Date: June 29, 2016
To: Committee on Educational Policy
From: Eleonora Pasotti
Cc: Ronnie Lipschutz; Dean Mathiowetz
Re: Final Report on Disciplinary Communication Grant to the Politics Department: "Politics Department Writing Tutoring Program"

Thank you for the opportunity to report on the implementation and outcomes of the grant awarded to the Politics department last year. The department proposed to develop a curriculum for class-specific writing groups that teaches students to better articulate social science argumentation and course content. The deliverable of this grant proposal is a pedagogically rigorous program that is specific to the class curriculum and keyed to the syllabus. Specifically, the output is a manual for tutors, attached in the Appendix.

In order to achieve this goal, we requested funding for the expert consultation with Amy Weaver, a lecturer in the Writing Program with extensive graduate training in political science, during the academic years 2015-16 and 2016-17. We were awarded funding for 2015-16, and were able to develop the proposed curriculum in that time frame. Manuals available on the market focus on curricula designed for one-on-one tutorials. We therefore had to develop a new approach for activities suited to a small group environment (the Politics Department writing program is based on groups of 4-5 students plus a tutor). Of course, the manual for tutors is subject to continuous revisions, in response to instructor or tutor suggestions for improvement. The result is a pedagogically rigorous but also user-friendly weekly program with a menu of class practices and exercises from which tutors can choose at each meeting, depending on the specific needs of a given group, and that is flexible enough to be adaptable to different group levels and needs, yet also structured enough to present a clear progression in skill development.

The manual for tutors whose development was funded by the grant is only one component in a complex writing program, which was developed in autonomy by the department and independently of the grant. We will therefore only provide a brief overview of the program.

The Politics department's writing group program modifies use of LSS tutors as follows:
1) The DUS (in conjunction with instructors) recruits tutors; LSS has agreed to administer and pay tutors selected by the department. Therefore the program does not require financial resources by the department. The program does not involve department staff. Course instructors can choose their preferred level of involvement – the program does not require involvement by the main class instructor.
2) Nearly all lower division and upper division core classes offer all students the option to enroll in small group weekly session facilitated by a tutor with the goal of working on essay writing in the context of class-specific content. We target lower division classes in order to provide students across the university as well as future politics majors the opportunity to improve essay writing (one or two are offered each quarter, with about 250 total students each quarter). We focus also on upper division core classes because majors are required to pass at least four of these (three to four are offered each quarter, usually with 100 students each core class). Satisfactory completion of three out of four upper division core classes also satisfies the DC requirement for the politics department. Therefore, it is particularly appropriate to focus writing training in this type of class. Students are becoming accustomed to the availability of the writing program, and experience the overall consistency of the pedagogical approach to writing across the different syllabi and content in the different core classes. This approach has therefore greatly improved the pedagogy of the DC requirement in the department.

Tutors are recruited among students who excelled in the previous class offering because we need tutors who are proficient in the class content. Ideally, prospective tutors would take Writing 159 and 169, which train undergraduates in tutoring practices. However, the pool of top-performers in our classes is small, and recruitment would be undermined by the imposition of such requirements. Since tutors lack pedagogical training, it is indispensible to provide them with an effective and detailed curriculum, which was achieved with the grant-funded tutor manual.

Each quarter, the writing program develops as follows. In each of the eligible classes (nearly all lower divisions and core classes) an early assessment test is conducted in Week 2 and evaluated by the end of Week 2. Weak performers are especially encouraged to enroll in the weekly tutorials. Tutorials begin in Week 3 and the same small group meets weekly until the end of classes in Week 10. About 25% of students in each class enroll in the weekly tutorials. Students typically receive a 3-point bonus (out of 100) in their final grade for nearly perfect attendance in the tutorials. Tutors report attendance, activities and outcomes in each tutorial in Google spreadsheets, which are monitored by the DUS. Instructors can choose the preferred level of involvement. Usually the DUS supervises all related activities as well as communication and coordination with students, tutors, TAs, instructors, and LSS. The department typically offers between 20 and 26 sessions per quarter, thus serving on average 100-130 students each quarter). Many students are repeat customers, as they enroll across their different lower divisions and core classes.

With respect to the assessment of the deliverable of the DC grant, the department rests on the feedback of instructors, tutors (especially the tutors who participated in the program before and after the manual was introduced) as well as students. The manual was developed over Fall 2015 and Winter 2016, and has been in use only one quarter (Spring 2016). The feedback is positive.

The next phase of the Politics writing program will focus towards improving assessment. Tutors currently administer an open qualitative survey to their clients at the end of the quarter, which is used to evaluate and consider possible improvements. Student responses are kept on file and are overwhelmingly very positive. In the future we would like to develop an approach to systematically measure the program's impact within and across classes, by comparing students who have enrolled and attended the program against a control group of students who performed similarly in the early assessment test. We are currently able to obtain this measure, with significant effort, for a single class. We envision a system in which measurement is produced automatically, and across all target classes (allowing for example to better follow the evolution in performance of repeat customers of the writing program, as well as the overall macro-impact on all majors).

We therefore expect to submit a future application for the DC Grant to this purpose. In the meantime we once again thank the Committee on Educational Policy for the grant awarded in 2015-16.

Handbook for Writing Group Tutorials in Politics

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide support for writing tutors working with upper-division Politics courses. Above all else, it is a living document designed to be followed, but also rearranged and even abandoned as the needs of particular faculty, students, and courses see fit. The order of the topics presented here represents only a reasonable arrangement for building successful writing strategies. The needs and priorities of faculty for their classes will, of course, trump the schedule presented in this handbook. Tutors are encouraged to be in regular contact with the faculty for specific advice and guidance as relevant to individual courses.

Most weeks in this Handbook have three sets of materials for the tutors – Goals, Exercises, and an extended set of Tips. The first part of each week's material will offer a brief overview of the goals for the tutorials; the second will provide activities and exercises for the groups; the third (in italics) will be tips excerpted and adapted from *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors* (Fifth Edition) by Leigh Ryan & Lisa Zimmerelli (2010, Bedford / St. Martin's). At the end of this handbook is a section, "Additional Resources," with sample writing group assignments, worksheets, essay rubrics, etc.

It is important to note from the outset that writing tutors are not teaching assistants. By UC-UAW contract[1], tutors may not:
- hold mandatory sections
- be responsible for grade recommendations
- provide direct instruction in the form of lectures or substantive discussion sections

Tutors duties may include:
- attending class meetings
- reading, marking, commenting on student work
- discussing homework or other course materials

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[1] This summary of the tutors' duties is excerpted from a document prepared by Anne Callahan, September 2014.

Week 2 – Introductions & Reading

Writing groups work best when students are comfortable enough with one another to both share their writing and offer honest feedback beyond simple correction or, worse still, "It's good". Spend time this week facilitating introductions. In particular, ask students about their past experiences with writing (including in high school) and in writing groups. Plant the seed that these meetings are not simply "peer editing" sessions, but rather part of the intellectual work of the course.

Writing Group Exercises:

Ideas for getting started (beyond the usual names, majors, colleges, etc.):

· Prompt students to freewrite briefly about past college writing experiences and their own sense of strengths and weaknesses. Ask them what they hope for from these groups. Share around. I always do these sorts of informal writing and sharing tasks with my students so that they see that we all can benefit from being reflective about our writing and teaching (and tutoring) practices.

· Read together the syllabus and any current assignments. Ask students to explain what is expected from the course, the assignments, etc. Students need to understand course material in order to be able to write in response to it.

· Have students review their diagnostic essay and write a few comments about what they see as its weaknesses. If time allows, have students read and revise a very short part of their essays. Even working together on the title, opening lines, and their theses can cement the purpose of these group meetings.

· Remind students that these group meetings are a part of the course and, as such, they should always bring all relevant texts, assignments, notes, etc.

Tips:
GETTING STARTED[1]
During the first several minutes, you and the student writers will be setting at least a tentative agenda for the tutoring session, and the best way to do that is to talk or chat. Conversation not only establishes rapport but also engages the writer in the session immediately. In addition, it allows you to learn fairly quickly about the assignment and the writer and about his or her approaches to and concerns about the task at hand, as well as writing in general -all necessary information to determine how to spend your time together most effectively and efficiently.
As a new tutor, you may feel uncomfortable with an extended conversation. You may think that looking at the assignment description and the student's paper gives you something concrete to do, and you may worry that a conversation could go in unpredictable directions. Recognize, however, that this initial conversation allows you not only to establish a comfortable acquaintance but also to gather information and assess the writer's needs. As an intelligent,

interested, and friendly audience, you will find it relatively easy to talk and learn more about the assignment and the writer. Then, you can put your newly acquired tutoring skills to work more easily and productively.

As a tutor, you have three powerful tools at your disposal:

·   *Active listening*

·   *Facilitating by responding as a reader*

·   *Silence and wait time to allow a writer time to think*

Used in combination, these tools can help you to learn and understand better what students' concerns or problems with writing may be. You can use them to induce writers to think more clearly and specifically about their audience, their purpose, their writing plan, or what they have already' written. These tools also provide an excellent means of getting feedback to determine how well writers understand the suggestions or advice that you have given them.

Week 3 – Reading Strategies -- Name It!

In reading as in writing, being able to identify the moves authors make is critical to building an understanding of how an argument works and when it does not. In addition, this week, as you continue to get to know your students – and they, one another – ask them to reflect on what kinds of learners they are. Keep the following different learning styles and strategies in mind throughout the quarter.

Writing Group Exercises:

· Describe/Analyze/Argue. Chose an object in the room – table, chair, smartphone, etc. – and ask each student to describe it. Then ask each to analyze it. Then ask each to make an argument about the object. Keep this opening exercise short – no more than 10 minutes. The purpose here is to have students work first with objects familiar to them, then move these same skills into course material and, eventually, their own writing.

· Chose a short portion of the readings from the course and, together with the students, name what is happening throughout. Make sure you have already done this and/or asked your faculty to provide an excerpt that is marked accordingly. Move this exercise to an unmarked portion of text. Ask students to identify where they see summary, analysis, argument, and evidence?[2] Repeat as time allows.

· Using their own writing – from the diagnostic, perhaps – ask students to do the same thing to a page or so of one another's essays.

Tips:

You might provide students with the following illustration to explain the difference between description and analysis.

Analysis (by Prof. Dean Mathiowetz)

Analysis is the activity of drawing connections between and idea and its context, of conveying the purpose of an idea, and of laying the groundwork for understanding its significance. It thus differs from description, which merely re-presents or rephrases your evidence. To understand the difference, consider first this description of a smartphone: "A smartphone is a slab of glass, plastic, and metal, about three inches wide and five inches long. The glass on one side is an illuminated screen that presents visual information and is sensitive to touch. It has a small speaker of some kind. The edges of a smartphone contain a microphone, ports for charging and for audio, and buttons for power and for audio volume. Most smart phones include two cameras, one on each large side of the device. Smart phones are used for personal communication, photography, listening to music, navigation, and access to Internet sites."

