   - Like Mexico, Hawaii is a popular vacation spot for Vancouverites. (The preposition like means similar to).