

Introduction to American Politics Revisited: Using Active Learning In Introductory Courses

Marjorie Randon Hershey, *Indiana University*

The first edition of this syllabus collection presented a variety of approaches to teaching Introductory American Government/Politics. The selected syllabi looked at American government through the lenses of political history, constitutional issues, philosophical foundations, realignment, the application of the 14th Amendment, and other organizing themes. Since then, APSA has directed a project to develop ways of teaching Introductory American Government in comparative perspective, in philosophical perspective, and with the systematic inclusion of international issues. [1]

The current syllabus collection has a different focus. Political science departments and, in fact, the liberal arts more generally, are facing two related challenges serious enough to be called crises: declining enrollments in our courses, and more students coming to colleges and universities deficient in the kinds of skills – reading comprehension, analytical abilities, effective writing – that help them do well in our classes. [2] The purpose of this collection, then, is to suggest ways to deal with these challenges by stimulating students' interest in political science, particularly by moving beyond the traditional lecture method used in so many introductory classes.

During the 1990s there has been a marked drop in the number of students choosing to take political science courses. As a study by Sheilah Mann shows (Mann, 1998), during the last 15 years, departments were most likely to report enrollment increases (compared to the previous year) in 1988 and 1989. From that point, undergraduate enrollments declined precipitously, especially in departments that also offer graduate degrees. In these departments, many of them in large state universities with student populations of 20,000 and more – all of whom, of course, could benefit from learning more about American politics – the proportion reporting enrollment drops grew from less than 15% in 1989 to between 40 and 70% in 1995. Data showed some recovery in enrollments in 1996 and 1997, but to nowhere near the levels of the late 1980s. These declines were followed rapidly, not surprisingly, by a similar drop in majors completing their degrees. Whereas in 1990, between 50 and 80% of these departments reported increases in undergraduate degrees in political science from the previous year, the percentage had dropped to below 30% by 1996 and has not yet shown a recovery (Mann, 1998).

Closely related to this trend is a decline in political interest among incoming freshmen (UCLA, 1998). At the same time, there has been an apparent weakening in traditional academic skills. From 1972 to 1993, for example, the not-yet re-centered SAT scores dropped from a mean combined score of 937 to 902, even as college-bound seniors' reported grade averages were rising impressively (Leo, 1993: 22). So for a variety of reasons, even we, at the top of the academic food chain, need to adapt to incoming students who are less interested in politics, less knowledgeable about public affairs, and less blessed with the academic skills we associate with the ability to thrive in political science courses.

It sometimes seems that we are richer in possible explanations for these trends than we are in students. Explanations range from overburdened elementary and high

schools and inadequate teacher training to insufficient education budgets, inattentive parenting, and a diet too rich in Nintendo and TV. Our task is compounded by the prevailing Cart Before the Horse school of self-esteem training, in which elementary and high school students are encouraged to take great pride in themselves without being comparably encouraged to develop skills in which they can take great pride.

Regardless of where these problems originate, we suffer the results. Undergraduate advisers warn us of the widespread perception that political science is *hard*: that students have to read and write a lot in political science classes. Courses that demand the vital skills of effective reading and writing, from students whose self-esteem may at times outpace their academic abilities, and majors whose degrees do not have the comfort of an immediate vocational tie, can understandably suffer enrollment declines. This is not a happy picture for political science faculty. Declining enrollments threaten the budgets of many departments. Weaknesses in students' capabilities detract from the satisfactions of teaching.

The introductory course in American government and politics is greatly affected by these problems, and can also become the key to their solution. As the "gateway" course into many departments, its enrollments help determine the FTEs of the department as a whole. And as one of the largest courses in most departments' undergraduate offerings, it provides an opportunity to engage our students more fully with the course material: to help them see the fascination of politics and power, and to expand their abilities to understand abstract and complicated material and to communicate effectively.

As an approach to teaching about politics, the traditional lecture method has a number of virtues (see Frederick, 1986). Lectures can provide new information efficiently, explain and organize ideas, show relationships among them, and inspire enthusiasm for the subject matter. And, of course, lecturing has the great virtue of being the teaching technique over which the instructor has the greatest control. But even the best kind of traditional lecture, which Frederick terms "the exquisite oral essay," (1986: 45) is not as effective at helping students *apply* the information or develop analytical skills. Further, as we know all too well, lecturing can ensure only that information is *offered*, not that it will be understood or, in all frankness, *heard*. Even in the presence of an exquisite oral essay, students' attention spans tend to expire faster than does that of the lecturer.

