

Thesis Statement Checklist

Adapted from Appendix B in *Writing for Sociology* (2nd Edition)¹

If you can answer “yes” to each of these questions, then you have an excellent thesis!

- ___ Does my thesis sentence attempt to answer (or at least to explore) a challenging intellectual question?
- ___ Is the point I'm making one that would generate discussion and argument, or is it one that would leave people asking, “So what?”
- ___ Is my thesis too vague? Too general? Should I focus on some more specific aspect of my topic?
- ___ Does my thesis deal directly with the topic at hand, or is it a declaration of my personal feelings?
- ___ Does my thesis indicate the direction of my argument? Does it suggest a structure for my paper?
- ___ Does my introductory paragraph define terms important to my thesis? If I am writing a research paper, does my introduction place my thesis within the larger, ongoing scholarly discussion about my topic?
- ___ Is the language in my thesis vivid and clear? Have I structured my sentence so that the important information is in the main clause? Have I used subordinate clauses to house less important information? Have I used parallelism to show the relationship between parts of my thesis? In short, is this thesis the very best sentence that it can be?

¹ Excerpted from Dartmouth College's *Materials for Students: Developing Your Thesis*, by Karen Gocsik. Available at http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/materials/student/ac_paper/develop.shtml.