Better Research Papers Workshop

AWC February 2017

Overview

- Improving the drafts students turn in
- Basic principles of responding to student writing
- Process for reviewing/responding to drafts
- Diagnosing main problems
- Choosing what to focus on
- Giving useful comments

Improving drafts

- Clear expectations (specific rubric)
- Reverse outline
- Peer review
- Student self-assessment against rubric
- You don't have to grade/comment on everything

Rubric

	Outstanding/Excellent	Good/Satisfactory	Marginal	Unsatisfactory
Thesis/Sense of Purpose	• Thesis is exceptionally clear, concise and arguable. • Writer is sophisticated in ability to signal purpose to the reader	• Thesis is clear and supportable • There is a controlling idea that holds the paper together	• Thesis is present, but may be unclear, too broad or difficult to argue, or only indirectly linked to the assignment • While there may be a sense of purpose that holds the paper together, it is often very broad	• Thesis is missing, incompletely expressed, or irrelevant to the assignment • Paper seems disjointed or incoherent
Analysis/Evidence	• Thesis is strongly supported by arguments and evidence that are consistently accurate, thorough and relevant • Support reflects sophisticated analysis and interpretation of evidence • Uses reliable and accurate information/evidence that is relevant to the main issue • Disassembles and reassembles relevant information in an accurate, critically-oriented, deep way, producing a synthesis of the material • Demonstrates a logical progression of thought throughout the writing • Conclusion is a logical and effective outgrowth of thesis	• Thesis is sufficiently supported by arguments and evidence which are accurate, thorough, and relevant • Support reflects sound analysis and interpretation of evidence • Usually uses reliable and accurate information that is relevant to the main issue, deviations do not detract from the overall paper • Logical progression of thought • Conclusion logically flows from thesis	• Thesis is generally supported by evidence, though not sufficient for all points • Paper reflects some careful thought and analysis, but it is inconsistent • Information/evidence is of marginal relevance to the main question or issue • Full synthesis is not achieved. Evidence is not disassembled and reassembled in a fully accurate, critical, or thorough way • Progression of ideas does not fully unfold in a logical manner • Conclusion is present, but does not tie to thesis as well as it could	• Thesis is never adequately supported; evidence is weak, inaccurate and/or misleading • Information/evidence does not clearly relate to the main question or issue • Synthesis of information is not attempted or lacks accuracy, critical assessment, or depth • Logical progression of ideas is absent • Minimal analysis reflected in the paper • No real conclusion or, if present, it fails to relate to the thesis
Organization	• Paper is remarkably clear and inherently logical in structure • Transitions smoothly link ideas within and between paragraphs • Paragraphs are tightly constructed and each focuses on one central idea • Paper is free of digressions and irrelevancies	• Paper has a sound organizational structure throughout • Adequate transitions guide the reader within and between paragraphs • Paragraph structure is solid • Digressions and irrelevancies, if present, are rare and do not significantly distract from the argument flow	• Some degree of organization is present • Paper is sometimes difficult to follow because of confusing arrangement of supporting ideas and/or ineffective transitions • Paragraph structure occasionally weak. Multiple ideas covered in lengthy passages • Digressions or irrelevancies sometimes distract reader from the flow of the argument	• Logical flow of ideas is interrupted, broken, or non existent • Writer's thoughts are difficult to follow throughout; transitions are not used. Abrupt, confusing, or unclear • Paragraph structure is haphazard • Digressions and irrelevancies consistently distract the reader from the flow of the argument

OPR: AWC/DEX   .pdf version Aug 2012   Distribution: 1-Student, 1-Instructor
 Copy comments to AUSRIS

	Outstanding/Excellent	Good/Satisfactory	Marginal	Unsatisfactory
Grammar/ Mechanics/ Documentation	• Displays exceptional command of standard written English • Includes well crafted sentences and reflects superb word choice • Clarity of ideas is enhanced through written expression • Sources are fully cited and in proper format • Publishable	• Demonstrates sound command of standard written English • Is generally correct and well written. Contains no persistent errors in grammar, mechanics, or word choice • Word and sentence choices clearly convey meaning • Sources are fully cited and citations generally correct	• Contains errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization • Sentence structure or word choice gets in the way of clear communication • Some sources are either not cited or are incorrectly cited	• Contains extensive errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization • Sentence structure hinders communication • Reader must occasionally guess at writer's meaning • Most sources are either not cited or are incorrectly cited