Now consider this analysis of a smartphone: "Smartphones were developed early in the Twenty-first Century, with the integration of personal computers, mobile telephones, and portable music players. They quickly became a common form of personal organization, communication, and entertainment for upper-middle-class and middle-class consumers. In addition to serving the above functions, smartphones convey social status: heavily advertised and expensive smartphones, like those produced by Apple, are easily distinguished from less expensive Android and other devices. Finally, while smartphones obviously provide convenience and entertainment, they also function as objects of distraction and surveillance."

The description of the smartphone tells you almost nothing you wouldn't see if a phone was in front of you—though this description would help a person who is totally unfamiliar with smartphones to understand what she or he is seeing. The analysis connects the smartphone to history, to economy, and suggests its multiple roles in modern life. None of this is simply what you perceive directly when you look at a smartphone.

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LEARNING STYLES
Visual Strategies
1. Rather than simply talking, work from written material, pointing to, circling, highlighting, or otherwise indicating information as you discuss it.
2. Make writing things down a part of the tutoring session by taking notes, jotting down examples, or drawing diagrams. When writers leave, they will have something to take along-visual reminders of what you have discussed with them.
3. Use color when possible - different colored pens or, if working on the computer, highlighting or different colored fonts when inserting new text.

Auditory Strategies
1. Read instructions, notes, or other material aloud, or have writers read aloud.
2. Repeat or rephrase directions and explanations, especially ones that may be more complicated.
3. Verbally reinforce points made in notes, diagrams, or other visual aids.
4. Throughout the session, ask the writer to paraphrase what you have discussed; at the end of the session, ask the writer to summarize what was accomplished and outline his or her plan for the paper.

Kinesthetic Strategies
1. As you read through papers or discuss ideas, ask students to do the writing, underlining, highlighting, or diagramming.
2. Have students point to material as you talk about it.

3. Write sentences or sections of a paper on self-stick removable notes, separate pieces of paper, or file cards or even cut the paper apart. Ask students to rearrange the passages in order to find the most effective organization.

Have self-stick removable notes on hand, and use them to identify parts of the paper, like the thesis, topic sentences, and evidence. Have the student write the concept on the self-stick note and then match it to the appropriate part of the paper.

Week 4 – Essay Assignments & Writing Strategies

        At this point in the quarter, most students will have received their first formal essay assignment. Part of the tutorial's task this week is to help students understand the assignment. They should also leave this session with a free write, an outline, and/or a working thesis (please check with instructors as to their preferences). At a minimum, they should have a good "next step," a timeline for writing the essay, and an understanding that writing a successful essay is a process of many steps.

        By this session you will likely have started to garner a reasonable sense of the various kinds of writers you are working with. The first set of readings below offer specific strategies for different students. These categories are not static, but can change even from one assignment to another.

        The second set of tips below, along with the group exercises, for this week focus primarily on early essay writing strategies and on developing arguments.

Writing Group Exercises:

·   Ask students to read and annotate an assignment. Discuss the assignment in pairs, preparing to present to the group their understanding of the assignment's demands and possibilities for responding.

·   Brainstorm strategies and ideas as a group – use a board if available. Have students freewrite first on their initial responses/answers to the assignment, then on their concerns about the assignment. Share both as time allows, making sure that students have a tentative plan for their essay.

·   In pairs, write two possible thesis statements from which one might build a response. Have students identify sources and evidence for these claims. Work with students to differentiate their working theses from one another. Look at "Claims" on page 24 of this handbook.

·   Another effective approach to helping students understand the difference between topics, claims, evidence, etc., is to posit an issue with which all students will have some familiarity -- global warming or cost of education, for example -- and then ask students to articulate an arguable claim, potential evidence, possible outcomes.

·   Remind students to always bring to these sessions all current course work – texts, assignments, essays-in-progress.

Tips:
THE WRITERS YOU TUTOR, Part 1

Writers do not always think of their papers as drafts, and while they may request suggestions for improvement, they may not be immediately receptive to your advice. Though they may not articulate or even recognize it, their writing is quite personal and sharing it can make them feel

vulnerable. Their drafts represent authorial decisions they have made, which can lead to their taking criticism more personally than it is intended. This sensitivity can be particularly acute for first or early drafts, the likes of which may present many areas for improvement. As a tutor, try to frame the negative aspects of a paper as good first steps toward improvement and offer lots of encouragement. How much nicer to treat the paper as a draft and discuss its potential than to regard it as a final copy and offer only negative comments!

SPECIFIC STRATEGIES

The Writer Who Has Writing Anxiety

1. Briefly explain the writing process. Point out that beginning as soon as possible and allowing plenty of time actually makes the task easier. Getting words on paper helps writers figure out what they want to say. Starting early also allows time for the unconscious mind to play with the ideas that have consciously been gathered.

2. Help writers break the assignment into a sequence of specific, manageable tasks. Then, help them set up a reasonable schedule with deadlines for completing the various parts. This planning will also enable writers to make use of the writing center during the writing process and can prevent small problems from becoming big ones.

3. Point out that breaking down the process of writing a paper into specific, manageable tasks can help writers feel degrees of success along the way. Rather than planning to sit clown for an evening to "write the paper," a writer might set out to draft an introduction and work out a tentative organization for the rest of the paper or plan to revise a particular section of the paper. Approaching tasks in this way enables writers to leave their desks with a sense of having accomplished what they set out to do, rather than with disappointment or frustration that the paper is not yet finished after several hours of work.

4. Suggest that writers set firm writing appointments with themselves and build in rewards. They can promise to work for a set period without interruptions and then get a reward at the end -a bike ride, a new DVD, a bowl of ice cream, or some other treat. Such rewards may sound silly, but the strategy often works.

5. Remind writers that a rough draft is exactly that: rough. Especially in the early stages, writing needs to be free flowing rather than perfect. Writers should be concerned with putting ideas on paper and not get bogged down with finding the "right" word or making each sentence perfect before beginning the next one.

The Writer with Basic Writing Skills

Basic writers are not stupid but rather are uninformed or misinformed. They do not necessarily apply grammatical rules incorrectly but instead use a different set of rules, acquired from speaking nonstandard English. Likewise, their writing reflects a lack of familiarity with the conventions for showing relationships among parts of a piece of writing rather than ignorance of the relationships themselves.

Some general suggestions for working with basic writers

1. Take care to be supportive, respectful, patient, and encouraging. Writers with basic writing skills often feel especially frustrated and even defeated by the task of writing. Be sure to acknowledge (and thus reinforce) what they do well, whether it's a larger issue like organization or a smaller issue like an especially appropriate phrase or word.

2. Talk with writers about their perceptions of writing and of the writing process. Help them understand that the writing process moves from the messy, tentative beginnings of formulating and ordering ideas to getting those ideas on paper and making meaning of them, first for the writer and then for the reader. By discussing the larger process, you reassure writers that they do not have to produce perfectly formed ideas and writing from the start. When you explain the editing stage, emphasize that this stage ensures that errors will not distract readers.

3. Help writers develop and convey meaning by explaining what you think they said in a sentence or passage. For example, after reading a concluding paragraph, you might say, "Your last paragraph indicates four sources, but I only remember three: [list them]. Did I miss one? Can you show me where it is?" By responding to writers in this way, you can help them see where the meaning of their writing does not match their intentions.

4. Look at the grammar and punctuation not in isolation but as a part of communicating ideas effectively. If a writer struggles to combine two sentences, use that example to talk about the appropriate punctuation rather than simply handing the writer an exercise on commas or semicolons.

*5. **Have writers read their papers aloud or into a digital tape recorder**. Listening to themselves can help writers identify weaknesses in development, coherence, and sentence structure. This activity also reinforces and encourages writers' ability to recognize their own weaknesses- and their strengths.*

6. Do not overwhelm writers with too much information or too many suggestions at once. It is better to cover one or two areas well so that writers can master them and feel successful. You can acknowledge other problems, but address them in later sessions.

7. If a writer has several problems, work with him or her to develop a strategy for coping with them. Make a plan for the next paper(s) and how to deal with grammatical and mechanical issues. Suggest that the writer see a tutor early and regularly throughout the writing process.

Second Language Writers

1. When you work with second language writers, respond first to the content and organization of their papers, as you would with any writer. Fixing sentences that may later be discarded wastes time. Read the description of the assignment and see if the paper adequately addresses the audience and fulfills the purpose. Listen to what writers are trying to say on paper and help them make sense of it.

2. Encourage writers to talk through what they want to say in each paragraph -in other words, to describe briefly each paragraph's focus and content. This non-evaluative approach is especially helpful with people who are unaccustomed to questioning authority (and to them, you are the authority in the tutoring situation). As you work with writers and their papers, ask

questions that will help you understand what they are trying to communicate. Paraphrase what they say to see if you understand it correctly.

3. Give directions plainly. Watch writers' expressions, and ask questions to see if they comprehend your explanations. Second language writers may be too embarrassed to admit that they are unsure. They may smile and nod in agreement but still be confused. If you are not sure whether someone understands something, ask him or her to explain what you have said or to give you an example. Be patient and, if necessary, explain again.

4. Expecting a second language writer to be familiar with English phrases or idioms is sometimes unrealistic. Occasionally, you may need to supply an appropriate word or phrase.

5. Try not to focus only on the mechanical and grammatical errors in the paper. In second language acquisition, grammatical correctness may take quite a while, and it is only through frequent practice- lots of writing- that a writer will gain proficiency. If you find a grammatical problem that impedes the readability of the paper, point to a couple of places where it occurs and help the writer correct the errors. Then, ask the writer to find similar errors in the paper. This practice will help the writer become independent in his or her own editing.

Writers with Learning Disabilities

1. Our discussion of learning styles at the beginning of this chapter is especially appropriate for tutoring writers with learning disabilities. They can usually tell you how they learn best and what you can do to make your comments and explanations most beneficial. In many cases, writers are aware of their disabilities and have learned to compensate. They know that they may need to take a test orally or with additional time, for example. If a writer tells you that he or she has a learning disability but does not offer information about coping strategies, ask. Work with these writers as conscientiously as you would with any writer, but take additional care to involve the writer, to structure and sequence material, and then to reinforce that structure. Above all, be patient!

2. Ask what you can do that will best help the writer, both in terms of an approach (perhaps an outline of the paper?) and in terms of tasks (should you, and not the student, do the physical writing?). Teach to a writer's favored learning style. The earlier discussion of learning styles contains specific suggestions to help convey and reinforce information to a variety of people. You might want to be creative and try combining approaches.

