

**Final Paper**  
**Due Aug. 21<sup>st</sup> (or earlier)**  
Turn papers in to Social Sciences Building Room 909  
**NO LATE PAPERS**

**Format:**

**Introduction/Problem Statement**

For each of your topic give us some background information and familiarize the reader with the issue. This part of the paper should elaborate on the topic, providing details as to what – exactly – you might study. You will also need to discuss why this topic is important/sociological. Obviously poverty is an important issue in the world, but why specifically is it necessary to study.

My question is .... You will need to copyedit this section. Make sure that the wording is clear and concise. Depending on your topic you may have one good question or you may have two to four smaller questions that form a whole project. It is useful to elaborate on your research question and familiarize the reader with your topic.

**Literature Review**

You need to include an introductory paragraph. You will also need to revise and copyedit this section. Describe/state the themes that will be used to organize the literature. This is also often called a Roadmap paragraph. You need to make it clear that you will cover theme a, theme b, theme c, and theme d.

Theme a is the first theme you should cover. Then cover the rest of the themes in the order you presented them.

Theme b.

Theme c.

Theme d.

conclusion

Then you should restate your research questions and how the literature helped contribute to the final questions. This would be a conclusion statement for the literature review.

**Methodology**

Here you discuss your methods. There were three main sections to this paper. You will need to revise and copy edit this section.

The first section, includes your unit of analysis, the population you want your research to speak to, and how you are going to sample units from your population.

A second section detailing the mode of observation you are going to use to collect your data. What is your method and why is it useful? Strengths/Weaknesses.

A final section detailing the type of data that is going to be produced, i.e. transcripts of interviews, a dataset like the GSS, fieldnotes, etc; how that data is going to be analyzed, how potential results are related to your research questions, and what further research should be conducted on your topic.

Conclusion paragraph. How your method will help you answer your question. What

further research should be conducted? If you had time, money, status how would you suggest answering this question? What kind of data would you use if any data could be produced? What would be the best case scenario for answering this question?

Conclusion

Overall wrap-up for the paper. May just be a paragraph or two.

Bibliography

Single-spaced and alphabetized.

**Tips:**

- Do not forget a bibliography.
- Read your paper from end to beginning one sentence at a time. Each sentence should be able to stand on its own and add something new to the paper.
- This has to be copy-edited. That means checking for errors in spelling, grammar and style. We are looking for a clear and concise final paper.
- Do not include title of book or article as an in-text citation.
- Authors can make statements; books/articles can not make statements. "The book states" is incorrect. Clonney states, "blahbalh blah". Is correct.

**Proofreading Strategies**

Brought to you by the Purdue University Online Writing Lab at

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>

For more information on proofreading, see the Purdue OWL's other handouts on the subjects:

\* Steps in Editing at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_stepedit.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_stepedit.html)

\* Editing and Proofreading Strategies for Revision at

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_edit.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_edit.html)

\* Proofreading Your Paper at

[http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_proof2.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_proof2.html)

No matter how many times you read through a "finished" paper, you're likely to miss many of your most frequent errors. This handout will help you proofread more effectively

...

\* By giving you some useful general strategies for proofreading well

\* By giving you strategies which personalize proofreading so you can identify errors you typically make (You don't need to check for everything. It's more efficient to know your typical problem areas and make several passes through the paper for them.)

\* By giving you specific strategies for finding and correcting those errors.

General Strategies

Begin by taking a break. Allow yourself some time between writing and proofing. Even a five-minute break is productive because it will help get some distance from what you have written. The goal is to return with a fresh eye and mind.

The following strategies will help you s l o w d o w n as you read through a paper and will therefore help you catch mistakes that you might otherwise overlook. As you use these strategies, remember to work slowly. If you read at a normal speed, you won't give your eyes sufficient time to spot errors.

Read aloud

Reading a paper aloud encourages you to read every little word.

Read with a "cover"

Sliding a blank sheet of paper down the page as you read encourages you to make a detailed, line-by-line review of the paper.

