**Wordiness**

Wordiness is the tendency to use ten words when only four or five are necessary. Adding words—better known as *fluff*—to your paper to meet an assignment page requirement does not make your paper better, just fluffier. And fluff will not get you a higher grade. Readers do not want to wade through wordy phrases or sentences to arrive at the writer’s intended meaning. In short—be concise. Make sure that every word you commit to the final draft is important to the overall completeness of the piece. And remember, fluff is what you do to pillows—not what you add to writing.

- **Deadwood Constructions**
  We call these phrases on the left deadwood because they, too, are lifeless.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>regardless of the fact</th>
<th>although</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>due to the fact that</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the reason is that</td>
<td>because</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>as to whether or not</td>
<td>whether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>there is no doubt that</td>
<td>doubtless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it is believed that</td>
<td>the senate believes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concerning the matter of</td>
<td>about</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>by means of</td>
<td>by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>these are the kinds of … that</td>
<td>detective stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in order to</td>
<td>to</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Circumlocution**
  Writers take a roundabout way to say something simple.

  Janice *made her decision* after hearing his report.
  Janice *decided* after hearing his report.

  Each candidate should be evaluated *on an individual basis*.
  Each candidate should be evaluated *individually*.

  The Writing Center tutors are *comprised of students*.
  The Writing Center tutors are *students*.

  His dog *shows a great deal of obedience*.
  His dog *is obedient*.

- **Redundancy**
  Writers use words that repeat the same idea or their meanings overlap.

  His speech on flying saucers aroused my deepest *feelings and emotions*.

  In this *day and age*, people expect to live to be at least fifty years old.
Other common redundancies include
- reverted back
- reflected back
- fell down
- climb up
- a true fact
- new innovation
- red in color
- resulting effect
- free gift
- circle around

- **Passive Voice**

  The passive voice makes writing wordy colorless. You can often recognize sentences with passive verbs because they contain the word *by*, telling who performed the action.

  The window *was broken by* a Laker.
  A Laker *broke* the window.

  The essay *was examined by* the instructor.
  The instructor *examined* the essay.

  The Stugo senator *was angered by* the newspaper reporter.
  The newspaper reporter *angered* the Stugo senator.

- **Unnecessary introductory or prepositional phrases**

  **Introductory Phrases**

  *There are ten thousand students* attending Longview.
  *Ten thousand students* attend Longview.

  *There are many reasons that* I don’t eat liver.
  I don’t eat liver *for many reasons.*

  *It is the Psychology Club that is sponsoring* the trip.
  *The Psychology Club sponsors* the trip.

  To avoid passive voice constructions, keep the performer (the subject) and the action (the verb) together.

  **Prepositional Phrases**

  *A friend of hers* left class early.
  *Her friend* left class early.

  *A neighbor of ours* owns a clothing store.
  *Our neighbor* owns a clothing store.

  *The hands of the referee* were waving again.
  *The referee’s hands* waved again.

Wordiness in any form can detract from your writing. Practice writing in concise language and plan to focus on identifying deadwood constructions, circumlocutions, redundancies passive voice, and unnecessary introductory or prepositional phrases during the latter stage of your revisions.