



# Center for Writing and Speaking

## **E** NO. 2 IN THE CENTER FOR WRITING AND SPEAKING HANDOUT SERIES

### Revising Your Draft

#### **Take a break.**

Before attempting to revise your essay, take a break. Thinking about something else will give your mind a rest so you can return to the paper refreshed.

#### **Stage One: The Big Picture.**

- The first stage of revising should focus on the big picture — addressing the content and organization of your draft as a whole.
  - Look at the **CONTENT** of your draft. Check to be sure that...
    - The language and ideas of your thesis are carried throughout the rest of your essay.
    - Your points are developed using specific examples.
    - Your points are based in analysis, not summary. (See Handout No. 13)
  - Look at the **ORGANIZATION** of your draft. Check to be sure that...
    - Your ideas flow logically from one paragraph to another in an organized manner
    - Your ideas on a specific topic or point are grouped in one section of the essay, not spread throughout.
    - Your points serve as support or proof of your thesis.

#### **Stage Two: The Closer Look.**

- The second stage of revising should focus on the smaller picture — refining the content and organization of your individual paragraphs and points.
  - Look at the **CONTENT** and **ORGANIZATION** of your points. Check to be sure that...
    - The points within the paragraphs follow a logical sequence.
    - Each paragraph includes a transition from one point or example to another.
    - Each paragraph includes a main idea or topic sentence.
    - Each paragraph includes specific examples that support the main idea of the paragraph as well as the thesis of the paper.
    - Each paragraph includes a concluding sentence that links the point to the thesis.
  - Look at the **CLARITY** of your points. Check to be sure that...
    - The points within the paragraphs are concise and direct, but substantial.
    - The points within the paragraphs have precise word choice and varied sentence structure.

#### **Read the draft aloud.**

- After you have revised, take the time to read your draft aloud. You may hear problems or errors that your eyes do not catch, including awkward transitions or wording and grammar mistakes.

**Make** an appointment with the CWS for further revision--another set of eyes can sometimes see errors you can't!

AGNES SCOTT