

Writing and Editorial Support Services

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Introduction

Academic writing, especially research and scholarly writing, requires accuracy, precision, and therefore extensive editing. Although some participants bring to their graduate study years of technical writing experience, a lucid writing style and an understanding of APA requirements and AU format standards, others need to cultivate these skills through formal courses, intense feedback from teachers and advisors, and support from classmates and/or Leadership and Learning groups. Some get support from professional editors. This paper details some of these solutions for improving academic and scholarly writing.

Orientation, Annual Conferences and Research Boot Camps

At orientation, participants are trained on Endnote and the use of American Psychology Association (APA) (2006) style and *Andrews University Standards for Written Work* as well as other resources to guide their writing. During annual conferences additional seminars on writing and managing/editing academic material and presentations are provided, including writing literature reviews, editing for publications, structuring book reviews, etc. The annual research boot camp which typically follows the annual conference helps individuals focus on writing a research design (often the chapter three) and findings sections of their research using more complex phrases and explanations of methods, statistics, validity, reliability, trustworthiness, etc. All of these opportunities provide intensive support, but also introduce participants to learning crucial for academic writing success.

Courses

There are many courses offered throughout the English department at this and other universities that participants may wish to take, either to transfer into their program or to supplement it. We have two courses in our department that are useful for participants:

LEAD535 D (1-3)

Principles of Academic Writing

This course offers an introduction to the art of academic discourse that will prepare students for writing research papers, theses and dissertations. It covers summary, analysis and synthesis, structure and language use, style and formatting, and the concept of writing as both a process and a skill learned best through continual practice.

LEAD625 D (1-2)

Research Writing Seminar

Provides an overview of the technical aspects involved in writing research reports, focusing specifically on the language, structure, style and composition process typically used in research writing.

Research Course(s)

Although every graduate course you take will provide scholarly writing experience, three are especially designed to mature your scholarship and technical research writing related to your specific research project(s): LEAD637, LEAD880, and LEAD899. LEAD637 requires the expansion of your Endnote database, provides training in locating and critiquing scholarship, and helps you build a significant literature review/document in your area of focus. LEAD880 is designed to leverage your literature review into a full dissertation proposal, further growing your ability to write research designs and plans. Then LEAD899 with the chair of your dissertation committee gives you detailed and systematic feedback to improve your conceptual explanations and logic, technical prose for complex scholarship, and APA & AU standards & requirements for research reports.

In the event that research committees need an editor, we would like to give them a list of people to call:

Editing and Editorial Services

Throughout your academic writing journey, but especially toward the end when you are finalizing research reports (like dissertations) and reflection papers, you may need professional help. Although advisors and committees will help with some aspects of editing, often they can provide only general recommendations. The outline below describes the various types of editing typically needed for research writing and some frequent source(s) for help:

Table 1- Types of editing

Stage	Description	Main Help
Conceptual (1)	This involves understanding variables, theories, key concepts, and connecting those to existing literature. The committee should help here the most by providing ideas for literature and theoretical explanations. Once findings have been summarized, conceptual	Chair Members Some experienced

	alignment and integration often need revisiting not only in the final chapter but throughout earlier sections.	editors who can also do this
Statistical/ Methods (2)	Usually only methodologists, statisticians or experienced dissertation chairs can help students edit these areas. Covers appropriate and accurate ways to describe complex research designs, statistical analyses, or research findings and interpretations.	Methodologist Chair Statistical editors
Logical (3)	This editing tightens up the flow of argument between chapters, sections and paragraphs. Structuring and organizing your writing to ensure a logical, reasonable conceptual sequence has been provided. Often involves complex 'tightening' and linking work to improve arguments and explanations through strong word/phrase transitions and sequencing.	Chair Member Editor
Grammar and Syntax (4)	Perhaps the most common editing most manuscripts need both inside and outside academia. Correct/precise word choice, active and correct verbs, appropriate and varied sentence structures, and balanced paragraph structuring. This necessary yet tedious work requires good English skills.	Editor Member Chair
Copy editing (typos, wording) (5)	Although this editorial area has been improved by automatic word processing corrections, even those services often miss spaces, incorrect words (e.g., malapropisms, homonyms), etc. Good professional editors can find misspelled words, stray letters, poor punctuation, missed quotation marks, and more.	Editor Member Chair
Format (6)	AU Format and APA Style are difficult to learn and even more difficult to apply to a several hundred page document. This requires appropriate page numbering, headings, margins, preliminary pages, table of contents, APA citation, APA reference, etc.	Editor Member Chair

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