Strong/OK/Weak

GRID FOR COMMENTING ON RESEARCH PAPER

STRONG	OK	WEAK	
			YOUR IDEAS, YOUR COMMENTARY, YOUR INSIGHTS, YOUR UNIQUE CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUBJECT
			CONVEYS A SENSE OF CONVICTION, COMMITMENT
			INCLUSION AND USE OF DATA, RELEVANT INFORMATION
			APPROPRIATENESS AND RELIABILITY OF SOURCES
			ORGANIZATION, STRUCTURE, GUIDING THE READER
			LANGUAGE: SENTENCES, WORDING, VOICE, STYLE
			INTEGRATION OF QUOTATIONS INTO TEXT
			BALANCE BETWEEN QUOTATION AND YOUR WORDS
			CARRYING OUT PROCESS, GENUINE REVISION
			SENTENCE STRUCTURE, PUNCTUATION, SPELLING, PROOFREADING IN GENERAL
			CITATION OF SOURCES

Basic header style outline
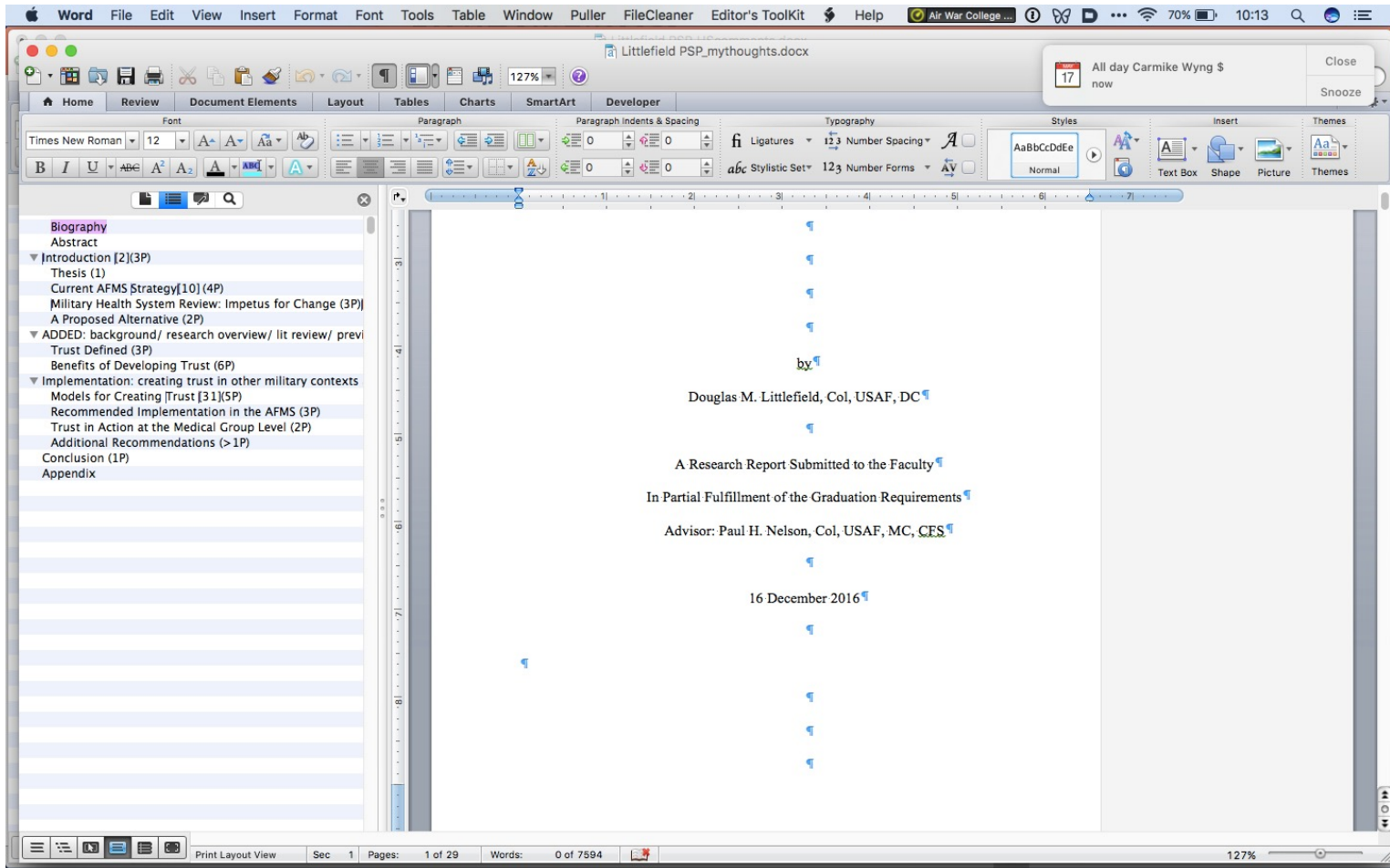
Reverse outline

