

WE THE PEOPLE

*WE THE PEOPLE: AMERICAN CONSTITUTION 1787 ACADEMIC
GUIDE*



MUNUR XVI

Universidad del Rosario



MUNUR

XVI

UNIVERSIDAD DEL ROSARIO MODEL OF UNITED NATIONS

The Model of United Nations of Universidad del Rosario, MUNUR, is the first of its kind in Colombia. It is constituted as a space led by and for students to develop abilities such as debate, oratory, teamwork, and leadership. MUNUR is a space that allows students to explore the universe of the international system, taking an interest and learning from the different current, historical, and future problems.

MUNUR was born as a project of students from the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario in 2009. Following global trends, they decided to venture into these types of academic exercises that promote competition and debate. Additionally, MUNUR is a space of cultural diversity, where people around the country and the world gather to create bonds of friendship and inclusion in a society that so badly needs to strengthen fraternal ties.

For the 16th edition, we decided to bet on innovation and differentiation, without leaving behind our traditions and legacy that characterizes MUNUR. For this reason, we have created a wide range of committees for different passions and interests, with dynamics that challenge delegates so they can demonstrate their abilities and academic excellence.

This document contains the necessary information for delegates interested in this committee. It is important to remind everyone that the academic guide is only a recommended route of investigation proposed by the Honorable Dais. Nonetheless, it is the responsibility and duty of all the delegates to prepare properly for the days of the debate. Finally, we remind all of our attendees that the procedure rules can be found in the Handbook of this edition. We highly recommend that everyone interested in participating in this conference read this document carefully.

See you in MUNUR XVI!



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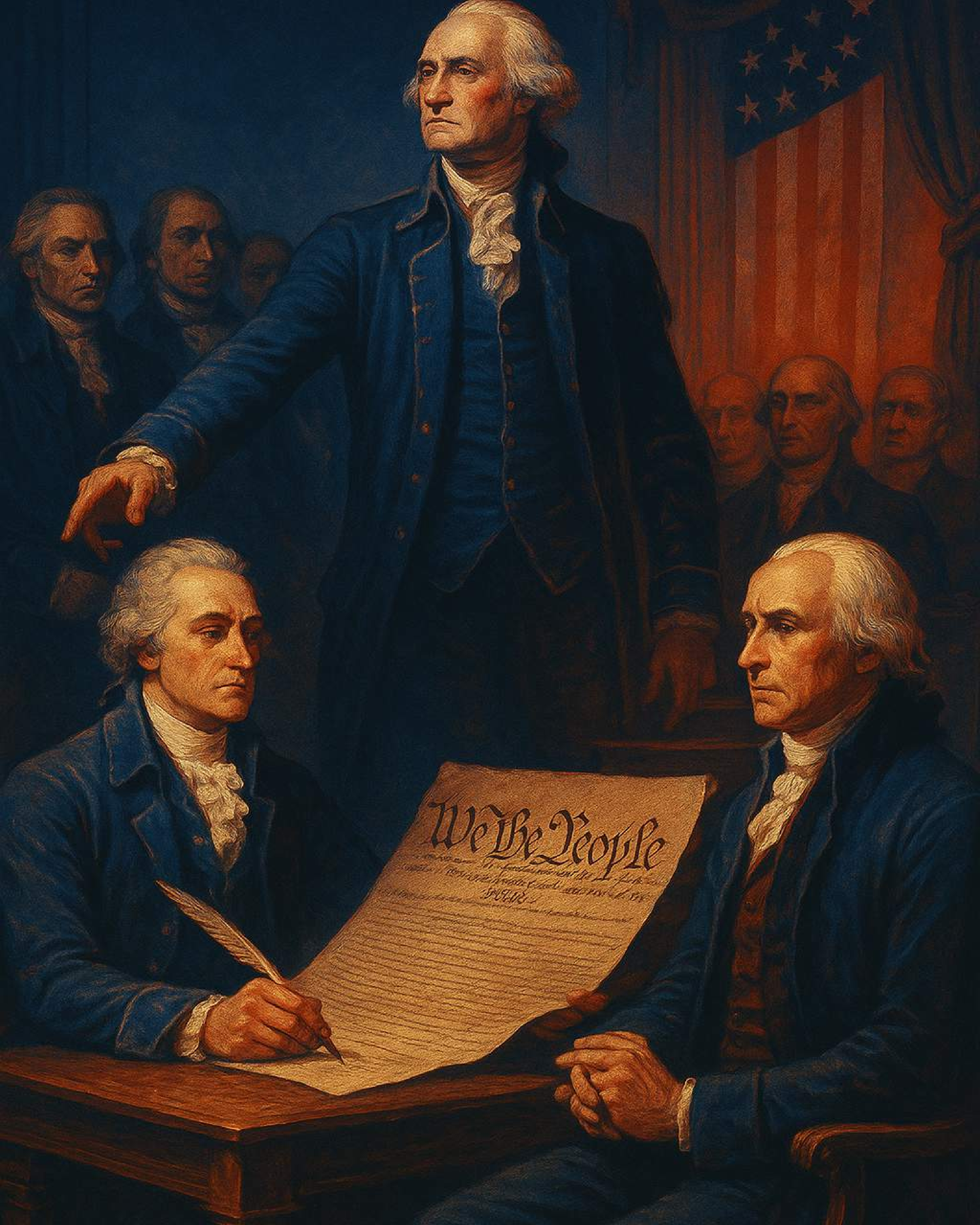
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We the People: American Constitution 1787