There are good reasons, then, to consider adding to the repertoire of methods by which we teach introductory American politics and, in particular, to supplement lecturing with teaching methods that involve greater student involvement and more "active learning" (see Sutherland and Bonwell, 1996) . The likely impact on student interest and enrollments is reason enough in itself. In addition, active learning methods have potential benefits for civic education. As John Hibbing and Elizabeth Theiss-Morse point out (1996: 58), American adults tend to be "effusive in praise for the concept of democracy" but "recoil from what democracy looks like when seen in action and sometimes in inaction. People love the rules of the game but they hate the game itself." The reason, the authors argue, is that students have been taught "antiseptic constitutional principles" in the public schools, and not the fact that people disagree, sometimes vehemently, on the issues and programs of American politics. So they don't come to see that conflict is normal: that "the politics they so despise is driven by their own diversity and by their own desire for liberty, progress, and self-government" (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 1996: 62).

Introductory courses can help students understand the inevitability of conflict. But it may be too much to ask this of a lecture course, in which students' main role is to sit quietly and listen to their professor talk. Increasing students' involvement in the course through various forms of active learning – small group activities, simulations, debates, direct observation of a variety of organized interests – can be a more effective means of learning that intelligent people can disagree, that conflict is central to politics, and that disagreement can be channeled, safely and productively, into learning experiences as well as public policies.

Of course we should not accept uncritically a push toward active learning. We need to be attentive and informed consumers of different teaching styles. To do so, it would certainly help if we knew more about the kinds of teaching our students received before they came to us, in their pre-college education. Unfortunately, college teachers tend to think of the university learning experience as *sui generis* – curious, given that our students have already spent at least 12 years in classrooms, listening to lectures, getting assigned readings, writing papers and taking tests. Their experience with the teaching techniques and expectations in these classes helps to shape their receptiveness to the innovations we try. Anecdotal evidence suggests that not all active learning techniques work well. For instance, listen to this college student's description of the "small group projects" with which he has had experience: "Usually, everyone just sits there, someone gets picked to do all the work, and then everyone complains they didn't learn anything" (Endersby and Webber, 1995: 522). On the other hand, we'll also need to get past the notion that Real Intellectuals Just Lecture, and that only the lesser minds among us are willing to dive in and try to engage the interest of the more marginal students.

With these cautions in mind, let us explore some means by which students in introductory courses can be induced to become more involved in their learning. Perhaps the most effective way to do so is to combine a variety of teaching methods, making sure that active learning experiences are followed by a debriefing, often in lecture format, to remind students of the main points and their implications. The following collection incorporates a number of innovative techniques. To help others make use of them, I have asked the authors of these syllabi to write accompanying memos suggesting how to put these techniques into practice. Let us begin with the syllabus itself.

Syllabi as agents of learning

In the course of editing two syllabus collections, I've discovered that most syllabi -- even many of those nominated as exemplary -- are no more than barebones listings of dates, topics, and reading assignments. That's a wasted opportunity. It also implies that many instructors must be providing the necessary explanations of required papers, exams, and active learning techniques orally, in class, thus relying on the very attentiveness and note-taking capabilities that we have often found students to lack. Because students all receive a syllabus, to which they can refer later in the semester to refresh their memory of a course requirement, it makes *sense* to include in that syllabus all the important information about the central activities and assignments of the course, their structure, and their purpose.

The syllabus by Timothy O'Neill that opens this collection, for example, provides students with questions to guide their weekly readings, suggestions on note-taking,

and advice on preparing for the exams. The syllabus by Chris Howard shows another approach. The course is structured to consider a series of puzzles – e.g., has there been a decline in political participation and engagement recently, and if so, why, and with what effects? In the syllabus Howard tells students how class will be conducted, how he approaches the process of assigning grades, and why he assigns particular types of written work.

Being there

A variety of accomplished people have been quoted as saying that 90% of success is just showing up. Yet many college instructors feel uncomfortable insisting that their students show up. Taking attendance takes time away from other classwork and reminds students of their high school experience. On the other hand, it is stating the obvious to say that we can't teach them if they aren't there. (Yes, it's possible that they skipped class because they've always wanted to find the time to read Thucydides. I don't think most university faculty would be shocked, however, at the thought that sleep, socializing, and soap operas are likelier alternatives.)

