



The Judith Anderson Herbert Writing Center offers free, one-to-one help to students developing written assignments in any discipline. Each year about 18,000 student visits are made to our locations.

We offer constructive feedback designed to help students improve their written work and their writing processes. Conversations may be about anything from brainstorming for ideas, to organizing the structure of a written text, to learning how to polish final drafts—including how to find and correct grammar and punctuation errors and how to proofread effectively.

We work with writers on any type of document, including academic papers for any course, scientific lab reports, literature reviews, abstracts, book reviews, and more. We also help with citation and documentation of sources. Basically, if it's writing, we can help!

Students may walk in to our **HSS 212** and **Pendergrass Library** locations to request feedback on their writing—no appointment is needed. See our website, <https://writingcenter.utk.edu>, for the hours.

We offer appointments for the following specialized services: the **ESL Writing Center** in Hodges Library, North Commons, for multilingual students; and **Application Materials Help** for students seeking assistance with documents such as personal statements, graduate school applications, and cover letters. The appointment scheduler and the hours for these services are available at <https://utk.mywconline.com>.

We offer in-person walk-in help for **graduate students** at our **Pendergrass Library location**. Some online assistance for graduate student writers is also available—see <https://utk.mywconline.com> for the hours and to make appointments.

One of the great things about the Judith Anderson Herbert Writing Center is that you can talk with a tutor at any point during the writing process. **The best time to talk with a tutor** is when you've just received an assignment from your teacher and aren't sure how to begin or are having trouble getting started. We can help you get up and running! If you've already started but have gotten stuck, we can help you get moving again. And if you've finished your draft and want to double check that your essay meets the assignment or see if it needs improvement, we can help you then too.

What Happens During a Tutoring Session

First, we'll ask what you're working on, what the specific assignment is, and what you want to accomplish in the tutoring session. If you have a full draft, we'll read it from start to finish first. Most drafts (even those written by professional writers) need some revision or polishing, so we don't try to make global evaluations like "This is a good paper and nothing needs revising." Instead, we'll mention the specific strengths we see and will talk with you about the best ways to revise the 2-3 most important things that could be improved. While we do not do line-by-line grammar corrections, we'll look for patterns of sentence-level error in your work—recurring mistakes—and we'll teach you how to recognize and correct those errors.

How to Make the Most of a Conversation with a Tutor

Since your time is limited and since the Herbert Writing Center does get busy, here are a few pointers to make the best use of your tutoring session.

- **Bring your assignment.** We want to help you, and you'll find that our help will be that much better if we can see directly what your teacher is asking you to do for the assignment.
- **Bring your questions.** Most people don't have everything figured out before they sit down with a tutor (if that was the case, no one would need our help!), but thinking about various aspects of the assignment before you come in will help you get more from the session.
- **Bring your own sense of what you usually need to work on in your papers.** Also, having earlier papers handy will help the tutor determine what your teacher's priorities are and what he or she most wants you to be working on.
- **Bring an open mind.** Our tutors are trained to think about your papers in a number of different ways. We will do our best to answer all your questions, but we might also point out some useful things that you hadn't thought about before.
- **Take notes during the session.** Having some notes about what to do to revise your paper will help you later when you get back to work on it!

What to Avoid

- **Don't wait until the last minute to ask for help.** While we'll certainly do what we can, there's only so much we can do if there isn't much time before the deadline. Our best suggestion is to come in as soon as you get an assignment—since getting started is often the hardest part. Then, come in as often as you like to see the assignment through.
- **Don't be surprised when we don't concentrate on "proofreading" or finding your mistakes for you.** Why? Most professors care about whether you've fulfilled the assignment, and they care most about your ideas and analysis. So, there are a number of things tutors look for when reading your paper, especially how well you've developed and presented your ideas. While grammar is important, it's not the first thing tutors look for. A grammatically "clean" paper might still be bad if it doesn't satisfy the assignment or if your ideas are confusing or still evolving. Be ready for suggestions about organization and big-picture issues from a tutor, not simply ones concerning grammar.

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