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WELCOME LETTER



SECRETARY GENERAL
LAURA PEÑALOZA



WE THE PEOPLE

Hello, everyone! Welcome to one of the best experiences you are about to have in your entire life. Yes, I'm talking about MUNUR XVI!

My name is Laura Peñaloza, and I have the great honor to present myself as the Secretary General for this edition. When I went to my first UN model, the only thing that crossed my mind was to win an award. And even though I got the diploma, that very same day, I realized that the reason I stayed and kept going to these events was because I discovered that the true purpose of them is for you to become a better version of yourself. Models of United Nations allow us to evolve into well-prepared professionals, masters of negotiation and oratory, but they also turn us into better people. As years passed by, I also realized that I not only wanted to be part of this growth, but I also wanted to help and lead projects that helped people become better.

That's how I ended up here, in MUNUR. With a dream of creating an event that will allow all its attendees to learn, to grow into better versions of themselves, and, most importantly, a place in which everyone could feel they are worthy and are appreciated. I want everyone to feel the magic of MUNUR, from its majestic history and spaces, through the nerves we all feel during the first session, and until the closing ceremony where we all hope to raise a hammer in our hands. Our mission is to make you feel welcomed and comfortable in every single space of the event, in order for you to live your participation to its maximum.

I invite you to challenge yourselves in this conference and demonstrate what you are capable of. Academic excellence comes with exhaustive preparation, expertise, and skills mastery, but it also comes with the values you share as a person. If you are capable of balancing and demonstrating all of this during the debate, I assure you will become an excellent delegate and an inspiration for many. I hope that MUNUR is the place where you face your fears and finally achieve all the goals that you've been working on constantly.

Lastly, I hope that this committee will be to your liking, that all the academic proposal gives you the satisfaction of a prestigious event with the proper preparation. And, above all else, I hope that you will find a safe place where your ideas are listened to and your solutions are highly valued. I will work hard for it, I promise. Can't wait to see you soon!

With love,
Laura Peñaloza

WELCOME LETTER



SUB-SECRETARY GENERAL
SANTIAGO RIASCOS



WE THE PEOPLE

When I look back and see the whole journey of this road, I'm amazed at how I never imagined everything that would happen. For six years, I have been dreaming of this moment, thinking about representing my university three years ago, meeting the person who would bring me to MUNUR two years ago, and finally assuring that this journey was almost over last year.

It is the paradox of life. The work, the effort, the falls, but above all, getting up again and an unexpected turn of events bring me here today as Santiago Riascos Beltrán, Sub-Secretary General for MUNUR XVI. I am an eighth-semester student at the Universidad del Rosario. Many of the things that have happened during these eight semesters have shaped my path to this point and make sense at this moment, as we near the peak and end of this already long journey.

