

Formal Paper Prompt: Explaining a Controversy

Write a 4-6 page paper (double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 point font) that demonstrates the complexity of **one energy policy controversy** by discussing views held by relevant stakeholders.

Rather than merely listing disconnected viewpoints, make a coherent argument by using a theme that runs through your discussion of the controversy. How does a **unifying theme** (a recurring concept or value, a difference in perspective, a goal, a conflict, or even a simple term), help answer the question, “Why is there controversy on this topic?”

Choose from ONE of the following topics.

Explain why there is controversy around whether or not nuclear energy companies should receive government subsidies.

Explain why there is controversy around whether or not natural gas is currently a good energy option.

Tips:

—All stakeholder views and arguments must be represented well. Stakeholders in different camps should recognize themselves in your words.

—This is not an advocacy paper in which you side with one stakeholder or propose a solution. While you may have a preference, or even a solution, your argument is not about that. Your main claim is to explain why there is controversy. To test if you’ve answered the prompt, ask this: can you rephrase your main claim to fit this format: “There is controversy because **[main claim here]**.”

—The nuance of a few, key points should be explored in depth. You are being graded on a solid exploration of a few important points, not an exhaustive survey of the entire topic. You can acknowledge areas not covered in a conclusion (a great way to end this kind of paper).

—Do not merely produce a summary of what you have read. Pinpoint stakeholders and key issues and decide (narrow down) which ones to talk about. You can’t talk about them all. The key skill is strategic, active reading: filtering and framing content to make it work for your goals.

— **No fewer than three sources** must be used (from Energy Policy Arguments discussed during class). However, all three don’t have to be covered equally. For instance, you can focus on two, while using other sources to back up your points. You can also derive multiple perspectives from one author. No outside research. Site all sources using MLA conventions for both your in-text citations and your works cited page.

—Quality, appropriateness, and skill of paraphrase and quotation will be heavily graded.