



## MKN Heartland McNair Conference



Program Counselor Ashley Cervantes, Marsha Norton, Carol Viluethpad, Aja Molinar, Elizabeth Ramirez, Carrie Van Dusen, and Senior Administrative Assistant Neshia Greene

On September 22, 2017, five McNair scholars attended the 21st Annual McNair Heartland Research Symposium at the Country Club Plaza Marriott Hotel in Kansas City, MO.

The conference gave students an opportunity to present their research to McNair students from across the country and learn about research being conducted by their peers.

Also included was a graduate school fair, allowing students to interact with admissions representatives from various colleges and universities.

## Quick Writing Tips

Follow these simple tips to improve the quality of your writing.

- Eliminate the word "that."

The majority of the times you use the word "that," it can be removed from your writing and will make your sentence stronger.

Example: "You believe that I'm lying, but I'm not." becomes "You believe I'm lying, but I'm not."

- Eliminate the words "I think."

It adds nothing. Remove it to strengthen your point.

Example: "I think this is a good sentence." becomes "This is a good sentence."

- Avoid words that end in "-ing."

In most cases, the "-ing" softens your word and adds no value. Your writing will read better if you avoid it.

Example: "The experiences we're seeking end up being underwhelming and even disappointing." becomes "The experiences we seek often underwhelm and disappoint."

Source: <https://medium.com/an-idea-for-you/the-two-minutes-it-takes-to-read-this-will-improve-your-writing-forever-82a7d01441d1#.7s5egduoc>



## Reminder

Literature reviews are due  
**January 31, 2018.**

You should have a minimum of 10 sources, with at least one written page per source.

## Birthdays

*Happy Birthday to those celebrating during the months of December, January, and February:*

Neshia Greene • 1/23

Jessica Wewer • 2/13

Marliz Valles • 2/26



# Grammatically Speaking: *Tips for Concise Writing*



## Conciseness

The goal of concise writing is to use the most effective words. Concise writing does not always have the fewest words, but it always uses the strongest ones.

Writers often fill sentences with weak or unnecessary words that can be deleted or replaced. Words and phrases should be deliberately chosen for the work they are doing. Like bad employees, words that don't ac

complish enough should be fired. When only the most effective words remain, writing will be far more concise and readable.

Often, writers use several small and ambiguous words to express a concept. Ideas are better relayed through fewer, specific words. More specific words lead to more concise writing. Brainstorming or searching a thesaurus can lead to the word best suited for a specific instance.

## The Paramedic Method

Use the Paramedic Method to edit your professional writing. The Paramedic Method will make your prose easier to read. Sentences that are easy to read are more persuasive and more user-centered.

Professional writers understand the need for clear, concise prose. When you use the Paramedic Method, you will reduce your word count by eliminating unnecessary words and create more active sentences by eliminating passive voice and redundancies.

Follow the seven steps below to improve the readability of your writing.

1. Circle the prepositions (of, in, about, for, onto, into)
2. Draw a box around the "is" verb forms
3. Ask, "Where's the action?"
4. Change the "action" into a simple verb
5. Move the doer into the subject (Who's kicking whom)
6. Eliminate any unnecessary slow wind-ups
7. Eliminate any redundancies.

**Examples:** Notice that the examples below actually convey more as they drop in word count.

1. Suzie believed but could not confirm that Billy had feelings of affection for her.

Revision

Suzie assumed that Billy adored her.

One specific word

Several small words

(Original word count: 14, New word count: 6)

2. The politician talked about several of the merits of after-school programs in his speech

Revision

The politician touted after-school programs in his speech.

One specific word

Several small words

(Original word count: 14, New word count: 8)

3. It is widely known that the engineers at Sandia Labs have become active participants in the Search and Rescue operations in most years.

Revision

In recent years, engineers at Sandia Labs have participated in the Search and Rescue operations.

eliminate slow wind-ups

Action in the sentence

The doer is in the subject

(Original word count: 24, New word count: 16)



Sources: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/572/01/>;

## Graduate School Bootcamp with Donald Asher



McNair Students had the opportunity to attend a Graduate School Bootcamp during the Fall 2017 semester.

by **Elizabeth Ramirez**

This conference influenced my personal plan regarding graduate work because the speakers provided encouragement through their real-life experiences. It was really helpful to hear graduate students talk about how their application was not perfect. Some students even lacked in the GRE compartment, but they were able to compensate with their research experience and explanation of why they were a good fit for their prospective programs.

