**Constituents**

Context: Your constituents are the people who elected you to represent them. As a Senator, you have been elected to represent an entire state not just an individual portion of one. Each state possess unique challenges, priorities, and concerns. To help you come to understand your role as a Senator you will need to get to know the unique group you represent. This research guide is designed to help you gain a basic understanding of your constituency and will need to be utilized and referenced throughout this project.

**Major Industries:**

What are the major areas of your state’s economy? What kinds of jobs do your constituents hold?

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|  |

Do you see any potential advantages or challenges based on your committee responsibilities?

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| --- |
|  |

**Population Demographics:**

Who lives in your state?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Age |  |
| Race/Ethnicity |  |
| Prominent Religion |  |
| Education Levels |  |

Do you see any potential challenges or priorities that you will need to consider meeting your senatorial responsibilities based on your state’s demographics?

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|  |

**Voter Behavior:**

As an elected official you need to understand the trends in voter participation and behavior within your state.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Voter turnout rate in your state | Midterms  Presidential |
| How wide was your election margin? (Did you win by a large percentage or was it a close race?) Why do you think that was? |  |
| Party membership as a percentage of registered voters | Democrats  Republicans |

Do you foresee any election challenges that you should be concerned about? How will this impact your behavior as a senator? How long until your next election cycle?

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| --- |
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**Relations with other branches**

Context: The United States Constitution sets up a system of both separation of powers and checks and balances. As a member of the legislative branch, you have many responsibilities that will force you to interact with the other two branches. Understanding how power is divided between the branches and the checks Congress posses over said branches will increase your ability to effectively preform your role.

**The Executive Branch**

To what party does the president in our simulation belong? What challenges or advantages does that present for you?

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Based on your committee assignments, which executive departments and/or agencies will you be working with?

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|  |

Are there any Senate and/or Congressional powers/responsibilities that will shape your interaction with the executive branch?

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|  |

**The Judicial Branch**

How can the judicial branch check the power of Congress?

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|  |

What specific responsibilities do you (the Senate) have in relation to the Judiciary?

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**Caucus Guide**

Context: Successfully passing legislation requires alliances and support from other members of Congress. As laws are required to be passed by both the House and Senate before they can move on to the President, it would be beneficial for you to identify members of both chambers who could serve as an ally on different issues.

Who is the other senator form your state (look up in real life?) Are they a part of the simulation?

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|  |

What other senators serve on your committee? Who might be a potential ally based on their party/constituent interests?

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How are members of your state delegation in the House(look this up in real life?) Any potential allies based on committee assignment or party affiliation?

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| --- |
|  |

What is the makeup of the House in our simulation? How will this be advantageous or disadvantageous for you?

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| --- |
|  |

Who holds House leadership positions in real life? Who holds Senate leadership positions in our simulation?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **House** | **Senate** |

**Party Conflicts**

Context: Political parties play an important role in organizing the business of Congress. However, your party’s priorities may not always match your own legislative priorities or those of your constituents. During this simulation, you will be expected to navigate any potential conflicts that arise as you preform your senatorial responsibilities. To prepare yourself for when these challenges inevitably come it will be helpful to determine where your priorities may be different from your parties.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Priority Rank** | **Agenda Topics and Goals** | **Potential Conflicts (based on your constituency, caucus affiliations, and/or personal stances)** |
|  | **Immigration** |  |
|  | **National Debt** |  |
|  | **Environmental Protection/Regulation** |  |
|  | **Health Care** |  |
|  | **Terrorism** |  |
|  | **Judicial Appointments** |  |