Some instructors have developed ways to encourage class attendance while accomplishing other purposes as well. For example, you can ask your students do a brief writing assignment in class on several days during the semester. By looking through these pieces of written work, you can learn how well they're absorbing the material, and how they react to it, while also finding out who was in class that day. Students benefit by getting another opportunity to practice their writing skills, and you get an unobtrusive measure of their attendance. You can use a simple grading scheme – one that takes very little time – in which a thoughtful response gets full credit, less effort gets partial points, and the lack of a paper gets no points. These assignments could include:

- "Minute papers": Ask students to write for a few minutes about what they considered the most important idea in that day's classwork, or the most confusing point.
- Present students with an idea from lecture or a piece of information from the assigned readings and ask them to write a brief explanation of it. Or raise a simple question about the day's assigned readings. (This might increase the probability of their doing the readings.)
- Ask students to write three arguments in favor of an idea discussed in class that day, and three points in opposition to it.
- Tell students to write their predictions on an empirical question related to the day's topic – e.g., what age groups of Americans have the lowest and the highest rates of political participation. In a subsequent class, you can compare their predictions to actual data.
- Require students to write a possible essay question for the next exam, on the basis of that day's discussion and readings. You can discuss some of these questions during the next day's class as part of a continuing test review. If you want students to take this exercise even more seriously, use some of these questions on your next exam.

Research and writing assignments that engage students' interest

Working on the web.

Longer writing assignments can also do a lot to engage students' interest in American politics. The Internet is an information source with the appeal of a video game. The enormous amount of information that the Internet makes accessible ranges from carefully conducted research to the political equivalent of palmistry. It becomes all the more important, then, for students to learn to distinguish cyberfact from fantasy, just as they must do in political life more generally. Internet assignments can be designed to do that – as well as to extend the fascination with the medium itself to the research opportunities it offers.

The Brophy-Baermann syllabus incorporates a variety of web-based exercises. Students are asked to complete ten such exercises from among an extensive list of possibilities. In a section of the course on constitutional issues, for example, the authors recommend that students go online to try to answer questions from the Alabama Literacy Test -- the questions once used to keep African-Americans from voting in that state -- or to peruse Madison's notes on a given day of the Constitutional Convention, and to write about the section of the Constitution discussed that day and the conflicts it generated. These web-based activities are summarized for instructors, along with the Internet addresses and contents of almost 300 politics-related sites, in Michelle Brophy-Baermann and Bryan Brophy-Baermann's (1998) "101 and the Web: A Guide to Political Websites for Use in American Politics Classes." The paper is too lengthy to reproduce here; it can be found online at <http://www.uwsp.edu/polisci/brophy-baermann/ps101/>.

The syllabus by Christine Williams requires students to complete 13 prescribed web-based assignments. They range from examining the White House home page, in order to consider the roles of the post-New Deal presidency, to comparing interest groups' home pages for the purpose of contrasting their issue positions and voter targets. In a recent issue of PS (1998: 573-77) Sue Crawford has also provided a helpful discussion of the series of short Internet assignments she uses in her introductory American government course. All three instructors' assignments have the great advantage that they make use of existing websites – those of interest groups, states, cities, or other political institutions – to help students gather information and learn to take part in politics; they do not require instructors to become expert builders of their own course websites. Crawford reports very positive student evaluations of the Internet assignments.

Two of the syllabi cited later use the Internet in different ways. Margaret Groarke has created an Internet assignment ("Class Project on American Public Opinion") in which students first explore their own political orientations, and then learn what kinds of people agree with them on issue questions; they do so by creating cross-tabs using General Social Survey data available on the ICPSR site. Derek Reveron compensates for the lack of discussion sections in his large introductory course by requiring students to participate in a newsgroup on the web: an online discussion group for his lecture course, to which students are assigned to post questions and comments at least twice a week. Other students can then respond, with the discussion monitored by the instructor (see page 10 of Reveron's "Virtual Teaching Assistant," which follows his syllabus). Reveron also uses the Internet as a "virtual TA," from which students can get access at any time to all course materials, including practice tests and class assignments, and their own grades.

Using novels to teach politics.