3. Be patient, explain things clearly, and repeat or rephrase if necessary.

4. As you talk and go through the writer's notes or draft, make lists or outlines or notes that can later serve as guides or reminders for the writer. Toward the end of the session, you might review- and perhaps reorder- them with the writer.

5. Remember that a writer with a learning disability often struggles very hard to accomplish what may come to others quite easily. Support, encouragement, and praise are especially important to a writer who is easily frustrated or discouraged, so take care to offer positive comments liberally where they are due.

6. Be aware that a person with a learning disability may correct some- thing and then immediately repeat the same error. Do not assume that he or she is lazy or has not been paying attention.

STAGES OF THE WRITING PROCESS
PREWRITING
    Freewriting: Focusing on thoughts and ideas
    Brainstorming: Considering audience
    Researching: Gathering and organizing information
    Observing: Creating a workable plan
WRITING
    Creating initial draft (The purpose in this exploratory writing is to find out what you know.)
REVISING AND EDITING (USUALLY IN MULTIPLE DRAFTS)
    Global Revision: Improving content, organization, tone in your expository writing for an outside audience.
    Sentence-Level Revision: Strengthening and clarifying
    Editing: Correcting errors in grammar, punctuation, and mechanics
    Proofreading: Looking for typographical errors, omitted words, and other mistakes

PREWRITING
FINDING AND EXPLORING A TOPIC
Tutors can help writers discover what it is they want to say by using a variety of techniques. Brainstorming (listing), freewriting, and clustering (branching) are discussed here, but you may want to check writing handbooks and textbooks to learn about other techniques.

Brainstorming (listing). *Brainstorming involves focusing on a topic and tossing out, thinking through, and refining ideas to find ways to approach it. As writers list and play with ideas on a particular topic, ask questions to prod and encourage them to think more and reach further.*

Freewriting. *Ask writers to put pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard) and simply let ideas on the topic flow for ten minutes. Tell them to write words, phrases, sentences, or questions but to ignore punctuation and spelling. If they get stuck, tell them to rewrite the last few words over and over until the ideas begin to flow again.*

Clustering (branching or webbing)*. Clustering not only helps writers explore their subject but also suggests how they might organize their ideas. With the writer, make a diagram with the central topic in the middle. Then, as you talk or chat with the writer about aspects of the topic, ask how each relates to the central topic and draw branches that show the relationships. Effective with pen and paper, clustering also works especially well in online synchronous forums with drawing capabilities. In fact, using drawing tools, color, and highlight functions can help make these exercises more vivid for the writer.*

· Help writers explore options by mapping out how the paper might be organized. Rather than make a formal outline, which can be too rigid and confining for many writers, suggest that the writer generate a more informal diagram, such as a list or flow chart similar to the one above. Writers can easily see the general shape of the paper but will feel more open to shuffling parts around if necessary.
· Ask the writer to start drafting the thesis and topic sentences. It might be helpful to see the main ideas worked out in full sentences. These sentences can be a jumping-off point when the writer goes to compose on his or her own. Be sure to let the writer know that these sentences may be revised as she or he continues working on the paper.

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The difference between drafting and writing is also effectively explained by Prof. Mathiowetz in the section below. <u>You are welcome to adapt his recommendation about working with topic sentences as an exercise for the writing group</u>.

The Writing Process

Writing political theory is not research in the usual sense of working from information found in an archive or database. It nonetheless requires two distinct stages of work, in much the same way that a research paper requires research and then writing. The first stage of the writing process in political theory is **exploratory writing**. In this stage, you're writing *to find out for yourself what you think*. The second stage is **explanatory writing**. In this stage, you write *to communicate to someone else what you think*. Recognizing and working with these two distinct stages of the writing process is essential for your success as an author of an essay in political theory.

Many students conflate these parts of writing. When they are given a prompt, they seek first to formulate an answer in their heads to the prompt (mistaking this first hunch for a good thesis), and then try to create an outline of how they will give their answer. From there, they being writing, and at some point, they add text evidence to the writing. Because the course materials are ambiguous and the prompts are complex, writers sometimes encounter significant confusion as they go along. This is normal. But because these writers think that they already have a solid argument, it leads them down a rocky path. Some students ignore their confusion, pushing ahead with their first hunches, and submit a paper that is confusing for the reader or displays an insufficient grasp of the materials. Other students get lost in the confusion, and find it difficult to work at all.

In order to get a sense of what distinguishing these processes looks like, consider an archaeological dig. First comes **exploration**. An archaeologist identifies an area where digging is likely to yield results, and then sets to work, carefully excavating in the area. When she uncovers something, she handles it carefully, making notes about where she found it, and sets it

aside. Only after many hours of digging does she step back and look at all this evidence; on that basis, she begins to develop a picture of the lives of the ancient people whose dwelling she's excavating lived. Say, for example, she's found lots of ceramic fragments, and when putting them all together, has assembled several five-cornered eating plates. Once she's considered several ways of putting together the plate fragments, she decides which assemblage is the most convincing. Now begins **exposition**: she organizes and presents the evidence of her dig, and interprets its significance for the archaeological community, and for a wider public's understanding of ancient life. These people, she tells us, ate on plates that had five corners. This makes them unlike all previously known societies, whose plates were either round or had four corners. Notice how much work she has done before she even begins writing the article that her colleagues or the public will see!

The writing process for political theory that this analogy suggests looks like this. Looking at the prompt, determine which texts, and which large sections of each, you will need to re-read in order to explore the topic. Then re-read carefully, noting down (I suggest copying down) every sentence in the text that feels like it might be evidence. Include the page number where you found it, and make a note to yourself too, analyzing a little the evidence that you find (see above re: analysis). After you have done this for all of the relevant parts of the relevant texts (i.e., you have concluded your preliminary research), step back and read the prompt again. What does the evidence you have gathered suggest in terms of answers to the various questions in the prompt? The evidence may be contradictory: don't ignore this fact, but instead note it. Now is a good time to sketch a "working thesis" – your idea of how you will answer the question. Now is also a good time to do some free writing, just musing on the question and the things you have encountered in your "dig." Let your ideas flow. This is the *beginning* of your **exploratory** writing. Given how much time you have already spent with evidence, it's a good time to start trusting your hunches and ideas about the texts and your response to the prompt. You may want to turn your free writing into an outline, or some other process of moving toward writing prose that integrates evidence, analysis, and starts making the larger connections toward your argument. Collect the contradictory evidence, and use some of it to sketch a counterargument to your working thesis.

Now you are deep in **exploratory** writing…often called "drafting" a paper. You are likely to encounter a "crisis" at this stage, made up of difficulties with interpretation, confusing ideas, and other uncertainty. <u>This is an ideal stage to talk over your writing with a teacher or a friend</u>. Often just talking about our writing we find ways through our difficulties and answers to our problems. Don't hesitate to scrap your working thesis and craft a new one, or radically change your mind about how you want to go about structuring your essay. These are evidence of a lively and creative writing process.

As your confusion clears and your crisis settles, you are ready for **expository writing**. Exactly what this means depends on your experience and maturity as a writer, but one way to go about it is this:

1. Look at each paragraph you have drafted. Be sure it has multiple text citations in it (see "evidence," above). Be sure that you have presented analysis alongside the evidence. Experiment with organizing the exposition of the paragraph so that it moves from

established, less-exciting information to novel and more exciting information and ideas. And then revise or write a "topic sentence" for that paragraph --- stating up front what the paragraph ahead will say.

2. Copy and paste all of your topic sentences, in order, into a second document. Read that document from beginning to end. Does it make sense? Should it be organized in a different way? Use this process to help you make organizational decisions for the essay as a whole.

3. Write an introductory paragraph that lays out the theme of the essay and provides context in broad strokes, and then, in its last sentence, clearly states your argument.

4. Edit your writing on a sentence-by-sentence level—looking out for grammar, punctuation, and style. Short, crisp sentences are better than sentences that are long and complicated. It's also an effective style strategy to revise sentences so that the last word of each is most important.

As you can probably tell, this writing process takes time. It can hardly be done in one sitting—and it is best done in small chunks over the course of a week or more. One of the best things you can do is to give yourself time away from your writing so that problems and confusion can work themselves out in the back of your mind, while you're doing other things. Returning with a fresh eye to your own writing is helpful in discovering where you can clarify your ideas and your prose.

Not leaving time for this process to unfold, or confusing its various stages, is likely to lead to a poor result. Settling too soon on an argument, presenting drafted writing as final writing, can make for an unconvincing or even illegible essay. Imagine our archaeologist, deciding before she digs that the ancient people used square plates. She'd be tempted to stop digging after she finds four corners. She might offer those corners as evidence, but her readers are likely to notice that the fragments don't really fit together.

Week 5 – Writing the Essay

   This week is all about working with live drafts of students' essays. Ideally, the groups' work to this point will have demonstrated to students that they can learn from one another. When real essays are involved, however, many writing groups become less collaborative and more like sequential mini appointments with the tutor (and an audience of peers). While as tutors, you certainly have more experience than the students in the groups, be mindful to continue to conduct these sessions as in past weeks, with all participating. With guidance and modeling, all student writers can offer helpful commentary to their peers. Use the first exercise below to explicitly put students' arguments in conversation with one another.

   As your groups work through the essay drafts, you might return to some of the topics and exercises from previous weeks. For example, it will probably be useful to have another conversation about reading strategies. In particular, developing writers often have a hard time understanding the difference between the topic of their essays and their theses.

Writing Group Exercises:

·   Ask each student to note one specific aspect of their colleagues' essays they found effective (and why), one possible counter-argument, and one place where they want/need to hear more (and why).

·   Allow a few minutes for students to review their peers' (and tutor's) comments and freewrite their next steps in revising this essay.

·   Using the checklist at the end of the "Tips" below, have students choose one task each and read their colleagues' essays.

·   Work through the "Logical Fallacies" on page 37 of this handbook. Create some logical fallacies with students about an object ("My iPhone is the best because it's good"), then about a current event.

·   Use "Sample Peer Review Worksheet" (Additional Resources, page 49) to guide students' feedback and for additional exercises appropriate for this week.

