MINI-GRANT AWARD OPPORTUNITY
SPRING 2020

Project Pericles, in collaboration with Up to Us, is delighted to share a new initiative: **The Up to Us Voting Modules Mini-Grants**—a $500 award to support a faculty member to incorporate voter education and a deliberative dialogue discussion about a pressing civic or economic issue (see below) into a class or through a co-curricular activity.

About the Up to Us Voting Modules Mini Grants—Faculty across disciplines are actively incorporating the Periclean Voting Modules, a set of resources for faculty across disciplines, interested in incorporating nonpartisan voter education into the curriculum. The modules are designed to cover three main areas: 1) deliberative dialogue discussion sections, 2) why voting matters, and 3) an overview of the registration and voting process. The goal of the deliberative dialogue discussion is to empower students to see the connections between the issues that affect them, their elected officials, and the impact of their vote. Project Pericles provides a framework to support faculty facilitating a deliberative dialogue discussion including: discussion prompts (below), deliberative dialogue discussion ground rules, issue stances, a sample PowerPoint, and other supplemental resources including articles, guides, and reading material.

Up to Us and Project Pericles have expanded on the deliberative dialogue discussion modules to include five new topics that actively engage students to understand pressing civic and economic issues which affect them and the importance of voting. **Faculty are encouraged to interpret/build upon the topics to structure a discussion that best fits the needs of a class in their course.**

Up to Us Deliberative Dialogue Discussion Topics

The National Debt	Student Debt Crisis	Reducing Hyperpartisanship	Rising Healthcare Costs	Minimum Wage Determination

A longer description of the Up to Us topics, including discussion prompts and resources to help facilitate the discussions, are found below and on the Project Pericles Voting Modules Website.

Goals for the Up to Us Voting Modules Mini-Grants:
- Empower students to see the connections between the issues that affect them, their elected officials, and the impact of their vote.
- Facilitate a deliberative dialogue discussion with one of the five Up to Us topics. Discussions typically take approximately 45 minutes.
- Engage more than 12 students in a class held February-June 2020.
- Evaluate/assess participants' increased understanding of 1) The importance of the issue topic and 2) The importance of voting.

To Apply:

- Faculty from any higher education institution from any discipline are invited to apply.
- Please send an e-mail to Arielle del Rosario (arielle@projectpericles.org) with the following information:
  - Name, title, institution.
  - Two-three paragraph proposal explaining how the discussion topic will be facilitated and meet the expectations of the mini-grant (see "Goals for the Up to Us Voting Modules Mini-Grants" above.) Please include how the Up to Us deliberative dialogue topic will be adapted to fit the needs of a class or co-curricular activity; which aspects of voter education will be incorporated; how many students will be engaged; and plans for evaluating students' learning.
- Applications will be reviewed and awarded on a rolling basis.
- The Mini-Grants opportunity is also open to students, staff, and administrators who are interested in hosting a deliberative dialogue using Up to Us discussion topics.

Uses of the Grant: The grant award money may be used at the discretion of the faculty member and their institution.

For more information or any questions, please contact Arielle del Rosario at arielle@projectpericles.org.

Project Pericles appreciates the support of Up to Us, The Students Learn/Students Vote Coalition, Young Invincibles, and The Eugene M. Lang Foundation.

*Up to Us is the nationwide, campus-based campaign focused on building a sustainable economic and fiscal future for America's next generation.

Periclean Colleges and Universities
Allegheny College • Bates College • Berea College • Bethune-Cookman University
Carleton College • Chatham University • Dillard University • Drew University
Elon University • The Evergreen State College• Goucher College • Hampshire College
Hendrix College • Macalester College • Morehouse College • New England College
The New School • Occidental College • Pace University • Pitzer College • Reed College
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute • Rhodes College • St. Mary's College of Maryland
Skidmore College • Swarthmore College • Ursinus College • Wagner College
Whitman College • Widener University • The College of Wooster

Up to Us Deliberative Dialogue Discussion Topics

The National Debt	Student Debt Crisis	Reducing Hyperpartisanship	Rising Healthcare Costs	Minimum Wage Determination

The National Debt

Our nation's debt has never been larger, and it has the potential to affect not only each of us but future generations. By the end of the fiscal year 2018, the United States government owed around $21.7 trillion in gross federal debt. It was $10 trillion just ten years ago and is projected to rise to $34 trillion in another decade. Many economists warn that this level of debt is unsustainable and that significant actions need to be taken to address the growing problem. Should all of us have to tighten our belts or should we ask more from larger corporations or wealthier citizens? Are we willing to live with a much smaller federal government—and if so, what benefits and services are we willing to live without? Or should we address the debt through a combination of increased taxes and reduced federal spending?

