



All students will have access to the discussion tasks early. Students and Judges can access the Discussion Tasks via this Google Doc. Varsity tasks are at the end of this document.

Novice Discussion Tasks (FRIDAY ONLY)

Round #1 (NOVICE):

Voting is often considered the foundation of a democracy. Accuracy, reliability, and access to voting are all critical factors in this. In order to increase access to voting and do so in a way that avoids COVID-19 exposures some states have recently experimented with online voting using web and phone apps. However this has brought to light the question of security and voter privacy these online options. The Minnesota Secretary of State is exploring online voting for the next election. You are a group of consultants tasked with making a recommendation on Minnesota developing an online voting system. You are asked to consider the positive effects it could have as well as any potential concerns.

Round #2 (NOVICE):

In the increasingly polarized political climate in the United States, individuals are becoming more involved in directly advocating for political policies they believe in and actively interacting with lawmakers. A recent study found that approximately 50% of people in the US have contacted one of their congressional representatives in the last five years to give a viewpoint on an issue. Of those, 35% percent said they had not received any sort of response and almost 50% stated that they felt lawmakers were either “not very” or “not at all” interested in what they had to say. You are the staff in the office of a member of Congress who are dedicated to increasing communication with the constituents they serve. What methods do you propose to more effectively listen to the concerns that these citizens have? What problems could potentially arise and how could you address them? Generate a list of proposed methods that would help better

connect citizens in your district with their elected representative and the resources you would need to implement these suggestions.

<https://www.rollcall.com/2021/03/17/voters-to-congress-are-you-listening/>

Final Round (NOVICE):

We recently recognized the first anniversary of the attack on the US Capitol on January 6, 2020. The majority of citizens arrested in connection to the insurrection claimed their primary motivation was belief that the 2020 presidential election had been fraudulent. A series of polls taken by Monmouth University throughout 2021 revealed that 32% of Americans believe that President Biden's 2020 electoral victory was the result of fraud. The Federal Election Commission is an independent government agency, created to promote confidence and participation in the democratic process. Work has already begun preparing for the 2024 presidential election. You work for the FEC and have been selected to sit on a task force challenged with building Americans' confidence in the integrity of the upcoming election. Are there actions the agency can take to increase transparency of the election process among Americans? What role can technology play, both as a means for potentially reforming the electoral process and in the sharing of information? These are the questions your task force has been asked to answer, as well as compiling a list of recommended actions the FEC can take in preparation for the 2024 election. At the end of the task force you'll be sharing these recommendations with the six commissioners who lead the FEC.

<https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/559402-one-third-of-americans-believe-biden-won-because-of-voter-fraud-poll>

Varsity Discussion Tasks (SATURDAY ONLY)

Round #1 (VARSITY):

According to the ACLU, “Although virtually every state has a law protecting reporters from having to disclose to law enforcement sensitive information about their reporting, including the identity of confidential sources, Congress and the federal courts have refused to recognize such a privilege. As a result, reporters have been subpoenaed by prosecutors to disclose confidential sources, and they face jail time if they refuse.” As members of a bipartisan Senate Judiciary Committee, your task is to review “media shield” laws and outline steps to protect journalists on the federal level. What can be done without violating the constitution and hindering federal investigations?

Round #2 (VARSITY):

According to the 2013 GLSEN National School Climate Survey, more than half of transgender students report that they were “required to use the bathroom of their legal sex rather than the one that they feel most comfortable using.” Nearly a decade later and a majority of public schools still lack adequate restroom access for transgender and gender nonconforming students. You are a group of students preparing a detailed presentation for your school’s administrators. Your goals in this presentation include addressing access concerns and the related negative impacts students endure. Further, your group is tasked with offering solutions to this problem within your district’s schools where sex-segregated bathrooms are the norm.

Round #3 (VARSITY):

It's no secret that private, anonymous donations play a major role in elections. Specifically, Super PACS have been the subject of intense scrutiny over the past decade due to their staggering influence. As a group of campaign advisors, you understand the drawbacks of Super PACS but also know that several have aided in your candidate's political success. Discuss the benefits and harms of Super PACS and come to a consensus on whether there should be greater restrictions, fewer restrictions, or no change at all.

Final Round (VARSITY):

While school safety training has mostly centered around COVID-19 protocols and procedures over the last two years, the threat of school shootings remains a top concern for districts across the country. According to an EdWeek article from last week, there have been 96 school shootings since 2018; the highest number of shootings, 34, occurred last year and the nation is already averaging more than one per week in 2022. In your community, a group of gun rights activists are petitioning the school board to enforce mandatory firearms training for all teachers and school staff. The group would also like teachers to have the option to arm themselves in the classroom. As members of the school board, your job is to examine the merits of this petition and propose safety measures to keep your staff and students safe.