Tips:
FACILITATING
Reacting As A Reader. *Comments like "I'm confused," "I get lost here," "From your introduction, I expected to read ..," and "This is what this sentence or paragraph means to me. Do I have the right idea? Is that what you meant?" simply and honestly convey your response to a paper as you read it. They invite writers to elaborate and, in so doing, to clarify ideas for you and for themselves.*

Requesting Information. *Questions such as "Can you tell me more about ...?" can help students to clarify their thinking, consider the whole paper or an aspect of it more critically, refocus their thoughts, or continue a line of thinking further.*

Requesting Clarification. *When students' answers or writing is vague, encourage them to clarify points by asking, "What is your idea here?" "What are you thinking?" "What do you want to say?" "What do you want your reader to know in this paragraph?" "How does this idea connect with what you said before?" "What do you mean by . . .?" or "Tell me more about..." To be sure you arc following and understanding what a writer intends, restate the content of the message: "What I'm hearing you say is . . . Do I have it right?"*

Developing Critical Awareness. *Writers sometimes plan or write whole papers without adequately evaluating audience or purpose, and one of the best questions that you can pose is "So what?" That question, or versions of it -such as "Why does anyone [your audience] want or need to know about that?" -forces writers to think about their purpose in addressing their audience. "So what?" also makes them consider and justify other points in the paper, as do questions like "Why would that be so?" and "Can you give me an example of . . . ?"*

Refocusing. *To get writers to refocus or rethink their writing, it is useful to get them to relate their approach to another idea or approach, using questions like "How would someone who disagrees respond to your argument?" "How is that related to ...?" or "If that's so, what would happen if . . . ?"*

Prompting. *To get writers to continue or follow their line of thinking further, encourage them with questions like "What happens after that?" or "If that is so, then what happens?"*

*****As a facilitator***, you function as a sounding board or mirror, reflecting back to writers what you hear them trying to communicate. Your stance is an objective one, for your purpose is to evoke and promote writers' ideas, not to contribute your own. As you become increasingly comfortable with tutoring and better able to size up the writers with whom you work, you may feel more at ease with occasionally offering opinions about or suggestions for content, but beware: The paper must remain the responsibility of the writer.*

Silence And Wait Time. *Try this experiment. Get a watch or clock with a second hand. At the start of a minute, turn around or place the clock out of sight. When you think that a minute has elapsed, look back. How close did you come? Thirty seconds? Forty-five? Chances are you stopped a little too soon, and that is what we tend to do when we try to make ourselves wait: We jump in a little too soon.*

As a tutor, you should learn when and how to pause and be silent in a tutoring session. Occasionally, writers need time to digest what has been discussed or to formulate a question. They also need time to think about a response when you pose a question. Often, tutors are tempted to quickly rephrase a question or even answer it themselves when a writer does not respond after a moment or two. If you feel this temptation, try waiting a little longer than you think you should; then wait some more. This deliberate use of wait time communicates to writers that they are expected to think and arrive at answers on their own. You might even create an excuse to get up and leave for a few minutes; go to the restroom or get a drink of water. In a

synchronous session, online silence is sometimes even more difficult to bear, as the blinking cursor seems to demand an immediate response. Feel free to type "take your time" or "I have to leave the computer for a couple of minutes; I'll be right back!" to give the writer some online breathing room.

Thinking time is especially important when a new aspect of a topic arises, and writers may even need a few moments on their own to do some writing. Try initiating short breaks that allow writers five or even ten minutes to freewrite, brainstorm, or draft a section of a paper. On other occasions, you might give them time to complete an activity that relates to what you have just been discussing. You might ask them to revise a portion of their draft or correct certain problems with grammar, mechanics, or punctuation. Or they might complete a short grammar exercise. When they finish, you can review their work with them. When chatting, simply give them a set amount of time to work on a discrete task ("I'm going to give you five minutes; I'll be here when you want to resume."). Resist the urge to maintain constant online chatter; instead, give them the time and space necessary to compose their thoughts.

How to begin? Quite simply, ask questions and show interest.

- *"What can I help you with?"*
- *"What are you writing about?"*
- *Why did you choose this argument?"*
- *"What approach did you take?"*
- *"Can you tell me (briefly) how you set up your argument? What readings can you use to address the question, and how?"*

As the writer answers, seek clarification with follow-up questions that encourage him or her to talk more. This time spent talking means that when you finally look at the paper, you will be able to match the writer's goals more adequately with what actually appears in the paper and more readily offer suggestions to make the writing more effective.

If the assignment is unfamiliar, read through the description quickly to be sure the writer has not forgotten or misunderstood any details, but not so quickly that you miss any important information. (Even if the assignment is a common one, it is probably a good idea to glance through the description in case the instructor has made any changes.) Rather than have the writer wait for the session to begin, engage him or her with comments or questions as you read, like "I see you have to ..." or "What did you choose for ...?" Asking writers to articulate the assignment- and their approach to it-often allows you to uncover any misunderstandings or apprehensions that they may have.

Argument or Position Papers

In argument or position papers, writers take stands on debatable issues. Such papers aim to get readers to think differently about a particular issue or to persuade them to take a certain stance. Writers of argument or position papers should envision skeptical audiences and build arguments that are strong enough to stand up to opponents' views. As they write, they should anticipate readers' objections, refuting them or conceding points while indicating, for example, that there are more important issues to be considered.

A Checklist For Argument/Position Papers

·   *Is the claim or proposition -what the writer is trying to prove- clearly stated?*

·   *Are all assertions supported by evidence?*

·   *Is the evidence - facts, interpretations of facts, opinions- appropriate? Data should be accurate, recent, and sufficient. Cited sources should be reliable.*

·   *Does the arrangement of evidence make sense? Does it emphasize the most important issues? Are there more effective ways of arranging the evidence?*

·   *Are facts, statistics, examples, anecdotes, and expert opinions placed properly? Are they used in the appropriate context?*

·   *Is the evidence carefully documented?*

·   *Is the reasoning sound?*

·   *Has the writer avoided logical fallacies?*

·   *Are terms that might be controversial or ambiguous adequately defined?*

·   *Have opposing arguments been considered and dealt with adequately?*

Week 6 – Revising & Editing, Part 1

  Many student writers think of revision – if they think of revision at all – as proofreading. The goal of this week is to help students read their own work attentively and critically. Depending on the needs of the students and the essay assignments, you might continue the work of the previous session, focusing in particular on evidence, opposition, and counter-arguments. The tips below focus first on global revision strategies and then on a few more kinds of writers who, if in your sessions, can be discouraging to you and disruptive to other students.

Writing Group Exercises:

· On summary, paraphrasing, & quoting: Using a short selection from one of the course readings and working in pairs, have students summarize the text. Ask each group to prepare and present their summaries, then have another group paraphrase the summaries. Finally, ask each student to quote from both the texts and the summaries. (Another version of this exercise is to ask students to do each of these tasks in relation to the original passage.)

· Review the original assignment and ask students to comment on the degree to which they believe their colleagues' essays meet the requirements of the assignment.

· Ask students to fill out the "Sample Cover Sheet" (Additional Resources, page 51) to guide peer feedback and for additional exercises appropriate for this week.

Tips:
WRITING, REVISING, AND EDITING
MAKING GLOBAL REVISIONS
Global revisions refer to the paper's overall development and organization. When helping a writer make global revisions, consider if the paper addresses the topic in a meaningful way and if it has a logical flow.
Development
Did the writer follow through on points raised in the thesis? Did the writer offer enough supporting details and examples? Did the writer explain relationships between ideas?
Organization
Did the writer organize according to a particular scheme or format? Did the writer organize according to the needs of a specific audience? By first asking questions and talking with the writer about his or her paper's audience, topic, content, and structure, you get useful information and also give the writer the opportunity to indicate troublesome areas. As you then read through the paper together, you can compare what he or she has told you with what is actually on the page.
SITUATION: Writer has a draft. Writer has time to revise.

WHAT TO DO: Find out where the writer feels the draft needs improvement. Point out where the draft needs improvement. Explore possibilities.

HOW TO RESPOND: Question. Reflect or mirror. Offer suggestions and opinions

One of you should read the paper aloud. Asking writers to read aloud engages them more in the tutoring session; however, explain that you will interrupt whenever you have a question or comment. Occasionally, you may prefer to read, reacting and commenting as you go. In any case, do not simply let writers sit there and watch you read silently, for that will only increase any discomfort that they may be feeling.

As writers talk about their ideas or read aloud, ask questions or make comments in order to help them clarify their thinking and offer suggestions for improvement. At this stage, focus on the larger issues of content and organization. Not only are they more important than matters of style or mechanics but you might also end up spending much of the tutoring session on a section that is ultimately deleted.

Other suggestions for global revision

1. Read the paper as a naive reader, and indicate those places where it needs more details or more specific details. For example, if you read a sentence like "Economic policies are always debatable," ask the writer to be more precise. Which/whose policies? Under what conditions? By what measures? According to whom?

2. Stop at the end of a paragraph or section of the paper to summarize what you have just read and to explain what you anticipate will follow. If what you say does not match the writer's intended message, he or she can see where misinformation, extraneous details, or other cues misdirect the reader.

3. Don't overwhelm the writer with too many suggestions for improvement at one time. First, see if you can identify the major recurring issues that impede the readability of the paper. Then, try to find one or two sections or sentences that represent these issues, and spend some time working with the writer on these smaller pieces of the paper. If the writer seems frustrated, it may be better to select problems that are fairly easy to deal with in order to give him or her a more successful tutoring session. You can indicate that other areas need work and suggest that the writer make another appointment to attend to them.

THE WRITERS YOU TUTOR, Part 2

The Unresponsive Writer

Teachers sometimes require students to visit the writing center, and occasionally, such writers come with an attitude of resistance. They may refuse to answer your questions, give half-hearted answers, or otherwise indicate that they do not wish to be there. Often, even their body language is telling. They may slump in their seats, avoid eye contact, or avoid facing you. How do you help these writers?

DO

·   Be patient and polite.

·   *Remind the writer that you are there to help and that the suggestions you offer are just that- suggestions that he or she may choose to accept or reject.*

·   *Try to make the tutoring session short but helpful. If you can improve one aspect of a resistant writer's paper, perhaps he or she will see that coming to the writing center is not a waste of time.*

·   *Engage the writer as much as possible. For example, have the writer read the paper aloud.*

·   *Recognize that even your best efforts may not change writers' attitudes, at least in the initial tutoring session. With hindsight, resistant writers may realize that getting help with a paper is not altogether unpleasant. Another day, they may return of their own volition.*
DON'T

·   *Lecture writers about your role or their unresponsiveness.*

·   *Lose your cool and become angry.*

·   *Become unresponsive as well. Try to keep the upper hand in this situation.*

The Antagonistic Writer

For some writers, composing a paper looms as an extremely frustrating - perhaps even impossible - task. They may be apprehensive about writing in general or upset about demands placed on them by a particular assignment or teacher. Often, they view meeting these demands as being beyond their control. If someone could only tell them exactly how to "fix" things, all would be well. Finding themselves in an impossible position, these writers may become verbally aggressive, redirecting their anger and frustration at you or they may show little interest in the suggestions that you offer.
DO

·   *Promptly report the incident to the main instructor.*

·   *Be patient, polite, and supportive.*

·   *Allow writers to vent their feelings and tell you what is upsetting them.*

·   *Acknowledge writers' anger and frustration with an I statement like "I hear how frustrated you are."*

·   *Using an I statement, rephrase what writers are saying in order to help identify their emotions and problems. You might say, for example, "What I'm hearing is that you're discouraged because you can't figure out how to begin this paper."*

·   *If writers become verbally aggressive, politely tell them that you are not willing to accept such behavior, but do so using an I statement. You might say, "When you yell at me that way, I find it difficult [impossible] to listen."*

·   *Remind writers that you are there to help and that the suggestions you offer are just that - suggestions that they may choose to accept or reject.*
DON'T

·   *Lecture students about your role or their behavior.*

·   *Get into an argument or a shouting match.*

·   *Become hostile or punitive with statements like "You can't talk to me like that!"*
·   *Look away and refuse to deal with the situation.*
·   *Agree with their judgments and criticisms of assignments, teachers, and grades.*
Remember that doing so would be unprofessional.

