

Dear Summer School student,

Congratulations on your admission to the 68<sup>th</sup> annual Junior Statesmen Summer School! This packet contains an overview of Congressional Workshop and instructions regarding your first assignment, which is due when you arrive at Summer School. Please read through the packet carefully and let us know if you have any questions (800-334-5353).

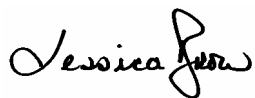
Congressional Workshop ("CW") is one of the most exciting elements of the Junior Statesmen experience. Each evening, you will have the opportunity to debate current, controversial policy issues with your peers. Whether you are new to debate or a seasoned speaker, you will experience success in Congressional Workshop. However, success requires curiosity about the issues, a commitment to sharing what you learn, and preparation!

In order to get the most out of this unique experience, please complete the following prior to your arrival on campus:

- 1) **Read through the attached CW Welcome Letter and Frequently Asked Questions.**
- 2) **Complete both sides of the Congressional Workshop Sign-Up Sheet.** Side One asks for your background as a speaker. You can be successful in Congressional Workshop without having any prior debate or public speaking experience. However it is important that you accurately describe your background. Side Two asks for your topic choices. Remember that we want your top 10 choices as well as your position ("Affirmative" or "Negative") on all 25. You will be turning in the Sign-Up Sheet once you get to campus, so please make a copy for your records.
- 3) **Begin your research. You must turn in one magazine or newspaper article for each of your top 5 topic choices on the first day of Summer School.** You will not have time to do this on campus, and you will be graded for completing this preparatory work, so bring the five articles with you. **PLEASE NOTE THAT RESEARCH PROVIDED FROM THE JSA WEBSITE IS NOT VALID TOWARDS THIS ASSIGNMENT. You must conduct outside research; articles submitted from the JSA website will not be counted towards your grade.**

As you read the attached list of topics, I hope you are excited and curious to learn more about the policy questions facing our nation. These are the hallmarks of a Junior Statesmen student, and we look forward to hearing what you have to say this summer!

Sincerely,



Jessica Brow  
Associate Director of Summer Programs

# Congressional Workshop Welcome Letter

On behalf of the staff of the Congressional Workshop, we would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to the 2007 session of The Junior Statesmen Summer School. The purpose of this packet is to help prepare you for one of the major portions of the Summer School curriculum, Congressional Workshop.

The Workshop is a Congressional (Parliamentary) style debate program that is a crucial part of the Summer School experience. You and your classmates will be divided into legislative houses where you will research and then debate a variety of controversial resolutions almost every night beginning the second week of Summer School.

**To successfully complete the Congressional Workshop, you will be required to actively participate in at least 4 debates:** In one debate, you will be responsible for leading the debate and discussion by giving the main speech, either for or against one of the resolutions (see the attached list). Additionally, in a minimum of 3 debates, you will be expected to make a supporting or subsequent speech for or against other resolutions.

Every Congressional House will debate over a dozen issues from among those listed in this packet, and you should start preparing for the Congressional Workshop debates prior to your arrival at Summer School. The more prepared you are when you arrive at the Summer School, the less you will have to do at the last moment.

**You are therefore asked to complete the following prior to arriving on campus:**

- **Indicate on the attached form your ten favorite topics in rank order (with "1" being your most favorite).** From among your top ten, we will try to pair you with a student of similar debate experience on the opposing side, and the two of you will lead the debate on that particular issue.
- **On the same form, indicate on which side you stand for all 25 of the topics.** If you are in favor of the resolution as it is written, circle "Aff;" if you are against, then circle "Neg." You must circle either "Aff" or "Neg" for each issue. If you don't know where you stand on a particular issue, discuss it with your parents, teachers and friends and do library research on the topic.
- **After selecting your top ten preferred resolutions, begin researching those issues.** Avoid using dated materials for this research; use magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek*, *U.S. News and World Report*, or *The Economist*. Newspapers with national reputations such as *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The L.A. Times* or *The Christian Science Monitor* make excellent source materials, as do *The Congressional Quarterly*, *Facts on File*, and many books and reference materials. If you don't have access to any of the newspapers or magazines noted above, try researching through Web addresses to access such sources; they're available online!
- **Do some library or internet research of greater depth on your top five preferred resolutions.** Remember that the most popular resolutions will be debated, so anything you can do in advance will be to your advantage.
- **As you are doing this early research, set aside one key newspaper or magazine article on *each* of those top five preferred resolutions. Make a photocopy of these articles to take with you to turn in at Summer School. At the top of each article, please write your name and the resolution number that it addresses (e.g. Jane Doe, #11) so that you receive credit for your research. The articles will be due on the first day of Summer School. PLEASE NOTE THAT RESEARCH PROVIDED FROM THE JSA WEBSITE IS NOT VALID TOWARDS THIS ASSIGNMENT.**