Six years ago, I started at UN with the sole purpose of learning, teaching, and learning through teaching. My first experience showed me that I wanted to make my path in Rosario, starting as a guy who was afraid to speak, whose hands and voice trembled constantly. But, that later, with hard work, dedication, and perseverance, those weak hands strengthened and turned the guy into someone who seeks academic and human excellence. I turned into a guy who taught people to come even better than me, so that the next leaders of Colombia and the world were formed from the core of this country. Here, in Rosario.

For me, it is a pleasure to receive you in what I call my home to live 4 days of intense debates, negotiations, and challenges that will always be present in MUNUR. A place where you will see reflected not only a dream but a bet for something different and innovative, and an event that I'm sure you will treasure as one of the best experiences and memories in your lives. In MUNUR, not only will you be able to learn, but also through your actions you will be an example for many, regardless of the position in which you find yourselves, because I hope you will handle it as a premise not to stop learning from those who were, are, and will be.

Without further ado, I wish you all, delegates, dais, sponsors, and spectators, to enjoy MUNUR XVI to the fullest, and welcome to my home.

With much love and affection,
Santiago Riascos Beltrán

WELCOME LETTER



GENERAL DIRECTOR
SOFIA PRADA



WE THE PEOPLE

It is an honor for me, as General Director, to extend to you the most sincere welcome to the 16th edition of the Universidad del Rosario Model of United Nations, MUNUR XVI.

Since I was a girl, I have always dreamed of participating in models of UN. Throughout the years, I have had the privilege to live this experience as a delegate, as dais, as a member of the logistics staff, and today as General Director. Taking this role has been one of the greatest adventures in my life, full of challenges and good memories. But, counting on your participation is surely one of the best memories, which fills me with deep honor and gratitude.

For this edition, we are committed to carrying on the legacy and the tradition that have characterized MUNUR throughout the years. But also focusing on innovation, not only in academics, but in logistics too. We have worked pretty hard on every little detail, surprise, and experience for you to enjoy this year's conference. The team is completely sure that MUNUR will leave a mark on you for the rest of your life, and will let you build your future after this edition.

We are well aware that you have assumed the challenge of participating with the purpose of contributing to new ideas and solutions that will help to enrich the discussions over the current global challenges and problems. Your participation represents a precious contribution to the build-up of a more ethical, empathetic, critical, and compromised society with the world and with our people.

During the 4 days of MUNUR, you will find in each committee not only a place for negotiation, analysis, and debate, but also you will find an opportunity to grow personally and professionally. I hope that this experience inspires all of you to keep evolving into leaders who change lives as well.

Wishing you the best of luck in this journey. And, lastly, I invite you to live this edition with passion, respect, and always be open to learn new things.

With love and admiration,
Sofia Prada Pachón.

WELCOME LETTER



GENERAL SUB-DIRECTOR
ISABELLA CUARTAS



WE THE PEOPLE

Dear delegates,

Welcome to MUNUR XVI, a place where you will have the opportunity to challenge yourselves and discover the strength that each of your voices has. Here, every intervention counts, every argument transforms, and each one of you is essential to make this edition as unique and marvellous as ever.

As General Sub-director, for me it is a privilege to have you in this 16th edition that we have prepared carefully and full of love. I firmly believe that we learn the most when we get out of our comfort zones, when we debate with respect, and when we listen before answering. MUNUR is not about perfection; it is rather a safe place where you can feel free to make mistakes, rethink your ideas, and grow into a better version of yourself.

We want every single detail to speak for itself, and for every committee to come to life. Each decision we have taken, from logistics to academics, reflects our wish for all our attendees to feel motivated, supported, and valued. Because MUNUR will not be anything without each one of you, it is your ideas and your passion that give sense to this project. You are not here only to represent a delegation or a university; you are here to leave a mark, to inspire, and to be inspired. I hope that after these 4 days, you will remember your experience, for your performance, and for the new things you discover about yourselves.

Thanks for being here, for believing in us, and for being part of MUNUR XVI.

I wish you the best of luck and hope that you will enjoy every part of this model that was made with love, curiosity, and with our whole hearts.

With love,
Isabella Cuartas Gómez

WELCOME LETTER

USG FOR SPECIALIZED BODIES

ZHAYRA ALONSO



WE THE PEOPLE

Dear Delegates,

Please receive my warmest and most enthusiastic greetings.

