

SSI ONSITE MOCK COMMITTEE MEETING

Committee Chair Instructions

*****Please Read This Document to the End*****

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Thank you for volunteering to serve as a chair for the SSI Onsite Committee Meetings! We are looking forward to a wonderful and educational experience for our students and are glad that you can be a part of the team.

Plan on arriving at least 5 minutes early so that we can start on time. If you are running late or will be unexpectedly prevented from attending, please call Joseph Cecil at 989-388-1149.

Details

Follow the instructions in the email you received to find your assignment and download the bills your committee will be considering. The email also contains the time and place of the committee hearings. You can also find this information at <https://ssionline.org/vip-resources/>.

Chairing

There will be a brief orientation for all VIP volunteers just prior to the start of the committee meetings. Coffee and refreshments will be served. Following the orientation session, you will be introduced to the students, a quick photo will be taken, and the committee meetings will begin.

You will be chairing a hearing on two different bills. Each bill will have two lobbyists speak: one supporting the bill and one opposing. Committees are named after American Presidents (Adams, Jefferson, Washington, Madison) rather than being named to indicate what type of bills are being considered, and instead of Republican and Democratic Caucuses, we have the Blue Caucus and the Green Caucus. Students spend 2-3 days role-playing as representatives and are assigned their position on each bill. They are not allowed to change their positions. Representatives must use proper parliamentary procedure during the meeting, meaning that the Chair is running the meeting, and students must have the Chair recognize them in order to ask a question or speak. They are not allowed to directly ask questions of each other but must ask them through the Chair. ***Please explain what this should look like to the students.*** Every student **must** participate by either asking a question or making a comment. If students have not engaged by the second bill, feel free to draw them out and encourage them to make a comment or ask a question. You might remind the group that each person needs to ask a question or make a comment and tell them if they still don't say anything, soon you'll start calling out people by name. If you notice that one student in particular has not participated, you can single him out by saying, "Representative *Lastname*, we haven't heard anything from you. I'll give you a minute to think of something to say and then come back to you for a question or comment."

Schedule:

Opening Procedure: 3 Minutes
First Bill: 35 Minutes
5 Minute Break (if there is time)
Second Bill: 35 Minutes
Adjourn: 2 Minutes

Because of certain lobbyists' schedules, the order in which the bills are considered CANNOT be changed without permission.

Before starting, ask the lobbyists for their Committee Hearing Cards which will give their name and the organization they represent so that you can recognize them. The lobbyists may use a fake name and/or organization.

Opening Procedure (3 minutes)

Call the meeting to order and take the roll using the *Committee Tally Sheet* provided for you. If you want to assign a student to serve as clerk, feel free to do so. We will also have name tents by their seats so you can call on them by name (Representative *Lastname*). Take some time to explain the basics of parliamentary procedure (raising hand to be recognized, speaking through the Chair, how to make a motion i.e. “I move” not “I motion”).

First Bill (35 minutes)

1. Announce that the committee will be taking up bill #... for public comment.
The order in which you take up your committee’s bills will be listed in materials provided for you upon arrival.
2. Ask the Bill Sponsor from the sponsoring caucus to give a brief introduction of the bill.
3. Recognize the lobbyists using the Committee Hearing Cards and moderate the asking of questions by the students. The sheet that outlines the order of the bills also lists the lobbyists who will be testifying before your committee. These lobbyists have been instructed to be there at the start of the meeting, however, if the first lobbyist is not there on schedule, you can have the opposing lobbyist go first. **The first lobbyist should be given 10-12 minutes for his 3-5 minute initial remarks followed by questions from the students. This would then be repeated for the second lobbyist.** If a lobbyist has not finished his testimony after 5 minutes, ask him to wrap up so that students may begin asking questions. Lobbyists who give long winded answers can also be asked to keep their answers short so that more questions can be asked. Students may be reluctant to ask questions at first. Feel free to ask questions or make comments yourself to help them start.
4. After approximately 25 minutes of lobbyist testimony and questions, the lobbyists should be thanked and debate should be opened between caucuses. Ask whether anyone has any questions or comments for the other caucus. Remind them that they should direct everything through you. Again, students may need to be prompted to begin debate. You can help by presenting some thoughts as a devil’s advocate.
After approximately 10 minutes of debate or if the students don’t have anything else to say, explain how to ask for a motion to report the bill out of committee and request a second. Use the tally sheet to record their vote (yea or nay) as you (or your assigned clerk) read off their names. ***Caucus members must vote FOR the bill they are sponsoring and AGAINST the bill they are opposing.*** **All bills must be reported out of committee after debate.** If the bill receives a majority of yes votes, then the bill will be reported out with a “favorable recommendation.” Otherwise it will be reported out with an “unfavorable recommendation.” The Chair should vote in the case of a tie.

Depending on how involved students are during the first bill, there may or may not be time to take a brief break.

Take up the second bill following the same procedure as the first. 25 minutes of testimony and questions. 10 minutes of debate between caucuses.

Close the meeting by asking for a motion to adjourn. Please make sure everything is done by the time indicated on your Committee Chair and Lobbyist Assignments sheet. Thank you!

There will be a brief VIP reception with the students immediately following the committee meeting. We invite you to stay if time permits.

If you need more information on the bill, feel free to either do your own research or to contact us for additional assistance. **If you have any questions, please call Aimee Chauvin at 517-321-6233.**

Thanks again, and we look forward to seeing you soon!

For more information on the Onsite Program, go to our website at www.ssionline.org/onsite/.

*Note: If an emergency arises and you cannot fulfill your commitment on the day of the event, please call or text Joseph Cecil at **989-388-1149**.*