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Introduction to the Simulation

PurpleState is a virtual internship simulation that engages students in state level policy issues, explores the role of media in politics, develops skills in argumentation, and increases students' self-efficacy for participating in civic action. The tasks for the simulation take approximately 10 hours of class and out-of-class work time, depending on how the teacher implements the simulation and extends any activities. Phase One works as an introduction to the internship and supports the development of concepts and skills used in Phase 2. Phase 2 then asks interns to work in collaborative teams to design a media campaign on a state level policy issue. Optional Phase 3 has interns communicate their designs and what they have learned in authentic forms.

The simulation uses an “engagement first” design where students engage in problem solving that requires them to seek out and access content and tools from the simulation resources. In this way, students learn by engaging in an authentic problem instead of learning *before* applying that information. This model is designed as a collaborative activity with the teacher playing the role of an account manager in our fictitious political communications firm. The teacher's role is to support interns, push them to consider their work more deeply, and to sell the fiction of the simulation and internship.

Each phase is divided into tasks, and each task plan includes a big-picture framing, reflective questions, a step-by-step description of learning activities, potential informal assessments, and tips for implementation. Tasks are not necessarily designed to take place entirely within one class period. They are a set of activities that go together but can be divided up synchronously or asynchronously based on what works best for your classroom. Each core task in Phase 1 starts with students reading an “email” from another PurpleState employee outlining the task and providing access to the resources needed to complete it. All resources are accessible in the PurpleState app. Resources in **red text** in the curriculum are accessible by students within the PurpleState app, and resources in **blue text** are available through a teacher account on the PurpleState app or as a link to an external website (e.g., Youtube).

We encourage teachers implementing the simulation to be creative in their role as account manager. This can include helping students understand what being an intern means and how professionals collaborate. We also encourage teachers to help students connect what they learn in the simulation with what they are seeing locally in terms of political advertising and information sources. Further, the curriculum is designed to help students reflect on the role of media in politics and develop a better understanding of the political and media ecosystem across the state.



Curriculum Elements

Lesson Framing	Basic overview of the learning activity and the broad objectives for the task.
Reflective Questions	Prompts to be used by the teacher either during class discussion informally or as part of a reflective discussion that helps participants to reflect on how what they are learning as interns at PurpleState applies to their lives as informed citizens outside of the simulation.
Learning Activities	Step-by-step guide for teachers on how the activity is designed for implementation.
Implementation Tips	These are suggestions for how to successfully implement the activity based on lessons we have learned from how other teachers have helped their students.
Reflective Discussions	These structured discussions can be used as an informal assessment as well as a way to ask interns to reflect on their role and experience in PurpleState and how to apply it to their roles as citizens outside of school.
Emails	PurpleState uses Emails from a staff member named Matt Gonzalez to introduce activities throughout the simulation. These are designed for the engagement first model of engaging students in a task and then helping them seek out the resources and information they need to address the problem or task. These emails also set the objectives for the task and can be used as a model for having students to reply to Matt through a professional email format.
Review Team Discussions	PurpleState uses a “Review Team Protocol” as an informal assessment during the campaign design process that focuses on having intern teams sharing their strategy along with justifications and evidence for that strategy. Intern teams also receive feedback either from their teacher / manager or from other interns in their class section.



Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign
Task 1: Introduction to the Internship
25 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Students begin their internship by assisting an account executive on an ongoing campaign. The executive will introduce interns to the various aspects of designing a campaign and the tools used by PurpleState by having them complete a series of tasks.

- Students will get familiarized with the PurpleState tools, including polling data, an interactive map, and a campaign simulator.
- Students will be introduced to the different steps needed to design a campaign to prepare them to design their own.
- As the teacher, you are playing the role of the account manager. Please try to sell the simulation as real to students.
 - Try to remember, within the simulation, you are no longer their teacher, you are the supervisor also employed by PurpleState.
 - Try to avoid language such as, “they want us to” or “We’re supposed to”. Instead try to use language such as, “PurpleState needs us to” or , “As interns, your job is to...”

Reflective Questions:

- What is an intern?
- What does a political communications firm do?
- What do you know about political communications and the media already?

Learning Activities

Intro Video (10 Minutes)

-Play Corporate style video ([PurpleState Intro Video](#)) welcoming students to the internship from their boss at PurpleState

-Suggested Dialogue

“What do you think an internship is?”

“What kind of work do political communications firm do?”

“Over the next [time frame] we will be learning about the role of media in politics and how groups seek to engage people in the state on controversial or important issues”

“The goal of this simulation is to help us be more informed citizens who can engage effectively on issues you care about”

Welcome Letter (15 Minutes)

-Share the letter ([1.1 Welcome Letter](#)) with students welcoming them to their internship with an overview of overall experience. This letter will also explain how to use the Student Intern ID.

