

MCC Writing Center

Global and Local Revision

First steps:

- 1.) Once you have a finished draft, try to set it aside for a day before coming back to it.
- 2.) Go back and reread the assignment so that the requirements are fresh in your mind.
- 3.) Read the paper aloud, slowly, carefully attending to how it sounds and what you see as you read.

Suggestions for making global (large, big picture) revisions:

Focus

- Can you give a one sentence description of the argument or main point?
- Sometimes as you draft, you take the paper in an unexpected direction for which your introduction doesn't account. After rereading your paper, does the introduction accurately address what your paper argues or discusses?
- Ask a friend to read your introduction—the first paragraph or two—and tell you what she or he thinks the paper will be about.

Organization

- Pay special attention to the transitions—particularly the first and last sentence of every paragraph. Does one paragraph lead you to the next in a logical manner?
- Sometimes it's easier to “see” the organization if you make an outline after you have a draft. Go through the paper and write a list of the topic each paragraph covers. Does this order make sense? Is there a better order? Do you find places where you are repeating yourself?

Development

- When you reread the paper, do you notice places where your ideas need more examples, details, or specific information to support them? Look especially for places where you've made statements or claims. Do you offer information to back it up?
- Ask someone to read your paper to see if there are places that are confusing, that seem to need more support or explanation. Where are there good ideas that could be made stronger if more information were provided?

Some suggestions for local (sentence level) revision:

- Are there specific concerns you have about your writing or problems that you know frequently occur? Keep a list of those and check for them, or ask a friend to do the same.
- Are there places you have questions about what punctuation mark to use? Can you explain why you have placed punctuation marks in certain places? If not, you might want to check a handbook for the rules.
- Be sure to run spellcheck.
- See also “Tips for Editing” handout.