ORGANIZING YOUR PERSUASIVE SPEECH
Choose pattern that will convey your message and maximize persuasive impact

FACT CLAIMS: SEEKING TO PROVE SOMETHING IS TRUE OR FALSE

1. Casual pattern: one thing causes another
   Thesis: fast-food restaurants cause significant health problems in the US.
   I. Low prices encourage frequent consumption.
   II. Fast-food is high in trans-fats and calories.
   III. High-fat, high-calorie food contributes to obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

2. Categorical pattern: Each main point reflects a different reason your claim is true
   Thesis: The Earth is experiencing climate change.
   I. Changes in ocean temperature are consistent with computer models of climate change.
   II. Extreme weather is on the rise.
   III. Glaciers are melting.
   IV. Coral reefs are disintegrating

VALUE CLAIMS: SEEKING TO PROVE THAT A CERTAIN ISSUE/POSITION IS GOOD OR BAD

1. Criteria-application pattern: Two main points: one establishes standards for value judgment; the other applies it to the topic of your thesis
   Thesis: Community service is valuable part of college experience
   I. College education should provide students with several benefits
      A. New knowledge and skills
      B. Preparation for workforce
      C. Participation in new experiences
      D. Clarifying students’ values and place in the world
   II. Community service provides students will the opportunity to gain all these benefits
      A. It leads to higher GPA and better communication skills
      B. It provides valuable work experience and chance to discover career interests
      C. It offers an opportunity to experience new situations and work with people from diverse backgrounds.
      D. It encourages students to consider their values and see how they can help society.

2. Categorical pattern: when audience already understands each point’s relevance
   Thesis: Advanced driver-training courses are beneficial.
   I. They reduce risk of accidents
   II. They lower drivers’ insurance premiums.
   III. They lower drivers’ maintenance and gas costs.
   IV. The savings gained from the course exceed the cost of the course.

Adapted from Speak Up! An Illustrated Guide to Public Speaking, by Douglas Fraleigh and Joseph Tuman (525-534).
POLICY CLAIMS: SEEKING TO ARGUE THAT A CERTAIN POLICY SHOULD BE ADOPTED

1. Problem-Cause-Solution Pattern: builds to the action you are advocating. First point establishes a problem that needs to be addressed. The second shows how current policies are not sufficient to eliminate the cause of the problem. And the third presents a solution that can minimize the problem.

   Thesis: The local government should install secure bike racks near heavily used bus and train stations.
   I. Problem: Parking is scarce and traffic is congested near commuter bus and train stations in our city.
   II. Cause: Many suburban commuters who would take mass transit live more than a mile from the closest bus stop or train station.
   III. Solution: Providing secure bike racks will encourage alternative means of transportation to and from stops and stations, opening up parking spaces and alleviating traffic.

2. Comparative Advantage Format: explaining why the policy you’re advocating is more beneficial than existing policies, especially if there’s no glaring problem or issue at stake but there is a reason to adopt your proposal. The first point explains your solution, and each subsequent point identifies an advantage compared to the status quo. The subpoints should include proof.

   Thesis: You should graduate with a minor.
   I. Solution: Research available minors on campus and select one that interests you.
   II. Advantage: You can focus your studies on a subject you enjoy.
   III. Advantage: You can strengthen your qualifications in your chosen career.
   IV. Advantage: You can open the door to new career possibilities.