Implementation Tips

- In Wisconsin, the sample campaign asks interns to help on a congressional campaign for a Republican candidate. In Virginia, the sample congressional campaign asks interns to help on a campaign for a Democratic candidate. This is a good opportunity to introduce the concept that the “company” does not endorse one or the other political party, but works on behalf of all sorts of clients, just as many real-life firms do.



Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign
Task 2: Identifying Target Audiences
45 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Students begin their orientation by being introduced to the initial stages of campaign design. When reviewing the client contract, make sure students can articulate the campaign's focus and goal. To achieve this goal, students will use polling data to identify demographic groups that are undecided about the issue and can serve as target audiences for the campaign.

- Students will derive the campaign focus and goal from a client contract.
- Students will understand the purpose of a persuasion campaign.
- Students will understand how to use polling data to identify target audiences.
- Students will use and evaluate evidence in order to perform the task.

Reflective Questions:

- What roles do interns play in the process of designing media campaigns?
- What is the difference between persuasion and mobilization campaigns?
- How can we use polling to understand political views within our state?

Learning Activities

Email 1 (15 minutes)

Students will read Email 1 ([Task 1.2 Email](#)), an official welcome them email from PurpleState Account Executive Matt Gonzalez.

- "What will you be doing as interns?"
- "What is the task that Matt is asking us to help with?"

Contract Letter (10 Minutes)

- Have students read the contract letter ([1.2 Contract](#))
- Make sure students have a grasp of the background, goals and terms of the contract with PurpleState

Polling Resources (20 Minutes)

- Have students assist Matt with identifying target groups for their campaign. They should examine the Polling Report ([Gun Polling Report](#)) and Resource ([Polling Resource](#)) documents. Ask students what information in these documents stands out to them.
- We suggest using the [Gun Polling Report](#) instead of the [Gun Polling Report \(advanced\)](#) for this task. The advanced version also includes the raw numbers of respondents from the polls so may require more time and explanation when using. The advanced version may be more useful in Phase Two.

Formative Assessment

Option 1: Have students compose and submit a brief written response to Email 1 outlining what they think the target audience(s) should be for the ad campaign. You can use the **Argumentative Writing Guide** resource to help guide students to develop strong arguments in their emails.

Option 2: Discuss their recommendations in groups (large group / whole class format or small groups) and then share their answers for Matt with evidence / justification to support their answers. Some possible leading questions for this discussion: “Are there any surprising results in the polling?”, “In your own words, what are we trying to do in this campaign?”, “Based on your reading of this polling data, what groups might we target to help us accomplish our goal?”

Be sure to emphasize including specific evidence from the polling documents to support their conclusions.

Implementation Tips

- As students begin to identify their target audience, please help them keep the goal of their campaign in mind. They need to make sure their target audience is large enough to potentially meet the goal according to the contract.
- While you should validate student responses that are on the right track, especially those that are strongly supported with data and evidence, be careful not to lead the entire class to one “correct” answer. There may be many ways to meet the goals for the campaign, and students should feel the freedom to be creative and follow what they think the evidence points them towards.
- The email response could be used as both a formative assessment for students’ ability to interpret the polling information and construct meaning from the data that they have, but also a formative assessment of students’ writing ability both in terms of writing a professional email as well as presenting an argument and supporting that argument with evidence.

Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign Task 3: Locating Target Audiences 45 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Students have identified target audiences for their campaign and will now use an interactive map tool to locate these audiences throughout the state. Allow students to explore and experiment with the tools and remind them of the importance of using evidence to justify their findings. Encourage students to get familiar with the different map layers and filters, as well as the summary data obtained from the counties.

- Students will get familiarized with the PurpleState **Map Tool**, including the map layers, filters, and county summaries.
- Students will locate where in the state their target audiences are and identify the associated media markets.
- Students will use evidence to justify their suggestions.

Reflective Questions:

- What can you learn about the politics of our state by looking at the map tool?
- Why do political communications firms and campaigns focus on the groups that they do instead of just talking to everybody?

Learning Activities

Email 2 (15 Minutes)

- Have students read Email 2 ([Task 1.3 Email](#))
- “What does Matt Gonzales want you to do here?”
- “Do you have any initial ideas about how to do this based on the polling that you’ve already read?”

Map Tool (30 Minutes)

- Have students use the PurpleState **Map Tool** to investigate the political landscape of the relevant Congressional District (using the Congressional Districts Map Layer).
- Students should use the insights gained by examining the polling data to figure out where different demographics of people are concentrated within the Congressional District.

Formative Assessment

Option 1: Have students compose and submit a brief written response to Email 2 outlining what they have learned about the political landscape of the state. You can use the **Argumentative Writing Guide** resource to help guide students to develop strong arguments in their emails.

Option 2: Have students show each other, a group, or the whole class their process of exploring the congressional district, using the Map Tool as a visual aid.

