

Argument Revision Workshop
ENGL 115

Below you will find four different revisions exercises. Please do Revision Exercise One—*this one is mandatory*—and then choose at least one other exercise to try with your paper. Chose an exercise from numbers Two, Three, or Four that think would most benefit your paper. (Note: You can do all of these is you like but it is not required.) Please post your results to the Canvas discussion board—you can find the link in the schedule.

Revision Exercise One (mandatory):

Consider each paragraph of your essay, one at a time. What is the overall purpose of each paragraph? Does it introduce an idea? Back a claim? Present a counter-argument? Refute a counter-argument? Suggest a solution? Provide a “call to action” to your audience? A combination of two or more of these?

Write out the “pattern” of your paper, listing the rhetorical purpose of each paragraph. Reflect upon the way your paper is arranged by examining the purpose of each paragraph. Are there any missing parts to your argument? Or segments that are under-represented? Additionally, from reviewing this information, you might also decide to experiment with rearranging your argument into other forms for clearer rhetorical purpose, or to group a set of purposes together.

Please post your “pattern” on Canvas, as well as a brief reflection about what you’ve learned from examining your paper in this manner and/or any changes you might make in light of that.

Revision Exercise Two:

Play “devil’s advocate” with your argument by writing out a paragraph that is totally opposing the position you take in your paper. (If you have constructed a Rogerian argument, you can disagree with the common ground or solution you have proposed.) Be as passionate and convincing with your doubts as possible. Once you have done this, reassess your essay to make sure you have included counter-arguments that might be raised by those wholly opposed to your position, and see if you have made effective rebuttals to those opposing positions. Would your opponent be swayed? Why or why not?

Post your “opposing view” to Canvas, along with your reflection of how well you have addressed these concerns in your argument, if you think you could convince someone who held this position, and/or if you might choose to revise to incorporate or anticipate this opposition.

Revision Exercise Three:

Read through your essay and assess the ethos and tone of your paper. How do you construct your ethos? If an outside reader knew nothing about you except what he or she read in your paper, what would be the assessment of your authority as a speaker? What words do you use? Is your tone forceful? Light-hearted? Understanding? Curious? Note

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what tone you use throughout your paper, including times that this tone may transition into other tones. Is your current tone and use of ethos the most effective to persuade your audience? Are there ways you might alter your presentation for greater rhetorical effect?

Post your reflections about tone and ethos to Canvas, including your assessment of the effectiveness of both upon your intended audience.

Revision Exercise Four:

Choose a paragraph that either 1) is very important to your paper (e.g. the introduction or conclusion, where you refute a counter argument) or 2) a paragraph that you feel is unclear or not as fully developed as you would like. Read your original paragraph and then don't look at it again. Rewrite the entire paragraph in a new way – presenting information in a different order, using different words and descriptions, etc. Once you are done, compare it to the original paragraph – which one is more effective? Did you prefer your original or the rewrite? Or are there parts of both that you think work best? Which one, or combination of both, will you use for your final paper?

Post your original and rewritten paragraphs to Canvas, as well as your reflections about what you think works and doesn't about both paragraphs. Also include which one, or combination of both, you intend to use for your final paper.