**THE THESIS STATEMENT**

The thesis itself is an idea, opinion, or conclusion about a particular subject. The thesis statement is that idea, opinion, or conclusion expressed in a complete sentence that contains logical reasons to support this idea.

The following qualities are characteristics of a good thesis statement:

1. A good thesis statement is best expressed in a declarative sentence—**never** a question.

Poor: ***Is the registration process at DeKalb College satisfactory?*** (Opinion missing)

Better: ***The registration process at DeKalb College is confusing, frustrating, and exhausting.*** (This is now a declarative sentence containing a statement of opinion. *Confusing*, *frustrating*, and *exhausting* are the key words)

1. A good thesis statement is clear.

Poor: ***Dewey successfully argues that the three most important lessons a child should learn are to sing, to reading, and he should also be able to draw.***

(Ambiguous, not parallel, requires a second reading)

Better: ***Dewey successfully argues that the most important lessons for a child are singing, reading, and drawing.*** (Precise and parallel)

1. A good thesis statement focuses on a specific aspect of the topic which is not too narrow or too broad.

Poor: ***In this paper, I will discuss the relationship between fairy tales and early childhood.*** (Vague and too general)

Better: ***Not just empty stories for kids, fairy tales shed light on the psychology of young children.*** (Clear and specific)

1. A good thesis statement provides facts that are not overly obvious to the reader.

Poor: ***Hoover’s administration was rocked by scandal.*** (A fact everyone knows)

Better: ***The many scandals of Hoover’s administration revealed basic problems with the Republican Party’s nominating process.*** (A lesser-known fact)

1. A good thesis statement can be defined by reason rather than emotion.

Poor: ***It is better to use statistics to analyze advertisements.*** (Too emotional)

Better: ***Because advertisers consciously and unconsciously manipulate data, every consumer should learn to evaluate statistical claims.*** (Reasoning is justified)

\*Avoid formula and generic words. Search for concrete subject and active verbs, revising as many “to be” verb as possible.

\*Use your own words in thesis statement, avoiding quotation.