Implementation Tips

- Make sure students understand how media markets do and don't overlap with the target Congressional Districts as well as the comparative population sizes of the different markets.
- The sliders on the Map Tool don't automatically reset. Students can overlay multiple demographics filters, which is helpful for finding demographic groups. However, this can also be confusing if they forget that the map tool retains all of their previous filters unless they reset it.
- Concepts such as the implications for redistricting can also be explored using the congressional district map layer in the [PurpleState Map Tool](#).



Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign
Task 4: Choosing a Campaign Strategy and Message
75 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Now that students have located their target audiences throughout the state, direct them to the news layer of the **Map Tool** in order to research how the proposed gun control policy is being reported and discussed in these particular areas. Remind students to use the campaign resources to learn more about gun control issues and for help identifying different messaging strategies. These will help students justify their own recommended strategy and message.

- Students will use the **Map Tool** to investigate how gun control issues are being reported.
- Students will use campaign resources to determine the types of strategies and messaging being used in their target areas.
- Students will recommend a campaign strategy and message based on this research.
- Students will use evidence to justify their decisions.

Reflective Questions:

- What are the different sides of the debate about increased gun control?
- How does each side communicate its message?
- What do news and other media tell us about how people think about these issues?

Learning Activities

Email 3 (15 Minutes)

- Have students read Email 3 (**Task 1.4 Email**) to understand what PurpleState needs them to do in the next step of the simulation.
- “What is the next thing Matt Gonzalez needs help with for their campaign design?”

Media Audit (60 Minutes)

- Students will use the **Map Tool** News Layer to research the existing messaging around gun control.
 - How is the issue framed in the news in the local area?
 - What arguments are the authors using?
 - What kinds of messages did you find most compelling?
 - What sorts of messages do you think might be useful for your campaign?
- Students should read through the **Gun Control At a Glance** document to become more familiar with the topic.
- Have students read the **Media Strategy and Message Resource**.

Formative Assessment

Option 1: Either in small groups or as a writing assignment, have students share out the media messages that they found the most useful/persuasive

- “What new things did you learn from your gun control research?”
- “What messages did you find particularly effective?” “What messages would be effective in your media campaigns?”

Option 2: Like in Tasks 1 and 2, you have the option for a formative assessment by having students structure their responses above into an email to Matt Gonzalez. You can use the **Argumentative Writing Guide** resource to help guide students to develop strong arguments in their emails.

Implementation Tips

- Help students go beyond simply picking one type of strategy. They need to understand why they believe that one message strategy would work better than another. When writing or discussing their responses, students should back up their arguments with evidence.
- Help students to remember that they need to design a campaign with the message that the client will find persuasive, rather than what they personally believe.
- Remember that students’ media messaging suggestions must be supported with evidence.



Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign
Task 5: Making Media Buys
60 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

At this point, students have chosen target audiences, located them in the state, and suggested a campaign strategy and message to appeal to these audiences. Direct students to the **Campaign Simulator**, which will allow them to test out the results of different advertisements in different areas. Encourage students to explore the tool and try different strategies. Direct them to the campaign resources if they have questions about the Simulator.

- Students will get familiar with the **Campaign Simulator**.
- Students will test different media strategies and reflect on the projected effects of media buys.
- Students will use projections about the number of people influenced and the cost per person to make media buy recommendations.

Reflective Questions:

- What tradeoffs do you need to consider when planning media buys?
- How does each choice of Media Buy change the remaining choices you have?

Learning Activities

Email 4 (15 Minutes)

-Have students read Email 4 (**Task 1.5 Email**) to understand the next step of the campaign design process in which they will plan a series of media buys.

Campaign Simulator (45 Minutes)

- Next, students should refer back to the **Campaign Simulator Tutorial** so that they understand how to actually simulate their media buys.
- Have students decide what media buys (**Media Channel Resource**) they will make, keeping in mind their budget and goals.
- Students should use the **Campaign Simulator** to test their media strategies with different media buys to project the success of their campaign.

Formative Assessment

Option 1: Either in small groups or as a writing assignment, have students share their final media buy recommendations.

- “What buys did you make?”
- “Did you stay within your budget?”

Option 2: You may also have students record their final media buy recommendations and justifications in an email to Matt Gonzalez. You can use the [Argumentative Writing Guide](#) resource to help guide students to develop strong arguments in their emails.

Implementation Tips

- Students may struggle to influence enough people *and* stay within budget. This is often because they overlook the importance of Message Tone. Make sure students are experimenting with changing tone as they test different media buys. A moderate tone is key to persuading, whereas stronger tones help mobilize a political base.
- The Campaign Simulator graphs can be difficult to interpret. Remind students that bars pointed up *always* indicate increased support for an issue, and bars pointed down *always* show increased opposition.
- Remember that students' media buy suggestions must be supported with evidence.
- Students must balance their campaign goals with their budget.



Phase One: Internship Onboard and Sample Campaign
Task 6: Debriefing the Final Proposal
45 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Using the interns' suggestions, the PurpleState team has put together a final proposal for the campaign. Review the final proposal with the students and remind them that they will have to complete their own proposal in the following phase of the simulation. Go over the proposal together and discuss the different elements. Ask them if they think the PurpleState team made good decisions and to evaluate the evidence used to justify the proposed strategy.