It is a true honour for me to officially welcome you to the Specialised Committees of this model. As the Under-Secretary to the Specialised Committees, I want to express my deepest admiration for each and every one of you for taking on the challenge of participating in these spaces that demand rigorous analysis, critical thinking, and a great deal of creativity.

I know the road to this point has not been easy. Behind every intervention and position paper are hours of study, preparation, and commitment. Thank you for giving your all to this process. I truly celebrate your dedication and courage. The Specialised Committees are not just places for debate—they are laboratories where your negotiation, writing, and leadership skills will be tested as you tackle complex issues that rarely have simple answers.

I want you to know that you are not alone in this journey. From the Undersecretariat, along with the Daises, we will be here to support and accompany you every step of the way. We want this space to be more than academic—we hope it becomes a human, challenging, and transformative experience. I invite you to embrace the dynamics, participate with confidence, and always remember that every voice matters here, and any idea could be the spark of a powerful solution.

We have crafted challenges and activities not only to strengthen your positions but also to inspire reflection, empathy, and awareness about the role you each take on as diplomats in training. I sincerely hope you allow yourselves to enjoy, to question, and above all, to learn—not only from your committees but also from your peers, who bring with them diverse and profoundly valuable perspectives.

In my role as Under-Secretary General, I wish you the very best in your debates. I fully trust that your contributions will make this model an unforgettable experience. Never forget that beyond the debate, this is a space to grow, to rethink the world we live in, and to build, through dialogue, new ways of thinking and acting.



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Finally, I leave you with a simple thought: never underestimate the power of words or the strength of a well-grounded idea. This space is yours. Take it. Enjoy it.

With admiration and all my support,

Zhayra Alonso

Undersecretary-General to the Specialised Committees

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WELCOME LETTER

USG FOR SPECIALIZED BODIES

SIMÓN OSPINA



WE THE PEOPLE

Honorable delegates,

I'm glad that you dare to be part of the specialised committees for this MUNUR edition, we've worked on them with all our passion and dedication, willing to bring you an opportunity to learn, enjoy debate and enhance your soft skills.

With Zhayra and me as your Under-Secretary Generals, we guarantee that we will always do our best to help and guide you in whatever situation you undergo before and during the model. For us, it is vital to create an environment where ideas and emotions can flow freely, prioritising your wellbeing and maintaining fair and equal conditions where everyone can debate, negotiate, draft and grow as a delegate in their own way; feeling comfortable with their individual (or mutual) process.

Bear in mind: we've given directions to our Diasas to be fair, objective as possible and especially demanding towards the academic content that is presented in every intervention and document throughout all days of competition. Academy, excellence and rigour are pivotal adjectives that describe our under-secretariat and, ultimately, MUNUR XVI and Universidad del Rosario.

Hope to see you soon!

Simón Ospina

Undersecretary-General to the Specialised Committees

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WELCOME LETTER

Dais
Sofía Castañeda



Dear Delegates,

I am honoured to introduce myself as the President of this year's We the People US Constitution Committee. My name is Sofia Castañeda, and I'm currently studying Political Science at Universidad de Los Andes, where I've focused my studies on the US Government and its internal policy. Therefore, for this year's committee, I am eager to lead our discussions and deliberations throughout what we believe will be some thrilling sessions.

As President, my priority is to ensure that every delegate has the opportunity to express their perspectives while maintaining a respectful and solution-oriented environment. I encourage you to engage actively, think critically, and collaborate with your fellow delegates. Our work in this convention is of the utmost importance; what we decide during these days will shape the foundation of the US for generations to come.

Drafting a Constitution requires both wisdom and compromise, as we seek to establish a government that ensures liberty, justice, and stability. The responsibility before us is great, and I trust in your ability to rise to the challenge and craft a framework that will stand the test of time.

Throughout the sessions, I will be here to provide guidance, clarify procedures, and ensure that our debates remain fair, focused, and effective. I value open communication, so please do not hesitate to reach out if you have questions or require assistance!

I look forward to meeting each of you and embarking on this journey together. See you in November!