#### Role-play

Playing the role of the reader encourages you to see the paper as your audience might.

#### Strategies Which Personalize Proofreading

In addition to using the general strategies already listed, you'll need to personalize the proofreading process.

You won't be able to check for everything (and you don't have to), so you should find out what your typical problem areas are and look for each type of error individually. Here's how:

Find out what errors you typically make. Review instructors' comments about your writing and/or review your paper(s) with a Writing Lab tutor.

Learn how to fix those errors. Talk with your instructor and/or with a Writing Lab tutor. The instructor and the tutor can help you understand why you make the errors you do so that you can learn to avoid them.

Use specific strategies. Use the strategies detailed on the following pages to find and correct your particular errors in organization and paragraphing, usage and sentence structure, and spelling and punctuation.

To locate and correct errors in your papers, find the strategies on the following pages which correspond to your typical problem areas and follow the step-by-step instructions provided for you. Each strategy is designed to focus your attention on only one particular error, so to be most effective, use only one strategy at a time. (Ask a Writing Lab tutor about any terms you don't understand and/or refer to Lab handouts.)

#### Organization and Paragraphing

##### Thesis/Focus/Main Point

1. Find your paper's thesis statement. Copy it on another sheet of paper. If your thesis is not directly stated, write down a possible thesis.
2. Locate the central idea of each paragraph and try to reduce that idea to a word or phrase. If you cannot decide on one phrase, list two or three options.
3. List the paragraph ideas. List these in order under your thesis.
4. Decide whether your paragraphs clearly relate to your thesis. If not, either rewrite your thesis to incorporate the unrelated ideas or eliminate the unrelated paragraphs.

For more information, consult the OWL handout on thesis statements at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/ResearchW/examp.html>.

##### Paragraph Clarity

1. Locate the central idea of each paragraph. Reduce that idea to a word or phrase.
2. Look at each paragraph randomly. Consider only the information in that paragraph.
3. Ask yourself whether you offer enough details in the paragraph to support that word or idea.
4. Decide whether all of your details are relevant.
5. Ask yourself whether all of the information is related enough to be in the same paragraph. Should you create another paragraph or move some of the details to another paragraph?

For more information, consult the OWL handout on paragraphs at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_pgrph.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_pgrph.html).

## Overall Coherence

1. See whether you have clear transitions between paragraphs. If not, clarify existing transitions, add new ones, and/or rearrange your paragraphs to make transitions clearer. For more information, consult the OWL handouts on transitions at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_transition.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_transition.html) and coherence at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_cohere.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_cohere.html).

## Usage and Sentence Structure

### Subject/Verb Agreement

1. Find the main verb in each sentence.
2. Match the verb to its subject.
3. Make sure that the subject and verb agree in number.

For more information, consult the OWL handout on subject/verb agreement at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/esl/eslsubverb.html>.

### Pronoun Reference/Agreement

1. Skim your paper, stopping at each pronoun. Look especially at it, this, they, their, and them.
2. Search for the noun that the pronoun replaces. If you can't find any noun, insert one beforehand or change the pronoun to a noun. If you can find a noun, be sure it agrees in number and person with your pronoun.

See the OWL handout on pronouns at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_pronuse.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_pronuse.html).

### Parallel Structure

1. Skim your paper, stopping at key words that signal parallel structures. Look especially for and, or, not only...but also, either... or, neither...nor, both...and.
2. Make sure that the items connected by these words (adjectives, nouns, phrases, etc.) are in the same grammatical form.

For more information, see the OWL handout on parallel structure at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_parallel.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_parallel.html).

## Spelling and Punctuation

### Spelling

1. Examine each word in the paper individually. Move from the end of each line back to the beginning. Pointing with a pencil helps you really see each word.
2. If necessary, check a dictionary to see that each word is spelled correctly.

For more information, see the OWL handout on spelling at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/index.html#spelling>.

