You’ve Gotten Feedback, Now What?

At *The Peer Review,* we are committed to mentoring under/graduate and early career scholars through publication. As part of that goal, we offer the following as a tool for writers to productively navigate reviewer comments for revisions of their manuscripts.

As writing center practitioners, we value revision as a practice of refining content and form to best enhance your article’s insights, takeaways, and/or reflections. In other words, we approach revision, not from a deficit-lens, but an asset one: we want your contribution to be in the best possible shape so future scholars, teachers, and practitioners can productively engage your key findings.

At the same time, we realize it can be challenging to make sense of feedback you have received into actionable revision steps. We recommend the following as a guide to make sense of your comments into next steps. Specifically, you will notice this process culminates in a revision grid/plan that guides and prioritizes concrete changes to your manuscript.

We strongly recommend composing a revision grid to be submitted with your manuscript’s revision. Such a document can provide context for the changes in your manuscript, remind reviewers of the kinds of feedback you’ve received, and display how you’ve responded to your feedback.

We offer this sample document as an example that you can choose to fill in. However, you are more than welcome to create your own.

Step 1: Prioritize and Categorize Feedback

It is often useful to not immediately open the feedback you have received, and instead, block off time in your schedule to read through the feedback in your manuscript. You may find it helpful to print and/or move your feedback into a separate document. Also, please ensure the feedback is shared with any co-authors who are part of the project.

We suggest you begin to group your feedback into key ideas and/or themes across all reviewer comments. You might find it useful to highlight these groups or create categories. For example, I may read through my feedback and notice three key themes: (1) develop literature review section, (2) reframe introduction, and (3) narrate reflections with headers. These themes might be the key focus of my revision.

As you read through your feedback, you may also find it useful to prioritize comments into levels of priority (such as “must do,” “could do,” or “would be nice to do”). Some comments may be surface level or language-based change, while some may be larger structural changes. Others, may even be beyond the scope of your argument/goals of your manuscript. Using these (and other) ways of prioritizing feedback can help ground your process.

Questions to consider as your read and prioritize feedback:

- What recurring questions and feedback do I notice in my reviewer comments?
- Can I condense these trends into key themes? How would I describe these trends in my feedback?
- Which feedback items are highest priority? Which are lowest? Which are beyond the scope of my project?

Step 2: Plot Feedback into Grid

Once you've identified key ideas/themes of feedback, we recommend plotting feedback from reviewers into a revision grid. A revision grid is an organizational chart where your feedback is listed on the left and your response is on the right. Your revision grid is a chance for you to explain how and why you took up specific pieces of feedback.

When completing your revision grid, it is helpful to be specific in how and where you took up specific pieces of feedback. For example, "We decided to expand our literature review that explicitly centers scholars of color, on pages 3-7." Alternatively, you may find feedback is beyond the scope of your piece. In which case, you might write "Thank you for the suggestion to [feedback]. However, this is a little beyond the scope of this piece for [reason]"

Below, please find an example of an excerpt of a revision grid for a published piece in a previous issue of *TPR.*

Feedback	**Response**
In the first portion of the section entitled "The Charge for Linguistic Justice" you indicate that issues related to language have been around for some time. Can you elaborate in how you are contextualizing these issues, as you bring in more historical texts? Further be more clear as to how you are using Smitherman (as an outline of historical and current issues related to language injustices), as her work is very important to these conversations;	Thanks for this feedback. Part of our intention in including the opening vignettes was to help contextualize ways that language injustice surfaces in daily interactions, particularly within the context of writing center appointments. We attempted to make this connection immediately following these stories on the bottom of page 3 / top of page 4. To further make this link, we added a sentence to the beginning of the section, "The Charge of Language Justice." Regarding your second point, we added a short description of who Smitherman is in case some readers are unfamiliar or less familiar with her and her contribution to the field and this particular conversation.

Certainly, Figure 1 (p. 10) offers super helpful specifics about the phase and questions within each phrase. I would love to know what you did with these questions. Did you literally ask them to participate during sessions? Did they write responses and/or discuss with others? Did they keep a reflective journal or notes of some sort going through the process? The first paragraph on p. 11 offers a narrative description of the phases outlined in Figure 1. Perhaps this paragraph could be a place to expand and further detail the phases regarding how the phases were enacted in the actual professional development sessions, considering the questions I listed just above. Additionally, what does “critical reflection” look like exactly?	Thank you for this comment. We’ve decided to include two examples from our staff training—one on reflective writing and another activity on analyzing language ideology in children’s books. We feel this addresses this helpful comment around praxis. Please see pp. 10-11 for a description of these examples.
Copyediting: extra “t” in second sentence (p. 11)	Thanks for catching that!

Step 3: Develop and Complete “To Do List” & Write Document Introduction
Once you’ve developed your revision grid, you should have a good sense of your next steps. It may be helpful to create a to-do list for your revision to guide your next steps.

It’s important to note that the revision grid’s audience moves between you (as you are revising) and your reviewers (as a framing document); it is like a conversation. We suggest writing a brief paragraph before your grid to frame your revision changes.

Finally, if you are confused or unsure of any of the feedback you received, please contact the TPR Board and/or your graduate editor liaison. We are happy to workshop with you but hope you will go through this process, as well. If you are one of multiple authors, please follow this suggested process with your co-author(s).

Further Reading

Kornfield, S. Revise and resubmit!: But how? In Gallagher, J., R., & DeVoss, D. N., *Explanation points: Publishing in rhetoric and composition,* pp. 259-262