On the low-tech side, political novels can become the basis for stimulating reading and writing assignments. In his syllabus for a course on American National Politics, Mort Sippess asks students to write a paper linking the themes of a political novel of their choice to the main elements of the course. For some students, looking at American politics through the pages of *Ragtime*, *The Color Purple*, or *Dune* may provide the creative impulse that leads them into further study of government. The O'Neill and Reveron syllabi also use political novels (*The Godfather*, *The Last Hurrah*) and films to convey ideas and serve as the basis for analytical papers.

Collaborative learning in the classroom.

A student may understand and retain an idea more effectively when he or she has had a part in developing it (see Nelson, 1997). This can be done in a number of ways at the introductory level. For example, even a large class can be divided into small groups without moving any of the students from their seats. Simply ask each set of three students, counting down a row of seats, to work together, so that nobody has to crane his or her neck to communicate with people in the row in front or behind.

Then give class members an essay question to answer as a way of reviewing for an exam. Make sure that the question is similar to an essay that could be asked on the next test. Ask them to begin by writing individually on the question for five minutes. Then have them debrief within their group of three, to discuss the components of a good answer. Finally, ask each group to report its conclusions. If the class is very large, pick some groups randomly and ask them to report. The reporting requirement encourages students to discuss the task at hand, rather than more tempting topics. Further, the reports help an instructor to ferret out gaps in the students' understanding.

Alternatively, ask the groups to develop a response to a hypothetical or real issue. For example, in a discussion of organized interests, when you want to demonstrate the diversity of interests triggered by a policy issue (and the bias in mobilization of these interests), assign groups the task of thinking of an interest that might be mobilized by a particular piece of legislation, and specifying what that interest's concerns might be. What interests, for instance, would probably be affected by such apparently pedestrian legislation as a bill to move the state of Indiana onto Daylight Savings Time? It would undoubtedly be quicker to list a series of these interests in a lecture. But the point might be better retained when students hear a business major discuss the problem faced by an east-coast firm whose Indiana branch currently has opening and closing hours that do not match its time zone, or a rural resident mention a drive-in theater's loss of revenue when darkness falls an hour later.

Groarke's syllabus offers examples of group research conducted in class. In "The Constitution: A Scavenger Hunt," students work in small groups, using copies of the Constitution, to answer such questions as "In whose name is the Constitution written?" and "What power does the president have ... to participate in making law?" In "Comparing News Media," students each bring in several newspapers from the same 2-3-day period, and then, working collaboratively, compare these newspapers to find variations in the coverage of a particular story and differences in which types of stories are given top billing. They are asked to use assigned readings to consider reasons for these differences in coverage and priorities. Results are shared and explored in the general class discussion that follows. Amy Fried's syllabus, discussed below, includes group projects based on information derived from websites.

Collaborative learning projects such as these can be organized outside of class time as well. To address the complaint about "group projects" cited above, however, it is helpful to design an assignment in which each student's grade is based on his or her own individual participation and performance. Cultural norms make it unlikely that students will feel comfortable with group evaluations.

Debates.

These can be engaging ways to learn in smaller classes, or in discussion sections of larger introductory courses. Students will need to begin by gathering or receiving information about the issue to be debated; this is a good time to discuss the differences between expressing an opinion and developing an argument based on evidence. Then you can split the class into a group assigned to argue the "pro" side and another to argue "con," or you can create more groups, with each assigned a particular position on the issue. (For instance, on the question of campaign finance, one group might argue in favor of a ban on soft money, another for public financing of campaigns, a third for raising the limits on individual contributions, and a fourth for maintaining the status quo.)

Each group member should select a single, discrete point to research prior to the next class meeting. In time for that meeting, each student should have prepared a one-page statement of his or her point and its supporting evidence. When the class meets, each student can present his or her argument, followed by open discussion. To extend the assignment, you can ask students to revise their one-page statements after having heard other students' ideas.

Tom Hensley's syllabus makes use of the debate format in a lecture course of about 100 students. His assignment can be found beginning on page 2 of his syllabus and in the accompanying "Guidelines"; for more specifics, see Hensley and Oakley (1998). He assigns a "political controversies" reader to provide background information on a series of issues, and then schedules six debates, dealing with issues such as affirmative action or the impact of political campaigns. All students write a two-page paper in advance of each debate, summarizing the arguments on the issue from their readings and choosing one side. Once during the semester, each student takes part in an actual debate on one of these issues during class, in which the 7-9 members of his or her team present one side, another team presents the "other" side, and the remaining students raise challenges and ask questions.

