

Position Paper (15%)

Position papers have the overall objective of convincing readers to accept claims on debatable research issues. In the introduction the author summarizes the contrasting arguments that have been advanced on an unresolved issue. The author then sites his or her position as a formal claim. In the subsequent body paragraphs, the author structures lines of evidence and reasoning intended to support the author's claim and refute opposing positions.

Essay Prompt: On January 31, 2018 President Trump gave his annual speech to Congress, revealing his position on the future of energy sources/supply, saying: "*We have ended the war on American energy, and we have ended the war on beautiful, clean coal. We are now very proudly an exporter of energy to the world*" (Grandoni, 2018, p. 1). This made advocates of alternative energy very uncomfortable.

You are tasked with writing a position paper for ScienceLife Magazine informing readers about the necessity of alternative energy over "clean coal." However, alternative energy sources are not all equal in value and safety. For example, the controversy concerning the long-term impact of "natural gas," a process known as Fracking, causes people to be skeptical about other alternative sources. You must present your readers with the best alternative energy source, while also alleviating their skepticism. You have to select one of the alternative energy options discussed in class that you believe is superior to all others, and form a position to support it.

You are required to structure your arguments using concessions and counter arguments we discussed in class. Refer to the handout on *Structuring Arguments*.

Audience: Your audience subscribes to the ScienceLife Magazine and have a keen interest in science. Some of your secondary audience may not be scientists, but are educated in some science topics. You are writing for both a primary and secondary audience.

Guide

- 1) Format:** 3-4 pages (not including the cover page or work-cited page); APA format with cover page. Visual image should be placed somewhere on the cover page, along with the article's title and your name/course name.
- 2) Introduction:** Summarize both arguments on the unresolved issue(s). The introduction section closes with your thesis, or position you're taking on the unresolved issue.
- 3) Body:** Support your position using evidence from cited sources. To ensure that your position is credible, there should be one source opposing your position. Structure your arguments using concessions to convey valid aspects of the opposing position, and use counter arguments to show how your position is stronger. Your position might build on existing knowledge, or it might show how key areas of previous research were ignored or biased. Use adaptive measures to help your secondary audience understand complicated terms. You might use definitions, graphics, tables, and images to help your audience adapt to new knowledge.
- 4) Sources:** A minimum of four sources. Two of the sources should come from the CUNY/CCNY "Opposing Views" database: one proposing your position, and one opposing your position. The other sources can be selected from any of the readings and videos discussed in class.
- 5) Conclusion:** Your conclusion should do more than just summing up your argument. It should resonate with your readers in a way that will make them want to learn more about the issue(s).

Due Dates:**Oct 22** – First draft**Oct 24** – Final draft

CCNY Writing Center: Schedule an appointment with a writing consultant and earn points on your paper.