Donald Asher provided a ton of helpful information. He was clear in explaining where certain things need to be mentioned in personal statements; advising to mention the program early rather than just adding it to the end. He also gave helpful tips on what to do when programs start calling to set up interviews such as sending it to voicemail, that way there's the opportunity to prepare for the call and get a name.

### Spring Faculty-Led Seminars

Day/Time Saturday, 10 a.m. to noon  
Location: Devlin Hall 106

**Mar. 24:** Dr. Redmond "Writing for Publication"

**Feb. 28:** "McNair Alumni Panel"

**Apr. 21:** Dr. Weems - "What it Took to Get My PhD"

## Events to Come

JAN

31 Research Deadline  
Literature Review Due

FEBRUARY

2 Devlin Hall, Rm 105  
Grad Prep Meeting (2 - 3 p.m.)  
Dr. Jeffrey Jarman, "Critical Thinking Skills"  
Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)  
Ashley Cervantes, "Methodology and Data Collection"

9 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Grad Seminar (2 - 3 p.m.)  
Ashley Cervantes, "The Back-up Plan"

17 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)  
Dr. Michelle Redmond, "Writing for Publication"

23 Research Deadline  
IRB Submission Due

MARCH

2 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Grad Seminar (2 - 3 p.m.)  
Student Money Mgmt, "Managing Grad School Debt"

Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)  
Ashley Cervantes, "Parts of a Manuscript"

24 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)  
LaWanda Holt-Fields, "McNair Alumni Panel"

6 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
McWrite Meeting (2 - 3 p.m.)  
Ashley Cervantes, "Writing in Review"

Research Assembly Meeting (3 - 4 p.m.)  
Ashley Cervantes, "Research Concerns"

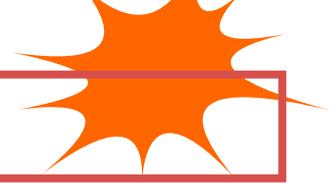
APRIL

20 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Grad Prep Meeting (2 - 3 p.m.)  
Jill Pletcher, "Portraying a Professional Image"

21 Devlin Hall, Rm 106  
Faculty Led Seminar (10 a.m. - noon)  
Dr. Robert Weems, "What it Took to Get My PhD"



## Someone Like Me: Carl Hart, Ph.D.



Carl Hart, Ph.D., Neuroscience



Dr. Hart is the Chair of the Department of Psychology and the Dirk Ziff Professor in the Departments of Psychology and Psychiatry.

Hart has published numerous scientific and popular articles in the area of neuropsychopharmacology and is co-author of the textbook *Drugs, Society and Human Behavior* (with Charles Ksir). His most recent book, “High Price: A Neuroscientist’s Journey of Self-Discovery That Challenges Everything You Know About Drugs and Society,” was the 2014 winner of the PEN/E.O. Wilson Literary Science Writing Award.

Hart has appeared on multiple podcasts, radio and television shows including *Real Time with Bill Maher* and *The O’Reilly Factor*. He has also appeared in several documentary films including the award-winning “The House I Live In.” His essays have been published in several popular publications including *The New York Times*, *Scientific American*, *The Nation*, *Ebony*, *The Root*, and *O Globo* (Brazil’s leading newspaper).

Hart has won numerous awards including Columbia University’s Presidential Teaching Award and the Humanitarian Award from Mothers Against Teen Violence. The city of Miami issued a proclamation declaring February 1, 2016 “Dr. Carl Hart Day.”

Hart has testified before the United States Congress and in State and Federal courts as an expert witness on the effects of psychoactive drugs. He serves on multiple national and international committees and boards.

Hart’s research uses an interdisciplinary approach that draws broadly on both psychology and neuropharmacology to study responses to psychoactive drugs in humans, and to assess the efficacy of potential drug abuse treatment strategies for substance-dependent individuals.

