

# The Writing Center @ EOU

## Editing your Paper

### Editing as a 3 Step Process

#### 1. Start by working with your paper as a whole.

You should consider editing a process that starts large and works its way down. Begin by working through your draft from start to finish looking for areas that don't seem to flow, areas with unclear meaning, and areas that seem awkward. At this point in the writing process, you should be primarily focused on identifying and correcting mistakes in word choice and sentence structure that impede the overall understanding of your paper.

#### 2. Break your paper down paragraph by paragraph.

After going over the whole paper, break the paper down paragraph by paragraph. Two common areas that commonly can use improvement are topic sentences and transitions. Check to be sure each of your paragraphs has a clear and relevant topic sentence. Likewise, check to see if within each paragraph you made adequate use of transitions to allow the paragraph to flow from beginning to end.

#### 3. Work through your paper sentence by sentence.

Following the review of your paragraphs, take a closer look at sentences. Read aloud one or two sentences at a time checking for coherence, repetition, and lack of sentence variance.

### Editing Tips

- Find a quiet, distraction free area to work.
- Keep a list of recurring errors, so you know what to look for in the future
- Don't worry about trying to perfectly memorize every grammar, punctuation, or formatting rule. Instead, learn to be familiar with them and to recognize areas that seem awkward, so they can be looked up later.
- Keep your writing handbooks and any handouts you may have close during the editing process. If you don't have any of these, don't be afraid to use the internet to look things up.
- Keep an eye out for unfamiliar words. If you aren't exactly sure of the meaning of a word you used, then either delete it or verify it. You should not use words you are unfamiliar with in your argument.

References: Gustavus Adolphus College, Writing@CSU Guide, University of Minnesota Center for Writing, Writing Center at UNC-Chapel Hill

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Campus Writing Tutors: <http://eou.mywconline.com>

Online Writing Tutors: <https://www.etutoring.org/login.cfm?institutionid=382&returnPage=>