The Writer Who Plagiarizes
DO
·   *Be familiar with the Politics Department's code of integrity and the university's policy on misconduct (https://www.ue.ucsc.edu/academic_misconduct).*
Promptly report any case of suspected plagiarism to the main instructor.
·   *Be familiar with the Politics Department's expectations for citations, found at http://politics.ucsc.edu/undergraduate/citation.html.*
·   *Explain the importance of carefully taking notes from sources. Remind writers to indicate the author's words clearly and to gather accurately all information that might be required for a citation.*
·   *If you encounter a suspicious passage or phrase, explain that the text sounds "different" or "funny" and seems to be taken from another source. Explain that material taken from another source that is not common knowledge must be documented, whether it is quoted directly, paraphrased, or summarized.*
·   *Explain that acknowledging sources is an ethical issue, a matter of giving credit for ideas and/or words to the person who came up with them. Documenting sources appropriately both acknowledges the original writer and allows readers to locate that resource easily if so desired. Remember that this policy applies to Web writing as well.*
·   *DON'T*
Accuse a writer directly of plagiarism.

Week 7 – Revising & Editing, Part 2
   Even if essays have been turned in – and whether or not opportunities for revision exist in the course – help students see both the progress they have made and the work still to be done. Work on sentence-level revision, from spotting errors to crafting more effective prose.

Writing Group Exercises:
·   In pairs or as a group, work on the following:
- Thesis statements – Ask each student to posit a potential thesis in response to either a reading or, as appropriate, to an essay prompt; pass it to another student. Is it arguable? What kind of evidence/support would be necessary for the thesis?
- Wordiness – Looking at a paragraph from their own writing, have students cut each sentence in half. Discuss the pros and cons of the new sentences.
- Punctuation (in particular, comma usage) -- Write a sentence from the readings on the board – without any punctuation. As a group, punctuate it. Look at how many might change depending on punctuation.
- Paraphrasing – Choose a short reading from the class. Assign individual students to summarize, to paraphrase, and to quote.

·   Ask students to examine the same checklist items in an article from the class and in their own writing. For example, have students note how quotes are introduced in a professional text and in their own writings; or have students circle all the "to be" verbs in each kind of writing as they work to become more aware of the moves they make in writing. Depending on the group, you might do this exercise before moving to students' own writing.

·   Use "Sample Revision Checklist," (p 48) in "Additional Resources" as another guide for editing.

Tips:
MAKING SENTENCE-LEVEL REVISIONS
Sentence-level revisions involve strengthening and varying sentences as well as refining style. Inappropriate or imprecise language, wordiness, and choppiness are common problems in student papers. To help writers recognize these problems and learn to correct them, concentrate on a small section - a paragraph or several sentences. Later, writers can apply what they have learned to the rest of the paper. This approach also reminds writers that they are ultimately responsible for revising their papers.
SITUATION Writer has a satisfactory draft. Writer has time and motivation to revise.
WHAT TO DO Read carefully, preferably aloud. Consider each paragraph, sentence, and word.
HOW TO RESPOND Help in reading. Point out kinds of problems. Question.
Mirror and reflect. Offer opinions and suggestions. Demonstrate techniques for improvement.

Other suggestions for sentence-level revision

1. To improve the voice of the paper, ask the writer, "Do you talk like this?" If so, is this appropriate for an academic paper, or is it too casual? If not, is the word choice governed by a sense of how an essay should sound? Discuss the use of language in the paper, and then help the writer rework a small section and eliminate, for example, stuffiness or stilted words and phrases. Maybe here's a place to emphasize that wordy prose is not the same as intelligent prose, to reassure students that a direct style made up of short sentence is preferred today even in scholarly/intellectual discourse. To make tone more appropriate in a formal paper, explain the conventions of formal writing. For example, explain that using contractions is inappropriate in a formal paper, as is the use of etc.

2. To eliminate wordiness, go through several sentences word by word with the writer to determine if each word is really necessary. Ask the writer what the most important word in each sentence is. Ask the writer to try re-writing the sentence so that that word appears at the end. Not only is this an effective rhetorical strategy, it gets the student to reflect on what they wish to emphasize. And, if they can't choose one word for this role, ask them to consider whether the sentence can and should be broken into two.

3. You might also read wordy sentences back to the writer and then read the sentences again, leaving out what you think are excess words. Ask the writer to consider whether the words that you have omitted are necessary. Remind students that wordiness is not a marker of sophistication.

4. To improve choppy writing, have the writer read the paper aloud. (Often, it is easier for the writer to detect choppiness when reading aloud than when reading silently.) You might want to have the writer revise some problem sentences in the tutoring session.

5. If the writer tends to use several prepositional phrases in a row, read a few sentences aloud. As you read, accent the choppy effect that such phrases produce, and then show the writer how to eliminate at least some of the phrases. For example, changing "Running in the morning on the track on the campus keeps one fit" to "A morning run on the campus track keeps one fit" makes the sentence less choppy and less wordy yet retains the meaning.

6. Ask the writer to check his or her work for overuse of to be verb forms (such as am, is, are, were). He or she can improve emphasis by replacing these forms with more vigorous verbs and eliminating passive-voice constructions. If you notice that the writer overuses to be forms and the passive voice, ask him or her to circle all the verbs in a passage and then look at them and tell you what he or she notices.

7. For any of these sentence-level issues, take one of the writer's sentences, one of your own creation, or one from an exercise and demonstrate how making appropriate changes renders it more effective. Called modeling, this technique allows you to create several alternatives and to explain your reasoning for the changes.

EDITING FOR GRAMMAR, PUNCTUATION, AND MECHANICS
Tutors often worry that they must be thoroughly familiar with grammar rules, but that is not true. Good readers usually recognize a problem, though they may not always be able to explain

it technically. If you are unsure about a rule or term, check a guide to grammar, punctuation, and mechanics. Another handy and excellent reference that should not be overlooked is another tutor. When you encounter problems with grammar, punctuation, or mechanics, paint a larger picture for writers. Explain that such errors distract readers from the paper's content. If readers pause to notice misplaced commas or misspellings, they lose the thread of the paper for a moment and must reorient themselves to continue reading. In the process, the paper's content may become less compelling.

SITUATION   Writer has a satisfactory draft. Writer has time and motivation to revise.

WHAT TO DO Read carefully, preferably aloud. Consider each paragraph, sentence, and word.

HOW TO RESPOND Help in reading. Point out kinds of problems. Question. Mirror and reflect. Offer opinions and suggestions. Demonstrate techniques for improvement.

As you discuss grammatical points, be flexible with your vocabulary. What one writer knows as a "fused" sentence another calls a "run-on." In addition, writers may be unfamiliar with terms like comma splice or independent clause. When you use technical terms, ask the student if she or he needs a definition of the term or further clarification. Muriel Harris suggests turning the process of understanding over to writers by offering enough explanation to start them off and then inviting them to "find and revise all instances of whatever problem was discussed, asking questions as they proceed; to reformulate the principle for themselves in terms that they are comfortable with; to write their own sentences demonstrating the rule; to cite uses of the rule in their own papers if that seems helpful; or to explain how the rule works in their sentence." If serious problems with grammar, punctuation, and mechanics permeate a student's paper, concentrate on a small section - a paragraph or several sentences - to help the writer recognize and learn to correct these errors. Later, the writer can go through the rest of the paper and apply what he or she has learned.

Other suggestions for editing grammar, punctuation, and mechanics

1.   Have writers read their papers aloud. In doing so, they often make corrections as they go, for the ear frequently judges more accurately than the eye. In addition, their changes afford you the opportunity to encourage them by pointing out that they really do know how to recognize and correct some of their errors.

2.   Point to an error and ask a general question, such as "Do you see a problem here?" You might underline several sentences that reflect the same problem and ask the writer to read them aloud. If the writer cannot see the problem, focus on a single sentence. If he or she still remains uncertain, explain the error and see if he or she can identify it elsewhere.

3.   Ask writers to indicate which sentences they feel uncomfortable with and then ask why.

When you are tutoring, questions will come up that you cannot answer on your own. Note where you could find the following information[3]:

1.   an explanation and exercise on subject-verb agreement

2.   discussion of thesis statement, with examples

3.   strategies for tightening wordy sentences

4.   guidelines for evaluating a Web site

5. *rules for when to spell out numbers or use figures*
6. *exercises for punctuation, including comma usage*
7. *a discussion of subordination for emphasis*
8. *an explanation of cause and effect as a pattern of development*
9. *the format for documenting a selection in an anthology*
10. *the rules for use of who and whom*
11. *ways to avoid using sexist language*
12. *a list of common spelling errors*
13. *an explanation of passive and active voice*
14. *a list of logical fallacies with explanations and examples*
15. *guidelines for creating an entry in an annotated bibliography*
16. *explanations and examples of paraphrasing effectively*

Week 8 – Claims & Counter Arguments

Though discussions and exercises focused on claims and counter-arguments have come up throughout the quarter, students typically struggle with both and with the relationship between the two concepts. A successful thesis is only debatable if a plausible counter-argument exists. In turn, counter-arguments must also be debatable.

Writing Group Exercises:
- Using the essay topics developed for your class, ask students to develop a series of claims in response. You can also bring to the group a related news item and ask students to write a set of claims in response to this article. Students can then pass their claims around the circle and write possible counterclaims to their colleagues' claims (you might look at the "Index of Templates" on pages 40 - 45 with the students). In the third round, ask students to prepare a more nuanced response that agrees in part and disagrees in part with their colleagues' claims.
- Ask students to reverse outline one of their colleagues' essays, writing on a separate sheet of paper their annotations. This exercise helps students see the gaps in their argument and identifies potential problems in the arrangement of their essays.
- Ask students to write their topic sentences – intentionally out of order – on a piece of paper (or, better yet, on index cards). Have other students arrange the topic sentences as they see fit. Identify the claims and counter-arguments present in these sentences.