Sofía Castañeda Carreño
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WELCOME LETTER

Dais

Juliana Parroquiano



Delegates,

I extend a very warm greeting to all of you. My name is Juliana Parroquiano, and great honour is inspired in me as I take on the great responsibility of being part of the Dais for this committee. I'm a bookworm at heart—I've fallen in love with reading from a very young age—, since it allows me to explore worlds foreign to mine via my imagination and ink on a page. Its very essence of creative outflow allows readers to take on challenges and connect to experiences tangent to theirs. I also love research and conversation, and many of those who know me can bear testimony of my love for deep dives into history, philosophy, and politics alike. My deep fascination for the unknown and the uncovered alike runs and swells around many topics, many of which shall be uncovered as time runs its course and expands its circle.

In We The People, we'll search for honesty, liberty, and patriotism to shape the emergent country under our feet. As part of the Dais, I will be available to listen and aid any of you in this journey, where you all shall take up your mantle and stand up for what you deem correct. Throughout eons, and across the vast, unshakable, foldable fabric of time, the space around us boasts of only few constants. One of such is the constant of change, where the change appears to be the creator of all around us. Change not only pushes but tinkers existence into deeper realms of understanding and survival, for individual yearning for change results in the folding of values that surround many and a shift in understandable perspectives. We seem to be followed by the many shifting states of reality, which appear both as fluid as they are solid. And although change and chaos exist together, they render us mere players inside a cosmic game of tug-of-war, torn between observing, understanding, and actively participating between its many variables.

And yet, there seems to be another constant—resilience.

As you plunge deeper into the construction of the Constitution, the manual and guide for the soil under our feet, your task consists of keeping the United States’ interests at heart, their philosophy in your thoughts, and their tactics under your sleeves. Remember this Constitution is more than vacuous words on a paper—it’s a living, breathing document that must withstand the test of time and persist through adversity.

Founding Fathers, it is a great pleasure to receive and welcome each of you as we build this magnum state and forge a future for our descendants.

Sending you my kindest regards, I wish you all the best of luck.

The Constitution was not made merely for the generation that then existed, but for posterity—unlimited, undefined, endless, perpetual posterity."

Henry Clay



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In 1787, delegates from across the whole territory gathered in Philadelphia, intending to create the American Constitution. It's been just a few years since securing independence from Great Britain and the brittle republic finds itself struggling to survive under their Articles of Confederation. This system has proven to be weak, inefficient, and unable to meet and solve the needs and problems of a growing nation. Slavery, representation in congress, liberty and democracy are points that shall be discussed in order to create a brand new order that will guarantee the success of America and its entrance into the world as a renewed nation.

This academic guide will tackle all the historical context which led to this very exact moment in history. As well as the main points that important figures will try to cover and accomplish throughout the debate. History is being made and wirtten in this meeting, where the interests of the 13 states will be shown to conform a united group of people who believe in the future of a country who broke free from the colonization and decided to become independent.

Keywords: America, independent, liberty, democracy



WE THE PEOPLE

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE

“We the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union...”
But what if those words had never been written?

The year is 1787, and the emerging country of the United States stands at a crossroads. It’s been just a few years since securing independence from Great Britain and the brittle republic finds itself struggling to survive under their Articles of Confederation. This system has proven to be weak, inefficient, and unable to meet and solve the needs and problems of a growing nation.

The *Articles of Confederation* were the first attempt at a national government, designed to preserve the independence and sovereignty of individual states while, conversely, keeping the central government weak. However, these attempts presented multiple issues, like a lack of central authority, economic instability, interstate disputes, and a weak national defence.

These aforementioned weaknesses became increasingly untenable, as the breaking point surged in 1786 and 1787 with Shays’ Rebellion. This armed uprising, led by upset farmers in Massachusetts, sought to voice their frustration at their heavy debt and economic problems. This rebellion not only exposed the government’s inability to maintain internal order and protect its citizens, but also sparked widespread calls for reform.

In response to these crises, delegates from across the thirteen states have been summoned to the city of Philadelphia in the summer of 1787. This meeting seeks to address the failures and benefits of the Articles of Confederation, deciding whether they will be revised or thrown out entirely. Debates among delegates are expected surrounding topics like federal and state power, representation in Congress, slavery, individual rights, and executive power. What should be included shall heavily impact the collective and individual lives of each of the people living within the borders of the American country. With the nation on the brink of collapse, what begins as a meeting to amend the Articles of Confederation soon becomes more ambitious—the complete restructuring of the American government.