### Compound Sentence Commas

1. Skim for the conjunctions and, but, for, or, nor, so and yet.
2. See whether there is a complete sentence on each side of the conjunction. If so, place a comma before the conjunction.

For more information, see the OWL handout on compound sentence commas at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_clause.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_clause.html).

### Introductory Commas

1. Skim your paper, looking only at the first two or three words of each sentence.

2. Stop if one of these words is a dependent marker, a transition word, a participle, or a preposition.
3. Listen for a possible break point before the main clause.
4. Place a comma at the end of the introductory phrase or clause (which is before the independent clause).

For more information, see the OWL handout on commas after introductions at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_commainit.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_commainit.html).

#### Comma Splices

1. Skim the paper, stopping at every comma.
2. See whether there is a complete sentence on each side of the comma. If so, add a coordinating conjunction after the comma or replace the comma with a semicolon.

For more information, see the OWL handout on commas at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_comma.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_comma.html).

#### Fragments

1. Look at each sentence to see whether it contains an independent clause.
2. Pay special attention to sentences that begin with dependent marker words (such as because) or phrases such as for example or such as.
3. See if the sentence might be just a piece of the previous sentence that mistakenly got separated by a period.

For more information, see the OWL handout on sentence fragments at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_frag.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_frag.html).

#### Run-On Sentences

1. Review each sentence to see whether it contains more than one independent clause. Start with the last sentence of your paper, and work your way back to the beginning, sentence by sentence.
2. Break the sentence into two sentences if necessary.

See the OWL handout on comma splices at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_sentpr.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_sentpr.html).

#### Apostrophes

1. Skim your paper, stopping only at those words which end in "s."
2. See whether or not each "s" word needs an apostrophe. If an apostrophe is needed, you will be able to invert the word order and say "of" or "of the":

\* Mary's hat

\* the hat of Mary

For more information, consult OWL Handout on the apostrophe at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_apost.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_apost.html).

#### Left-Out Words

1. Read the paper aloud, pointing to every word as you read. Don't let your eye move ahead until you spot each word.

2. Also, make sure that you haven't doubled any words.

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### **Higher Order Concerns (HOCs) and**

### **Lower Order Concerns (LOCs)**

**Brought to you by the Purdue University Online Writing Lab at**

**<http://owl.english.purdue.edu>**

When you are revising your papers, not every element of your work should have equal priority. The most important parts of your paper, often called "Higher Order Concerns (HOCs)," are the "big picture" elements such as thesis or focus, audience and purpose, organization, and development. After you have addressed these important elements, you can then turn your attention to the "Lower Order Concerns (LOCs)," such as sentence structure and grammar.

Some HOCs

Thesis or focus:

\*

Does the paper have a central thesis?

\*

Can you, if asked, offer a one-sentence explanation or summary of what the paper is about?

\*

Ask someone to read the first paragraph or two and tell you what he or she thinks the paper will discuss.

Audience and purpose:

\*

Do you have an appropriate audience in mind? Can you describe them?

\*

Do you have a clear purpose for the paper? What is it intended to do or accomplish?

\*

Why would someone want to read this paper?

\*

Does the purpose match the assignment?

Organization:

\*

Does the paper progress in an organized, logical way?

\*

Go through the paper and jot down notes on the topics of the various paragraphs. Look at this list and see if you can think of a better organization.

\*

Make a brief outline. Does the organization make sense? Should any part be moved to another part?

\*

Ask someone to read the paper. At the end of each paragraph, ask the person to forecast where the paper is headed. If the paper goes in a direction other than the one forecasted by the reader, is there a good reason, or do you need to rewrite something there?

Development:

\*

Are there places in the paper where more details, examples, or specifics are needed?

\*

Do any paragraphs seem much shorter and in need of more material than others? (For more help, see our handout on paragraphing at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_pgrph.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_pgrph.html).)

\*

Ask someone to read the paper and comment if something is unclear and needs more description, explanation, or support.

Some LOCs

Sentence structure, punctuation, word choice, spelling

\*

Are there a few problems that frequently occur? Keep a list of problems that recur and check for those.

