Writing a Conclusion

Conclusions wrap up your paper with a cohesive bow. By the time you get to your conclusion your thesis should be argued to the best of your ability. It is not a body paragraph, so don’t add another point to argue. A conclusion has two main parts: the restated thesis and the significance or application.

Restate the Thesis

Don’t just reword the thesis. Now that they have read your entire paper, your readers will benefit from a more developed summary of your argument. Restate, but also expand on, your thesis.

Your restated thesis: ____________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Significance/Application

Now that you’ve restated the thesis, tell your readers why they should care about your topic and argument. Your paper doesn’t stand alone; it’s part of a larger dialogue, so end with something that will promote further discussion. Ask yourself:

- Why is this important?
- What would happen if nothing changes?
- What would happen if things change?
- Do we need more research? What else do we need to know?
- What can we learn from this?
- Does this relate to things that are happening today/happened in the past?
- What should we do?
- Does this relate to other class concepts or other disciplines?

The significance/application of your argument: _______________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________

Other suggestions

**Bring it full circle:** Depending on the paper this can add a nice touch and make your paper feel complete. If you started your paper with a hook such as a question, anecdote, prediction, or figure of speech (see introductions handout), try tying your final sentences back to that hook.

**Double check the assignment:** The prompt may give you specific instructions or suggestions on how to end your paper. Always consider the context of the assignment (what set of skills/knowledge is your instructor looking for?) to guide the content and structure of your paper. (See assignment analysis worksheet for more help with this.)