

## Check List for Completing Speech for New York State Ratifying Convention History 1101

On Wednesday, May 2, and Monday, May 7, we will undertake a mock Constitutional Ratifying Convention debate, inspired by New York State’s very significant convention. To prepare for this debate, all Federalists and Antifederalists will submit a written speech by **9:00AM on Wednesday, May 2**. Moderates will submit their separate examination at that time as well. All submissions will be via Blackboard (links to be provided in your Course Materials folder).

Our two entire classes will be devoted to debates and voting. Here is the game agenda, which is also described in detail in *Raising the Eleventh Pillar: The New York State Ratifying Convention* (found in your Course Materials folder):

Class	Debate Phase/Voting	Topics/Provisions	Classifications	
			Federalist	Antifederalist
May 2:	#1 First Phase	1. Character of Representative	“trustee”	“agent”
	Second Phase	2. Size of Chamber 3. Size of Electoral Districts	1 per 30,000 large	1 per 20,000 small
May 7:	#2 Third Phase	4. Term of Office 5. Rotation 6. Recall 7. Instructed Voting	2 years no no no	1 year yes yes yes
	Final Vote			

At this time, you have been assigned a Federalist or Antifederalist identity and an issue (if you remain unsure, please look at “Assignments for New York State Ratifying Convention” in Blackboard Course Materials folder labeled “Readings for the New York State Ratifying Convention”). Please check this table here to see what day your issue will be debated and voted upon.

This graph also tells you what specific idea you are arguing for, based upon your faction (whether Federalist or Antifederalist) and your assigned issue. So, for example, if you have been assigned issue number 5, “Rotation,” and you are a Federalist, you will argue for a “no” vote on a proposal for required “rotation” of elected representatives.

Now, here is a proposed check list for preparing your speech.

- Gather the assigned course materials (all available on Blackboard) you need to be informed on issues and historical context. These include:
  - a. *Raising the Eleventh Pillar: The New York State Ratifying Convention of 1788*
  - b. Role Sheet for the New York State Ratifying Convention
  - c. Selected primary source to review related to your issue. The possible sources to choose from are listed in your Role Sheet, where your issue number is described. Each specific issue has original primary sources listed (available through hyperlink or on Blackboard) and you will choose

one to read and inform your own speech. Look for any key words and ideas in these primary sources to help you understand and frame your argument.

- d. Textbook chapters 5-6 in *The Enduring Vision*. This provides historical context as well as specific discussions of the American Revolution and its meaning, the Articles of Confederation, and the US Constitution.
- e. Professor Ford's presentations in class. I am trying to convey the big ideas here for you, for historical context.

You will NOT do any other outside research for this assignment. This is plenty of material to read and understand. Please do not add on any more work than necessary here.

- Read these materials, especially *Raising the Eleventh Pillar* and your role sheet. These are the two most important items, so you understand how this debate is structured, and your speech can be appropriate to the debate.
- Carefully review the primary source you have selected relevant to your issue.
  - This source should *inform* your understanding of the issues, and give you some direct access to the voices from this moment.
  - You do not need to quote this source directly, unless there is some really on-point phrase, or super great wording, that catches your eye.
  - You may certainly paraphrase some of the ideas here, in your own language, if you feel it is persuasive to help you make your argument.
- Think about your audience: The Moderates in our class. The Moderates control four votes. Antifederalists and Federalists each control seven votes, but at the start, Governor George Clinton and Melancton Smith each have one extra vote. You need to persuade the Moderates to support your position. They are less informed about your particular issue than you are. Your task is to clearly explain what your issue is, and why it matters for a government to truly represent its people.
- Get out a piece of blank scratch paper and a pen or pencil. Brainstorm ideas.
  - If you've taken good notes from *Raising the Eleventh Pillar* and your role sheet, you should have a sense of the Federalist and Antifederalist positions, and the reason why each of these narrower issues reflects something important about really establishing the idea of representation.
  - Imagine yourself in 1788, without any true functioning national government at the time. The proposed US Constitution is entirely new. It will define your generation and its commitments. Why is representation so important? You care passionately about this. You've been elected by New Yorkers to decide whether this will reflect all the bloodshed and pain of the American Revolution, to establish the principle of representation.
    - How can this US Constitution ensure *true* representation?
    - By electing the best and brightest?
    - By having frequent elections?
    - By rotating people out of office frequently, for fresh voices?
    - What would persuade YOU of your position?

- Organize your brainstorm into an outline.
  - Again, think about the Moderates, who maybe aren't entirely sure why they should care about having the ability to recall elected representatives who might not be doing a good job, for example. Maybe that creates too much turbulence and instability . . . Explain your point clearly and simply.
  - The speech should be organized something like this, imagining your role as Federalist in this example:
    - I am here to persuade you to vote against the power of recall.
    - Explain what the power of recall would do—for example, take power away from voters at election time and likely give undue influence to a few disgruntled people . . . Truly competitive elections, not recall, should define who represents us, you might argue.
    - Provide some historical context—why did Americans fight against the British in the American Revolution? What were the problems of the Articles of Confederation? How was this proposed Constitution drafted? Why do we need it (or not need it, as the case may be?)
    - Bring home the bigger point: How this will protect all people in these new United States, and what the larger issue at stake is. Why did we fight this American Revolution, if not to protect elections? Use the recent history of the American Revolution to help make your point.
- Write your speech.
  - Set everything aside now except your outline.
  - **Write in your own words**, imagining that you are a delegate in 1788, in New York State.
  - Write in crisp, brief sentences. No room for long-winded complexity here. Keep it straightforward, strong, and vivid.
  - You are not a student in 2018, but rather **an American in 1788** trying to figure out what would be the best government for a weak and fledgling nation going forward.
  - How will that government survive, while protecting the principles of the American Revolution?
  - **Write directly, simply, and with passion.**
    - This is a persuasive speech. “This proposed Constitution endangers the principles of our American Revolution!” or, “If we don't accept this strong national government now, with its guarantees for enlightened representation, we will be doomed! This nation won't survive, and we will be a laughing stock.” You get the idea . . .
    - Don't forget the profoundly important moment in which you are living, with the weight of the world on your shoulders, truly.
    - This has got to be meaningful and strong. Don't mince words.
  - Demonstrate that you understand the historical context of the American Revolution and its purported ideals, and the challenges of a new nation.

Demonstrate that you have thought about the best way to ensure representation for all Americans, not just a narrow minority.

- You should be able to write this in about two hours, just going full steam ahead.
- Edit your speech.
  - Revise to make sure that paragraphs are clearly demarcated. You should probably have at least three paragraphs.
  - **Double check that you have 600 words.** Do a word-count check. All programs have this. Don't skimp.
  - Read out loud for clarity. Will this make sense to people hearing or reading it?
  - Revise, if not crystal clear.
  - Double check that double spaced, typed, etc.
- Submit speech via Blackboard, through links in your Course Materials folder.
- Take a deep breath and exhale. Done!!!
- If you would like me to review your speech before May 2, I am happy to do so.
  - Just email it to me for feedback, ok?
  - I'll give you a quick response about whether up to snuff, or needs some work.