The Thesis Equation

For Z, X is Y because {a, b, c}.

WHERE
- **X** = essay subject narrowed to a length suitable for assignment
- **Y** = writer's attitude about subject or what he/she is going to tell us about the subject
- **{a, b, c}** = reasons to support X/Y statement, formulated as topic sentences in the body section of the essay (# of reasons vary per paper)
- **Z** = limiting/focusing factors, such as audience and context of essay

Note: a thesis statement does not always include Z and {a, b, c}, but it should always have an X and Y. However, your essay must always make clear what the Z and {a, b, c} are to the reader. Z begins in the introduction and continues throughout the essay in the choice of reasons to suit the audience and context as well as the tone and diction levels. {a, b, c} come directly from the X/Y statement and the Z because they are reasons that logically support the essay's thesis and also will appeal to the essay reader.

Example: Students should not complain about tuition hikes at Seminole State College because the money provides many useful services to them in computer labs, the library, and in classrooms.
- **X** = SSC tuition hikes
- **Y** = students should not complain
- **{a, b, c}** = money provides services in computer labs, the library, and in classrooms
- **Z** = the limiting factors are: students (the audience and complainers) and SSC (where the tuition hikes are occurring)

Thesis statements are not:
1. *Statements of fact*: SSC raised tuition this year.
2. *Statements of the obvious*: Students don't like paying tuition.
3. *Announcements of intent*: This essay will explain how SSC uses tuition money in ways beneficial to students.