During Summer School, you will be asked to put together a synopsis of the issues surrounding the resolution for which you will be delivering a main speech. You will then be asked to participate in a Faculty Committee discussion on your topic. In addition, an outline of your detailed arguments and a bibliographical list of your sources will be part of a debate "brief" that you will be asked to turn in; sample briefs will be made available during the Workshop Orientation lectures. Now turn this sheet over for more helpful information . . .

# Frequently Asked Questions

**1. Will I receive a grade for Congressional Workshop? How about academic credit? Is it a class like my American Government course? Will I have a textbook?**

Yes, you will be graded on your participation in the Congressional Workshop. This grade constitutes 10% of each regular course grades, so it is a fairly significant component of Summer School. It is not a separate class; instead, it supplements and extends the information you learn in your classes and through the Speakers Program. There is no textbook per se, but you will have access to research packets to help you prepare. During the first week, we will review all of the requirements for Congressional Workshop and an extensive series of large and small group presentations will be made by the Congressional Workshop staff to introduce you to the concept of Congressional Workshop.

**2. How will the topics and sides be assigned? When will I know which topic and side I have been assigned for my main debate?**

You will be assigned to be the main debater for one of your top ten choices from the page of resolutions. Hopefully, most of you will be assigned to one of your top five choices. You will be assigned to uphold the side - either "Aff" or "Neg" - that you circled, so be sure to make that choice correctly. You will be designated to debate a topic in your house with another Summer School student of comparable debate experience to yourself. These topic choices and partnerships will be published and announced early in the first week of Summer School. **It is imperative, however, that you arrive at Summer School registration with your Sign-Up Sheet completed and your five research sources in hand.**

**3. If I have never participated in Junior State debate before, will I be able to survive?**

As mentioned above, we pair students by interest and debate experience. That is why we ask you to accurately fill out the Congressional Workshop Sign-Up Sheet. Help will always be available from your Resident Assistants, from the Summer School faculty, the Congressional Workshop staff and Summer School Director; you will be guided and assisted with Congressional Workshop, no matter what your skill level. All students experience a series of orientation sessions to help explain how to research, how to put a speech together and how to participate in the Workshop debates. At the end of the summer, students evaluate each aspect of the program; Congressional Workshop always ranks high, especially by some of the most inexperienced debaters who enjoy this activity immensely.

**4. When will the Chairs of the Houses be announced? Can I be one? Will I receive any training?**

A preliminary list of Congressional Workshop Chairs will be selected using the information you provide on the Congressional Workshop Sign-Up Sheet. Additional Chair candidates will be chosen based on Resident Assistants and teacher recommendations after the start of Summer School and on self-nominations once the Congressional Workshop process is under way. All candidates will receive special instructions and training during the first week of Summer School and will be assigned to chair one of the first debates in their House. At the conclusion of the first week of debating, each House will elect a permanent Chair for the remaining debates.

**5. What should I do if I have further questions about the process?**

Feel free to call the Junior Statesmen office for more information at (800) 334-5353 or (650) 347-1600. You can also send email to [jsa@jsa.org](mailto:jsa@jsa.org).

**Please note:** The Junior Statesmen Summer School is a nonpartisan program. The following topics were written to provoke debate and do not reflect the position of The Junior Statesmen Foundation or its staff members who take no position except that high school students should be prepared for active and informed citizenship and leadership in our system of law and democratic government.

# Congressional Workshop Sign-Up Sheet

*(Please complete carefully and bring with you to Summer School registration)*

Your Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** First, indicate your **ten** favorite resolutions (from the list on the reverse) by placing a "1" in front of your first choice, a "2" in front of your second choice, etc. These should be the resolutions for which you would most like to lead the debate as a main debater (affirmative or negative) in the order desired, 1st-10th.

