

Midterm Examination

Due: midnight, October 26. E-mail your exam to [lisa.bickmore@slcc.edu](mailto:lisa.bickmore@slcc.edu).

Part 1. **Please edit the following passage** (taken from *Writing: A College Handbook* 5e, Heffernan/Lincoln/Atwill). Feel free to cut and paste it to another document. Please **strike-out** passages you are eliminating and please put your additions/edited versions **in another color**.

[Some editorial considerations to bear in mind: passive voice; active verbs; variety of sentence type; cohesion and coherence; sentence rhythm; known/new contract; voice, diction, and tone.]

After you have edited the piece, **please write a paragraph** in which you talk about your main editorial priorities. What were the two or three salient problems in the passage's style, and how did you decide to address them through your editing? Give at least one example of each problem you cite.

Critics of detective stories have three complaints. First, there is too much senseless violence. Lots of characters are killed. Others are badly beaten. In *The Lonely Silver Rain* by John D. MacDonald over twenty people are killed. The violence and deaths are not "senseless," however. A purpose is served by them. Clues are furnished to the detectives. Second, detective stories are said to be filled with old, lifeless plots. The age of the plots is a problem, but a youthful vitality is usually imparted to them by writing which is conducive to a dramatic effect with regard to both place and characters. Interiors are described in vivid detail by Rex Stout. In the dialogues of Ed McBain, the words spoken by his characters sound just like the words of real people. This vitality is ignored by critics. They have a third complaint. The detectives, they say, are cardboard cutouts. The characters are likened to wooden statues. In reality, fictional detectives are like real human beings. There are real problems in their lives. Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot is faced with the problem of being an old man. A failed marriage is a haunting memory in the mind of Ross MacDonald's Lew Archer. There is almost no end to the examples. So it may be asked whether the critics ever read the stories they criticize.

**Part 2. Please analyze the style of the following passage** (from Terry Tempest Williams, *Refuge*). Please write approximately two double-spaced pages. You may consider any aspects of the style you choose, but your analysis should make some summary as to the overall characteristics and effects of Williams' style.

Great blue herons, egrets, and cormorants, all tree nesters, have been aided by the flooding of the wetlands, as waterfowl management areas have become inaccessible to man and arboreal predators. Their preferred habitat for nesting: dead trees. Suddenly, there's lots of them, killed by the rising salt water. The cottonwoods and box elders that once provided shade and cover for songbirds have become bare-branched rookeries for herons and cormorants.

They have not been without their problems, however. In some instances, where they had used the low tamarisk shrubs to nest in, eggs and young were drowned as the waters rose over a few weeks.

As was expected, white-faced ibises and Franklin gulls, both dependent on hard-stem bulrushes for nesting, have suffered the most. With 80 percent of the world's population of white-faced ibises nesting in Utah, these losses become significant.

In 1979, the Utah ibis population was estimated at 8690 pairs. The 1985 colony-nesting survey recorded 3438 pairs. The decline in Franklin gulls is even more radical: a late 1970s survey showed a thousand breeding pairs, compared to the fifty-one nests counted this year.

It is hoped that many breeding adult ibises and Franklin gulls have survived and moved on to more stable marshes in the Great Basin. Breeding numbers are reported higher at Fish Springs and at the Ruby Marshes in Nevada. The Cutler and Bear Lake marshes northeast of Bear River also show an increase in ibis and gull populations.

The avocets and stilts, along with other ground nesters around Great Salt Lake, have been completely displaced. Their nesting sites have been usurped by water, with mudflats almost nonexistent. Some pairs of avocets have been seen nesting just off the interstate on gravel shoulders.

English 2500  
Final Exam

Due to me electronically or hard copy by 3 p.m. Thursday December 16.

1. Parse **2 of the 4** sentences below. To do this, identify

- the core sentence (the sentence pattern)
- clauses, either independent or dependent
- the noun phrases
- the verb phrases
- the prepositional phrases

and identify how each phrase functions in the sentence. You can identify anything else you'd like as well for extra credit.

*Sentence 1:* Starting next month, people whose cases cannot be pursued will be provided with a newly created toll-free number that will connect them with an ABA-approved attorney referral service so they can find a qualified lawyer to help with their claims.

*Sentence 2:* For instance, the artist Orly Genger, who crochets vast quantities of rope, has created chain-and-rope chokers and thick wrist-doughnuts that are a cool new take on the paracord survival bracelet.

*Sentence 3:* In one way, I suppose, I have been “in denial” for some time, knowingly burning the candle at both ends and finding that it often gives a lovely light.

*Sentence 4:* In several of the essays in this book I talk about John Calvin, a figure of the greatest historical consequence, especially for our culture, who is more or less entirely unread.

2. Take the following passage and do the following:

- combine sentences, using some type of subordination, two times
- combine sentences using punctuation, two times
- take a subordinate clause and make it an independent clause

Which of these revisions do you feel are an improvement? Why?

Passage:

Scientists and philosophers of science tend to speak as if “scientific language” were intrinsically precise—as if those who use it must understand one another’s meaning even if they disagree. But in fact, scientific language is not as different from ordinary language as is commonly believed: it too is subject to imprecision and ambiguity,

and hence to imperfect understanding. Moreover, new theories or arguments are rarely if ever constructed by way of clear-cut steps of induction, deduction, and verification or falsification; neither are they defended, rejected or accepted in so straightforward a manner. In practice, scientists combine the rules of scientific methodology with a generous admixture of intuition, aesthetics and philosophical commitment. The importance of what are sometimes called extra-rational or extra-logical components of thought in the *discovery* of a new principle or law is generally acknowledged, but the role of these extra-logical components in persuasion and acceptance—in making an argument convincing—is less frequently discussed, partly because they are less visible. The ways in which the credibility or effectiveness of an argument depends on the realm of common experiences (or extensive practice in communicating those experiences in a common language) are hard to see, precisely because such commonalities are taken for granted. Only when we step out of such a “consensual domain”—when we can stand out on the periphery of a community with a common language—do we begin to become aware of the unarticulated premises, mutual understandings, and assumed practices of the group. Even in those subjects that lend themselves most readily to quantification, discourse depends heavily on conventions and interpretation, conventions that are acquired over years of practice and participation in a community.

3. Make the above passage approximately 25% more concise. Describe as precisely as you can what you did to make it more concise. Some of your revisions should be syntactic—in other words, you should not just rely on cutting words.

4. Define the following terms and write an example of your own for each. You may not use examples I gave you, or examples you find on the internet, but you may imitate those examples.

Epizeuxis  
Anaphora  
Antithesis  
Epanalepsis  
Epistrophe  
Asyndeton  
Polysyndeton  
Anacoluthon  
Chiasmus  
Hypophora  
Isocolon  
Polyptoton  
Metanoia  
Ellipsis  
Active/passive voice  
Anadiplosis

