

## Writing Center cheat sheet

The purpose of a campus writing center is to help students become better writers. Consequently, the people working in the writing center don't want to just edit your paper for you. Generally, they prefer that *you* explain the problems that *you* think might be in your paper. Then, they will address those specific issues.

So, when you bring your paper to the Writing Center, these are some good questions to ask to get things started. Don't ask all of them, at least not all at once. Pick one or two, and hopefully that will lead to the person in the Writing Center giving you as much relevant feedback on your paper as he or she can. (And don't read them off this piece of paper. If you can't memorize what you're going to ask, write it somewhere in your own handwriting.)

- 1a. I have in mind what I'm trying to say in this paper, does it make sense to you?
- 1b. My professor said that I should have someone who isn't familiar with this topic read my paper and then tell me whether or not they understand it. But my friends won't read it and my mother is too busy. Can you read it and tell me if you understand it?
2. This is the assignment that I was given ... (explain the assignment or show it to the person working with you). I feel like I'm answering the question (or questions), and I feel like I'm doing a pretty complete job of answering them. Do you think that I'm answering all of them?
3. My professor said that I need to think about the organization of my paper. Is this paper well organized? Are the paragraphs in the right order and is each the right length?
4. I've been told in the past that I need to work on my grammar, but I'm not exactly sure what I'm doing wrong. Are there grammatical mistakes in this paper that you can help me with?
5. I used this as one of my sources ..., and this is what I wrote based on that source. Is what I wrote in my own words?

Of course, you can also ask any questions that you have about your paper. Or you can formulate other questions around these ideas: *answering the question, organization, style and grammar, explaining, or clarity.*

Don't ask whether your citations are correct according to MLA or APA style. That's a waste of time, it's not going to help your paper in any significant way, and you should be able to figure it out yourself.