What is a Thesis?

- a one- or two-sentence statement that:
  - explicitly outlines the purpose or point of your essay
  - points toward the development or course of argument your essay will take
  - contains an arguable point (NOT an observation or a fact)
Thesis

- thesis answers a question (how or why, NOT just what, who, where, when)
  - note: “what/who/where/when” questions = endless description without analysis
- thesis must be arguable
- has three parts:
  1. “subject”
  2. argument or claim about subject
  3. strategy for proving claim (including an implied pattern of argument)

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Thesis Statement

Remember:

- Your thesis should be in your introduction; think of your introduction as a “thesis paragraph”
- Either your thesis OR your introduction should include a “pattern or course of argument” that indicates “how” you will development your argument
- In social sciences, this is very often “cause and effect”, but may also be:
  - Compare / contrast
  - Example / illustration
  - Chronology
  - Categorization
  - Definition
Introduce issue (the expansion of the Darlington nuclear facility as a means of generating more electricity in Ontario)

Introduce “problem”, “urgency”, “relevance” etc.

State method of argument / analysis

Argument A (the one you are supporting)

Argument B (the one you are not supporting)

[Statement of scope / limitations]

**Thesis:** Argument A is preferable for at least two reasons.
A Potential Template for your Persuasive Essay

Introduction

- Clear statement about issue or problem under discussion
- Methods of approaching or understanding the issue or problem
- Advantages / disadvantages of Option A
- Advantages / disadvantages of Option B
- Thesis Statement that does two things:
  - Makes a Claim about the relationship between A and B
  - Indicates a Strategy for proving the Claim (indicate WHY one position is more persuasive than the other or HOW you will develop your argument)
A Potential Template for your Persuasive Essay

Body Paragraph #1

- Topic sentence (makes arguable claim about the position you are arguing for)
- Introduction and citation of evidence
- Explanation of Evidence
- Introduction and citation of evidence
- Explanation of Evidence (relating it back to topic sentence)
- Transition

Body Paragraph #2

- Repeat above format

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A Potential Template for your Persuasive Essay

Body Paragraph #3
[this is often a discussion of Counter-Argument]

- Topic sentence (makes statements about weaknesses of other position)
- Introduction and citation of claim made by opposite position
- Explanation of Evidence refuting that claim
- Introduction and citation of claim made by opposite position
- Explanation of Evidence refuting that claim
- Concluding statement emphasizing strength of your position
A Potential Template for your Persuasive Essay

Conclusion

- 3 – 4 sentences indicating **HOW** you have argued support for your position and weakness of other positions
- Focus on **methods** of analysis rather than simply restating your TS

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