*Thesis Statements*

**Thesis statements** form the foundation for your paper. They are the central point you are trying to make with your writing. They perform several functions across the different styles of papers you can write. Some aspects to keep in mind when crafting your thesis state are:

1. Determine what type of essay you are writing:
   * An **analytical** paper breaks down an issue or idea and closely evaluates those ideas and presents this evaluation to an audience.
   * An **expository** (explanatory) paper explains a concept or idea to the audience.
   * An **argumentative** paper makes a claim about a topic and justifies the claim with specific evidence throughout the essay. The goal of the argumentative paper is to convince the audience that the claim is true based on the provided evidence.
2. Your thesis statement should be specific- it should cover only what you will discuss in your paper and should be supported with specific evidence.
3. The thesis statement usually appears at the end of the first paragraph of a paper.
4. Your topic may change as you write, so you may need to revise your thesis statement to reflect exactly what you have discussed in the paper.

*A strong thesis should…*

* Introduce the writer’s perspective on the topic without using personal conviction as the basis.
* Be an interpretation of the subject.
* Make a claim that is debatable. This claim should not be too broad, but instead can be supported by specific examples throughout the paper.
* Summarize the main points the writer will make in the paper.
* Encourage the audience to continue reading.
* Avoid vague language such as “good,” “bad,” “better,” “worse,” or “nice.”

*Thesis Statement Example*

**Analytical Thesis Statement**:

An analysis of the college admissions process reveals one challenge that counselors face: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.

The paper should then:

1. Explain the analysis of the college admission process.
2. Explain the challenge facing admissions counselors

**Expository Thesis Statement**:

The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.

The paper that follows should explain how students spend their time:

1. Studying.
2. Attending class.
3. Socializing with peers.

**Argumentative Thesis Statement**:

High school graduates should be required to take a year off to pursue community service projects before entering college in order to increase their maturity and global awareness.

The paper that follows would strive to present an argument and give evidence to support the claim that students should pursue community projects before entering college.

*Thesis Checklist*

* Can your thesis be supported by evidence?
* Does the thesis summarize the main points of your paper?
* Is the thesis clear and concise?
* Is the thesis unique to your paper? Is the thesis your own creation?
* Is your thesis more than just an opinionated statement?
* Have you reviewed your thesis as your paper changes and develops?
* Does your thesis avoid vague language?