



STATE AFFAIRS FORUM

WHAT IS THE SAF SECTION?

State Affairs Forum helps students explore current issues through structured committee hearings using parliamentary procedure. Delegates propose and debate solutions (not legislation) to major state, national, and global problems, promoting critical thinking and informed discussion.

STEPS TO GETTING STARTED

- Learn State Affairs Forum procedures using scripts and examples
- Students research multiple topics, share findings, then choose one to focus on
- Work individually or in groups of 2 to 3 to write a 1 to 2 page proposal with an optional visual aid
- Encourage participation as Chair, Clerk, or candidate
- Practice with mock sessions and peer evaluations
- Ensure proposals follow the template and are submitted by the deadline
- Prepare visual aids and materials for conference

PROPOSALS

Title: Briefly state the basic action of the proposal.

Major Areas to be Affected: List the key entities that would be impacted by this proposal.

Justification: In paragraph form, tell why there is a need for your proposal. Include any supportive information, include statistics, quotes, et., you feel necessary. Don't include all of your facts.

Proposal for action: State your proposal. You may use outline form or paragraph form. This is the main part of your proposal and should be substantial enough to explain fully what you intend to do. You are not writing legislation, rather, a broad proposal.

Results to be Expected: Simply state the result you expect to see after your proposal is put into action.

DEBATE



The goal of Texas Youth and Government has always been to follow the procedures followed by the actual Texas Legislature and Robert's Rules of Order when possible. However, modifications are made to adjust for our limited timeframe.

In each committee room there is a chair and clerk team who play an essential role in the legislative process. The chair leads the chamber by managing debate, recognizing speakers, and ensuring proper procedure is followed, while the clerk supports the session by tracking bills, recording votes, and maintaining order and documentation.



To learn more
about the role of
chair/clerks follow
the QR code

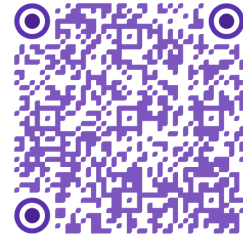
COMMITTEE PROCEDURE

Debate Process Overview

1. Clerk introduces proposal and reads any friendly amendments
2. Author gives a 2-minute opening explaining the proposal
3. 2-minute technical question period to clarify proposal details
4. Pro/Con Debate - Begins with pro, ends with con
 - Two rounds of one-minute pro and con speeches
5. Amendments
 - Amendment is read, followed by a one-minute speech from amendment author
 - Proposal author accepts or rejects
 - If rejected, one-minute pro and con speeches follow
 - Vote is taken (majority rules)
6. Closing Summation
 - Proposal author gives a 2-minute summary (plus unused opening time)
7. Scoring and Evaluation
 - Committee members evaluate using the official rubric
 - In General Assembly, delegates vote to pass or fail the proposal

Student Evaluations

In the State Affairs Forum, students evaluate each other's proposals using a standardized evaluation form. After each presentation, delegates score based on clarity, research, feasibility, presentation skills, and engagement with questions and debate. This process helps students give constructive feedback while practicing critical thinking and respectful dialogue.



Use the proposal template on the website to organize your ideas

GRAMMAR AND ORGANIZATION

Delegates are evaluated on how clearly and logically they present their proposal, use appropriate language, avoid repetition, and effectively communicate their main message with supporting points and tools like visual aids.

1

QUALITY OF ORAL DELIVERY

Delegates are assessed on their presentation skills, including eye contact, audience engagement, respectful communication, limited reliance on notes, and effective use of visual aids to support their proposal.

2

QUALITY OF QUESTIONS

Delegates are evaluated on how well their questions contribute to meaningful debate and how confidently and accurately they respond to others, using evidence to support their proposal.

3

DEMONSTRATION OF Y VALUES

Delegates are assessed on their respectful communication, appropriate timing when asking questions, and their demonstrated passion for creating positive change in their community.

4

RELEVANCE TO DEBATE

Delegates are evaluated on whether their questions stay focused on the topic and whether they contribute unique perspectives during discussion.

5

BE CONSISTENT

Delegates should engage in fast-paced discussions and contribute meaningfully despite unequal speaking times. Evaluators must be unbiased, penalizing off-topic or disruptive questions. Only those using visual aids can achieve a top score of 5. Distinguished delegates at the district level are chosen based on overall committee performance.

6

Follow the QR code to access lesson plans and resources that will guide you through how to write a bill and debate.