\*

Read the paper aloud watching and listening for anything that sounds incorrect.

\*

Ask yourself why you put punctuation marks in certain places. Do you need to check any punctuation rules? (For more help see our handouts on punctuation at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/index.html>.)

\*

For possible spelling errors, proofread backwards, from the end of a line to the beginning. The following information must remain intact on every handout printed for distribution.

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### **Coherence**

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When sentences, ideas, and details fit together clearly, readers can follow along easily, and the writing is coherent. The ideas tie together smoothly and clearly. To establish the links that readers need, you can use the methods listed here.

Repetition of a Key Term or Phrase

This helps to focus your ideas and to keep your reader on track.

Example: The problem with contemporary art is that it is not easily understood by most people. Contemporary art is deliberately abstract, and that means it leaves the viewer wondering what she is looking at.

#### Synonyms

Synonyms are words that have essentially the same meaning, and they provide some variety in your word choices, helping the reader to stay focused on the idea being discussed.

Example: Myths narrate sacred histories and explain sacred origins. These traditional narratives are, in short, a set of beliefs that are a very real force in the lives of the people who tell them.

#### Pronouns

This, that, these, those, he, she, it, they, and we are useful pronouns for referring back to something previously mentioned. Be sure, however, that what you are referring to is clear.

Example: When scientific experiments do not work out as expected, they are often considered failures until some other scientist tries them again. Those that work out better the second time around are the ones that promise the most rewards.

#### Transitional Words

There are many words in English that cue our readers to relationships between sentences, joining sentences together. See the handout on Transitional Devices (Connecting Words) at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl\\_transition.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/general/gl_transition.html). There you'll find lists of words such as however, therefore, in addition, also, but, moreover, etc.

Example: I like autumn, and yet autumn is a sad time of the year, too. The leaves turn bright shades of red and the weather is mild, but I can't help thinking ahead to the winter and the ice storms that will surely blow through here. In addition, that will be the season of chapped faces, too many layers of clothes to put on, and days when I'll have to shovel heaps of snow from my car's windshield.

#### Sentence Patterns

Sometimes, repeated or parallel sentence patterns can help the reader follow along and keep ideas tied together.

Example: (from a speech by President John F. Kennedy) And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

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#### **Strategies for Improving Sentence Clarity**

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Go from old to new information

Introduce your readers to the "big picture" first by giving them information they already know. Then they can link what's familiar to the new information you give them. As that new information becomes familiar, it too becomes old information that can link to newer information.

The following example sentence is clear and understandable because it uses old information to lead to new information:

Every semester after final exams are over, I'm faced with the problem of what to do with books of lecture notes (new information). They (old) might be useful some day, but they just keep piling up on my bookcase (new). Someday, it (old) will collapse under the weight of information I might never need.

Here is a sentence that is not as clear. It moves from new information to old information:

Lately, most movies I've seen have been merely second-rate entertainment, but occasionally there are some with worthwhile themes. The rapid disappearance of the Indian culture (new) is the topic of a recent movie (old) I saw.

Did you find the second sentence hard to read or understand? If so, it could be because the old information comes late in the sentence after the new information. A clearer version that moves from old information to new information might look like this:

Lately, most movies I've seen have been merely second-rate entertainment, but occasionally there are some with worthwhile themes. One recent movie (old) I saw was about the rapid disappearance of the Indian culture. (new)

Be careful about placement of subordinate clauses

Avoid interrupting the main clause with a subordinate clause if the interruption will cause confusion:

\* clear (subordinate clause at the end):

Industrial spying is increasing rapidly because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information.

\* clear (subordinate clause at the beginning):

Because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information, industrial spying is increasing rapidly.

\* not as clear (subordinate clause embedded in the middle):

Industrial spying, because of the growing use of computers to store and process corporate information, is increasing rapidly.

