



Writing Center

Thesis Statements

1. A **thesis statement** is generally one sentence that states clearly and directly the main point of an essay. It can be thought of as a road map for your paper, setting out the direction your paper will take. In most cases, the **thesis statement** appears as the last sentence of the introduction.
2. A **thesis statement** introduces the topic of the paper and presents the writer's main idea, attitude, opinion, or point about the topic.
 - Studying with others has several benefits.
Topic Main idea
 - Balancing work and school can involve many challenges.
Topic Main idea
 - Instructors use several teaching techniques to reach students with different learning styles.
Topic Main idea
3. A **thesis statement** should not be so broad that the topic cannot be covered in an essay, and it should not be so narrow that there is nothing else to say about the topic.
 - *Receiving a higher education is beneficial. (Too Broad)*
→How and why is it beneficial? For whom?
 - *My Associate's degree in graphic design helped me obtain a job at Alpha Graphics. (Too Narrow)*
→How else was your degree in graphic design beneficial to you?
 - *Receiving a college degree not only helps you obtain a job in your field but also helps you become a well rounded individual. (Focused Thesis)*
→The topic and main idea are neither too broad nor too narrow.

Note: A **thesis statement** should be a statement and not an announcement. Avoid using words or phrases such as: "In this paper I will argue. . ." "I am going to write about. . ." "The subject of this paper is. . ."

4. A **thesis statement** should convey a single main idea.
 - History, English, and sociology textbooks have better explanations, key points, and graphics than chemistry, biology, and calculus textbooks. (Too many topics)
 - Higher education is beneficial to all young people today and there should be more scholarship opportunities and financial aid for students in order to reach out to students who do not have many educational opportunities. (Too many main ideas)
 - Scholarships and financial aid should be more accessible to students so they can further their education without financial burden. (A single topic and main idea)



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For more about Thesis Statements, visit:

Purdue Owl: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/545/1/>

Indiana University Writing Center: http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/thesis_statement.shtml

University of Richmond Writing Center: <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/wweb/thesis.html>