Revision Checklist

**Revision** means much more than proofreading for mechanical errors. Instead, it asks you to “re-see” your paper from new angles in order to clarify your ideas and strengthen your prose. In addition, the revision process suggests that it is often useful to seek feedback from another person, in order to gain a fresh perspective on your work.

The following list should help you prioritize your work during the revision process:

1) **Does the paper respond adequately to the requirements of the assignment?** It can be very frustrating to reach a second or third draft and suddenly realize that you are “off track” and need to start over. Before you invest any more time into your draft, make sure that it fits with the assignment requirements and your instructor’s expectations.

2) **Is your paper structured in a clear and logical manner?** As you write, it is very natural for your ideas to develop and change, as well as for new ideas to emerge. So don’t be afraid to reorganize your paper after the first draft. The best writing is usually the result of many drafts and many attempts at structure.

3) **Are you using sufficient evidence to support your ideas and arguments?** Once you have determined that your overall structure is well-designed, turn your attention to the content of individual paragraphs. Here, you want to make sure that each paragraph makes a credible claim, and that you are incorporating enough evidence to support it. This work may require you to review your notes and/or to conduct additional research.

4) **Is your writing style appropriate to the discipline or genre?** Make sure that your language is formal enough for an academic paper (i.e., no slang or conversational language) and that you have defined any new or technical terminology for your reader.

5) **Is your prose graceful and compelling?** Consider the effect that your prose will have on your reader. Do you vary your sentence structure and word choice? Do you write in active voice unless there is a good reason no to? Is your tone compelling and persuasive?

6) **Are your sources (if applicable) well integrated and correctly cited?** Refer to the proper style guide for your discipline (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago) in order to make sure that you are citing sources correctly. In addition, be sure to integrate cited material into the body of your text.

7) **Are there any errors in your writing?** Finally, it is important to proofread for any errors in spelling, grammar, or punctuation. Do not rely on Spell Check and Grammar Check; it is important to read your work through carefully yourself!

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