

Position Paper #1: Celebrity Feminists / Feminist Celebrities

Assignment Description

For this assignment, we will be writing a position paper (see [overview video](#)) about the current debate over the role of celebrities in feminism. Do they help the movement by making it more visible? Do they hurt it by electing themselves as spokespersons? Why do some embrace the title of the “feminist” and others reject it? What does and doesn’t it mean to their fan base? Their bank accounts? Their right to free speech? What impact do these decisions have on the status, visibility, and productivity of the feminist movement?

Learning Outcomes

By completing this position paper, you will be making progress to the following course learning outcomes:

Course Learning Outcome (CLO): Analyze current debates, theories, and perspectives about the role of feminists and feminist studies.

CLO: Create a working definition and argument regarding feminism and its role in contemporary society.

Directions

Complete the following in order:

Step 1. Review and refresh.

The [overview video](#) discusses how to write a position paper, why we write them, and how. You should also review the rubric embedded on Blackboard before you begin, so you know how the work will be graded.

Step 2. Research.

Position papers are *research-based* arguments, so you will want to familiarize yourself with that research. Select some of these sources to help you get your footing in this debate:

- Janell Hobson, [Celebrity Feminism: More Than a Gateway](#)
- Roxane Gay, [These aren't the feminists you're looking for](#)
- Zan Romanoff, [In Defense of Celebrity Feminism](#)

There are dozens of hyperlinks embedded in these sources that can take you to more articles about this debate and can give you some specific celebrity examples that you can use in the body of the paper.

Step 3. Brainstorming!

Having reviewed some of the basic arguments for and against celebrity feminism, you will need to choose a “side” of this debate and identify your reasoning for selecting it.

- If you are “for” celebrities being vocal about their feminism, then you’ll want to think about what *benefits* feminism receives from their elevated cultural status. Do they bring visibility to certain issues? Do they help inspire others to activism? Do they use their platform to speak out against a social issue?
- If you are “against” celebrities being vocal about their feminism, then you’ll want to think about how celebrities might *detract* from the feminist movement/message. Do they ignore certain issues that are important to feminists? Does their association with the movement turn others away from it? Do they take attention away from feminist thinkers?

Answering these questions will help you start the brainstorming process and give you some major points to discuss. (Helpful hint: look at what the opposing side might discuss and draft up some counterarguments while you’re here!)

Step 4. Pick an approach

There are really two approaches you can take for this essay:

- A little about a lot: choose three different celebrities that support your position
- A lot about a little: choose a celebrity that supports your position in three different ways

Some examples:

- “For”: [Jameela Jamil](#), [Emma Watson](#), [Beyoncé](#), [Kim Kardashian](#)
- “Against”: [Jameela Jamil](#), [Emma Watson](#), [Beyoncé](#), [Kim Kardashian](#)

(See what I did there? ☺ That’s because there is no “right” or “wrong” argument here. Rather, position papers are all about whether or not your essay is persuasive.)

Step 5. Outline and draft

Don’t reinvent the wheel: the [overview video](#) has an outline for you already. You can also download a copy of that outline in Course Resources. Use that outline to complete your draft.

Step 6. Review, revise, edit, and proof!

Remember that you are writing to a “hostile” audience, so focus on tone. You will also want to revise, edit, and proofread at this stage.

Step 7. Format and cite.

Before you hit submit, now is a great time to make sure that your citations are in place and you have formatted the document.

- Formatting: header (name, course, professor, date), double-spaced, twelve-point font, Times New Roman, unique title
- Citation: citation method of your choosing (APA, MLA, etc.); no title page or abstract

Step 8. Submit assignment.

Upload the assignment to Blackboard using this dropbox by Sunday at 11:59pm. [Watch a short video on how to submit an assignment here.](#)

Length

There is no length requirement. The essay should be as long as it needs to be to fulfill the assignment’s outcomes. In general, students land between 3-4 pages, which sufficiently covers the material.

Why no requirement? Some writers are very concise, so a length requirement can pressure them into writing “fluff” to meet it. Some writers feel pressured to hit a length requirement and that writing anxiety is unproductive. Finally, length requirements ask writers to focus on the word count rather than the content, which goes against the entire purpose of this assignment.

Assessment

The assignment is worth 100 points and is worth 10% of your overall grade. See the embedded rubric for more details.

Collaboration

You will need to use external resources to complete the basic research for this assignment. Please make sure that you are citing these sources (in the citation method of your choosing) as in-text citations and in a references/bibliography/works cited page. Please review the College’s [academic integrity policy](#) for more information. *If you have questions or concerns, ask!*