**Weak Thesis Statements**

*There are many different kinds of thesis statements, and no one right way to*

*compose one. However, there are several mistakes that students can make*

*when composing their own. Here is1 some advice on how to spot, and fix,*

*common traps in your own writing .*

**Weak Thesis 1**: **The thesis makes no claim.**

*EX: In this paper, I will explore William Faulkner's short story, "A Rose for Emily."*

**How to Revise:** Make generic claims specific. Take a stand on one side of an issue. Show *how* you will explore your topic, and *why.*

*In "A Rose for Emily," William Faulkner uses non-reproductive sexuality as a metaphor for the stagnation of the Southern Aristocracy of which Emily is a part; by exploring the*

*role of Homer's slyly depicted homosexuality in the narrative progression, the connection between aristocracy and death becomes inarguable.*

**Weak Thesis 2: Statement of Fact (not a debatable claim).**

*EX: Many authors use Shakespeare as a reference in their works.*

**How to Revise:** Find a question within your original claim? *Why* is this statement true?

Are there scenarios in which this statement is not true?

*Although many American Modernist authors peppered their works with allusions to*

*Shakespeare in order to establish their literary pedigree, many contemporary authors are*

*too concerned with the "middlebrow" to engage Shakespeare's work in a similar manner.*

**Weak Thesis 3: Opinion-based theses.**

*EX: Adele's song "Someone Like You" is one of the best wedding-dance songs ever.*

**Advice for revision:** Look for opposing positions. What are their points? What will you have to temper to make your claim something someone could engage using evidence and

logic?

*Adele's record* 21, *uses themes of heartbreak and bittersweet reunions to set the stage for*

*a lyrical celebration of love's strength when it is built in spite of a history of failed*

*relationships. With "Someone Like You,"Adele invites the listener to overcome the grief*

*that drove the preceding songs, thus creating a cycle of loss and healing within the record's whole.*

1

Advice has been adapted from suggestions in *Writing Analytically, 5th edition.* Copyright, 2009, Cengage Learning.

Authors, David Rosenwasser and Jill Stephen.

**Weak Thesis 4: Overarching, broad claims.**

*Republicans tend to appeal to the working class.*

**Advice for revision:** Convert broad categories and generic (fits anything) claims to more specific, more qualified assertions; find ways to bring out the complexity of your subject.

*While President Obama may have come from a lower- to middle-class background, he is*

*currently depicted in many Republican debates as an aloof, intellectual—someone too*

*cerebral to understand the everyday American. By reviewing recent Republican*

*presidential nominee debates, one can see how Republican candidates strive to oppose*

*themselves against this image and appeal to the "everyman."*

**Remember, these are general rules.**

If you need further assistance with this or any other writing issue, visit the Academic Writing Center. More information can be found at our website: uc.edu/awc.