

[I provide these instructions before peer review workshops for student papers. The worksheet emphasizes the courteous and constructive nature of peer workshopping and provides guidance for offering concrete feedback in the workshop.]

### Peer Review Workshops

Be respectful, courteous, and generous as you read these papers. Feedback should always be constructive. Remember that the point of giving and receiving feedback is to help make your papers as clear and persuasive as possible.

During workshop, each paper's author should **first verbally explain what s/he is arguing** in the paper to his/her workshop partner(s); this should only take a minute or two. Everyone should then read their partner's paper. As you read, assess the paper's persuasiveness, argument, its use of evidence, clarity and its logical organization. This is not the place to point out spelling mistakes or minor errors. Aim to spend 30-40 minutes reading and jotting down comments and 10-20 minutes discussing your feedback with your partner.

#### **Paper's**

**Author:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Introduction/Thesis:**

- 1) Is the thesis clear, specific, and argumentative? It should be argumentative, that is, debatable, rather than descriptive.
- 2) Was the thesis clearly identifiable and easy to find? If there are multiple parts to the thesis are these clearly stated?
- 3) Do several different ideas seem like they could be the thesis? Does the paper seem to argue a claim but not state it explicitly?

Suggestions:

#### **Body paragraphs (support/evidence)**

- 1) Does the paper provide textual support for the thesis claim in the form of quotations from the text?
- 2) Does the evidence in each paragraph relate to the paragraphs' topic point?
- 3) Does the author spend time explaining the significance of the evidence in each paragraph for the topic point? Is it clear why and how the evidence supports the author's argument?
- 4) Is evidence included but not well explained? Does the evidence veer off into personal opinion or summary?

Suggestions:

**Body paragraphs (organization/topic sentences):**

- 1) Can you identify a topic sentence or argumentative point in each paragraph?
- 2) Does each paragraph serve a clear purpose in advancing the overall argument?
- 3) Do the paragraphs have a logical sequence/flow or are they disjointed? Are tangential points introduced?
- 4) Do transitions between paragraphs enable to reader to easily follow the development of argumentative points?
- 5) Do logical gaps or jumps make it difficult to follow the paper's argument? Are there too many points in one paragraph?

Suggestions:

**Conclusion:**

- 1) Does the author reiterate the original thesis statement, and do you feel the author proved the thesis claim by this point?
- 2) Has the thesis statement changed over the course of the paper so that it no longer matches the one in the introduction? Does the introduction's thesis statement need to be modified to match the argument the paper has actually developed?
- 3) Consider swapping the thesis in the conclusion for the one in the intro?

Suggestions:

Peer reviewer's initials \_\_\_\_\_

After reading the paper, give the author a quick synopsis of your comments. What was done particularly well and what 1-2 things most needed improvement? You don't need to discuss every

comment you wrote but you should focus on highlighting the biggest areas that you think could be improved and suggest how.

Remember, this is collaborative work. The purpose is for each of you to help each other develop stronger, more persuasive papers, and to benefit from reading many examples of claims, evidence, and organization.