Tips:
Claims
The thesis statement or main claim must be debatable
An argumentative or persuasive piece of writing must begin with a debatable thesis or claim. In other words, the thesis must be something that people could reasonably have differing opinions on. If your thesis is something that is generally agreed upon or accepted as fact then there is no reason to try to persuade people.
Example of a non-debatable thesis statement:
Pollution is bad for the environment.
This thesis statement is not debatable. First, the word pollution means that something is bad or negative in some way. Further, all studies agree that pollution is a problem; they simply disagree on the impact it will have or the scope of the problem. No one could reasonably argue that pollution is good.
Example of a debatable thesis statement:
At least 25 percent of the federal budget should be spent on limiting pollution.

This is an example of a debatable thesis because reasonable people could disagree with it. Some people might think that this is how we should spend the nation's money. Others might feel that we should be spending more money on education. Still others could argue that corporations, not the government, should be paying to limit pollution.

Another example of a debatable thesis statement:

America's anti-pollution efforts should focus on privately owned cars.

In this example there is also room for disagreement between rational individuals. Some citizens might think focusing on recycling programs rather than private automobiles is the most effective strategy.

The thesis needs to be narrow

Although the scope of your paper might seem overwhelming at the start, generally the narrower the thesis the more effective your argument will be. Your thesis or claim must be supported by evidence. The broader your claim is, the more evidence you will need to convince readers that your position is right.

Example of a thesis that is too broad:

Drug use is detrimental to society.

There are several reasons this statement is too broad to argue. First, what is included in the category "drugs"? Is the author talking about illegal drug use, recreational drug use (which might include alcohol and cigarettes), or all uses of medication in general? Second, in what ways are drugs detrimental? Is drug use causing deaths (and is the author equating deaths from overdoses and deaths from drug related violence)? Is drug use changing the moral climate or causing the economy to decline? Finally, what does the author mean by "society"? Is the author referring only to America or to the global population? Does the author make any distinction between the effects on children and adults? There are just too many questions that the claim leaves open. The author could not cover all of the topics listed above, yet the generality of the claim leaves all of these possibilities open to debate.

Example of a narrow or focused thesis:

Illegal drug use is detrimental because it encourages gang violence.

In this example the topic of drugs has been narrowed down to illegal drugs and the detriment has been narrowed down to gang violence. This is a much more manageable topic.

We could narrow each debatable thesis from the previous examples in the following way:

Narrowed debatable thesis 1:

At least 25 percent of the federal budget should be spent on helping upgrade business to clean technologies, researching renewable energy sources, and planting more trees in order to control or eliminate pollution.

This thesis narrows the scope of the argument by specifying not just the amount of money used but also how the money could actually help to control pollution.

Narrowed debatable thesis 2:

America's anti-pollution efforts should focus on privately owned cars because it would allow most citizens to contribute to national efforts and care about the outcome.
This thesis narrows the scope of the argument by specifying not just what the focus of a national anti-pollution campaign should be but also why this is the appropriate focus.
Qualifiers such as "typically," "generally," "usually," or "on average" also help to limit the scope of your claim by allowing for the almost inevitable exception to the rule.

Types of claims

Claims typically fall into one of four categories. Thinking about how you want to approach your topic, in other words what type of claim you want to make, is one way to focus your thesis on one particular aspect of your broader topic.
Claims of fact or definition: *These claims argue about what the definition of something is or whether something is a settled fact. Example:*
What some people refer to as global warming is actually nothing more than normal, long-term cycles of climate change.
Claims of cause and effect: *These claims argue that one person, thing, or event caused another thing or event to occur. Example:*
The popularity of SUV's in America has caused pollution to increase.
Claims about value: *These are claims made of what something is worth, whether we value it or not, how we would rate or categorize something. Example:*
Global warming is the most pressing challenge facing the world today.
Claims about solutions or policies: *These are claims that argue for or against a certain solution or policy approach to a problem. Example:*
Instead of drilling for oil in Alaska we should be focusing on ways to reduce oil consumption, such as researching renewable energy sources.
Which type of claim is right for your argument? *Which type of thesis or claim you use for your argument will depend on your position and knowledge of the topic, your audience, and the context of your paper. You might want to think about where you imagine your audience to be on this topic and pinpoint where you think the biggest difference in viewpoints might be. Even if you start with one type of claim you probably will be using several within the paper. Regardless of the type of claim you choose to utilize it is key to identify the controversy or debate you are addressing and to define your position early on in the paper.*

• •

You can explain counterarguments to students as statements that are *both* counter the thesis *and* could be a valid answer to the question/prompt. Counterarguments are essential to solid papers. Therefore, consider including the following advice, in which Prof. Mathiowetz recommends presenting the counterargument immediately following the thesis statement.

*Your argument should be reducible to a single sentence (called the **thesis**) that delivers a pointed statement of your argument. This sentence typically goes at the end of the first paragraph of your paper. To be argumentative, it should express an idea with which a thoughtful and informed person could plausibly disagree. It should also be important; it should motivate the reader onward for some reason other than that she or he is grading your work. Put yourself on the line by establishing a position you then have to defend in some way.*

*You should also present a brief **counterargument** to your thesis (often in the second paragraph of the paper). Doing so will sharpen your reader's sense of your thesis, show that it is indeed argumentative, and underscore its importance. Indeed, because the political world is complex, heterogeneous, and sometimes ambiguous, identifying and elaborating a counterargument is a good sign that you're working on a problem in the text that is truly political. It's crucial that the counterargument you present be plausible at least—otherwise your reader is apt to suspect that your own argument will be weak. The more compelling is the counterargument, the more powerful will be your refutation of it. Presenting a counterargument is an effective writing strategy.*

Week 9 – Open

      Becoming a better writer is not a linear process. Use this week to return to any previous topics and add new ones as appropriate to the class. It might be a good idea to return to areas were students struggled. Solicit input from faculty and students on their needs. While the readings below offer a guide for research papers, the checklist is useful for academic essays in general.

Writing Group Exercises this week will depend largely on the decisions of the groups. The "Index of Templates" on pages 40 - 45 offer a variety of situational examples for developing arguments and integrating sources.

Tips

To write an effective research paper, the writer will need to conduct research, interpret that research, and compose a paper that synthesizes both the writer's and the experts' views of the topic. Proper documentation of evidence is particularly important in research papers; writers may need help selecting appropriate resources to substantiate their claims, integrating information and quotations into their papers, and citing sources within their papers and in their bibliographies.

Checklist For Research Papers

·   *If there is a title, is it informative and appropriate?*

·   *Is the thesis clear? Is the organization logical? If headings and subheadings are used, do they consistently follow an accepted format?*

·   *Are sentences varied in length and structure?*

·   *Are tone, voice, and diction consistent and appropriate?*

·   *Are transitions smooth from sentence to sentence, paragraph to paragraph, section to section?*

·   *Are credible sources and evidence used? Is the supporting material suit- able and persuasive? Does it adequately support the thesis?*

·   *Are quotations and paraphrased and summarized passages properly introduced with a signal phrase?·   Are visual materials- tables, figures, charts, maps, and the like- introduced before they appear in the text?*

·   *Are long quotations set off from the text?*

·   *Is proper credit given to sources throughout?*

·   *Does the paper consistently adhere to the style used (MLA, APA, Chicago, CSE, and so on) in format and in documentation, both within the text and in the reference list or list of works cited?*

·   *Were the instructions for the assignment - length, number and kinds of resources to be used, directions for title page or documentation - followed carefully?*

Week 10 – In-class Essays

The goal this week is to help students think about the differences between their longer essay assignments and the in-class writing they might encounter in final exams.

As you wrap up the quarter, spend time reflecting on both the improvements your students have made and also the various writing processes, insights, skills, and strategies that will serve them will in future classes. At this group meeting, students will also fill out an evaluation of the work they've done and the tutorial itself.

Writing Group Exercises:

· Using course review materials (or the essay topics generated by faculty at the beginning of the quarter), plan the structure of your answers as if these were in-class exams. Have students pre-write for 5 minutes, write their answers for 20, and then revise for 5 minutes. Ask students to talk about what they did well and what else they could have done. Strategize for the exam.

· Have students fill out an evaluation of the group tutorials.

Tips[2]:

What is a well written answer to an essay question?
It is...
Well Focused
Be sure to answer the question completely, that is, answer all parts of the question. Avoid "padding." A lot of rambling and ranting is a sure sign that the writer doesn't really know what the right answer is and hopes that somehow, something in that overgrown jungle of words was the correct answer.
Well Organized
Don't write in a haphazard "think-as-you-go" manner. Do some planning and be sure that what you write has a clearly marked introduction which both states the point(s) you are going to make and also, if possible, how you are going to proceed. In addition, the essay should have a clearly indicated conclusion, which summarizes the material covered and emphasizes your thesis or main point.
Well Supported
Do not just assert something is true, prove it. What facts, figures, examples, tests, etc. prove your point? In many cases, the difference between an A and a B as a grade is due to the effective use of supporting evidence.
Well Packaged
People who do not use conventions of language are thought of by their readers as less competent and less educated.

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[2] From Purdue OWL, https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/737/01/

How do you write an effective essay exam?
1. *Read through all the questions carefully.*
2. *Budget your time and decide which question(s) you will answer first.*
3. *Underline the key word(s) which tell you what to do for each question.*
4. *Choose an organizational pattern appropriate for each keyword and plan your answers on scratch paper or in the margins. Remember that time spent informally outlining an answer before you begin writing is generally time well spent - but keep track of time! An effective outline is not too long or detailed.*
5. *Write your answers as quickly and as legibly as you can; do not take the time to recopy.*
6. *Begin each answer with one or two sentence thesis which summarizes your answer. If possible, phrase the statement so that it rephrases the question's essential terms into a statement (which therefore directly answers the essay question).*
7. *Support your thesis with specific references to the material you have studied.*
8. *Proofread your answer and correct errors in spelling and mechanics.*

Specific organizational patterns and "key words"

Most essay questions will have one or more "key words" that indicate which organizational pattern you should use in your answer. The six most common organizational patterns for essay exams are definition, analysis, cause and effect, comparison/contrast, process analysis, and thesis-support.

Definition
Typical questions
- *"Define X."*
- *"What is an X?"*
- *"Choose N terms from the following list and define them."*

Example
Q: "What is a fanzine?"
A: A fanzine is a magazine written, mimeographed, and distributed by and for science fiction or comic strip enthusiasts.
Avoid constructions such as "An encounter group is where ..." and "General semantics is when..."

Process
- *State the term to be defined.*
- *State the class of objects or concepts to which the term belongs.*
- *Differentiate the term from other members of the class by listing the term's distinguishing characteristics.*

Tools you can use
- *Details which describe the term*
- *Examples and incidents*
- *Comparisons to familiar terms*
- *Negation to state what the term is not*

- *Classification (i.e., break it down into parts)*
- *Examination of origins or causes*
- *Examination of results, effects, or uses*

Analysis

Typical questions

Analysis involves breaking something down into its components and discovering the parts that make up the whole.

