

Sample Persuasive Speech Sentence Outline (Preparation) – UW-La Cross Public Speaking Center

A. Introduction

- 1. Attention Getter: "At that point, the only thing I cared about was that my daughter, Camryn, was OK. I didn't care if I ever ran track again." These were the words of Allyson Felix shortly after giving birth to her premature baby girl in 2018 (Anne Francis, 2018)
- **II. Relevance to audience**: Many of us watch various Olympic sports and maybe even look up to some of the professional athletes who perform
- III. **Speaker Credibility**: As a student athlete here at UWL, I keep up to date on the news of professional athletes and the issues within professional athletics.
- IV. Thesis: Women athletes should not be held back from, nor afraid to start a family in spite of losing their career and/or income, and contractors in this case especially, Nike, should not be preventing this.
- V. **Audience Analysis:** In the survey I conducted all six who responded agreed that male and female athletics are not equally valued in society today.
- VI. **Preview main points:** Today I will touch on the contract content for a professional athlete and compare their contracts to other paid professionals, identify some working names and share some personal testimonies of women who have personal experience with inequality in their sport, as well as suggesting solutions to these issues.
- **B.** First Main point (problem): As many of you may have experienced, when you begin a job you likely receive particular benefits whether it be vacation days, health or dental insurance, and maternity or paternity leave and much more.
 - 1. These are often bargaining chips for individuals when they are choosing an employer and company that they would like to work with.
 - II. Similar to this, professional athletes might negotiate contracts, although their contracts contain much less protection at higher stakes
 - III. Francine Darroch, a public health professional conducted a study contained in the Journal *Sport in Society* in 2019, where she explained the difference seen in these contracts when comparing those of the athletes to other professions.
 - i. In the study she concludes that athletes are treated as free agents, but often they sign agreements with ambiguous statements that allow for the tampering of their contracts in terms of compensation and income, without exceptions and explanation.
 - 1. This includes the "suggestion" that the pregnancy of a female athlete will be treated similar to an injury
 - 2. This is often dismissed by young women who are just beginning their careers



- IV. Also shared by Lindsay Crouse in 2014, a writer of the International New York Times, it is explained that when women endure pregnancy while under a contract, they often see pay cuts if they are out of performance for at least 6 months for an "injury".
 - i. This implies the expectation that women must perform as least part of the way into their pregnancy in addition to shortly after the birth of their children
 - ii. Crouse and the New York times both explain the significant difference we can see between this profession and others. These individuals can actually be fired from their paid position if they do not return in time, whereas other professionals cannot be fired due to the protections in their contracts.
 - 1. In addition to this, occupations where an employee might be sitting at a desk allow for the soon to be mother to continue working throughout the course of her pregnancy.
 - 2. Athletes are able to often continue working out but not at the normal intensity that their profession requires.

Transition: These discrepancies seen when comparing athletics to other professions are not the same for all sports and brands, however.

- **C.** Second Main Point (Problem continued) Lindy Korn, a workplace discrimination attorney, summarizes in the Daily Record in 2018 the comparison across sports, focusing on the issue's females experience while balancing motherhood and the life of a professional athlete.
 - 1. She explains that individuals who participate in team sports, such as US Women's basketball and soccer usually receive some percent of their contract while on maternity leave and throughout their pregnancy
 - i. Issue arise here too because these percentages are determined by statistics such as rank and other numerical values that rate the athletes performance
 - ii. These differ both within a single team and across different sports teams
 - II. Korn also emphasizes the issue that individual sports experience even more inequality due to their "free agent" agreements
 - i. Their contracts bind them to the company ONLY as long as they are appearing and competing at scheduled events while maintaining certain marks, and without following these guideline they are not making money, meaning their income needs look to their partner or spouse
 - ii. The athlete and their family must focus their efforts on finding childcare, budgeting to meet the needs of the family, and ensuring the health of themselves and their child rather than prepping for a race following the birth of their child



- III. With this thought, I would like to show you a clip by Alysia Montano who was previously a Nike sponsored Olympic athlete
 - i. This personal clip by Montano highlights the stereotypes of women in athletics and turns them into empowering statements for women who are seeking courage to endure motherhood during their peak performance years.
 - ii. Like Alysia, numerous other extremely talented and highly regarded professional athletes have had this discouraging experience in their careers
 - iii. They fear their contractors and the pay cuts and threatening removal of pay all together

Transition: So now you might be wondering, what major companies would be so focused on winning that they would disregard their female athletes physical and mental health as well as happiness? One word. Nike.