- Students will learn what is expected from a final proposal.
- Students will evaluate the final proposal and the evidence it uses to justify its decisions.

Reflective Questions:

- Now that you have completed your training as a political media intern, is this a job you would want to have in real life? Why or why not?
- What does your experience so far help you understand about why you see the political ads and news sources that you do? What factors dictate why you may see particular political news or ads?
- How might your understanding of how campaigns target groups for political messages change your behavior when you see political news and ads?

Learning Activities

Email 5 (15 Minutes)

- Have students read Email 5 ([Task 1.6 Email](#)), which refers to their help on the sample campaign.
- Compare students' designs to the final proposal used by the firm ([1.6 Campaign Proposal](#))
- "What did you learn from the actual campaign proposal?"
- Are there things you would have done differently if you could do your proposal again or that you would do differently than the firm's final proposal?"

Reflective Discussion 1 (30 minutes)

These reflective discussions are designed to have students consider the simulation in relation to their own experiences with political media and to examine the role of media, money, and groups in the US political system. Use the Reflective Questions above as well as the [PurpleState Structure Infographic](#) to facilitate discussion around students' experiences so far as interns.

Implementation Tips

- Remember this is a practice run for their own campaigns and a good opportunity to capture any errors as teachable moments to help the class with their final proposals.
- Students will need to clearly communicate their recommendations in their final proposals, including justifying their decisions and supplying evidence. Their “clients” will expect to understand what they are getting for their investment.
- The simulation is focused in particular on providing opportunities for students to develop argumentative writing. When looking at the sample Campaign Proposal it is helpful to focus on elements of argumentation explicitly in the proposal (e.g., using evidence to support claims).



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal

Introduction

In Phase Two, interns transition from their initial training to working in collaborative teams of 3-5 students to conduct research and develop a campaign strategy for a special interest group. Teams will go through the same design steps as they did in the Phase One, but this time they will be responsible for designing their own campaign for their client. They will use the PurpleState Campaign Design Process, PurpleState App tools and other resources that they became familiar with in Phase One and apply them to a new campaign of their own design.

For Phase Two you will need to decide, or have your students decide, which issue to use for the campaign design process. Please see the tables below for the range of policy issues and associated special interest groups. Once the issue is selected, you will need to select special interest group clients for each team. These groups span the political spectrum (e.g., strong conservative, strong liberal, moderate conservative, moderate liberal). To get the most out of the simulation, we recommend making sure that the range of political views they represent is distributed amongst the intern teams.





As your intern teams move through the design process, it is key to encourage them to make justifications and present evidence to support the justifications behind their campaign design decisions. This emphasis on claims, evidence, and justifications should also carry over into the campaign proposal. Remind them that they want the proposal to be as strong as possible so that they increase the likelihood that the client special interest group will award them the contract for implementing the media campaign. The aspects of argumentation emphasized in the simulation is also built into the review team protocols used at key stages of the design process. These review team protocols function as a form of informal assessment on the progress of the campaign design as well as an opportunity to give and receive feedback from other interns working for other special interest groups.







Symbol Indicates an opportunity for extension or customization – instructors are able to modify activity to suit the needs of the classroom, current events, or topics and skills that are relevant to the class

Wisconsin Special Interest Groups





Gun Control

<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Wisconsin Coalition for Gun Safety		Moderate Liberal	Oppose
Wisconsin Gun Retailers Association		Moderate Conservative	Support
Wisconsin Freedom Inc.		Strong Conservative	Support
United for Anti-Violence – Wisconsin		Strong Liberal	Oppose

Energy





<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Wisconsin Climate Coalition		Moderate Liberal	Support
Wisconsin Energy Producers Association		Moderate Conservative	Oppose
Wisconsin Energy Independence		Strong Conservative	Oppose
United for Climate Justice – Wisconsin		Strong Liberal	Support

Mandatory Minimums

<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Wisconsin Equal Justice Coalition		Moderate Liberal	Support
Wisconsin Corrections Association		Moderate Conservative	Oppose
Crime Victim Advocates – Wisconsin		Strong Conservative	Oppose
Badgers for Fair Sentencing		Strong Liberal	Support

Virginia Special Interest Groups





Gun Control

<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Virginia Citizens for Gun Safety		Moderate Liberal	Oppose
Virginia Gun Retailers Association		Moderate Conservative	Support
Virginia Freedom Inc		Strong Conservative	Support
United for Anti-Violence		Strong Liberal	Oppose

Energy

<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Virginia Citizens for Climate Protection		Moderate Liberal	Support
Virginia Energy Producers Association		Moderate Conservative	Oppose
Virginia Energy Independence		Strong Conservative	Oppose
United for Climate Justice – Virginia		Strong Liberal	Support

Mandatory Minimums

<i>Name of Org.</i>	<i>Logo</i>	<i>Political Ideology</i>	<i>Issue Position</i>
Virginia Equal Justice Coalition		Moderate Liberal	Support
Virginia Corrections Association		Moderate Conservative	Oppose
Crime Victim Advocates – Virginia		Strong Conservative	Oppose
Commonwealth for Fair Sentencing		Strong Liberal	Support



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal
Task 1: Introduction and Next Steps
60 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

In Task 1, interns will be combined into design teams. First, assign each team (or let them choose) a public policy issue. Then, assign a special interest group client to each team and let students begin to explore what they will need to do to build a successful campaign and meet their client's goals.

