

Participation in Government courses culminate with the Participation in Government (PiG) paper or a community service based project. One of these options must be successfully completed in order to meet our requirements for graduation. Either option will include a 10 minute presentation.

Option 1: PiG Paper - Due Monday, January 6th

Your PiG paper needs to revolve around a (mostly) current controversial public policy (i.e. a bill, court case, ordinance etc.) that is being debated at a specific branch of government somewhere in the nation. Your research should focus on the following three components: **the Issue**, how our **Government** is responding, and your **Reflection**.

Due November 29th - Task #1: Selecting a Workable Issue/Issue Background:

After instruction AND independent research, you will be required to submit your PiG topic. The issue is typically highly controversial, with opposing interests pushing the government to take action. The issue could involve citizens pushing a particular government body to pass a law, groups pressuring a court to decide a case a certain way, or individuals pushing a city council to pass an ordinance.

For this task you must ...

- Identify a potential PiG issue and research the current controversy. Issues should include a public policy issue in the form of a question.

Ex: Gay Marriage - Should the US Supreme Court have ruled in favor of same sex-marriages in Obergefell?

Ex: Stop and Frisk - Should the NYPD policy of stop and frisk continue?

Ex: Health Care - Should Congress repeal the Affordable Care Act?

- Demonstrate, with evidence (i.e. articles, websites, documentaries), that the public policy issue is **current** (i.e. newsworthy within the past year) and that you understand the issue well enough to believe it is a workable topic by:
 - Researching the background of the issue
 - Providing a brief explanation of the issue
 - Providing a brief history of when and how the issue became controversial
 - Indicating what branch of government is involved (legislative, executive, judicial) and at what specific level (federal/state/local)
 - Indicating the names of groups working on the issue, if you have come across any in your research thus far
- The information must be properly cited, with all sources utilized in proper bibliographic format.

Due December 13th - Task #2: Government

The next step is for you to further explore how the government body involved in this issue works in order to better understand what, specifically, each of the groups is trying to accomplish.

For this task you must...

- Update the status of the public policy issue you have chosen (i.e. what stage is it at in the legislative or

judicial process?)

- Research the procedure by which the issue will get considered or debated
 - If it is a bill, research the process by which a bill becomes a law in your specific location. Include the bill number and any important committee hearings/activities. Discuss whether and to what extent the groups participated in those hearings.
 - If it is a court case, research the process by which the case was filed, heard, decided, and appealed. Include any significant decisions that have already taken place and discuss any briefs that may have been filed by the groups.
 - If it is a ballot initiative, research the process by which an initiative gets on the ballot. Discuss the number of signatures needed, and what the groups did or are doing in order to get the initiative on the ballot. Discuss any future votes that are to take place or what happened at votes that did take place.
 - If it is a local ordinance, research the process by which an ordinance becomes a law in your locality. Include the number of the measure and any important hearings. Discuss whether and to what extent the groups participated in those hearings.
- Research the likelihood that the policy will be enacted.
 - If it is a bill, ordinance or ballot initiative, do you think the government will pass the measure? Why or why not?
 - If it is a court case, which side do you think will win? Why?
- If your issue has passed/failed/been decided, include the results and indicate what each group has done or plans to do in light of the result. Why do you think the result occurred?
 - Determine if there is an actual solution to your policy issue at large and if there are any other foreseeable problems that would arise in the near future.
- The information must be properly cited, with all sources utilized in proper bibliographic format!

Due December 20th - Task #3: Your Reflection

Your next task will require you to reflect on what you have learned about your topic and on the workings of the government. For this task, you need to:

- Indicate your position on the issue. Do you agree with what happened? Why or why not?
- Reflect on the points of access and frustrations relating to governmental systems. Analyze why you think these access points and frustrations exist.
- Identify opposing arguments you haven't previously considered that do actually make some sense to you. Why does this argument make sense and evaluate why this argument doesn't fit with yours.
- How would they use the experience to have a meaningful dialogue with someone on the other side of the issue?

Task #4: PiG Paper

- Write a final paper, of no less than five (5) pages compiling your research from Tasks 1-3. If you are submitting tasks or parts of tasks that were previously submitted, make sure the work is properly cited.
- Have internal citations in the appropriate format throughout your paper. As with your Works Cited, the internal citations need to show which specific webpage gave you the information that you are using or quoting. *(NB: If you have a proper Works Cited page, a mention of the website or author will suffice as in work citation.)* A paper submitted without citations or a bibliography is plagiarized and will not be accepted. For all other forms of media, books, newspapers, etc., use the appropriate APA format.
- Submit the paper on time. (Students who submit the paper late will receive a 10 point reduction in their PiG paper grade per day that it is late.)
- Be mindful of the requirements. Students who receive a failing grade (below 65%) on an on time submission will have the opportunity to correct and resubmit the paper for a passing grade for a maximum grade of 65. Students will have two weeks to complete this process.

- Any plagiarized paper or task assignment will receive a grade of zero. Since the PiG Paper/Community Service Project is a New York State graduation requirement, any plagiarized paper results in an automatic failure of the course. There is NO opportunity to resubmit a plagiarized paper.

