



Model Senate Roles and Responsibilities

Expert Witness

The World Affairs Council's Model Senate will simulate a congressional hearing and the legislative process with students serving as Senators, Committee Co-Chairs, Expert Witnesses, and Journalists. Students will have the opportunity to write collaborative policy resolutions, hear from Expert Witness, and debate and discuss critical issues in U.S. domestic and foreign policy.

Role:

Expert witnesses play a key role in Model Senate as they bring topic-specific expertise and practical knowledge that forms the basis of U.S. policy. Student Expert Witnesses are tasked with assuming the role of their assigned character and will testify about their understanding of the topic including historical context, technical knowledge, and present-day theory. Witnesses can offer their assigned character's preferred policy positions and should be prepared to help the Senators craft a policy resolution.

Expert Witnesses will provide a brief, pre-written, 2-minute opening testimony at the start of the committee session. Witnesses will then help craft a policy resolution through amicable questioning by Senators and should be prepared with a comprehensive understanding of the issue at hand. Examples of Expert Witnesses include high-level government officials, leaders of foreign countries, ambassadors, foreign ministers, State Department officials, scholars, think-tank analysts, corporate executives, and journalists.

Preparation Level: Medium

Responsibilities:

- Research his or her assigned character, including any published writings, presentations, speeches, testimonies, or other documents on the assigned topic;
- Write a draft of their opening testimony and submit it to Council staff by the assigned deadline
 - A witness's testimony consists of a two minute (approximately 250 words) prepared opening statement that addresses key facts or issues about the topic that should be shared with the rest of the subcommittee. It includes the following components:
 - (1) A short biography of the witness;
 - (2) Relevant background information about the topic;
 - (3) Future possibilities related to the topic that the U.S. may encounter and;



WORLD AFFAIRS COUNCIL
of Philadelphia

- (4) Recommendations for how the U.S. should shape its domestic and foreign policy decisions accordingly.

*See the *Writing an Effective Witness Testimony* worksheet for assistance in preparing your testimony. (This worksheet is found in the Model Senate Handbook and is available on the Council's website www.wacphila.org)

- Research your assigned Expert Witness and complete the '*Get to Know Your Expert Witness Worksheet*';
- Research your assigned subcommittee and assigned topic and complete the '*Topic and Subcommittee Worksheet*'.