



Eastern  
Mennonite  
University

Eastern Mennonite University  
Writing Program

*Mission Statement*

The Writing Program supports the academic mission of Eastern Mennonite University by promoting excellent writing across disciplines. The program advances EMU's faith mission by its commitment to building community, promoting cultural awareness, and motivating action through language. Students and faculty work together to develop writing habits of mind and heart that foster creativity and effective communication.

Graduate & Professional Studies Writing Center  
Policy Paper for Graduate Writing Tutors

EMU graduate programs desire writing tutoring for all graduate students as needs arise. This includes developing a graduate student writing culture wherein all students realize the value of having another pair of eyes on their papers and that readers of our writing make our writing better. Writing tutoring, therefore, is not only to strengthen reading and grammar skills but is intended to provide graduate students with feedback regarding the intended audience and purpose. EMU faculty believe that all students can learn to be better-skilled writers.

1. Graduate tutors will have a 16-week contract. Tutors may not provide sessions past the last day of the 16<sup>th</sup> week. This is up to the discretion of the graduate tutor.
2. Sessions may be held face-to-face, in Zoom or Skype venues, providing educational opportunities.
3. Length of sessions: As much as possible, sessions should be focused on a particular reading or writing issue in order to maximize the amount of time spent in a session. When possible, limit tutoring sessions to 30 minutes. We realize that in certain situations, one hour is preferable in order to provide an overview of a lengthier paper. No session should exceed one hour.
4. Students may make one 1-hour appointment per week.
5. Students are not permitted to send papers to the graduate writing tutor ahead of their scheduled tutoring session. Currently, students are doing this and expecting

the graduate tutor to read and mark the papers ahead of time. Students may, instead, send the graduate tutor an email attachment or bring a hard copy with them to the meeting. The graduate tutor will open the attachment or look at the hard copy as the tutoring session begins.

6. In the hour-long meeting, whether face-to-face or through Zoom, your students should know that the graduate tutor will not be able to cover the entire paper. Rather, he will look, first, for higher order concerns such as thesis, paragraphing, coherence, unity, and so forth. As time permits, he will look for patterns in grammatical errors, sharing these patterns with the student. Our writing tutor does not edit papers. The students are responsible for editing their own papers.
7. At the discretion of the graduate tutor on duty, students may be tutored as part of a group in order to facilitate tutoring a common focus.
8. At the discretion of the graduate tutor on duty, the tutor may hold “café-style” tutoring sessions where the tutor may work with multiple students, rotating among them.
9. As appropriate each semester, graduate tutors will trade off walk-in hours with appointment hours in order to see a greater amount of students.
10. **When students need an editor:** Many graduate students, concerned about grammatical errors and editing in general, hire someone to edit their papers. If you, as a program, believe this is a good service for your students, then please let your students and professors know about this distinction and encourage them to find an editor at cost. This is NOT why we have hired a graduate tutor. A tutor is one thing, as explained in the policy above; an editor for grammar is another. Both our students and professors need to know this important difference. Professional editing services are easily available on the Internet for students struggling with grammar and seeking an editor.