Option 2: Community Service Project - Due Monday, January 6th

Background: Students can satisfy the Participation in Government requirement by completing **25 hours** of community service plus a modified PiG paper that incorporates their service experience. Students electing this option must secure a placement with an approved community service organization. Appropriate community service organizations are agencies or groups that are attempting to address particular social issues/problems through government on a local, state or federal level. **YOU MAY NOT CHOOSE A CHURCH OR A SCHOOL.**

It is our sincere hope that meaningful relationships will be created during this semester-long process, which enables students to understand (through interviews, hands-on tasks, etc.) how organizations work to create change through government. Students are expected to interact with the organizations in a competent and professional fashion, which includes being punctual and performing tasks adequately. Below are some worthwhile organizations that can potentially fulfill your community service hours. Please be advised that the organization that you select **MUST** be involved in impacting/affecting government policies at the local, state, or federal level.

Community-Service Organizations

1. **St John's Bread and Life:** www.breadandlife.org
2. **Heifer International:** www.heifer.org
3. **Interfaith Nutrition Network:** www.the-inn.org
4. **Mommashouse:** www.mommashouse.org
5. **Nature Conservatory:** www.nature.org
6. **Rock and Wrap It Up! Inc.:** www.rockandwrapitup.org
7. **We Act For Environmental Justice:** www.weact.org
8. **American Red Cross:** www.redcross.org
9. **More options in NYC can be found at** <http://www.ny.com/community/> **or** <http://www.bxvc.org/>

Government-Related Community Service

In addition to the organizations provided above, there are other options to consider, particularly working with your elected local, state, and/or federal officials.

1. **Local Mayor's Offices:** <http://www.nycservice.org>
2. **New York State Senate:** <http://www.nysenate.gov/senators>
3. **New York Assembly:** <http://assembly.state.ny.us/mem/>
4. **Federal Congress:** <http://www.contactingthecongress.org/>
 - This website allows you to access your federal Senators and House of Representatives member
5. A Local Political Party

Due November 29th - Task #1: Community Service

***Note - if you do not have a place committed to by November 18th, you MUST choose Option 1.**

For this task you must...

- Identify an organization that interests you
 - Contact the organization to inquire about volunteer opportunities and begin the process to secure a placement
 - Provide a description of the services provided. This must be done in your own words.
- Explain your decision by answering the following questions in a few paragraphs.
 - Why did you select this experience?
 - What do you hope to learn as a result of this experience?
- Submit a piece of literature from the organization (brochure, pamphlet, etc.)
- Submit a typed response to the questions below:
 1. What is the name and address of the organization?

2. Describe the social issue that the organization is attempting to rectify (local, state, or federal level).
3. List your anticipated days and hours of Service.
4. Provide the name and Phone Number (*BOTH PLEASE*) of your primary contact person.
5. Provide the name and Phone Number (*BOTH PLEASE*) of your primary contact person's supervisor.

Due December 7th - Task #2: Organizational Information

This task will require an interview with your supervisor.

- NAME/HISTORY of ORGANIZATION
- MISSION/GOALS: information about your organization's general goals and the strategies they employ to meet these goals
- ISSUE: a scholarly investigation of the causes of the societal issue/problem your organization attempts to remedy, including relevant statistics; any pending legislation involving your group and its mission
- MEMBERSHIP: information and an analysis of the volunteers/staff as well as the target population.
- BUDGET: information about your group's budget and funding history. To what extent does this group rely on public and/or private funding? How does your organization raise money?
- Include in your interview any other pertinent questions you deem interesting or necessary to your understanding of your group's operations.
- You must include internal citations and a Works Cited page.

Due December 21st - Task #3: Relationship with Government

For this task you must...

- Explore the relationship your group may have to the government. Many community service organizations receive funding from the government and/or attempt to influence government policy. Research the process in detail.
- Identify, explain, and analyze any governmental legislation that affects your organization.
- Look into if there is a relationship between your organization and any local government officials.

Task #4: Submit Community Service Project Paper

- Write a final paper of no less than three (3) pages, compiling your research from Tasks 1-3 and a personal reflection of your time spent. If you are submitting tasks or parts of tasks that were previously submitted, make sure the work is properly cited.
- In addition to the final paper, please submit the following:
 - Time sheet
 - Official letter of completion signed by your supervisor
- Have internal citations in the appropriate format throughout your paper. As with your Works Cited, the internal citations need to show which specific webpage gave you the information that you are using or quoting. (*NB: If you have a proper Works Cited page, a mention of the website or author will suffice as in work citation.*) A paper submitted without citations or a bibliography is plagiarized and will not be accepted. For all other forms of media, books, newspapers, etc., use the appropriate APA format.
- Submit the paper on time. (Students who submit the paper late will receive a 10 point reduction in their PiG paper grade per day that it is late.)
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Participation in Government (PiG) Paper

Letter of Understanding

I, _____, have received information on the Participation in Government Paper.

I have been provided detailed instructions and deadlines from my teacher, Mr. Lee, on how to complete this assignment and know what is expected out of me in order to receive satisfactory marks.

It is my responsibility to complete this assignment and all of its parts by the given deadlines.

Should I not complete this assignment by January 6th, I understand that I may not receive credit for this course and thus, potentially may not be able to graduate on time. I further understand that should I not meet this deadline, full credit may not be given and I will not receive credit for this class until this assignment is turned in, regardless of other standing or previous grades.

I have also reviewed this assignment with my parents/guardians and they are fully aware of the ramifications of not completing this assignment.

Full Name: _____ Parent Name: _____

Signature: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____