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Rhetorical Rationale

After receiving my partners' first round of edits, I combined their edits by marking up a print document of my paper so I could see all the places that needed work. Only then did I begin to revise my paper, going comment by comment. I tried to evaluate my partners' suggestions as a whole before deciding which revisions I wanted to make and which I didn't. I noticed several common themes in their queries - the informality of my paper, several over-generalizations, opinions stated as fact, and passive voice. When both of my partners made the same query, I knew I should take it seriously. I realized that my frequent use of first-person tense throughout the paper definitely contributed to the informal tone, as well as my generalizations and my tendency to state opinions as fact. I fixed these issues by cutting back on the first-person tense and removing myself from the paper, including my opinionated statements. I reworded specific phrases in order to make it clear that I was drawing conclusions from my research and not merely stating my claims as absolute fact. I also focused on using an active rather than passive voice, making sure that the subjects of my sentences were acting on the verbs. After revising my paper to make it more professional, and eliminating passive voice, I found that I'd cut unnecessary "fluff" and made the paper more clear and concise. This also reduced the word count significantly.

In the second round of copyedits, my partners pointed out my misuse / overuse of parentheses and the em-dash, as well as wordy sentences. I totally agreed that I was a little too fond of parentheses and the em-dash, and so I revised my paper to eliminate unnecessary parentheses and to replace misused em-dashes with the correct punctuation. I also have a

tendency to be a bit wordy, so I revised to eliminate excess. My partners were definitely skilled at identifying “deadwood” in my sentences.