

# Requesting Feedback: Transcript

## Slide 1:

Thank you for watching the Purdue OWL's vidcast on requesting feedback! In this vidcast, we'll talk about the process of requesting feedback and the audiences you can reach out to for that feedback.

## Slide 2:

When you're requesting feedback, you can think about different audiences to go to and the kind of feedback they're best able to provide.

Disciplinary insiders are folks within your discipline who can provide subject-specific writing feedback, whereas disciplinary outsiders may provide more general writing feedback or let you know when your content is inaccessible to a general reader.

Insiders like professors and advisors will know disciplinary conventions; for example, they'll know what constitutes a good research question for your field, your field's writing conventions (like article structure), and how to refine your claim or situate your study; they can also help with field-specific writing concerns like how to cite things in your discipline.

Peers in your program can offer the same kinds of feedback but are especially great if you're still refining your ideas and want to develop them further before speaking with a faculty member. Peers in other departments are also a resource—if you're unable to explain your work to these readers in clear terms, then you know that your work may need to be clarified.

Peers outside of your field would be disciplinary outsiders; while they may be familiar with general academic writing practices, they may not know your field's grammatical preferences or be able to refer to disciplinary conversations happening in your area of study. Friends, family, writing consultants, and other trusted readers may also lack this disciplinary insight, but can still provide helpful feedback.

These readers can also help you understand when your ideas are unclear, but also identify patterns in your writing like repeated words and phrases, whether or not key terms have been identified, if claims have been clearly announced, or if your language choices convey a certain style or voice.

### Slide 3:

When seeking feedback, you can consider different categories you'd like help with. Here's a sampling of feedback categories: Research questions; claims; the structure and organization of the document; the opening or introduction of the document; methods sections; results and discussion sections; conclusions and implications; the defining of key terms; quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, and evaluating sources; style and voice; grammar and mechanics; and repetition and variation.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it's important to note that any one person providing feedback to your document cannot or should not be expected to address all of these concerns; instead, as the primary author of the document, it's your job to identify which of these categories represent your primary concerns. These concerns may change based on where you're at in your draft. For example, if you're in the early stages of your drafting, you might be concerned with the claims of your document. If you were going to your advisor or another graduate student in your program, you might say, "I'm defining the central claims of my document. Can you review what I have so far and tell me if the claim is clear, meaningfully contributing to the discourse of our field, and narrow enough in scope?" As you continue to develop the document, you might return this same person with a new concern. If you're in the final editorial stages, you might ask that the definition of key terms in the document is clear and ask if there is any unnecessary repetition that needs to be removed before finalizing things.

### Slide 4:

We've talked a little bit about narrowing the scope and focus of feedback requests, but let's consider this in a little more detail. As you identify the feedback categories you'd like to pursue and the reviewer you'd like to seek feedback from, spend some time defining the exact feedback you're looking for. For example, if you're concerned with the structure and organization of your document, you might reflect on the specific difficulties you have with this writing task. Where are these difficulties coming from? As you reflect, you might determine that this concern emerges because you're still learning about the genre conventions of a typical research article in your field.

This reflection will help define the direction you take. Since you've determined where these difficulties stem from, you can start to craft specific questions that will define the scope of review. In this instance, you might ask: "How do you typically structure your research articles?" or "What structural elements are consistent across your articles?" The "you" in these questions would most likely be a disciplinary insider who can advise you on the conventions of your field; that said, you could also seek review from a disciplinary outsider, but since they may not be aware of the conventions of your field, you might approach things collaboratively with your reviewer. For example, instead of asking a disciplinary

outsider how they would structure their articles, you might bring some examples of research articles in your field and ask a different question, such as, “What are some of the common structural elements you notice in these research articles?” A question like this would help you conduct genre analysis with a disciplinary outsider to demystify the common organizational strategies of the articles.

In short, when seeking feedback, try to narrow the scope of the review you’re seeking so it’s more manageable for your reviewers. Besides this, engage in some reflection to develop specific questions for your reviewers. These questions may also help you decide who to ask and ensure that the feedback you receive is tailored to your specific concerns. While your reviewers may identify other things to look out for, it will also guide their review to ensure it’s relevant to your current stage of the writing process.

## Slide 5:

Check out the rest of our videos, which discuss the writing process in more detail, how to identify sources of writing support, and so much more.

You can also find more information about graduate writing on the Purdue OWL website.

For now, thanks for watching!