What is a counterclaim?
A claim that negates or disagrees with the thesis/claim. In other words, it's the claim of someone who might oppose your position on this issue. It's the "other side of the story" for the argument.

It is also sometimes called the **counterargument** or the **opposition**.
Source: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/03/>

What's its purpose? Why do I need a counterclaim?
Include the opposing side as a counterclaim to strengthen your own claim. Think about what the "other side" would say about this topic and respond to it within your own argument.

Including counterclaims allows you to find common ground with more of your readers. It also makes you more credible because you demonstrate that you are knowledgeable about the entirety of the debate rather than just being biased or uninformed.

You can even include several counterclaims to show that you have thoroughly researched the topic.
Source: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/588/03/>

How do you craft an effective counterclaim?

1. Be sure you can clearly articulate the "other side" of the argument:

   **Example:**
   *If your claim is: School uniforms are unnecessary and ineffective.*
   *Possible counterclaim: Educators who are in favor of school uniforms assert that students should wear uniforms because there will be less social friction between students.*

2. Refute this claim and write your rebuttal (explain why this claim is not valid):

   **Example:** *But the sad truth is that teenagers will just find other ways to use appearance to judge their peers, such as choice of shoe brands, hairstyles or even the kind of phone or computer used by the student. As a result, school uniform policies are an exercise in futility if their main purpose is to eliminate social conflicts among teenagers.*

   *Some people call the rebuttal "disagreeing, with reasons" or "defeating the counterclaim."

Common mistakes that students make writing counterclaims:

1. Not including a counterclaim at all.
2. Acknowledging the opposition but not refuting it.
3. Defending the opposing viewpoint instead of refuting it: Be careful not to "prove" the counterclaim is true by supporting it with evidence. Unless the writing assignment specifically tells you to explain and support BOTH sides of the issue, you should use evidence to strengthen YOUR claim, not the opposition.
Sentence Structures to Use for Counterclaims:

To introduce the counterclaim:

Critics of X will probably argue that __________.
Those who believe X will probably argue that __________.
Some will disagree with the assertion that X because __________.
Some may want to question whether __________.

To refute the counterclaim:
X is mistaken because __________.
But the truth is, __________.
I disagree with X's view because __________.
By focusing on __________, X overlooks the deeper problem of __________.
However, it simply is not true that __________.

Useful vocabulary:

Acknowledg (v): accept or admit the existence or truth of

Refute (v): prove (a statement or theory) to be wrong or false; disprove

Rebuttal (n): plainly put, the rebuttal is the "no, you're wrong and this is why" part of your argument.

PRACTICE: Should students be allowed off campus during the day in high school? Articulate your CLAIM, a possible COUNTERCLAIM, and REFUTE the counterclaim using any of the above sentence starters if needed.

Your claim:

Possible counterclaim:

Rebuttal (refute the counterclaim by disagreeing with reasons/evidence):