

History and Social Science Argument
THE FUTURE OF DIVERSITY ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

The History/Social Science Competition

Each team will compete against approximately 5 other teams during the first heat. The score that your team receives from the panel of judges will be applied to your total score for the day (the scholarship competition). However, the top scoring/ranking team from each group of 5 in the first heat will go onto the History/Social Science final competition. These top teams will compete for first, second and third place for the History/Social Science award/trophy. Therefore, it is possible that a top ranking team from one heat could have a lower score than a second or third ranking team from another heat, and will not move onto the final round. However, their higher score will still place them in an advantage for the overall score for the day (the scholarship competition).

History/Social Science Argument Guidelines

Two or more team members will prepare the history argument and will present it on the Challenge Day before a panel of judges. The argument, which should address the prompt below, should be 6 to 10 minutes in length. Visual aids, like PowerPoint, are allowed. Your argument must include primary source evidence and interviews that the team members have conducted. On the day of the event, you will submit a list of sources used in the development of your argument. If the list of sources is not included, 15 points will be deducted from the final score. If the list of sources is submitted but does not contain either primary source evidence or interviews, 10 points will be deducted from the final score. See scoring rubric.

Thesis Argument Background

On June 29, 2023, the Supreme Court ruled that the race conscious admissions policies at Harvard University and the University of North Carolina violate the Constitution, thereby effectively overturning approximately 40 years of affirmative action as well as its own 2003 ruling that reaffirmed the right of colleges/universities to use race as one factor among many in an attempt to increase their campuses' diversity.

In response this summer the Biden Administration held a [National Summit on Equal Opportunity in Postsecondary Education](#) and published [guidance](#) for colleges/universities. The American Civil Liberties Union published a [list of actions](#) that colleges/universities could take. And in a paper published last year, [Richard Kalenberg](#) argues that colleges/universities should use class instead of race as a way to increase racial diversity and class diversity ([A Better Affirmative Action](#)).

In advocating for Texas's 10% Plan AND socio-economic affirmative action in place of race-base affirmative action, Kalenberg, et. al are arguing not only that these will produce better college admission results for African-American and Latino/a students, but that they will be more likely to succeed politically. Meanwhile, Edward Blum, [who initiated cases challenging race based affirmative action in college since 2012](#), has made it very clear that he will challenge any attempt to circumvent these decisions.

Prompt:

Is racial diversity on college campuses a national interest? Why or why not?

- A. If yes, what policies would you argue for to increase racial diversity on campuses, while abiding by the most recent Supreme Court decision? For example, are the 10% plan and class based admissions effective strategies to promote diversity and address racial disproportionality on college campuses?
- B. If not, why not, and what would be your legal, political, economic, and/or social argument against it?

Your argument must include:

1. Your point of view of what constitutes the “national interest”
2. Your reasoning for why you support A. or B., and why you do not support the other choice.
 - Ethical, social, political, economic and/or legal (at least two)
 - Historical and/or contemporary data
2. Creative and insightful solutions (A) or arguments (B)
3. Your understanding of the national controversy and arguments surrounding affirmative action in admissions and its alternatives

Please refer to the specific requirements below:

1. Be sure to review the rubric before you begin your research
2. Presentation length 6-10 minutes
3. Visual aids may be used
4. Minimum of two face to face, telephone or Skype interviews with people from the following categories:
 - Professors
 - College Admissions Officers
 - Civil Rights Organization Activists
 - Government representatives, judges or officials