

**LUC WRITING CENTER –
“CONCLUSIONS: THE TRAP OF CIRCULAR INFORMATION”**

Often when you're concluding your essay, you might notice that:

1. Your conclusion sounds **familiar**, almost like your topic paragraph, and that
2. You feel like you have **nothing new** to add to your essay.

Sometimes misleading, but common writing advice can make it easy to write a bad conclusion.

Common example: “Your conclusion is a **restatement** of the topic paragraph.”

This wording makes it sound as though you should repeat the exact words in your conclusion that you used to explain the issue in your topic paragraph.

But a conclusion paragraph is very different from a topic paragraph, because though it references some of the same information in different words, it ensures that your reader knows what to do or think after reading your essay.

What Makes a Conclusion Strong: Spelling out the *practical use* of your essay argument, whether to *change, alter, or add to current thought (scholarly, cultural, etc.) on a subject or issue.*

Learn the Functional Differences Between a Topic Paragraph and Conclusion Paragraph:

Your Topic Paragraph:

- *Gives Historical Information and Background about your Topic,*
- *Introduces your Argument, and*
- *States what your Overall Thesis (statement you will prove in the body paragraphs of your essay) will be.*

On the other hand,

Your Conclusion Paragraph:

- *Sums up the Argument you have just Set Out,*
- *Explains How your Argument Changes, Alters, or Adds to Current Scholarly Thought on the Topic, and,*
- *May contain Investigation Advice for Future Scholars of the Topic, or provide Recommendations for what Practical Action to Take on the Issue Going Forwards.*

Each *subject, and essay on that subject is different*, so the content of your conclusion paragraph will depend on what you see to be the practical consequences of your thesis, if accepted, to real-world, practical implementation. What, **ideally, would be accomplished by your reader accepting the basic premises of your essay?** Your conclusion should advise them to change their thinking, way of life, pursue an activity, or research some aspect of your argument themselves in another project – again, it all depends on the purpose of your unique essay.