- Interns should come away with an understanding of what kind of political group they will be working for and what that group wants to accomplish through this campaign.
- Interns will also see that the goals and objectives will be different for different teams and that those differences are driven by each team's assigned client.

Reflective Questions:

- What type of special interest group are you working for? What is your group's broader goals?
- What type of messaging is best for your client group? Who might you target with this message?
- Why might different groups' goals look so different?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

New Campaign Intro Video (5 Minutes)

- Play "zoom" video #2 ([PS Video 2](#)) congratulating interns on completing their training. Provide intern teams with the email ([Task 2.1 Email](#)) and the contract for the special interest group ([2.1 SIG \[Issue\] Contracts](#)) aligned with the issue(s) you have selected.
- Have interns review the [Campaign Design Document](#).
- This phase of the simulation is much more independent so they will need to reference the [Campaign Design Document](#) to make sure they are staying on track.

New Campaign Contract (20 Minutes)

- Have interns individually read their assigned Special Interest Group client contract ([2.1 SIG \[Issue\] Contracts](#)) and then work as a team to figure out:
 1. The goal of their group's advertising campaign (both large general goal and specific targets outlined in the contract)
 2. The position their group takes on their issueThe media buy budget they will have for their campaign.

- Have groups fill out the Campaign Contract section of their **Review Team Planning Document** as they work. Groups should be prepared to present this information in a 60-second Review Team exercise (described below).

Review Team (15 Minutes)

- In this first task, teachers will model the role of the Review Team. While students are completing task, the teacher will move group-to-group and listen to group reports using the protocol below.

- Post or project the presentation and question protocol for students to see (below). When groups are ready to present, approach each group individually to run a review with them.

Review Team Protocol

- Each group will present a 60-second report explaining

- 1) who their **client** is and what type of **organization** they represent
- 2) what **position** the client advocates
- 3) their specific **campaign goals** (including persuasion vs mobilization, target number, budget)
- 4) a prediction, using evidence, about what **audiences** and **messages** might help achieve the campaign goals

- The Review Team (teacher) will

- 1) ask any clarifying questions (“Can you say more about...?”) and reiterate the main points until the team under review is satisfied the main points were stated
- 2) identify any parts of the presentation lacking a rationale or evidence
- 3) offer counterarguments to question elements of the presentation or offer alternatives (“Have you considered...?”)

- Explain that clarifying questions and reiterating main points are crucial parts of active listening and help the group under review know if they are being clear or not.

- Identifying lack of evidence and offering counterarguments is important to help groups strengthen their proposals by brainstorming alternatives and considering different perspectives.

Debrief Discussion (20 minutes)

- Ask interns to have a debrief discussion within their design teams and share out to the larger group if there is time. Discussion should focus on the reflective questions above as well as any talking points that come up during the activities.

Implementation Tips

- Push interns to analyze contracts as texts to be deciphered. “What does the contract reveal about your client and the type of campaign they want?” “What do you know after reading the contract, and what do you still need to find out for your campaign?”
- Remind interns that they are contractually obligated to make their clients happy, regardless of whether or not they agree with the client’s position on the issue. “As a consultant you will sometimes disagree with a client, but your job is to work for your client within the ethical standards of your firm. This means that you need to present the best arguments for your client’s interests, even if you do not necessarily agree with them.”
- Consider your grouping strategy based on the number of students, how students may complement and support each other, and any strong political conflicts with the position of special interest groups.
- Groups should not move forward until they understand the goals and objectives of their client, and the goals of the campaign they are designing.



This is a task designed to also help you teach about and discuss different types of political groups involved in policy campaigning. You may need to ask interns about what types of groups are involved in political campaigns. Some are explicitly political (PACs, SuperPACS) and some include lobbying or political action as part of their mission (e.g., trade associations). Different types of interest groups operate using different tax designations (e.g., 501©(4)).



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal
Task 2: Choosing and Locating a Target Audience
60 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

The intern teams will start developing their campaign strategy using the PurpleState Campaign Design Process. In this task, they will focus on statewide polling data in order to identify which groups they think should be the focus of their campaign. Then, interns will use the PurpleState Map Tool to geographically locate these groups in the state. This research should focus on their campaign goal number and the political geography of the state.

- Interns will understand how polling data is compiled and what information we can get from examining it.
- Interns will understand how to identify a target audience and craft a message directed toward them.
- Interns will become familiar with the PurpleState Map Tool and use it to understand the distribution of demographic populations around the state.