- *"Analyze X."*
- *"What are the components of X?"*
- *"What are the five different kinds of X?"*
- *"Discuss the different types of X."*

Example:

Q: *"Discuss the different services a junior college offers a community."*

A: *Thesis: A junior college offers the community at least three main types of educational services: vocational education for young people, continuing education for older people, and personal development for all individuals.*

Process

Outline for supporting details and examples. For example, if you were answering the example question, an outline might include:

- *Vocational education*
- *Continuing education*
- *Personal development*

Write the essay, describing each part or component and making transitions between each of your descriptions. Some useful transition words include:

- *first, second, third, etc.*
- *next*
- *another*
- *in addition*
- *moreover*

Conclude the essay by emphasizing how each part you have described makes up the whole you have been asked to analyze.

Cause and Effect

Cause and effect involves tracing probable or known effects of a certain cause or examining one or more effects and discussing the reasonable or known cause(s).

Typical questions:

- *"What are the causes of X?"*
- *"What led to X?"*
- *"Why did X occur?"*
- *"Why does X happen?"*
- *"What would be the effects of X?"*

Example

Q: "Define recession and discuss the probable effects a recession would have on today's society."

A: Thesis: A recession, which is a nationwide lull in business activity, would be detrimental to society in the following ways: it would ....A......., it would ....B......., and it would ....C....... . The rest of the answer would explain, in some detail, the three effects: A, B, and C.

Useful transition words:
- *because*
- *consequently*
- *therefore*
- *for this reason*
- *as a result*

Comparison-Contrast

Typical questions:
- *"How does X differ from Y?"*
- *"Compare X and Y."*
- *"What are the advantages and disadvantages of X and Y?"*

Example:

Q: "Which would you rather own—a compact car or a full-sized car?"

A: Thesis: I would own a compact car rather than a full-sized car for the following reasons: ....A......., ...B......., ...C......., and ....D....... .

Two patterns of development:

Pattern 1

Full-sized car
- *Advantages*
- *Disadvantages*

Compact car
- *Advantages*
- *Disadvantages*

Pattern 2

Advantages
- *Full-sized car*
- *Compact car*

Disadvantages
- *Full-sized car*
- *Compact car*

Useful transition words
- *on the other hand*
- *similarly*
- *yet*

- *unlike A, B ...*
- *in the same way*
- *but*
- *while both A and B are ..., only B ..*
- *nevertheless*
- *on the contrary*
- *though*
- *despite*
- *however*
- *conversely*
- *while A is ..., B is ...*

Process

Typical questions

- *"Describe how X is accomplished."*
- *"List the steps involved in X."*
- *"Explain what happened in X."*
- *"What is the procedure involved in X?"*

Process *(sometimes called process analysis)*

This involves giving directions or telling the reader how to do something. It may involve discussing some complex procedure as a series of discrete steps. The organization is almost always chronological.

Example

Q: "According to Richard Bolles' What Color Is Your Parachute?, what is the best procedure for finding a job?"

A: In What Color Is Your Parachute?, Richard Bolles lists seven steps that all job-hunters should follow: .....A....., ...B....., ...C....., ...D....., ...E....., ...F....., and .....G..... .
The remainder of the answer should discuss each of these seven steps in some detail.

Useful transition words

- *first, second, third, etc.*
- *next*
- *then*
- *following this*
- *finally*
- *after, afterwards, after this*
- *subsequently*
- *simultaneously, concurrently*

Thesis and Support

Typical questions:

- *"Discuss X."*
- *"A noted authority has said X. Do you agree or disagree?"*

- *"Defend or refute X."*
- *"Do you think that X is valid? Defend your position."*

Thesis and support *involves stating a clearly worded opinion or interpretation and then defending it with all the data, examples, facts, and so on that you can draw from the material you have studied.*

Example:

Q: *"Despite criticism, television is useful because it aids in the socializing process of our children."*

A: *Television hinders rather than helps in the socializing process of our children because ....A......., ...B......., and ....C....... .*

The rest of the answer is devoted to developing arguments A, B, and C.

Useful transition words:

- *therefore*
- *for this reason*
- *it follows that*
- *as a result*
- *because*
- *however*
- *consequently*

Exercises

A. Which of the following two answers is the better one? Why?

Question: *Discuss the contribution of William Morris to book design, using as an example his edition of the works of Chaucer.*

a. *William Morris's Chaucer was his masterpiece. It shows his interest in the Middle Ages. The type is based on medieval manuscript writing, and the decoration around the edges of the pages is like that used in medieval books. The large initial letters are typical of medieval design. Those letters were printed from woodcuts, which was the medieval way of printing. The illustrations were by Burn-Jones, one of the best artists in England at the time. Morris was able to get the most competent people to help him because he was so famous as a poet and a designer (the Morris chair) and wallpaper and other decorative items for the home. He designed the furnishings for his own home, which was widely admired among the sort of people he associated with. In this way he started the arts and crafts movement.*

b. *Morris's contribution to book design was to approach the problem as an artist or fine craftsman, rather than a mere printer who reproduced texts. He wanted to raise the standards of printing, which had fallen to a low point, by showing that truly beautiful books could be produced. His Chaucer was designed as a unified work of art or high craft. Since Chaucer lived in the Middle Ages, Morris decided to design a new type based on medieval script and to imitate the format of a medieval manuscript. This involved elaborate letters and large initials at the beginnings of verses, as well as wide borders of intertwined vines with leaves, fruit, and flowers*

in strong colors. The effect was so unusual that the book caused great excitement and inspired other printers to design beautiful rather than purely utilitarian books.

Additional Resources

LOGICAL FALLACIES

Fallacies are common errors in reasoning that will undermine the logic of your argument. Fallacies can be either illegitimate arguments or irrelevant points, and are often identified because they lack evidence that supports their claim. Avoid these common fallacies in your own arguments and watch for them in the arguments of others.

Slippery Slope: This is a conclusion based on the premise that if A happens, then eventually through a series of small steps, through B, C,..., X, Y, Z will happen, too, basically equating A and Z. So, if we don't want Z to occur, A must not be allowed to occur either. Example:

If we ban Hummers because they are bad for the environment eventually the government will ban all cars, so we should not ban Hummers.

In this example, the author is equating banning Hummers with banning all cars, which is not the same thing.

Hasty Generalization: This is a conclusion based on insufficient or biased evidence. In other words, you are rushing to a conclusion before you have all the relevant facts. Example:

Even though it's only the first day, I can tell this is going to be a boring course.

In this example, the author is basing his evaluation of the entire course on only the first day, which is notoriously boring and full of housekeeping tasks for most courses. To make a fair and reasonable evaluation the author must attend not one but several classes, and possibly even examine the textbook, talk to the professor, or talk to others who have previously finished the course in order to have sufficient evidence to base a conclusion on. In politics, an example of hasty generalization is "democracy promotes prosperity." This is highly debated. To make a fair assessment the author needs to provide pointed evidence.

Post hoc ergo propter hoc: This is a conclusion that assumes that if 'A' occurred after 'B' then 'B' must have caused 'A.' Example:

I drank bottled water and now I am sick, so the water must have made me sick.

In this example, the author assumes that if one event chronologically follows another the first event must have caused the second. But the illness could have been caused by the burrito the night before, a flu bug that had been working on the body for days, or a chemical spill across campus. There is no reason, without more evidence, to assume the water caused the person to be sick. In politics, an example could be: "The recession was caused by a wave of labor strikes." Both events, despite the sequence, might have been caused by other factors instead.

Genetic Fallacy: This conclusion is based on an argument that the origins of a person, idea, institute, or theory determine its character, nature, or worth. Example:

The Volkswagen Beetle is an evil car because it was originally designed by Hitler's army.

In this example the author is equating the character of a car with the character of the people who built the car. However, the two are not inherently related.

Begging the Claim: The conclusion that the writer should prove is validated within the claim. Example:

Filthy and polluting coal should be banned.

Arguing that coal pollutes the earth and thus should be banned would be logical. But the very conclusion that should be proved, that coal causes enough pollution to warrant banning its use, is already assumed in the claim by referring to it as "filthy and polluting."

Circular Argument: This restates the argument rather than actually proving it. Example: George Bush is a good communicator because he speaks effectively.

In this example, the conclusion that Bush is a "good communicator" and the evidence used to prove it "he speaks effectively" are basically the same idea. Specific evidence such as using everyday language, breaking down complex problems, or illustrating his points with humorous stories would be needed to prove either half of the sentence.

Either/or: This is a conclusion that oversimplifies the argument by reducing it to only two sides or choices. Example:

We can either stop using cars or destroy the earth.

In this example, the two choices are presented as the only options, yet the author ignores a range of choices in between such as developing cleaner technology, car-sharing systems for necessities and emergencies, or better community planning to discourage daily driving.

Ad hominem: This is an attack on the character of a person rather than his or her opinions or arguments. Example:

Green Peace's strategies aren't effective because they are all dirty, lazy hippies.

In this example, the author doesn't even name particular strategies Green Peace has suggested, much less evaluate those strategies on their merits. Instead, the author attacks the characters of the individuals in the group.

Ad populum: This is an emotional appeal that speaks to positive (such as patriotism, religion, democracy) or negative (such as terrorism or fascism) concepts rather than the real issue at hand. Example:

If you were a true American you would support the rights of people to choose whatever vehicle they want.

In this example, the author equates being a "true American," a concept that people want to be associated with, particularly in a time of war, with allowing people to buy any vehicle they want even though there is no inherent connection between the two.

Red Herring: This is a diversionary tactic that avoids the key issues, often by avoiding opposing arguments rather than addressing them. Example:

The level of mercury in seafood may be unsafe, but what will fishers do to support their families?

In this example, the author switches the discussion away from the safety of the food and talks instead about an economic issue, the livelihood of those catching fish. While one issue may affect the other it does not mean we should ignore possible safety issues because of possible economic consequences to a few individuals.

Straw Man: This move oversimplifies an opponent's viewpoint and then attacks that hollow argument.

People who don't support the proposed state minimum wage increase hate the poor.

In this example, the author attributes the worst possible motive to an opponent's position. In reality, however, the opposition probably has more complex and sympathetic arguments to support their point. By not addressing those arguments, the author is not treating the opposition with respect or refuting their position.

Moral Equivalence: This fallacy compares minor misdeeds with major atrocities.

That parking attendant who gave me a ticket is as bad as Hitler.

In this example, the author is comparing the relatively harmless actions of a person doing their job with the horrific actions of Hitler. This comparison is unfair and inaccurate.

INDEX OF TEMPLATES[3]

INTRODUCING WHAT "THEY SAY"
A number of sociologists have recently suggested that X's work has several fundamental problems. It has become common today to dismiss X's contribution to the field of sociology. In their recent work, Y and Z have offered harsh critiques of Dr. X for _____.

