On September 21, 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.

Selecting a Graduate Program

The Graduate School Selection Worksheet, and Admissions Timeline and Checklist located in the WSU McNair Blackboard Organization can help scholars stay organized as they begin to search for graduate programs and meet with the program counselor to discuss graduate school plans.

Take note of the following as you start the selection process:

- Academic Programs Offered
- Size of the Program
- Application Deadlines
- Admissions Requirements (GPA, entrance exams, prerequisite courses, etc.)
- Admissions Process (personal statement/essays, # of recommendation letters, etc.)
- Assistantships/Fellowships
- Admissions Fees (are those fees waived for McNair Scholars?)

As you narrow your list of programs, consider the following (this information will also help you prepare your personal statement)

- Does the program focus on areas you are interested in researching?
- Identify 1-3 faculty members who you are interested in (shared research interests)
- Are there other aspects of the program that interest you (industry/internship opportunities, unique characteristics of the program that align with your interests)?

Use these considerations to narrow your list to programs that you would be very interested in attending if accepted.
Grammatically Speaking: Nominalization

Nominalization is a noun phrase generated from another word class, usually a verb. In other words, the process of nominalization turns verbs into nouns.

Nominalization is a useful skill to have in academic writing because it conveys an objective, impersonal tone. However, although nominalization is essential in academic writing, it can hamper clarity. Thus, maintaining a balance between the two is crucial.

Using nominalization

Sometimes, nominalizations can be useful such as:

1. When the nominalization is familiar to your reader as a character (happiness), it can be treated as a character. Example: Happiness has many causes and effects.

2. When you are making a general statement that focuses more on the idea than the actual actors in the sentence. Example: The distribution of the pizzas was fair.

Avoiding passive voice

Another issue with nominalization is that it often creates passive voice constructions.

× The analysis of how X-factor impacts B gene expression was conducted. [11 words]
✓ We analyzed X-factor’s impact on B gene expression. [9 words]

By shifting the nominalization to a verb, we establish an active voice and remove prepositions.

When should you revise nominalizations?

Below is a list of the most common cases in which you should revise nominalized phrases.

1. Meaningless verb + nominalization: Delete the meaningless one and convert the nominalization into the main verb.

× Joe will conduct research on the impact of the recent drought on local wildlife.
✓ Joe will research the recent drought’s impact on local wildlife.

2. When the nominalization is the subject of a passive voice structure: Identify the true subject, and convert nominalization to a verb for that subject.

× The approval of the plan was given by the committee yesterday.
✓ The committee approved the plan yesterday.

3. Back-to-back nominalizations: Make the first a verb, and keep the second or change the second to a question-word phrase.

× First was their introduction of their analysis of dreams by the trauma patients.
✓ First, they introduced how they analyzed the trauma patients’ dreams.

Avoiding normalization can aid in more concise writing.

Examples:
• We should take into consideration several factors. [7 words]
• He must make a decision about what to do. [9 words]
• They gave us information about the research program. [9 words]

Grammatically, these examples are correct, but, they’re less powerful with nominalized verbs. Instead of using strong verbs, the examples use weaker noun versions of those verbs.

Above, nominalizations are highlighted in red. Deleting the prepositions and articles reduces the phrases to one word. As you can see, when you’re trying to stay within a specific word count, eliminating these grammar constructions helps tremendously.

- We should consider several factors. [5 words]
- He must decide about what to do. [7 words]
- They informed us about the research program. [8 words]

Verbs Before Nouns (Concise writing)

Sources: https://wordvice.com/improve-writing-edit-nominalizations/; aeo.sllf.qmul.ac.uk/Files/Nominalization/Nom LOC.html; https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/english_as_a_second_language/esl_students/nominalizations_and_subject_position.html

McNair Scholars Program: Hit the Mark
The following speakers have agreed to volunteer their time and share their expertise during the spring 2019’s faculty-led seminars.

**Michelle Redmond, PhD**, Research Assistant Professor for the Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health at the University of Kansas will discuss “Writing for Publication” on Saturday, February 23rd. Topics include: journal selection and the submission process, impact factor, and parts of a manuscript.

**Alicia Thompson, EdD**, superintendent of schools for Wichita Public Schools will offer insight into what it takes to achieve a doctoral degree by sharing about her experiences on Saturday, April 13th. Topics may include developing mentor relationships, maintaining focus, and deciding on a career path.

**McNair Alumni:** McNair Alumni who have completed graduate education or who are working towards that goal will answer questions and share their experiences and advice on Saturday, March 23rd. Topics include: graduate applications and maintaining work-life balance.

**Research Deadlines**
- January 31: Literature Review
- February 15: Methodology Outline/Draft
- February 22: IRB Submission
- April 5: Research Progress Report
- May 24: Literature Review
Dr. Ajunwa is an Assistant Professor of Labor and Employment Law in the Law, Labor Relations, and History Department of Cornell University’s Industrial and Labor Relations School (ILR), and Associated Faculty Member at Cornell Law School. She is also a Faculty Associate at the Berkman Klein Center at Harvard Law School and an Affiliate of the Center for the Study of Inequality at Cornell University. Dr. Ajunwa’s research interests are at the intersection of law and technology with a particular focus on the ethical governance of workplace technologies. Her research focus is also on diversity and inclusion in the labor market and the workplace.

Dr. Ajunwa earned a Ph.D. in Sociology at Columbia University in the City of New York (emphasis on Organizational Theory and Law and Society). Her doctoral research on reentry received a grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) and honorable mention from the Ford Foundation. Prior to graduate school, she also earned a law degree from the University of San Francisco School of Law and Dr. Ajunwa has been admitted to the Bar in the states of New York and California.
McNair Events

Five students visited with graduate admissions representatives during a campus visit at the University of Kansas.

Dr. Micheal Birzer provided students with advice for selecting a mentor and fostering professional relationships.

Program Director LaWanda Holt-Fields presented information about time and stress management.

Student researchers prepared to present their research at the 22nd Annual MKN Heartland McNair Research Conference.

McNair students and staff gathered for a social event at Shocker Sports Grill and Lanes to celebrate the end of the fall 2018 semester.
McNair Facts: Did You Know?

McNair was the second African American to go into space. In February 1984, he was a mission specialist on STS 41-B, which was the fourth flight of the space shuttle Challenger and NASA’s 10th space shuttle mission. One of his jobs was to operate the shuttle’s robot arm.

Source: https://www.greensboro.com/news/things-you-should-know-about-astronaut-ronald-mcnair/article_35a46ea7-b52b-5be5-91ec-6d02a023dfe4.html

Highlighted Fellowship:
The University of Nevada, Las Vegas waives application fees for McNair Scholars and offers McNair Post-Baccalaureate Scholarships worth $4000.

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