

Moving from Informative to Argumentative Theses

Understanding the Difference

The key difference between these thesis types is that:

- An informative thesis simply states what the paper will cover
- An argumentative thesis takes a position that requires evidence and persuasion

Steps for Transformation

1. **Identify the core topic** in the informative thesis
2. **Determine a debatable position** related to that topic
3. **Add qualifying language** that indicates judgment or evaluation
4. **Incorporate specific criteria** that will be used to support the argument
5. **Consider counterarguments** to ensure the position is truly debatable

Practical Tips for Students

1. **Use evaluative language:** Replace neutral terms with words that show judgment (effective, insufficient, crucial)
2. **Add a "because" clause:** This forces students to include reasoning for their position
3. **Apply the "so what?" test:** Ask why anyone should care about this position
4. **Introduce tension:** Acknowledge opposing viewpoints to create a reason for argument
5. **Be specific and narrow:** Replace general topics with focused claims

Examples of Transformation Techniques

1. **Add a value judgment:**
 - Informative: "Many factors have contributed to rising college tuition costs."
 - Argumentative: "Rising college tuition costs are creating an unsustainable burden for middle-class families."
2. **Transform description into evaluation:**
 - Informative: "Currently two main teaching methods are practiced in most US schools."
 - Argumentative: "Project-based learning is more effective than lecture-based instruction for developing critical thinking skills."
3. **Convert comparison into advocacy:**
 - Informative: "Online and in-person learning offer different educational benefits and disadvantages."
 - Argumentative: "Despite technological advances, in-person learning still provides superior educational outcomes for most undergraduate students."