

Capitol Forum Annotated Agenda

What follows is an annotated sample agenda for the forum. The sequence, the amounts of time provided for each session, and the guidelines for conducting the sessions are based on experience in prior forums. However, you will need to work this agenda into the particular constraints of your geographic location and your meeting spaces. Staff from the national office are available as you plan your forum agenda.

8:00-8:30 Registration

- [Students and teachers arrive and register as school teams.]

8:30-8:45 Welcome & Introduction to the Day

- Secretary of the State & Representative(s) of the state sponsor/organizer

8:45-9:15 Introduction to the Forum Topic & Presentation of Posters: Part I

- Moderator: Lead teacher
- Overview of the day's agenda and the presentation of the first set of 10 posters [one minute each]
- Lead teacher introduces the goals of Breakout Session I

9:15-10:30 Breakout Session I—Deliberating Global Issues

- Facilitators: Breakout session facilitators (two per breakout) are selected prior to the pre-forum meeting. Teachers work in their teams during the pre-forum planning meeting to begin their preparation for their sessions.
- Students are pre-assigned to Session I breakouts on the global issues based on the topic they were assigned to prepare by their teacher.
- Lead teacher(s) should meet with Session II facilitators during this time to go over any last-minute details for their sessions. Remaining teachers should float among breakout sessions.

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-11:05 Presentation of Student Posters: Part II & Introduction to Breakout Session II

- Moderator: Lead teacher
- Present second set of 10 posters [one minute each]
- Lead Teacher introduces the goals of Breakout Session II

11:10-12:20 Breakout Session II—Four Futures

- Facilitators: Breakout session facilitators (two per breakout) are selected prior to the pre-forum planning meeting. Teachers work in their teams during the pre-forum planning meeting to begin their preparation for their sessions.
- Students will meet in four pre-assigned breakout groups, each assigned to gain an understanding of one of four distinct visions for the future of U.S. foreign policy and then to prepare a brief, presentation for the larger session that follows. The groups are “jigsawed” from Session I breakouts so that each room has “experts” on all global issues from breakout Session I.
- A fifth group will be assigned the role of “Senate Foreign Relations Panel” (4-5 students, 1 from each global issue topic). These students, chosen based upon observations in the first breakout session, will prepare questions to ask members of each Futures group after they present. Their questions should help the Futures groups to clarify the distinctions among the four Futures. A lead teacher should work with this panel during Breakout Session II.

12:20-1:05 Lunch

1:05-1:15 Introduction to the Afternoon

- Moderator: Lead teacher
- Lead teacher focuses student attention following the lunch break and provides an overview of the afternoon's agenda.

1:15-2:15 Hearing on the Four Futures

- All participating students and teachers meet in the auditorium to present the Four Futures. Public officials will be on hand to observe the hearing. Students will sit with their Futures group.

2:15-2:45 Open Forum—Part I: Student Views

- Moderator: Lead Teacher introduces the goals of this session and the "Conversation" to follow
- Session opens with a 5-minute "buzz session" in pairs focused on student views on the four Futures
- Lead teacher engages the full group in deliberation on the Four Futures and their own views (a listening and speaking activity). This is designed to give students an opportunity to draw from the ideas of their peers and to find their own voice prior to the conversation with elected officials. Officials who will participate in the upcoming session should be present as listeners.

2:45-3:30 Open Forum—Part II: Conversation with the Elected Officials & Policymakers

- Moderator: Lead teacher(s)
- This session should move seamlessly from the previous as the lead teacher introduces the elected officials and policymakers and draws them into the conversation. The lead teacher facilitates conversation among students and panelists, ensuring that a full range of student views is aired.

3:30-3:45 Wrap-Up

- Moderators: Lead teacher, state organizer, Secretary of the State
- Lead teacher thanks panelists and summarizes the day. Session closes with a charge to students to continue their participation in public policymaking. Using the post-forum lesson as a central component, students will be expected to return to their own classrooms and engage their peers in a continuation of the deliberation that has taken place at the forum. The leadership should reinforce the importance of completing the balloting and explain how this becomes part of a national report. An emphasis should also be placed on articulating a Future 5 (your own views). Complete the student evaluation forms and have students turn them in as they leave the room.

3:45-4:00 Dismissal

- Students are given certificates of participation and asked to leave their posters at the capitol for display. Photos may be taken of all student groups, the Secretary of the State and/or other sponsors, and teachers.