

PRECISION WRITING

Presented by Dr. Chris Holmes

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SESSION 3—REVISING  
THE PAPER

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REVISING THE PAPER

- When done thoroughly, the work of revision is painstaking
- Revision is performed not merely to eliminate errors but also to strengthen the arrangement and argument of the paper
- This session covers the basic work of preparing a final draft of the paper that is ready to be submitted

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## CONFORMING THE PAPER TO STYLE

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### CONFORMING THE PAPER TO STYLE

- Guidelines for preparing and submitting papers assume that the papers should look a certain way
- With some variations, these guidelines are essentially consistent for undergraduate, graduate, and professional documents
- Your research paper must conform to the stylistic requirements of the style guide assigned by your instructor
- Examples of these areas include margins, indents (tabs), line spacing, bibliographic and footnote citations, page numbers, font sizes, headings, title pages, etc.

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## THE STYLE GUIDE

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## THE STYLE GUIDE

- The style guide provides at least the basic information about the stylistic issues that you need to monitor in your paper
- Familiarity with the style guide is essential
- There is some variation in style guides, so do not assume that a particular guideline will not vary from one guide to another
- Few guides address all of the potential questions that may be encountered; it may be necessary to consult additional style guides for specific circumstances

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## OTHER STYLE GUIDES AND MANUALS

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## OTHER STYLE GUIDES AND MANUALS

- Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* is a particularly helpful resource
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*
- *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*
- *APA Style*

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## REVISE, REWRITE, REPEAT

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## REVISE, REWRITE, REPEAT

- The process of revising a paper is progressive
- “Revise, rewrite, repeat” will provide the best results in the preparation of your research paper
- It may—and probably will—require several rounds of revision and rewriting to bring your paper to readiness for submission
- You will rarely catch all of the problems in a single pass
- Ideally, you should revise your paper at least twice

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## TYPOGRAPHICAL AND OTHER ERRORS

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## TYPOGRAPHICAL AND OTHER ERRORS

- Watch closely for the common sources of problems (grammar, punctuation, word usage, spelling, etc.)
- Set your word processing program to alert you to words that may be misspelled or to grammatical issues
- Do not overlook the inclusion of page numbers (be sure to make them conform to the style guide)

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## TYPOGRAPHICAL AND OTHER ERRORS

- Orphans & Widows:
- No single line of a paragraph should end or begin a page
  - At least two lines of a paragraph should conclude or begin a page
  - Your word processor should have a setting to help with this
  - Do not attempt to fix this problem until later in the revision process

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## READ THE PAPER ALOUD

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## READ THE PAPER ALOUD

- Just do it!
- Your ears will notice things that your eyes may miss
- Problems such as subject/verb agreement will be more noticeable when that paper is read out loud
- If you listen, you will also notice problems in argumentation or organization that need to be corrected

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## EXTERNAL REVIEW

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## EXTERNAL REVIEW

- If time allows, arranging for another person to read your paper can be very helpful
- You may have to provide a beverage or snack as payment, but it shouldn't be much more painful than that
- Some individuals and services exist that will look over your paper and provide corrections and other editing services
- You need to develop good editing skills on your own
- Let the person know what to be watching for in your paper

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# BOOK REVIEWS

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

- A book review is a special kind of research paper
- It is likely that you will have to provide one or more book reviews over the course of your studies
- Book reviews can be helpful to you as they can inform you as to the worth of some of your resource materials
- They are intended to provide information on a book's reliability, depth, strengths & weaknesses, academic value, etc.

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

- Check your style guide for how to prepare book reviews
- Most book reviews are 3-5 pages in length
- Content:
  - Bibliographic citation (usually including the retail price)
  - Introduction
  - Summary
  - Critical Evaluation
  - Conclusion

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## RESOURCES FOR REVISING AND EDITING

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## RESOURCES FOR REVISING AND EDITING

### Printed Resources:

- *Schaum's Quick Guide to Writing Great Research Papers*  
by Laurie Rozakis (McGraw-Hill, 2007)
- *10 Steps in Writing the Research Paper*  
by Peter Markman and Alison Heney  
(Barron's Educational Series)
- *Don't Panic: The Procrastinator's Guide to Writing an Effective Term Paper* by Steven Posusta (Bandanna Books, 1996)

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## RESOURCES FOR REVISING AND EDITING

### Online Resources:

- Indiana University Northwest  
Editing an Academic Paper  
<http://www.iun.edu/utep/docs/editing-academic-paper.pdf>
- American Journal Experts  
<https://www.aje.com/assets/docs/AJE-Manuscript-Consistency-Checklist-2015.pdf>
- Columbia College in Columbia, MO  
<https://web.ccis.edu/Offices/AcademicResources/WritingCenter/EssayWritingAssistance/EditingYourPaper.aspx>

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