Second, indicate your stand on each of the 25 topics listed by circling **affirmative** or **negative**.

Third, to help us match you for a debate, we need the following information from you:

1. Have you participated in the following debate-oriented programs? (Circle all that apply)

Junior State                      NFL (Team)                      Mock Trial                      Model U.N.  
Lincoln-Douglas Student Congress                      Parliamentary Debate                      None of these

Other (Please be specific): \_\_\_\_\_

2. How do you perceive your debating ability and experience? (Circle one)

Very experienced                      Experienced                      Rather inexperienced                      Not experienced

3. A number of Summer School students will be selected to serve as a Chair for their Congressional House. Selections of the Chairs will not be made immediately at Summer School; you will learn more about the schedule and requirements at the first Congressional Workshop session. Knowing that you should have some experience as a presiding officer to be selected - or a willingness to learn - would you like to be considered for this position?

Yes \_\_\_\_                      No \_\_\_\_

If yes, please describe your previous experience as a presiding officer or debate moderator:

Finally, please follow these guidelines as you prepare for Congressional Workshop:

- A. **Complete both sides of this form. You will be expected to turn it in when you arrive at Summer School. Also, please make a copy for your records.**
- B. Any questions or problems? Call (800) 334-5353 or (650) 347-1600.
- C. **Begin researching your top ten choices**; you will be the main debater on one of them!
- D. **Photocopy at least one article or clipping on each of your top five topics to take with you to Summer School. You will be expected to turn these in when you arrive. PLEASE NOTE THAT RESEARCH PROVIDED FROM THE JSA WEBSITE IS NOT VALID TOWARDS THIS ASSIGNMENT.**

*Topic Choices on Reverse*

## CONGRESSIONAL WORKSHOP TOPICS -- SUMMER SCHOOL 2008

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Summer School \_\_\_\_\_

Reminders: Rank your top ten choices in order by marking 1 thru 10. Also mark whether you are "Aff" or "Neg" for ALL of the topics listed. Don't be too quick to select your top choices; read over the entire list of topics completely and be sure that you understand the difference between the Affirmative and Negative position prior to making your selection. "Affirmative" means that you are in favor of the resolution; "Negative" means that you are opposed to the resolution.

- |     |     |     |   |
|-----|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 1. Resolved, that Social Security be privatized.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 2. Resolved, that abortions may not be performed on girls under 18 without parental consent.                  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 3. Resolved, that capital punishment be abolished.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 4. Resolved, that English be established as the national language.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 5. Resolved, that Puerto Rico be given statehood.   |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 6. Resolved, that police be required to report the immigration status of persons arrested or detained.        |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 7. Resolved, that protecting global human rights is more important than respecting national sovereignty.      |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 8. Resolved, that affirmative action at public universities be abolished.                                     |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 9. Resolved, that the drinking age be lowered to 18.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 10. Resolved, that physician assisted suicide be legalized.   |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 11. Resolved, that the Federal government adopt the REAL-ID Act to create a national ID system.               |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 12. Resolved, that the No Child Left Behind law should be repealed.   |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 13. Resolved, that a system of universal national service be instituted for all US citizens at the age of 19. |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 14. Resolved, that the president be elected by popular vote.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 15. Resolved, that "Under God" be removed from the Pledge of Allegiance.                                      |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 16. Resolved, that all American combat troops be removed from Iraq by the end of 2009.                        |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 17. Resolved, that the U.S. approve the use of torture in the War on Terror.                                  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 18. Resolved, that the U.S. remove all remaining sanctions against Cuba.                                      |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 19. Resolved, that the U.S. be prohibited from direct talks with rogue nations.                               |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 20. Resolved, that the U.S. sign the Kyoto Convention Protocols.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 21. Resolved, that the Constitution be amended to allow non-U.S. born citizens to run for President.          |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 22. Resolved, that polygamy be declared legal.  |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 23. Resolved, that the Constitution be amended to limit the terms of Members of Congress to 12 years.         |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 24. Resolved, that private ownership of semi-automatic and automatic weapons be banned.                       |
| ___ | Aff | Neg | 25. Resolved, that the Constitution be amended to prohibit same-sex marriage.                                 |