

The Thesis Statement

❖ What is a thesis statement?

- A thesis statement is one or two sentences that express clearly and concisely the main ideas of your paper. It should argue a position and answer questions posed by your paper. It provides structure for the paper, as though it were a roadmap to help the reader navigate through the material. It also acts as mortar: holding together the various bricks of a paper, summarizing the main point of the paper "in a nutshell," and pointing toward the paper's development.

❖ What are the rules for writing a thesis statement?

- Make sure your thesis reflects the full range of your argument.
- Avoid using a thesis that is too broad to be defended in your paper or too narrow to be a full response to the assignment.
- Choose a thesis that can be supported by several solid arguments. Ask yourself *How?* and *Why?* questions to deepen your thesis.
- Make sure your thesis statement is easily identifiable.
- Do not just reword the professor's question; claim your own position.

❖ Are there different types of thesis statements?

- There are three types of thesis statements that should be used based upon what kind of paper you are writing.
 - Analytical: breaks down an issue or an idea into its parts, evaluates these, and presents this breakdown and evaluation to the audience.
 - Expository: explains something to the audience.
 - Argumentative: makes a claim about a topic and justifies it with specific evidence.

❖ What are some examples of these types of thesis statements?

- Analytical:
 - An analysis of the college admission process reveals two principal problems facing counselors: accepting students with high test scores or students with strong extracurricular backgrounds.
- Expository:
 - The life of the typical college student is characterized by time spent studying, attending class, and socializing with peers.
- Argumentative:
 - 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.

Information taken from: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu>; <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/resource/wc/intros.pdf>;
<http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/thesis.html>

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