Amy Fried's syllabus describes debates on the structure of government rather than on the substance of policy. One such assignment attempts to recapture the excitement of the Federalist/Anti-Federalist debate by asking students to consider whether the proposed Constitution creates a government that is too powerful, and public officials who have too much authority. Another poses conclusions about voting rules – that proportional representation permits too many views to be reflected, and encourages fragmentation rather than compromise – for students to support or attack.

Moot Courts.

In even a fairly large class (e.g., 75-100 students), it is possible to experiment with a moot court format. Provide students with a real or hypothetical case dealing with one of the issues or concepts under discussion. Divide them into groups, and give each group an argument to be made or a conclusion to be defended. Every student should develop a constitutional interpretation or some other basis for that argument.

Groups can discuss their argument or conclusion in class, and then research their questions individually. Each student should come to the next class meeting prepared with a brief outline of the constitutional interpretation or basis that he/she feels would be most persuasive for the group to offer. The group then meets to construct the strongest possible constitutional interpretation for its argument, or the most convincing basis for its conclusion. Each group might appoint a speaker to present its case.

You could ask students to go further and rewrite their one-page summaries in light of what they've heard in the broader class discussion. Or you might ask another group of students to serve as a panel of senators listening to these arguments, and then to decide how they should vote on the issue, and write a press release to their "constituents" explaining and justifying their voting decision. [3]

For a briefer and simpler version of this exercise in a large class, present the facts of a real or hypothetical case in lecture. (For example, in discussing the campaign finance reforms of the 1970s, you've mentioned the requirement that the name of any contributor of \$200 or more be publicly disclosed. Should this apply to contributors to minor parties, such as the Communist Party? Would that deter contributors, and thus limit the party's ability to exercise its free speech right? This was, of course, a real case.) Ask students to take five minutes to write how they would decide this case and how they would justify their decision. You could ask them to hand in these analyses, or have them discuss their individual "verdicts" in small groups, followed by a more general class discussion of the main themes in the case.

Simulations.

Craig Wheeland (see p. 5 of his syllabus and his accompanying memo) uses a simulated town meeting to teach political analysis. Students form teams which take the roles of historical figures (Socrates, Thomas Jefferson, and Martin Luther King, Jr.), and then explore these figures' views about the obligations of citizens and the right to dissent. Class members later participate in a simulated campaign planning session for a current U.S. House race, also as part of a small group.

Derek Reveron devotes three class sessions in his introductory course to a simulation of Congress. Members of this large class are each assigned a political ideology and a party, and each student must become familiar with one particular issue area (e.g., crime or immigration). The groups caucus and prepare legislative proposals on these issues, followed by debate and votes by the full "Congress." A debriefing session encourages students to specify what they've learned about the legislative process and the influences on legislative voting. Another congressional simulation, termed SimCongress, has been developed by Edward P. Morgan of the Lehigh University Department of Political Science.

Sandy Maisel incorporates into his introductory course a simulation of the federal budget process developed by the Concord Coalition. Maisel allots a three-hour evening session to the simulation, DebtBusters 2002, in which students take the roles of members of Congress representing districts with particular characteristics, and try to find a way to balance the federal budget while at the same time protecting their own constituents' interests. An overview of the program is enclosed in this collection; full instructions and materials for the simulation are available from the Concord Coalition. [4] Note that the budget numbers in the simulation are now two years out of date. The Coalition has developed another simulation in 1998 entitled

"Just Generations," focusing on possible reforms of entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare.

Debates and simulations offer different types of learning opportunities than lectures do. Lectures have the potential to provide a larger volume of material to students, and thus, are usually necessary to provide the background and set the stage for the more interactive techniques. On the other hand, students' greater involvement in a debate or a simulation can make their learning more memorable.

Service learning.

Many service learning programs were designed as a means of educating citizens for democracy by putting students in contact with civic organizations, engaging them in public issues, and thus better preparing them to contribute to their communities (see Battistoni, 1998; on the effects of service learning, see Markus et al., 1993; Battistoni and Hudson, 1997). This can require an extensive time commitment. It is possible, however, to tap some advantages of service learning by requiring smaller-scale internships with civic organizations as part of the student's coursework, and to use the student's contact with an organization as an information resource. Craig Rimmerman's syllabus, for example, asks students to complete two hours a week of service to a community organization, and to incorporate their learning from that service into two of the course's three required papers.