D. Third main point (Causes)

- I. Nike Contract specifics
 - i. All big brands are different
 - ii. Nike, one of the most familiar brands in athletics and the brand who preaches for women to dream the biggest they can, exhibits this inequality toward women in sports enormously.
 - iii. Lindsay Crouse in 2018, writer of the New York Times shares the inside point of view of Alysia Montano, an Olympic female runner who mentions that Nike's main contractors, comically, are 4 men
 - iv. In this article, there are also an array of details describing what a Nike track and field contract contains and what it lacks:
 - 1. A few main points include:
 - a. "No exceptions"
 - b. And high standards like "top five world rankings"
 - 2. In an article by Sheena Butler Young in 2019, a Footwear News writer, she interviews a number individuals who give her some insights on the policy that other companies require.
 - a. Matt Powell, and interviewee of Butler Young, who analyzes major industries as his profession, expressed great disappointment and was in awe at the selfishness of Nike
 - b. With this being said, you might be curious as to which brands do support these athletes, since I am singling out Nike
 - i. According to the previously mentioned article by Footwear News titled "Nike wasn't paying pregnant



runners-Here's what its competition was doing", brands like Asics, New Balance, and Under Armor do just the opposite of Nike

ii. These companies express their protection for female athletes that are expecting to start their families, and their athletes are able to notify them without fears of pay reductions

Finally, it is important to document some personal experiences that worked to make a change in the Nike contract controversy.

E. Fourth Main point: (Appeal to Audience through Solution)

- I. In an article written by ESPN in 2018, headlining Allyson Felix who I quoted earlier, and her phenomenal career and pregnancy complications, readers get a close-up view of the inequality she faced as an African American woman as an athlete and in the health care she received
 - i. Allyson Felix has won numerous accolades while being the most decorated women's track and field Olympian.
 - ii. She also has more World Championship medals than Usain Bolt, achieving her 12th only ten months after her emergency C-section.
- II. ESPN shared Allyson's story with the intention of comforting the fears many female athletes experience when telling their brands their exciting news, leading her to becoming the face of change for these athletes.
 - i. In addition to this, in an NBC sports and Olympic Talk article, Allyson shared her encounter with Nike causing her to abruptly switch her sponsorship to one through Athleta.
 - 1. Athleta was just a workout gear company prior to sponsoring and providing full protection to Allyson throughout the course of her pregnancy.
 - 2. This created a movement that was holding Nike accountable for their actions, one that was so empowering that Nike changed it's contract.
 - a. The contract, as shown here was tweeted on August 12, 2019- emphasizing a pregnancy clause
 - b. So now you might be thinking problem solved right?

Conclusion

I. **Transition to Conclusion**: Although this issue is "fixed", many more inequalities lie amongst both male and female athletes.



- II. **Signal the end:** It is important to take what you know now and hold huge brands like Nike accountable.
- III. Reinforce topic, purpose, and main points: Today I spoke to you about the contract differences seen between different sports and types of professionals, gave you some insight on Nike's lack of security for female athletes, and lastly shared some personal testimonies.
- IV. **Make an impact:** Although Nike finally offered some support to female track and field athletes in their contracts, it is important to acknowledge all the other hidden inequalities seen in women's sports on all levels of competition.
- V. **Challenge to the audience**: With that being said, I ask you all to think intentionally about where else revamping is needed in athletics, whether you are a sports fan or not. Think about your future daughters, nieces, grandchildren, and so on. Will you stand up for these super mothers? I know I will.