

WINONA

STATE UNIVERSITY

Writing Checklist and Basic Guidelines for Drafting, Editing, and Revising

Winona State Doctoral Program: Summer Residency 2024

Grammar/Punctuation

- Does the paper use appropriate tenses?
- Does each sentence start with a different word?
- Does the paper avoid intensifiers?
- Does the paper avoid pronouns?
- Does the paper use active voice instead of passive voice?
- Does the paper avoid the words demonstratives and the word 'the'?
- Does the paper avoid contractions?

Formatting/Organization

- Is the paper in Times New Roman, 12 font, Double-Spaced?
- Does each paragraph focus on one thought/idea?
- Is each paragraph shorter than one page?
- Does each paragraph flow to the next paragraph?

APA

- Are the quotes selected meaningful?
- Are there any quotes longer than three lines (40 words)? Are these quotes indented?
- Is there a reference page at the end? Does it have its own page?
- Does each in-text citation include the last name and year?
- Are the references at the end in alphabetical order?
- Are the citations within five years?

Other

- Does the paper have any bias or generalizations?
- Does the paper match the right audience?

Writing Cheat Sheet

Contractions:

It is important to limit the number of contractions you use in your papers. The only time you might use a contraction is in a direct quote. Below are some examples of contractions:

- Can't, Won't, Wouldn't, Couldn't, Aren't, There's, Didn't

Pronouns:

Avoid pronouns as much as possible. Again, only use if you are using a direct quote. Below are some examples of pronouns:

- You, Me, I, She, We, He, They, It

Intensifier Examples:

Avoid using intensifiers. Intensifiers are usually pointless and add extra words to your paper that do not need to be there. Below are some examples of intensifiers:

- So, Really, Very, Completely, Pretty, Especially

Active vs. Passive Voice

Making sure your paper is written in active voice rather than passive voice is very challenging. Using active voice allows the paper to be more direct, clear and concise. Below are some examples of how to change your paper from passive voice to active voice:

Example	Passive Voice	Active Voice
1.	Summer residency was completed by the doctoral students.	The doctoral students completed summer residency.
2.	The dissertation on elementary education was written by the researcher.	The researcher wrote a dissertation on elementary education.
3.	Every night the students will have to study.	The students will study every night.
4.	This week, the snacks are being eaten by the doctoral students.	The doctoral students are eating snacks this week.

You will want to focus on the order of your sentence to make sure it is in active voice. See below:

- Active Voice Order: Subject, Verb, Object of Verb
- Passive Voice Order: Object of Verb, Verb, Subject

Avoid phrases like:

- Have been, Had been, Was being, Will be, Was not, Were not, Is being, Are being, Is done, Was done, Will have been

Demonstratives and the word 'the'

Be careful when using this, these, that, and those. You can use the words, but make sure your audience knows exactly what you are talking about. Using the words frequently can make your writing confusing or less clear when reading. Double check any sentence that uses *the*. Many times, you can take out the word 'the' and the sentence will be clearer.