Reflective Questions:

- What is the specific question asked in the poll? Based on the question and the polling sample, how can we interpret the results?
- Which groups would see restrictions on the proposed measures?
- How do we know what groups we should target for our campaign?
- Where in the state are target groups located? Was this surprising?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

Intern Team Meeting (5 minutes)

- Intern Teams should use the [PurpleState Campaign Design Process](#) resource to make a plan for accomplishing the tasks needed to develop a campaign.
- Inform interns that they will have a Review Team meeting with another group to get feedback on their target audience.
- Groups should plan to accumulate evidence to justify their choice of target audience by using polling data and the PurpleState [Map Tool](#).

Polling Data Analysis (15 Minutes)

- Intern Teams will analyze polling data using the [Polling Report](#) for their issue.
- Groups should use the polls to determine target demographics that best align with their clients' position and stated goals.

- Groups should use the Target Audience section of their **Review Team Planning Document** to record what groups they plan to target and the evidence they used to make these decisions. They will present this information in the Review Team exercise.
- Encourage interns to brainstorm multiple target audiences because further research might reveal that not all audiences will best meet the campaign goals.

Political Landscape Research (20 Minutes)

- Once target audiences are chosen, intern teams will analyze state/regional demographics using PurpleState's **Map Tool**.
- Teams need to use the layers and filters to figure out where in the state the groups that they are targeting are most concentrated.
- Based on this research, teams can identify municipalities, counties, and ultimately media markets where they will focus their advertising campaign in order to influence the most voters.
- Interns may need to rethink their target audiences based on demographic numbers revealed in the **Map Tool**.
- Again, this research should be recorded in their **Review Team Planning Document**, and interns should justify their decisions with evidence to present in their Review Team meetings.

Review Team (20 minutes)

- Interns will play the role of Review Team for each other. Match interns whose clients have similar positions (moderate support should work with strong support and moderate oppose with strong oppose).
- Remind interns that the purpose of the Review Team Protocol is to make campaign proposals as strong as possible. Post or project the presentation and question protocol for students to see.

Review Team Protocol

- Each group will present a 90-second report explaining
 - 1) who their **client** is and what type of **organization** they represent
 - 2) what **position** the client advocates
 - 3) what their specific **campaign goals** are (persuasion vs mobilization, target numbers, budget)
 - 4) what **demographic group(s)** they plan to target – based on **evidence** – and how targeting this group(s) will help achieve the client's goals
- The Review Team will
 - 1) ask any clarifying questions (“Can you say more about...?”) and reiterate the main points until the team under review is satisfied the main points were stated
 - 2) identify any parts of the presentation lacking a rationale or evidence
 - 3) offer counterarguments to question elements of the presentation or offer alternatives (“Have you considered...?”)

- Groups or group members will then switch roles and go through the protocol again.
- Remind interns that clarifying questions and reiterating main points are crucial to active listening and help the group under review know if they are being clear or not. Identifying lack of evidence and offering counterarguments is important to help groups strengthen their proposals by brainstorm alternatives and considering different perspectives.

Implementation Tips

- The research tasks can be done as a team or spilt up among the individuals. This makes this task easy to be done either synchronously or asynchronously, depending on your schedule.
- Make sure students are referring back to the goal identified in the contract from their client. The target audience they identify has to be big enough to meet their goal!
- Remind students that this is an iterative process, and that information found in the Map Tool or feedback in their Review may require rethinking target groups or other aspects of their campaigns.



Polling data is complex and somewhat hard to read. We offer two versions of polling reports. **[Issue] Polling Report** includes only percentages. **[Issue] Polling Report (advanced)** also includes **raw numbers** of respondents. Students can get confused about percentages and assume that they represent a large group of people. Remind them that a high percentage of a small demographic is still not many people. Encourage students to read the fine print at the bottom of the polling report. This is an opportunity to discuss sampling, representation, and the different ways polling is used to make decisions in politics and beyond.



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal

Task 3: Issue Research, Media Audit

40 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Interns will understand the empirical evidence and different perspectives on their issue as well as why it is viewed as controversial. They will explore arguments from different points of view because it is important for any strategic campaign to know the most compelling arguments and evidence on both the side of the issue you represent as well as on the side you oppose.

- Interns can start to identify what arguments and evidence they find compelling and why.
- Interns will explore how the issue is being reported in different parts of the state.
- Interns will identify possible strategies to use in their campaigns.
- Using the issue research and media audit, interns will craft a message for the target audience of their campaigns.
- Interns will gain a deeper understanding of the issue and why it is controversial.

Reflective Questions:

- What evidence do you find compelling? What do you see as the most effective arguments both for and against your client's position?
- Why might people across the state hold different views on the issue? What factors seem to affect how different groups view the issue?
- How can the same evidence be used to make opposing arguments?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

Issue Research / Media Audit (20 Minutes)

- Each team should decide how to break up reviewing the Issue Research Report, At-a-Glance Report, and Media Audit using the news layer in the Map Tool.