Issue Stances:
- Raise federal taxes
- Cut spending in the federal budget
- Combination of raising federal taxes and cutting spending in the federal budget

Supplemental Resources
- National Issues Forum: "A Nation in Debt" summary guide
- CrashCourse: Deficits & Debts: Crash Course
- NPR: U.S. National Debt Hits Record $22 Trillion
- Peter G. Peterson Foundation: Key Drivers of the National Debt

Student Debt Crisis

College can be the most important four years of most people's lives, but it can also prove to be financially draining and stressful - particularly in terms of student debt. Superficially, student debt might appear to be a personal problem - one that impacts only the individual who borrowed money to fund his or her dream for a successful future. But the truth is, student debt is more than a personal problem: It's one that can adversely affect the economy in many ways. In 2019, there are 45 million Americans with student debt who owe more than $1.5 trillion dollars. What should we do about the student debt crisis? Should the government cancel and/or forgive all student debt? Or is it an unfair burden on taxpayers who don't go to college? Should we expand debt federal forgiveness plans for those students who choose careers in public service?

Issue Stances:
- Cancel all student debt
- No changes to current student debt repayment policies
- Expand federal debt forgiveness plans

Supplemental Resources
- Forbes: Student Loan Debt Statistics In 2019: A $1.5 Trillion Crisis
- Up to Us: What is the cost and value of a college degree in 2019?
- NPR: Senators Press Consumer Financial Protection Bureau To Dig Into Problems With Public Service Student Loan Program

Reducing Hyperpartisanship

Today in the United States, there is a sense of a deep political divide. You are either a Democrat or Republican. You are from a red state or a blue state. Yet, these dichotomies are harmful to working through our country's most pressing issues. Major problems, such as the national debt, immigration, health care, and Social Security continue year after year. Yet we appear unable to confront these urgent problems because of hyperpartisanship. One strategy to combat hyperpartisanship is making sure citizens have access to unbiased, nonpartisan information and news. Knowing that, should we require multiple viewpoints be addressed in the media and online? Or would that stifle free speech? Does that give media and internet companies too much power? Or should media companies be persuaded to provide multiple viewpoints without requiring them to do so?

Issue Stances:
- Require all media and internet companies to provide opposing views on controversial issues
- No requirements of television networks to provide opposing views
- Suggest, but do not enforce, media and internet companies provide opposing views

Supplemental Resources
- National Issues Forum: A House Divided: How Do We Get the Political System We Want? Summary Guide
- The Washington Post: Everything You Need to Know About the Fairness Doctrine in One Post
- The Los Angeles Times: Reagan's Veto Kills Fairness Doctrine Bill

Rising Healthcare Costs

The United States spends more money on healthcare than any other developed nation. Yet, our healthcare outcomes are no better than other countries who are spending less. The U.S. performs worse in some common health metrics like life expectancy, infant mortality, and unmanaged diabetes. A healthcare system with high costs and poor outcomes undermines our economy and fundamentally isn't serving the needs of the people. Yet, healthcare remains one of the most politicized issues in the U.S. What should we do to lower costs and improve healthcare outcomes? Should we institute a government healthcare scheme similar to the United Kingdom or Canada? Or does that undermine individual choice? Should Obamacare be expanded? Or should Obamacare be repealed?

Issues Stances:
- Institute a government-run single-payer or Medicare-for-all style healthcare scheme
- Expand Obamacare and provide additional tax incentives to help individuals afford healthcare in a private marketplace
- Repeal Obamacare and no federal government support for healthcare

Supplemental Resources:
- Peter G. Peterson Foundation: How Does The U.S. Healthcare System Compare To Other Countries?
- CNBC: France's health-care system was ranked as the world's best—Here's how it compares with the US'
- The Brookings Institution: Introduction to the U.S. health care system

Minimum Wage Determination

The 2018 federal minimum wage rate is $7.25 an hour, a rate that has not changed since 2009. While many states have set their own wage rates, none currently exceed $12 an hour. Many feel that the minimum wage rate should not be increased, as there are many drawbacks, like possible lay-offs, slower hiring, a shift towards technology, or an outsource of jobs to other countries. Many, however, argue that with higher wages comes a better quality of life, lower unemployment rates, and a possible reduction in government spending for social programs for the poor, which would reduce taxes. In what ways should the minimum wage be changed, if at all? Would that be different in your campus town vs. your hometown?

Issue Stances:
- Raise the minimum wage
- Do not change the minimum wage
- Let states/cities decide what to do with minimum wage rates

Supplemental Resources
- Ballotpedia: Minimum Wage on the Ballot (by state)
- CNBC Article: Amazon Raises Minimum Wage