Writing a Position Paper
A position paper presents an arguable opinion about an issue. The goal of a position paper is to convince the audience that your opinion is valid and worth listening to.

Writing a Position Paper
→ Ideas that you are considering need to be carefully examined in choosing a topic, developing your argument, and organizing your paper.
→ All sides of the issue must be addressed and presented in a manner that is easy for the audience to understand.

Writing a Position Paper
→ Writer's role is to take one side of the argument and persuade the audience that you have well-founded knowledge of the topic being presented.
→ Argument must be supported with evidence to ensure the validity of claims, as well as to address the counterclaims to show that writer is well informed about both sides.

Issue Criteria
To take a side on a subject, you should first establish the arguability of a topic that interests you. Ask yourself the following questions to ensure that you will be able to present a strong argument:
→ Is it a real issue, with genuine controversy and uncertainty?
→ Can you distinctly identify two positions?
→ Are you personally interested in advocating one of these positions?
→ Is the issue narrow enough to be manageable?

Analyzing an Issue and Developing an Argument
→ Select a topic.
→ Do some research on the subject matter.
→ Ensure that your position is well supported.
→ Listing out the pro and con sides of the topic.
→ Support counterclaims, along with a list of supporting evidence for both sides.

Supporting evidence for counterclaims
1. Factual Knowledge - Information that is verifiable and agreed upon by almost everyone.
2. Statistical Inferences - Interpretation and examples of an accumulation of facts.
3. Informed Opinion - Opinion developed through research and/or expertise of the claim.
4. Personal Testimony - Personal experience related by a knowledgeable party.
Audience & Position Paper
Once you have made your pro and con lists, compare the information side by side. Considering your audience, as well as your own viewpoint, choose the position you will take. In considering the audience, ask yourself the following questions:
1. Who is your audience?
2. What do they believe?
3. Where do they stand on the issue?
4. How are their interests involved?
5. What evidence is likely to be effective with them?

Viewpoint & Position Paper
In determining your viewpoint, ask yourself the following:
1. Is your topic interesting?
2. Can you manage the material within the specifications set by the instructor?
3. Does your topic assert something specific and propose a plan of action?
4. Do you have enough material to support your opinion?

Organization of Position Paper
Your introduction should lead up to a thesis that organizes the rest of your paper. There are three advantages to leading with the thesis:
1. The audience knows where you stand.
2. The thesis is located in the two strongest places, first and last.
3. It is the most common form of academic argument used.

Outline for a position paper:
I. Introduction
   A. Introduce the topic
   B. Provide background on the topic
   C. Assert the thesis (your view of the issue)
II. Counter Argument
   A. Summarize the counterclaims
   B. Provide supporting information for counterclaims
   C. Refute the counterclaims
   D. Give evidence for argument
III. Your Argument
   A. Assert point #1 of your claims
      1. Give your opinion
      2. Provide support
   B. Assert point #2 of your claims
      1. Give your opinion
      2. Provide support
   C. Assert point #3 of your claims
      1. Give your opinion
      2. Provide support
IV. Conclusion
   A. Restate your argument
   B. Provide a plan of action