Concise Writing

In both academic and professional writing you want to be concise. This means making your point in the fewest words possible. Writing concisely can be an easy and effective way to strengthen your argument.

Writing concisely requires proofreading over what you have written and looking for places to cut down words and/or sentences.

Eliminate redundant words:

The redundant words will be italicized.

Example 1:

- That sofa is large *in size.*
  Explanation: *In size* is unnecessary because when something is large, we automatically know that we are talking about size.

Example 2:

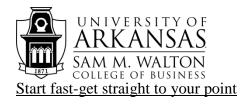- *Compulsory* attendance at social events is required.
  Explanation: This sentence goes on to tell us that attendance is required, and since this has the same meaning as *compulsory*, we can remove the redundant word (compulsory) to make the sentence clearer.

Eliminate words that do not add any meaning to the sentence:

- **"Empty Words":** Area, aspect, case, element, factor, kind, nature, scope, situation, thing, type.
  These words are overused and we usually add them to our writing to fill up space.
- **"Meaningless Modifiers":** absolutely, awesome, awfully, central, definitely, great, literally, quite, really, very
  These are words we use to "fill space" when we are talking with friends, and they often show up in academic writing. They can often be deleted without affecting the meaning of the sentence, but in some cases you may have to re-write the sentence.

Example 1:

- **Wordy:** The housing situation can have a big impact on the social aspect of a student's life.
- **Concise:** Housing can influence a student's life.

Delete phrases that do not add to the meaning or "main point" of the sentence.

Example 1:

- **Wordy:** I think that there are too many issues with this computer.
- **Concise:** There are too many issues with this computer.

Example 2:

- **Wordy:** The point that I wish to make is that Google is a very effective and innovative company.
- **Concise:** Google is an effective and innovative company.

Example 3:

- **Wordy:** The fact of the matter is that culture is a complicated term to define.
- **Concise:** Culture is a complicated term to define.