INTRODUCING "STANDARD VIEWS"
The standard way of thinking about Topic X has it that _____.
It is often said that _____.
Many people assumed that _____.

INTRODUCING SOMETHING IMPLIED OR ASSUMED
One implication of X's treatment of _____ is that _____.
Although X does not say so directly, she apparently assumes that _____.

INTRODUCING AN ONGOING DEBATE
In discussions of X, one controversial issue has been _____.
On the one hand, _____ argues _____.
On the other hand, _____
contends _____.
Others even maintain _____.
My own view is _____.
When it comes to the topic of _____, most of us will readily agree that _____.
Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of _____.
Whereas some are convinced that _____, others maintain that _____.
In conclusion, then, as I suggested earlier, defenders of _____ can't have it both ways.
Their assertion that _____ is contradicted by their claim that _____.

CAPTURING AUTHORIAL ACTION
X acknowledges that _____.
X agrees that _____.

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[3] From *They Say/I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing,*
by Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein. W.W. Norton & Company: New York, 2006.

X argues that _____ .
X believes that _____ .
X denies/does not deny that _____ .
X claims that _____ .
X complains that _____ .
X concedes that _____ .
X demonstrates that _____ .
X deplores the tendency to _____ .
X celebrates the fact that _____ .
X emphasizes that _____ .
X insists that _____ .
X observes that _____ .
X questions that _____ .
X refuses the claim that _____ .
X reminds us that _____ .
X suggests that _____ .
X urges us to _____ .

INTRODUCING QUOTATIONS
X states, "_____ ."
As the prominent philosopher X puts it, "_____ ."
According to X, "_____ ."
X herself writes, "_____ ."
In his book, _____ , X maintains that "_____ ."
In X's view, "_____ ."
X agrees/disagrees when she writes, "_____ ."
X complicates matters further when he writes, "_____ ."

EXPLAINING QUOTATIONS
In other words, X believes _____ .
In making this comment, X argues that _____ .
X is insisting that _____ .
X's point is that _____ .
The essence of X's argument is that _____ .

DISAGREEING, WITH REASONS
I think X is mistaken because she overlooks _____ .
X's claim that _____ rests upon the questionable assumption that
_____ .

I disagree with X's view that _____ because, as recent research has shown,
_____ .

X contradicts himself. On the one hand, he argues _____. But on the other hand, he also says _____.

By focusing on _____, X overlooks the deeper problem of _____.

X claims _____, but we don't need him to tell us that. Anyone familiar with _____ has long known that _____.

AGREEING — WITH A DIFFERENCE

I agree that _____ because my experience _____ confirms it.

X surely is right about _____ because, as

she may not be aware, recent studies have shown that _____.

X's theory of _____ is extremely useful because it sheds insight on the difficult problem of _____.

I agree that _____, a point that needs emphasizing since so many people believe _____.

Those unfamiliar with this school of thought may be interested to know that it basically boils down to _____.

If group X is right that _____, as I think they are, then we need to reassess the popular assumption that _____.

AGREEING AND DISAGREEING SIMULTANEOUSLY

Although I agree with X up to a point, I cannot accept his overall conclusion that _____.

Although I disagree with much that X says, I fully endorse his final conclusion that _____.

Though I concede that _____, I still insist that _____.

Whereas X provides ample evidence that _____, Y and Z's research on _____ and _____ convinces me that _____ instead.

X is right that _____, but she seems on more dubious ground when she claims that _____.

While X is probably wrong when she claims that _____, she is right that _____.

On the one hand, I agree that _____. On the other hand, I'm not sure if _____.

I do support X's position that _____, but I find Y's argument about _____ and Z's research on _____ to be equally persuasive.

SIGNALING WHO IS SAYING WHAT

X argues _____.

According to both X and Y, _____.

Politicians _____, X argues, should _____.

I agree, as X may not realize, that _____.

But _____ are real and, arguably, the most significant factor in _____.

But X is wrong that _____ .
However, it is simply not true that _____ .
Indeed, it is highly likely that _____ .
But the view that _____ does not fit all the facts.
X is right/wrong that _____ .
X is both right and wrong that _____ .
Yet a sober analysis of the matter reveals _____ .
Nevertheless, new research shows _____ .
Anyone familiar with _____ should see that _____ .

EMBEDDING VOICE MARKERS
X overlooks what I consider an important point about _____ .
These conclusions, which X discusses in _____ , add weight to the argument that _____ .

ENTERTAINING OBJECTIONS
Yet some readers may challenge the view that _____ .
After all, many believe_____ .
Indeed, my own argument that _____ seems to ignore_____ and _____ .
Of course, many will probably disagree with this assertion that _____ .

NAMING YOUR NAYSAYERS
Here many feminists would probably object that _____ .
But Social Darwinists would certainly take issue with the argument that _____ .
Nevertheless, both followers and critics of Malcolm X will probably dispute my claim that _____ .
Although not all Christians think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that _____ .
Non-native English speakers are so diverse in their views that it's hard to generalize about them, but some are likely to object on the grounds that _____ .

MAKING CONCESSIONS WHILE STILL STANDING YOUR GROUND
Although I grant that _____ ,
I still maintain that _____ .
Proponents of X are right to argue that _____ .
But they exaggerate when they claim that _____ .
While it is true that _____ , it does not necessarily follow that _____ .
On the one hand, I agree with X that _____ . But on the other hand, I still insist that _____ .

INDICATING WHO CARES

What this new research does, then, is correct the mistaken impression, held by many earlier researchers, that _____.

These findings challenge the work of earlier researchers, who tended to assume that _____.

Recent studies like these shed new light on _____, which previous studies had not addressed.

At first glance, _____. But on closer inspection _____.

ESTABLISHING WHY YOUR CLAIMS MATTER

X matters/is important because _____.

Although X may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today's concern over _____.

Ultimately, what is at stake here is _____.

These findings have important consequences for the broader domain of _____.

My discussion of X is in fact addressing the larger matter of _____.

Although X may seem of concern to only a small group of _____, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about _____.

COMMONLY USED TRANSITIONS

Cause and Effect:
accordingly
as a result
consequently
hence
it follows, then
since
so
then
therefore
thus

Conclusion:
as a result
consequently
hence
in conclusion, then
in short
in sum, then
it follows, then
so
the upshot of all this
is that
therefore
thus
to sum up
to summarize

Comparison:
along the same lines
in the same way
likewise
similarly

Contrast:
although
but
by contrast
conversely

despite the fact that
even though
however
in contrast
nevertheless
nonetheless
on the contrary
on the other hand
regardless
whereas
while
yet

Addition:
also
and
besides
furthermore
in addition
in fact
indeed
moreover
so too

Concession:
admittedly
although it is true that
granted
I concede that
of course
naturally
to be sure

Sample Revision Checklist

As you work on your revisions, make a checklist of all the things you know you need to look at in your essays. Add to what I've started below; cross out as appropriate.

An **interesting** topic
An **arguable** thesis
Titles
Citations – in text correctly and Works Cited pages
Opening lines
Transitions between paragraphs
Repetition
Word choice & phrasing
Sentence fragments and run-on sentences
Subject-verb agreement
Number agreement
Articles
Commas (too many, too few!)
"It is…"
"This is…"
Too many "to be" verbs
Effective quotes – that aren't just dropped in, but are introduced elegantly
So what?
Bold endings
Page numbers
Staples

_____

_____

_____

SAMPLE PEER REVIEW WORKSHEET

Author_____

Working Title_____

Other possible titles_____

      (Anyone/everyone can suggest another title)

Author: First, in the spaces above, write your name and the (tentative) title of your essay; second, skim over your piece and write (across the top of page 1) 2 – 3 real questions you have about your work.

Reviewers: You may do the following tasks in any order as long as all 6 are eventually completed. Go with your own strengths and interests as you help your colleagues.

1. Reviewer 1 – your primary task is to fill out lines 1 – 6 on this "Peer Review" sheet.

2. Reviewer 2 – your primary task is to answer the author's questions (you'll find them at the top of page 1 of their essay). Put your answers in the space number 7 below.

3. Reviewer 3 – your primary task is to help the authors professionalize their work. Look for big things (titles, citations, excessive typos…) and little things (page numbers, odd spacing, occasional typos…).

4. Reviewer 4 – your goal is to help the author on style and tone. For example, look very closely at word choice. Are there too many "to be" verbs? Or too much reliance on "it" and "this"? Circle as many of these words – is, are, was, were, it, this, these – and offer more interesting word choice options for the author. Choose a few sentences and revise them for the authors.

5. Reviewer 5 – Reverse outline the essay. That is, write in the margins what each paragraph is about. See if the order makes sense and, if not, suggest a different arrangement or point out where you think better transitions and/or additional information/analysis/argument are needed to bridge the gaps.

6. Additional reviewers may choose any of the above and add to the comments of previous reviewers… but only after all 6 tasks have been completed.

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       1. The topic here is

       2. The primary purpose and claims are

       3. They are supported by

4. The evidence is (not) clear because

5. I was interested in reading/learning more about

6. I would have

My answers to the author's questions:

Reviewer 1_____
Reviewer 2_____
Reviewer 3_____
Reviewer 4_____
Reviewer 5_____

Additional Reviewers, add your names below.

SAMPLE ESSAY COVER SHEET/RUBRIC

Author's Name:_____

Essay Title:_____

Essay Topic:

Essay Thesis:

 1.   Reread your revised essay and feel free to correct typos, add a line or two, cross something out, etc. Underline (or box, or star) your favorite line. What pleases you about this line? What pleases you most about your whole essay?

2.   Skim over your first draft. What changes have you made between drafts? What changes might you make on a subsequent version?

3.   Fill out the following box with brief (obviously!) commentary and page numbers:

	Outstanding	Exceeds Expectations	Acceptable	Poor
Purpose & Argument				
Arrangement aka "Flow"				
Textual Support & Analysis				
Style, Tone, & Word Choice				
Professionalism				

Other				

4. Space to elaborate on your choices above:

5. Of the above categories, which one do you want me to most focus on? Why? Which one would you like me to ignore? Why?

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, this and all subsequent "Readings" are excerpted and adapted from *The Bedford Guide for Writing Tutors* (Fifth Edition) by Leigh Ryan & Lisa Zimmerelli (2010, Bedford / St. Martin's). Though *The Bedford Guide* presumes individual tutorials, its tone and guidance are both appropriate to group meetings.
[2]This exercise is adapted from one created by Dean Mathiowetz for writing tutors working in his Politics 105A course.
[3] The Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) -- https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/ -- has answers and examples for nearly all of the following. The UCSC Library has excellent online instruction and examples for annotated bibliographies and literature reviews. From the library's help page (https://library.ucsc.edu/help), click on "How Do I …?"