



BRADLEY University

WRITING CENTER

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Strategies for Developing Strong Thesis Statements

A **thesis statement**, in any discipline, is a statement of an idea and/or an opinion on a particular subject. A thesis statement is a declaration of a stance on an argument, or the point of a discussion that the rest of the paper seeks to support. You may also see thesis statements referred to as **claims**.

Development Strategies

- ❖ Begin by putting your idea into very general, very basic words. **You can always revise** your thesis as you continue to work on the paper, but you need a clear statement to start with.
- ❖ Do not offer any supporting evidence or description in the thesis statement
 - State the opinion/point/idea in a single sentence
 - Do not say “A **should be** B because . . .”
 - Offer as little detail as possible
- ❖ The thesis statement should state the general idea
 - Example thesis (scientific discipline; example: environmental chemistry)
 - Reusable grocery bags have a less harmful impact on the environment than non-reusable grocery bags.
 - The subsequent paper will answer questions like . . .
 - ◆ What is the environmental effect of non-reusable bags?
 - ◆ Are there any plastics in the reusable bags and what are their effects on the environment?
 - ◆ Are the reusable bags made of a fiber mesh? If so, what fibers? Are those fibers recyclable/renewable/reusable?
 - ◆ How many uses/how long do the reusable bags last?
 - The above example is a bare-bones statement of an idea, bereft of any details or reasoning. It is a brief sentence that introduces the topic of the argument to come in the rest of the paper
 - Example thesis (humanities discipline; example: social issues)
 - Women suffering from disabilities are more likely to suffer abuse at the hands of a partner or care-giver than women not suffering from a disability.

- ❖ Look over examples of thesis statements pertaining to work in your discipline
 - Analyze how those theses are written and how they reflect or summarize the rest of the paper
 - Make note of the language used
 - Is there jargon? Anagrams? Is the language specific to your field?
 - This will give you an idea of your audience, as well
 - Keep the overall goal of the paper in mind
 - Is it meant to raise awareness?
 - Is it meant to get funding for or present research?
 - Is it meant to persuade?
 - Is it going to be peer-reviewed and/or published?
 - The paper will be tailored to your overall audience and purpose and this will overlap into the thesis
- ❖ Try consulting a professor in the appropriate discipline. They will have experience writing to certain audiences in that field and can help you tailor your work accordingly.

Still need help with thesis statements?

Make an appointment with the Writing Center!
Library, Room 311/312
www.bradley.edu/writeright