- Ask interns who read the **Research Report** and **[Issue] at a Glance** to use the Issue Research and Media Audit section of their **Review Team Planning Document** to keep a list of **evidence they believe their target audience will find most compelling**.

- Ask interns who conduct the Media Audit to use their **Review Team Planning Document** to keep a list of **strategies and messages being used in local news coverage that might align with their campaign goals**.

Group Discussion and Messaging (20 Minutes)

-Bring teams back together to share what they learned in their research.

-Have each team **use evidence** from their Issue Research and Media Audit to

- 1) choose a **campaign strategy**
- 2) choose a **message tone**
- 3) **craft a message** that aligns with their strategy and tone

4) compile rationale from your Issue Research and Media Audit for why you chose the strategy and messaging

- Remind interns that each component needs to be designed to achieve their client's campaign goals. They should record their decisions in their Review Team Planning document.
- In preparation for the review team in Task 4, interns should be able to justify their strategy, message, and message tone using evidence.

Implementation Tips

- Remind interns that any argument they make in their campaign needs to be backed up with evidence and reasoning, not simply opinion. You can use the [Argumentative Writing Guide](#) resource to help guide students to develop strong arguments in their emails.
- Have students practice crafting an argument
 1. Present an answer or argument relevant to the question or prompt
 2. Provide the reason(s) for your answer
 3. Supply evidence to support your reasoning
 4. Address any potential counterarguments to your answer
 5. Explain why your answer is the right option



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal
Task 4: Review Team, Discussion, Assessment
60 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Teams engage in a review team protocol to get and give feedback on their campaign strategies. They then plan out how to implement their strategies through media buys. Finally, the interns reflect on how their work on the campaign has shaped their view of the policy issue. Intern teams will participate in a review team protocol with members of other teams to get feedback on their strategy.

- Interns will determine which media channels to use for their campaigns.
- Interns will draft a plan for implementing their strategy through planned media buys.
- Interns will reflect on how their views and understanding of the policy issue have changed from their work.

Reflective Questions:

- How do you feel about the issue you are working on? Do you agree or disagree with the group you are working for?
- Has your work on this campaign changed the way you view politics in the state?
- Has your understanding changed about how your classmates and community members see different political issues?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

Review Team Discussion (30 Minutes)

Pair design teams that are working on different contracts together to help each other review.

- Review Team Protocol: each group will present a 2-minute report explaining
 - who their **client** is and what their specific **campaign goals** are
 - who their **target audience** (with evidence)
 - their campaign **strategy** and **messaging**
 - how the strategy and message **connect** with their target audience to achieve their campaign goals
- The Review Team will
 - ask any clarifying questions (“Can you say more about...?”) and reiterate the main points until the team under review is satisfied the main points were stated
 - identify any parts of the presentation lacking rationale or evidence
 - offer counterarguments to question elements of the presentation or offer alternatives (“Have you considered...?”)
- Remind interns that they work for the same company and that the point of the review is mutual improvement.

- After completing the review team, teams should use notes from the review to revise their target audiences, strategies and messages. In addition, interns will use the **Media Channel Resource** to determine what types of media will they use to best reach their target audience?
- By the end of this discussion, in order to use the Campaign Simulator, groups need
 - o a list of media markets to target
 - o associated media channels for each of those markets
 - o a message tone for the ads they will run in those markets

Reflective Discussion (20 minutes)

- After interns have completed their reviews, bring the large group back together to debrief.
- Use the **Reflective Questions** above to highlight why the issue might be controversial (and for whom), as well as where different arguments are coming from and what possible counterarguments might be.
- Tie the controversial nature of the debate back to the messages interns created and how the issue has been reported differently across the state.

Formative Assessment (10 Minutes)

Option 1: Have design teams compose a response to Email 6 ([Task 2.4 Email](#)) from Matt Gonzalez that outlines their message, strategy, and the evidence from their research that supports their choices. This should include their plan for which media markets they plan to target, the media channels for those markets, and the message tone they plan to test.

Implementation Tips

- Encourage students to really question others' ideas in the review team, ("...this is our last chance to improve our plan before the final submission!")
- For the energy policy and mandatory minimum issues it may also be worthwhile discussing why issues that have such popular support, though still polarized, have not had legislation passed to address them. Essentially, what is influencing legislators to not pass legislation on issues where there is broad public support (e.g., lobbying, corporate influence).



It may be helpful to encourage interns to examine their own views on this issue or how the issue is relevant to their community. Have students go deeper into how issue is discussed in your community. This could include: audit of local media, conducting a poll or set of interviews, etc. to understand how the issue is being talked about and how positions are being justified.



Phase Two: New Campaign Proposal
Task 5: Campaign Testing and Final Proposal
70 Minutes

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

Teams will collaborate to test out their strategies using the Campaign Simulator tool. These tests will inform their final campaign proposal that they will develop in their memo for their client.