Use active voice

Sentences in active voice are usually easier to understand than those in passive voice because active-voice constructions indicate clearly the performer of the action expressed in the verb. In addition, changing from passive voice to active often results in a more concise sentence. So use active voice unless you have good reason to use the passive. For example, the passive is useful when you don't want to call attention to the doer; when the

doer is obvious, unimportant, or unknown; or when passive voice is the conventional style among your readers.

For more on this topic, consult our handout on active and passive voice at [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g\\_actpass.html](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar/g_actpass.html).

\* clear (active):

The committee decided to postpone the vote.

\* not as clear (passive):

A decision was reached to postpone the vote.

Use parallel constructions

When you have a series of words, phrases, or clauses, put them in parallel form (similar grammatical construction) so that the reader can identify the linking relationship more easily and clearly.

\* clear (parallel):

In Florida, where the threat of hurricanes is an annual event, we learned that it is important (1) to become aware of the warning signs, (2) to know what precautions to take, and (3) to decide when to seek shelter.

\* not as clear (not parallel):

In Florida, where the threat of hurricanes is an annual event, we learned that it is important (1) to become aware of the warning signs. (2) There are precautions to take, and (3) deciding when to take shelter is important.

In the second sentence, notice how the string of "things to be aware of in Florida" does not create a parallel structure. Also, notice how much more difficult it is for a reader to follow the meaning of the second sentence compared to the first one.

Avoid noun strings

Try not to string nouns together one after the other because a series of nouns is difficult to understand. One way to revise a string of nouns is to change one noun to a verb.

\* unclear (string of nouns):

This report explains our investment growth stimulation projects.

\* clearer:

This report explains our projects to stimulate growth in investments.

Avoid overusing noun forms of verbs

Use verbs when possible rather than noun forms known as "nominalizations."

\* unclear (use of nominalization):

The implementation of the plan was successful.

\* clearer:

The plan was implemented successfully.

We implemented the plan successfully.

Avoid multiple negatives

Use affirmative forms rather than several negatives because multiple negatives are difficult to understand.

\* unclear (multiple negatives, passive):

Less attention is paid to commercials that lack human interest stories than to other kinds of commercials.

\* clearer:

People pay more attention to commercials with human interest stories than to other kinds of commercials.

Choose action verbs over forms of be

When possible, avoid using forms of be as the main verbs in your sentences and clauses.

This problem tends to accompany nominalization (see above). Instead of using a be verb,

focus on the actions you wish to express, and choose the appropriate verbs. In the following example, two ideas are expressed: 1) that there is a difference between television and newspaper news reporting, and 2) the nature of that difference. The revised version expresses these two main ideas in the two main verbs.

\* Unclear (overuse of be verbs):

One difference between television news reporting and the coverage provided by newspapers is the time factor between the actual happening of an event and the time it takes to be reported. The problem is that instantaneous coverage is physically impossible for newspapers.

\* Clearer:

Television news reporting differs from that of newspapers in that television, unlike newspapers, can provide instantaneous coverage of events as they happen.

Avoid unclear pronoun references

Be sure that the pronouns you use refer clearly to a noun in the current or previous sentence. If the pronoun refers to a noun that has been implied but not stated, you can clarify the reference by explicitly using that noun.

\* Unclear (unclear pronoun reference):

With the spread of globalized capitalism, American universities increasingly follow a corporate fiscal model, tightening budgets and hiring temporary contract employees as teachers. This has prompted faculty and adjunct instructors at many schools to join unions as a way of protecting job security and benefits.

\* Clearer:

With the spread of globalized capitalism, American universities increasingly follow a corporate fiscal model, tightening budgets and hiring temporary contract employees as teachers. This trend has prompted faculty and adjunct instructors at many schools to join unions as a way of protecting job security and benefits.

\* Unclear (unclear pronoun reference):

Larissa worked in a national forest last summer, which may be her career choice.

\* Clearer:

Larissa worked in a national forest last summer; forest management may be her career choice.

Larissa worked in a national forest last summer, and she may choose a forest management career.

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