

# The KSU Writing Center

## GLOBAL CONCERNS AND LOCAL CONCERNS

### PURPOSE

Not all elements of writing are equally important at all stages of the writing process. Focus first on your meaning as conveyed through big picture or “global” elements like your thesis and organization. Delay focusing on sentence-level or “local concerns” like punctuation and spelling until near the end of the writing process; you don’t want to spend precious time correcting commas in a sentence you may end up deleting. Concentrate on *what* you are saying before worrying about *how* you say it. Approaching your writing and revision strategically will save time *and* help you produce better writing.

### GLOBAL CONCERNS

#### Purpose

- Do you have a clear purpose? What is the paper intended to do/accomplish?
- Does the paper “match” or fulfill all the assignment guidelines?

#### Audience:

- Do you have an appropriate audience in mind? Describe who is in the audience and consider whether your paper is tailored appropriately.
- Consider why someone would want to read this paper.

#### Thesis (or focus):

- Does the paper have a central thesis? *For more information, check out our handout on [crafting a thesis statement](#).*
- Can you offer a one-sentence summary of what the paper is about? If not, the paper may not be focused enough.

#### Organization:

- Does the paper progress in an organized, logical way?
- Jot down notes on the topic of each paragraph. Does the order and structure of the paragraphs make sense? Should any part be moved elsewhere? Is there a better organizational structure?
- Create a [reverse outline](#) and use it to improve the organization of paragraphs.

#### Development:

- Are there places in the paper where more details, examples, or specifics are needed?
- Do any paragraphs seem much shorter and in need of more material than others?

### LOCAL CONCERNS

- Are there certain errors that recur in the writing?
- Keep a list of common problems (e.g., comma errors, run-on-sentences, etc.)
- Read the paper aloud – pencil in hand – marking anything that sounds incorrect in terms of sentence structure, punctuation, word choice, etc.
- Ask writers why they put punctuation marks in certain places. Review rules as needed; provide examples. Always have a handbook ready so students understand that all writers need resources.
- Have students look for empty constructions such as “There are/is” and overused words such as “very” to help students learn to “polish” a final draft.
- [Proofread](#) backwards, from the last sentence of a paragraph to the beginning. This will help you catch sentence-level errors of grammar or punctuation.