The Revision Process Quick Guide

- Revision is an important step of writing any strong academic paper. Always give yourself enough time to fully revise.

- Prioritize your revision process. Start with the macro-level (higher order), then move to mezzo-level concerns. You will look for micro-level concerns when proofreading (see the Proofreading Quick Guide).

- Read your paper multiple times and focus on different concerns each time.

Macro Level ~ Editing for Idea

A macro-level idea relates to whether or not you are following assignment instructions, have a strong main point, and have a balance of evidence and analysis in your paper as a whole.

☐ **Re-read Assignment Instructions for Missing Information**
Evaluate whether your current draft is fulfilling the primary purpose of the assignment. With your paper and guidelines side by side, go through the paper one section at a time.

- Check off an item on your assignment instructions if you have responded to it in your paper.
- Circle anything you forgot to address.
- Add in information directly into the draft of the paper to address the circled points.

☐ **Revise Your Thesis**
At the beginning of your first draft, you should have written a preliminary thesis statement. However, sometimes your main idea will shift slightly while your write. Re-read your draft, then revise your thesis statement to fit the final argument you make in your paper.
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☐ Complete Additional Research

Scan your assignment guidelines and your paper. Is your current draft using enough appropriate sources? Do your body paragraphs contain enough evidence? If not, find more sources that offer support for your statements.

☐ Cut Repetition and Add Analysis

Since you only need to prove each point in your argument once, delete any evidence that repeats an idea from another source you have already used. Deleting repetition of information will free up space to add analysis and strengthen your argument.

Mezzo Level ~ Editing for Argument Development

At the mezzo, or middle level, you want to edit for clarity of structure and logical development of idea.

☐ Map Your Argument Using Topic Sentences

• Each topic sentence, the first sentence in each body paragraph, should be like a mini-thesis for the paragraph that follows. Topic sentences should also support your thesis statement.
• Highlight each topic sentence in your paper to create a topic sentence map.
• Read through this topic sentence map, without reading anything else in your paper. Do the sentences create a cohesive argument that supports your thesis?
• If there are any jumps in logic, off-topic sentences, or repeated ideas, edit those paragraphs in your paper.

☐ Map Your Argument Though Reverse Outlining

• In order to ensure that the argument you are building is cohesive and logical, create a reverse outline by following the steps below.
• Print out your paper.
• Read through each paragraph and write a short note in the margin that explains the main idea you got from reading the paragraph.
• Does it match the topic sentence? If not, revise the topic sentence.
• When you read through your margin notes in chronological order, they should read like a cohesive argument. Edit or omit paragraphs with jumps in logic or repetition of ideas.
• If you notice multiple main ideas in one paragraph, revise the paragraph: break it up into two paragraphs or move information unrelated to your topic sentence to another paragraph.

Micro Level ~ See the Proofreading Quick Guide