

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: UNDERSTANDING A CONTROVERSIAL ELECTION AND NAVIGATING A PARTISAN MEDIA LANDSCAPE

Interactive Workshop

The 2020 election has been unlike any other in modern U.S. history. Having taken place in the shadow of a global pandemic and heightened polarization, the election's results were not immediately clear, as states continue to count mail-in and early ballots and the prospect of court disputes, protests, and counterprotests lingers in the weeks ahead. This election also created unprecedented interest, investment, and engagement among young people. So, how can educators build on this energy and motivate students to stay involved?

To that end, Close Up is offering professional development sessions aimed at *Understanding a Controversial Election and Navigating a Partisan Media Landscape*. **For a 90-minute workshop, please select two of the following strands; for a 3-hour session, we can include all four topics:**

Topic Overviews

- 1. Understanding a Controversial Election:** Given the current polarized climate, this strand will offer teachers resources for teaching and discussing the complex news of the election. Teachers will:
 - Receive materials to help students analyze and discuss the Electoral College, voting laws and procedures, and the disconnect that can occur between expectations and results.
 - Take part in a model deliberation about electoral reform to learn about Close Up's resources and strategies for dialogue.
- 2. Engaging in Civil Discourse and Understanding Each Other:** How do we ensure that our democracy and communities are strong enough to allow for disagreement without disintegration? Teachers will:
 - Be introduced to a values framework that provides an approach to examining political disagreements and discourse in the classroom.
 - Apply those values to multiple policy issues, identify governing tensions that emerge over how to prioritize values, and consider how values discussions can lead to productive discourse.
- 3. Navigating a Partisan Media Landscape:** What role does the media play in elections? How can we critique media, dissect competing claims, and draw our own conclusions? Teachers will:
 - Examine political ads produced by various 2020 campaigns in order to reflect on the current climate of polarization and the ways in which people influence the political debate.
 - Develop the skills needed to lead students in a critical analysis of media by examining three tactics used to frame political coverage—the horse race, the bipartisan panel, and setting expectations.
- 4. What's Next? Civic Engagement Beyond Election Day:** Once Election Day has come and gone, how can we help sustain democratic participation among young people and guide students as they seek to leverage their knowledge and passion to create change? Teachers will:
 - Examine stories and data about youth engagement in the 2020 election and reflect on the level of youth participation in their own communities.
 - Learn strategies and receive resources designed to promote civic engagement and to help students formulate a vision of themselves as empowered citizens who have the skills and ideas needed to influence others and to make a difference both in and between elections.

What's Included

- Interactive virtual training led by Close Up Curriculum & Professional Development Specialists.
- Access to Close Up's *Controversial Issues in the News* digital resource library for one year.
- All materials, including a digital teacher handbook, lesson plans, and classroom materials.
- Certificate of completion eligible for 90 minutes or 3 hours of PD credit.*
- Tech support during the session.

Next Steps

To learn more or to schedule professional development for your school or district, please contact a Professional Development Specialist at classroom@closeup.org.

**Please check with your school district in advance to ensure that the PD recertification credit is accepted.*