- Interns will test their strategies using the Campaign Simulator and adjust their strategies accordingly.
- Interns will work together to produce a final Campaign Proposal which should detail their plan for the campaign.

Reflective Questions:

- How did your group plan to reach your target audience?
- What messages did you find most persuasive to your target audience?
- What trade-offs did you have to make in order to reach your goal but stay within your budget?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

Campaign Simulator (30 Minutes)

- Using their planned strategy for media buys completed in Task 4, teams should test out their strategy using the **Campaign Simulator**.
- Have interns refer back to the **Campaign Simulator Tutorial**, if they run into trouble.
- As a group, they will use the Simulator to refine and finalize their ideas for their final proposal.
- Remind interns that they will need to achieve their clients' campaign goals while staying within the allotted budget.
- Once finalized interns can export a pdf file of their final summary media buys and projected effects to include in their campaign proposal.

Final Campaign Proposal (40 minutes)

- Groups will work together to craft their final Campaign Proposal. This will be formatted as a memo using the **Campaign Proposal Template**.
- The Campaign Proposal can be drafted collaboratively in class or as an out-of-class assignment.
- “Once you have collaborated as a team to decide on your final campaign strategy, write a memo for your boss outlining your final decisions and the justifications for them.”
- In the proposal they will need to both include their design as well as their rationale for that design and evidence for why they think it will be successful for their client group.

-Remind interns to use the proposal from Phase One as a model and to consult the **Argumentative Writing Guide**.

Implementation Tips

- Interns may be tempted to stop experimenting with the Simulator after a few iterations. They may gain new insights if they keep trying to refine their strategy. Remind interns that Campaign Simulator gives *projections* only, and so it is good practice to go beyond the goals outlined in their contracts.
- Students may struggle to influence enough people *and* stay within budget. This is often because they overlook the importance of Message Tone. Make sure students are experimenting with changing tone as they test different media buys. A moderate tone is key to persuading, whereas stronger tones help mobilize a political base.
- The Campaign Simulator graphs can be difficult to interpret. Remind students that bars pointed up *always* indicate increased support for an issue, and bars pointed down *always* show increased opposition.
- While it might be useful for groups to discuss their ideas and even to adjust their plans based on the ideas of other groups, it won't benefit them to copy other groups' plans because each contract has different goals.
- To ensure interns have complete proposals, refer them to the **Campaign Proposal Template** and the proposal made by Matt Gonzalez's team in Phase One.



Phase Two: Final Campaign Design
Task 6: Reflective Discussion 2
(55 Minutes)

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

This discussion should focus on intern perceptions of the issue, why it is controversial in the state, and how they may apply their understanding of the issue in their role as a citizen outside of the simulation. This discussion should also focus on what they have learned in their role as PurpleState interns.

- Interns will be able to reflect on their work with the project as well as what they have learned throughout the process.
- Interns will take the exit interview to give PurpleState a final point of feedback as they exit the simulation and their time as interns.

Reflective Questions:

- Based on your experience in this simulation, what do you think about the political system and the role of interest groups in attempting to influence political views on an issue?
- Could you imagine an alternative system that may be more effective in informing people while also reducing political polarization? What would a system like that look like?
- How has participating in this simulation, if at all, influenced the way you see politics and how you might act in the future in relation to political issues?
- How has your role as an intern impacted how you view this particular policy issue? Or how others view the issue?

Learning Activities (with estimated time)

Discussion (40 Minutes)

- Lead a discussion with the full group about the simulation.
- Use the **Reflective Questions** above as well as the [PurpleState Structure Infographic](#) to spark conversation among the teams.
- Teams may get ideas from each other that they could use in their final proposal.

Implementation Tips

- This is an opportunity to let students' experiences drive the discussion. The hope is that this simulation activity also meets the standards and learning objectives that you have for the class, so this is also a chance to reinforce those targets.



Extension Activities (optional)

Lesson Framing & Purpose:

You may wish to go further into these topics depending on the needs of your own curriculum or standards, or based on the discussions and learning which has occurred in your class. Here are some ideas of ways you could take another step within the PurpleState simulation.

Possible Learning Activities

1. Ask teams to develop short “pitch” presentations for their client organization. Make sure they identify who their client is and what their goals are for their campaign. Have them present their overall campaign strategy and proposal for their media buy based on the evidence/justifications they have compiled. Ask them to be very specific and “data driven” when explaining how they arrived at their strategy and what evidence informed it.
2. Have students produce an actual political ad which they might run in their campaign. Students could make an ad designed for any type of media within the simulation (tv or radio ads often exhibit lots of creativity and mastery). Have groups present their ads to each other and discuss how they might influence different types of voters.
3. Become an engaged citizen: Have students think about what political issues motivate and how they would take action to pursue the policy outcomes they support. Get in touch with an elected representative or political group, write a letter to the editor, or create a social media campaign.