THESIS STATEMENTS

A thesis acts as a **roadmap** to your report or memo

A thesis should:
- make one strong, **specific claim**
- tell the reader **what to expect** in the rest of the document
- come at the **end of the opening paragraph** in your executive summary or introduction

LET'S PRACTICE!

Consider the following assignment and thesis statements:

Assignment: Discuss the potential implications of the SEC's new 21st Century Disclosure Initiative. You should discuss the potential implications of the initiative for investors and for public companies.

Ineffective thesis statement:

"There are some positive and negative implications of the new initiative in question."
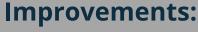
Problems:
- **too vague** - what are the implications? what is the initiative?
- **too descriptive** - what is your position/argument/opinion about the topic?

Effective thesis statement:

"The most far-reaching potential implication of the SEC's 21st Century Disclosure Initiative is the presentation of relevant disclosure information in a uniform format, which will facilitate more informed decision-making for both investors and public companies."

Improvements:
- **specifies** the initiative
- asserts a **strong claim**: "will facilitate more informed decision-making"
- states the **specific implications** for investors and public companies

Ineffective thesis statement:

"The SEC's 21st Century Disclosure Initiative has important implications for investors, while the SEC's Plain English Initiative more directly impacts public companies."

Problem:
- **not specific** - audience does not know which initiative will be discussed, and the impact listed is vague

Effective thesis statement:

"Because relevant disclosure information is crucial to making sound investment decisions, the SEC's 21st Century Disclosure Initiative is more likely to have a significant impact on investors than on public companies."

Improvements:
- **provides evidence** to support the claim
- **specifies** the initiative
- indicates the **specific impact** on investors

TIPS FOR WRITING AN EFFECTIVE THESIS

- ☑ articulate **one specific claim** about your topic

- ☑ **include relevant** and necessary **detail** for your audience

- ☑ ensure thesis **guides evidence and analysis** to come