



Feature



Civic Engagement

# ACCOUNTABILITY



## Run a Candidate Forum, Debate, Symposium, Panel, etc...

✓ **Have you ever wanted to hold a politician accountable?  
The best time to do it is while they are running for office.**



### Political Party Primary

In a primary election, candidates will try to prove their party bona fides. They will be trying to gather their first endorsements and proving to party loyalists that they are the true believers to lead the party.

There will often be more than two candidates making asking questions a long and slow process in public settings.



### Political Party Primary Run-Off

By definition, run-offs are between two candidates.

During run-offs, candidates have already positioned themselves and their basic politics are known. Voters need to find separation between the candidates. This is the time to test candidates ability to explain grand theories of political science.



### General Election

Once they pass the run-off phase of the election cycle, they will represent the Party.

Candidates who make it to the general election need to rally their base while carefully balancing an attempt to appeal to a few voters from the opposition party.

Voters want to learn how reasonable candidates are and understand how likely they will be to act on their campaign promises.

### Here is verbiage in the TASC constitution:

Section 3. No substantial part of the activities which have been or which will be carried on have been or will be used for an attempt to influence legislation or to participate or intervene in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office, including the publishing or distributing of political statements.





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### Political Debate

Debates ask candidates to think on their feet. In this format, usually reserved for two candidate scenarios, each participant is allowed to speak about topics, ask each other questions, and make rebuttles to arguments.

### Sample Debate Format

For each question, the following format is advised: (9 minutes total per question)

#### Moderator (1 min): Question 1

Speaker A (2 min): Opening statement on the topic  
Speaker B (2 min): Opening statement on the topic  
Speaker A (30 sec): Cross-examination of Speaker B  
Speaker A (1 min): Rebuttal statement on the topic  
Speaker B (30 sec): Cross-examination of Speaker A  
Speaker B (1 min): Rebuttal statement on the topic  
Speaker A (30 sec): Closing statement on topic  
Speaker B (30 sec): Closing statement on topic

#### Moderator (1 min): Question 2

Speaker B (2 min): Opening statement on the topic  
Speaker A (2 min): Opening statement on the topic  
Speaker B (30 sec): Cross-examination of Speaker A  
Speaker B (1 min): Rebuttal statement on the topic  
Speaker A (30 sec): Cross-examination of Speaker B  
Speaker A (1 min): Rebuttal statement on the topic  
Speaker B (30 sec): Closing statement on topic  
Speaker A (30 sec): Closing statement on topic



### Political Forum

Forums are great for races with more than two candidates. Usually, a moderator will ask a question and allow each participant to answer.



### Political Panel

Panels are another style of question and answer format great for multiple candidates. In this style, the moderator directs questions to random candidates. All candidates may not answer all questions.



### Political Symposium

As in academic settings, symposiums ask candidates to present on a prepared topic. Topics should be given to candidates ahead of time so they can present factual information.



**Always Provide a Timekeeper**



**Always Stream It Online**



**Invite The Community**



**Allow Audience Questions**





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# ASKING QUESTIONS

## Consider Answers with Future Potential Analytical Questions vs. Procedural Questions



### Questions for Congressional Candidates

- How do we provide the best health care to the most people in the most efficient way?
- How do we educate the most people with the resources available?
- What does a fair immigration policy look like?
- How do we balance safety-based policies with freedom-based policies?
- How do we know when we have too much regulation or too little regulation?
- How do we know when we are paying too much in taxes or not enough?
- How important is the role of political parties in the political process?
- Does the United States need affirmative action laws?
- Which is more important... American jobs or Free trade?
- What does the 2nd Amendment say and What should gun policy look like?
- What should the role of money be in politics?
- What should be the role of the private sector in roles traditionally reserved for government?
- Which makes for a better politician... a realist or an idealist?
- Is compromise important or is it an outdated notion in politics?
- What is good journalism?
- What should be the role of political action committees (PACs), lobbyists, and other organized groups in the political process?
- Who is more important... One donor or one voter?
- Is The United States of America great?
- What should be the role of religion in politics?
- Hypocrisy and lying, part of the game of politics to be praised when your side wins, or something to be shunned at all costs always?
- What is the role of law enforcement?







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## Sample Rules From a High School Congressional Symposium



### RULES OF THE GAME

- **1 Minute Answers**
  - Signals will be given by the time keeper at :30 sec, :15 sec, and at STOP.
  - After STOP you may only complete your sentence.
- **ALL Speakers will speak from the podium provided.**
  - Any speaker making speeches outside the designated area will be asked to suspend participation in the event.
- **:15 Second Rebuttles**
  - In case a candidate is attacked personally, the attacked candidate will have a one-time :15 sec rebuttle
- **Style of the Symposium**
  - Students will present a topic.
  - Candidates will have 1 minute to discuss the topic from their perspective.
  - There will be no questions.
- **Language of the Symposium**
  - One topic will be presented in Spanish
  - Candidates will be expected to respond to the topic for one minute in Spanish.
  - Candidates may read from a prepared statement.
  - The Topic to be discussed in Spanish is:  
"Border Security" - "Seguridad Fronteriza"
  - All other topics will be presented and responded to in English.
  - Topics to be discussed in English are:  
Education | Infrastructure | Immigration | International Trade
- **This is a student led, student run event created for students by students.**
  - Each candidate may bring two (2) adults with them to the event.
  - The event venue is a closed private school campus and therefore does not allow general public supporters to attend.