If service learning is to be effective, as Rimmerman's memo notes, it needs to be integrated extensively into the content and assignments of the course, rather than simply added as a free-standing requirement. Rick Battistoni has created a course on Introduction to Service in Democratic Communities; the syllabus can be found on the web at http://www.providence.edu/psp/syllabi/101/101-4_f98. Although not an Introduction to American Politics class, its design may interest those who would like to explore opportunities for service learning.

Other ways to engage students in your introductory course

Design your course so that students know clearly what will be expected of them. Predictability increases the students' feeling that their performance in the course is under their control, and is not simply a matter of luck. A full and specific syllabus is necessary but not sufficient. Discuss with students how you write an exam. If you intend to test them on concepts rather than specific factual details, make sure they know what you mean by a "concept." Give examples, so that they stand a better chance of recognizing a concept when they see one. As in any form of teaching, students and instructor need to share a common understanding of the basic terms and assumptions.

How will students decide which points in the readings and lectures are the most important and which are supplementary? You may find it helpful to devote some class time to the vital task of distilling what's most significant in a reading or lecture. Use a particular day's assigned reading as an example. Ask students to develop their own practice sheets for each exam, and then ask to see the practice sheets of those who don't do as well as you'd (or they'd) like.

Provide early assessment. If political science courses are perceived as "hard," even at the introductory level, then it becomes even more important to give students an early assessment of how well they're doing. If they must wait till a midterm

exam, which isn't graded until week 8 or 9 of a 14-week semester, to get an assessment of their performance, then we lose the chance to help them adapt their note-taking, study skills, and level of effort soon enough to make a difference.

Give students ample opportunity to practice their skills. It is often better to assign a larger number of brief assignments (several short papers, brief exams, or in-class writing exercises), each counting a smaller percentage of the final grade, rather than a few big assignments that each count a substantial percentage of that grade. This gives the student more occasions to learn desired academic skills, and makes each opportunity less risky.

Show them that you care about their achievement. After years in public schools, students come to us expecting that it is the job of a teacher not to damage their self-esteem. If you present a great deal of information in a short time without asking students whether they're absorbing it successfully, or if you read from notes without interacting with people in the class, they may conclude that you don't care much about your students. Ask frequently whether students have questions, or whether they could explain to someone the point you just made. Respect students' questions. Don't make them feel stupid for having asked. Respond with, "I'm glad you asked that!" even if you aren't. Come to class early to talk with groups of students before you start to lecture. Look at individual faces in the class as you talk.

Remember that different students have different styles of learning. Design your class to appeal to a variety of those different styles (Kloss, 1994). Find out what majors and interests are represented among your students. Then make an effort to illustrate your ideas with examples from these interests. The concept of power, for instance, can be discussed in endless ways. In a class with a lot of business majors, you could use the example of the competition between a large firm and several smaller firms, or the relationship between a professional football team desiring a new stadium and a cash-strapped city government. In a class that is dominated by freshmen, questions of who gets to set and enforce the minimum ages and requirements for driving cars and for drinking alcoholic beverages might be a good bet.

Finally, **keep track of students who show signs of failing.** If a student does not turn in two in-class writing assignments, email him or her saying you've noticed he or she wasn't present and you'd like to know if there's a problem. Call in students who are doing poorly on assignments and talk with them to determine the sources of the problem.

This is a time of challenge for political science and for the liberal arts. It is a challenge we are unlikely to meet if we approach it with only one tool: the effort to create the "exquisite oral essay" that eluded so many of our own instructors when we were undergraduates. The syllabi collected here demonstrate a range of methods of engaging students' interest, not to replace the traditional lecture but to supplement it. This would be an opportune time to explore these new teaching methods, to evaluate their effects as systematically as possible, and to share information about the results.

Notes

1. Four examples of syllabi from this project are reprinted in *PS*, September 1997, pp. 525-557.
2. The debate on this issue has been very extensive and complex; see the discussion of the findings of the National Assessment of Educational Progress and related data in Niemi and Junn (1998). I am grateful to John Patrick for his expertise on this question.
3. My colleague Judy Failer has used this type of moot court assignment in her course on constitutional law, and I think it could be adapted for use by students who are not as fully trained in constitutional issues.
4. 1019 19th St. N.W., Suite 810, Washington, D. C. 20036. Phone: 202-467-6222. FAX: 202-467-6333; Email: ConcordCoalition@juno.com; Web: ConcordCoalition.org

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