According to Hart, research with psychoactive drugs has the potential to:

1. Develop new theories about the neurochemical basis of several human behaviors
2. Inform public policy about the benefits and risks of drug use
3. Guide the development of medications for drug abuse

“Because of the large database on the neurobiology and neuroscience of drug action in laboratory animals, my research has the potential to provide an interface between the basic preclinical observations and the human condition. Drug abuse is not an affliction for laboratory animals, but is an affliction for many humans and research, such as my own, fills a valuable gap in translational neuroscience. Furthermore, knowledge about the behavioral mechanisms associated with excessive drug taking, can provide information about normal neurobiological controls of complex human behavior.”



Dr. Hart testifies before the United States Congress.

Sources:

<https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/profile/carl-hart-phd>,

<http://drcarlohart.com>



# McNair Events



Students from McNair Programs across the country presented their research in both oral and poster formats at the Heartland McNair Conference.



Policy Analyst Director Alan Dsouza and TRIO DSS Director/McNair Alum Vanessa Souriya-Mniraj pose at the First Generation College Celebration.



Heartland Conference attendees had the opportunity to visit with admissions representatives from several graduate programs.



First generation students, faculty and staff were asked to pose in a group photo during the First-Generation College Celebration.



Divisional offices at WSU hosted the Annual First-Generation College Celebration in honor of the anniversary of the Higher Education Act of 1965.



Dr. Marche Fleming-Randle served as mistress of ceremonies during the Grace Wilkie rededication ceremony honoring the former dean of women.





**WICHITA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**TRIO PROGRAMS**  
*McNair Scholars Program*



McNair Scholars Program  
 1845 N. Fairmount  
 Wichita, KS 67260-0199

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## McNair Fee Waivers/Fellowships

The Council for Opportunity in Education (COE), in conjunction with the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), has compiled a list of McNair incentives to help Scholars find graduate schools that offer application fee waivers and/or fellowships and other opportunities available to McNair Scholars.

This list can be found at [http://www.coenet.us/coe\\_prod\\_imis/COE/TRIO/McNair\\_Fee\\_Waiver\\_List/COE/NAV\\_TRIO/McNair\\_Scholars\\_Fee\\_Waiver\\_List.aspx?hkey=d459a62a-5577-4103-b125-8c3bb8aa5029](http://www.coenet.us/coe_prod_imis/COE/TRIO/McNair_Fee_Waiver_List/COE/NAV_TRIO/McNair_Scholars_Fee_Waiver_List.aspx?hkey=d459a62a-5577-4103-b125-8c3bb8aa5029)

### Highlighted Fellowship:

Howard University waives applicaiton fees for McNair scholars and provides an assistantship opportunity. The Ronald E. McNair Graduate Assistantship Program is designed to support new and continuing students who are seeking a Ph.D. and were McNair scholars as undergraduates. The McNair Assistantship is merit-based and offered on a competitive basis to students pursuing doctoral studies from all disciplines.

Recipients of the assistantship will receive full remission of tuition (not including student activity fees) and a stipend of \$20,000 for the fall and spring semesters for each year of eligibility. Successful applicants will be offered the award from year-to-year as long as all requirements are satisfied. This award will not exceed three years. Recipients should hold a baccalaureate or a Master's degree and be accepted into a Ph.D. program in the Graduate school.

### "The Doctor"

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#### Staff:

LaWanda Holt-Fields, Director  
 Ashley Cervantes, Program Counselor  
 Neshia Greene, Senior Administrative Assistant

## McNair Facts: Did You Know?

A precocious child who could read and write at the age of three, McNair was always ahead of his classmates in the town's segregated school, where he earned the nickname "Gizmo" because of his mechanical wizardry. "I remember in elementary school when there was all the talk about Sputnik.... That's all Ronald talked about—Sputnik, Sputnik, Sputnik. We got tired of hearing it," McNair's schoolmate Rachel Scott recalled in *Ebony Magazine*.



Source: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/education/news-wires-white-papers-and-books/mcnair-ronald-e>

### Notice of Nondiscrimination

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 Effective Date: March 25, 2016

