

### Paper Revision Instructions

- Please first read the comments carefully (both the overall comments on the side and detailed comments regarding particular sentences or paragraphs). Sometimes, I use abbreviations—you can find the list of [Comment Abbreviations](#) on the course website.
- Sit down and consider how you can improve the whole paper (including but not limited to adjusting the thesis, modifying the main argument, rearranging different parts of the argument to make the overall logical structure better, deleting unnecessary paragraphs, etc.).
- Start a new document and try to write from a fresh start. Don't simply copy-paste and just make small, local revisions on the original sentences—most problems cannot be fixed in this way.
  - There are reasons you should try to improve *the whole paper*, not just the sentences or passages I commented on.
  - Your rewrites should try to go beyond the specific errors and problems I've suggested.
- Note that many comments are heuristics, that is, they don't directly tell you what to do, but are meant to guide you in considering potential problems of the paper.
- You are not expected to address all possible objections in the format: "one possible objection is . . ." and "my response to that is . . ." Consider those objections as issues you need to think about. It might be better to rephrase or modify your argument directly so that those objections would not raise in the first place.
- Commenting done effectively requires a conversation between us. Make sure you meet with me before you submit the second draft, and prepare to ask about comments that you don't fully understand or you don't get what the problems are.
- Please also print out your paper and bring it to class on April 9.



While you're rewriting, continue keeping in mind:

Write clear, direct prose. No need for formal, fussy language. Feel free to use the first-person pronoun and say things like "I will argue..." and "I will consider...".

Ask the following questions as you write and re-write your essays: What is this sentence doing here? How is it connected to the sentences that immediately precede and succeed it? What is the point I am trying to convey in this paragraph? How is this paragraph related to its predecessors and successors? How would someone reading this essay for the first time ever feel as they parse these sentences? What might confuse or trip them? How can I avoid any misunderstandings of what I'm trying to say?

Also ask yourself: Is what I am saying true? Is it plausible? Have I provided evidence or argumentation to support what I am saying here? Do I really need to say this? Would a reasonable but skeptical reader find this persuasive?