1. **Title**
2. **Biography**
3. **Abstract**
4. **Introduction**
   Opens with anecdote: shows volume and importance of AFMC; starts to justify need for shared mission, goals, etc.
   Definition of strategy: weak
   Paper goal: topic sentence. Tells us that he's going to propose strategy for building trust, then he's going to define trust and lay out its benefits, then stories of seeing his recommendations in action. [Am sure this is going to be the interesting part and the rest is windup and justification, mostly.]
5. **Thesis:**
   Wordy. Basically, "need strategy to develop internal trust and trust with other teams: trusted care is a goal and this is one way to move toward it."
6. **Current AFMS strategy:**
   Despite the goal "trusted care," no mention of building trust among employees
   He's too scared to be critical of this oversight and it feels mealy-mouthed
   Confusing analogy about car trip (good impulse—to clarify and make concrete—but long and too vague
   Ends, ways, means: use team members as means toward goald of trusted care
   Goldfein agrees
7. **Military Health System Review: Impetus for Change**
   It's pretty good but could still improve; it's better than the healthcare system at large; "Trusted Care" framework created in response to this review
   Quotes document to justify his idea (good): notes that document has oversight in alignment of own objectives
8. **A Proposed Alternative**
   Unsaid: to CONOPS' ignoring this issue
   The benefits of trust hub as alternative to scattered energy going in multiple directions for AFMS
   Benefits to connecting in MC
   Benefits to connecting MC to other teams (combat)
9. **Trust Defined**
   Individual or organizational trust; risk part of it

Peer review

- Guided
- Specific instructions/questions
- Based on how you'll assess
- Share principles of good feedback (NOT editing!)

Self-assessment

1.

a. **First impression**: What kind of impression did you make when you entered the room or when the interview began? To what do you now attribute this first impression? In other words, what nonverbal cues did you give? (*Consider your posture, your facial expressions or general affect, your handshake, your gestures, and your appearance.*)

I think that my first impression showed that I was enthusiastic about the interview. I smiled, kept eye contact with my interviewer, and looked alert when the interviewer began. I kept good posture throughout the interview which showed that I was confident and prepared.

b. **Energy**: How would you characterize your energy throughout the interview? Through what parts of your body did you project or express energy? (*For example, do you seem positive, negative, nervous, bubbly, or intense? Feel free to think of other adjectives. Do you use particular parts of your body more than others? Describe what you noticed.*)

I would say that throughout the interview I was relaxed yet engaged. I smiled which gave off positive energy but I also made sure to look focused by nodding as my interviewer was asking questions so she knew I was engaged and truly listening to her. I noticed that I used small hand gestures occasionally but I do not think they were distracting or disruptive.

c. **Evolution**: Did your non-verbal cues remain the same throughout the interview or did they change over the course of the interview? Describe what you noticed and how you might explain any changes. (*Hint: Did you start gesturing at a particular moment? Was it in response to increased comfort, enthusiasm, or nervousness?*)

I noticed that I became more relaxed as the interview progressed. In the beginning my eyes were wandering a little as I was discussing my resume but then I became more comfortable and kept direct eye contact with my interviewer. I also smiled and sometimes laughed when I was answering particular questions which showed that I was more enthusiastic or excited about certain questions and that I enjoyed answering them. It also showed that I had relaxed since the beginning of the interview.

d. **Nonverbal strength and weakness**: What aspect of your nonverbal performance pleases you most? What nonverbal habit (if any) would you like to change? How and why?

I was pleased with how I carried myself overall. I thought that I appeared comfortable and excited to be at the interview. I also thought that looked prepared when I was answering the questions. I did not give any non

Principles of responding

- Triage: bones, muscles, skin (ROI)
- Good feedback:
  - Sympathetic reading
  - Facilitative
  - Global *and* local
  - Notice the good

Process for commenting on drafts

- Read through one time quickly
- Jot notes on separate sheet/outline or use lines method
- Choose a few (3–5) things to focus on (ROI)
- Read through again
  - Comment on chosen patterns
  - Give your reaction as a reader
  - Describe the paper

Diagnosing main problems

- Look for IMRAD elements

- Look at outline for logic gaps

- Look at space allotted to each section

- Monitor your reactions as a reader

Choosing what to focus on

- Bones first
  - Argument, so what, context, logic, global structure
- Muscles next
  - Framework, paragraph structure, sequencing, topic sentences, transitions
- Skin
  - Errors, word choice, formatting

Giving useful comments

- Use complete sentences (for clarity)
- Digital is best; dictation or recording saves time
- Describe what you see paper doing
- Give your readerly reactions
- Ask questions, don't give solutions
- Comment on patterns, not isolated incidents
- Do local (reporting) comments AND a synthetic end comment pulling together the 3–5 things you're focusing on; tie them together

Let's do this

- Read through Littlefield, first 2 pages
- Make notes on first impressions: lines method or separate sheet

- Look at Littlefield outline