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In We The People, you, as delegates, are tasked with putting on the shoes of the Founding Fathers and drafting the Constitution of the United States from the ground up. The decisions made in this meeting shall define the political, social, and economic future of the country within these borders.



taken from: The Annapolis Collection Garden

Your choices will shape the Constitution and will determine whether this emergent nation thrives or falls into painful division for the second time. Will you create a Constitution that not only stands the test of time, but also serves as a blueprint for those nations around you, or will your compromises lead to further divides and conflicts?

The power is in your hands, the responsibility is immense, and the nation is waiting.

While history surely provides guidelines, you are not bound by the exact choices of the Founding Fathers. Instead, each of you is gifted the opportunity to not only question, but modify and even rewrite the structure of government as it is known chronically. Will you create a strong executive branch or favour systems that prevent centralised power? Will you defend states' rights, or will you advocate for a strong federal government? Most importantly, how will you tackle the issues of representation, taxation, and liberties?



taken from: The American Founding

COMMITTEE COMPETENCE

Our We the People: U.S. Constitution Committee is a historical committee set in the pivotal moment just before the drafting of the U.S. Constitution. Composed of delegates from the



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original thirteen states, this body has been tasked with a monumental challenge: to construct a framework of government that not only addresses the failures of the Articles of Confederation but also improves upon the Constitution that was ultimately ratified.

This committee will have the authority to debate and design a stronger, fairer, and more effective Constitution, taking into account the diverse interests of the states, the balance of power between federal and state governments, the protection of individual liberties, and the lessons learned from both historical and modern perspectives.

Scope of the Committee

The committee has broad authority to debate and decide upon the fundamental principles that will shape the future of the United States. The main objectives include:

1. Creating a More Effective Government Structure

- Addressing the failures of the Articles of Confederation, including the lack of federal authority.
- Establishing a balanced system of governance that fairly distributes power between the federal and state governments.
- Defining the roles and responsibilities of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.

2. Ensuring Fair Representation

- Designing a legislative system that accounts for both population-based and state-based representation.
- Debating the role of direct democracy versus representative government.
- Determining how states should interact within the federal framework.

3. Defining the Powers of the Executive Branch

- Establishing limits on executive authority to prevent abuses of power.
- Determining the process of electing and removing the President.
- Evaluating the necessity of a strong or weak executive office.

4. Establishing Judicial Authority

- Creating an independent and impartial judiciary with clear jurisdiction.
- Ensuring protections against tyranny through judicial review and checks on legislative and executive power.



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- Addressing concerns of state's rights versus federal judicial supremacy.

5. Protecting Individual Rights and Liberties

- Ensuring that fundamental rights and freedoms are explicitly protected.
- Discussing the necessity of a **Bill of Rights** within the Constitution.
- Addressing issues of civil liberties, including freedom of speech, religion, and due process.

6. Economic and Taxation Policies

- Establishing a functional and fair taxation system that supports national development.
- Creating mechanisms to regulate commerce, trade, and economic stability.
- Ensuring that economic policies prevent future financial crises.

7. Addressing the Issue of Slavery and Human Rights

- Confronting the moral and political dilemmas of slavery.
- Determining whether the Constitution should explicitly protect or abolish slavery.
- Evaluating the long-term consequences of delaying action on human rights.

Decision-Making Power and Committee Authority

Delegates in the We the People: U.S. Constitution Committee hold full authority to propose, debate, and vote on constitutional provisions. Every decision made within the committee must balance the interests of individual states while ensuring the long-term stability and effectiveness of the national government.

To facilitate this process, the committee follows a structured parliamentary procedure inspired by the original Constitutional Convention. Discussions will be moderated by a presiding officer, and proposals will be presented, debated, and voted upon in an orderly manner.

Powers of the Committee

The committee has the authority to:

- **Draft new provisions or amend existing constitutional ideas** to address governance challenges.
- **Negotiate compromises** on key issues such as representation, taxation, executive authority, and state sovereignty.



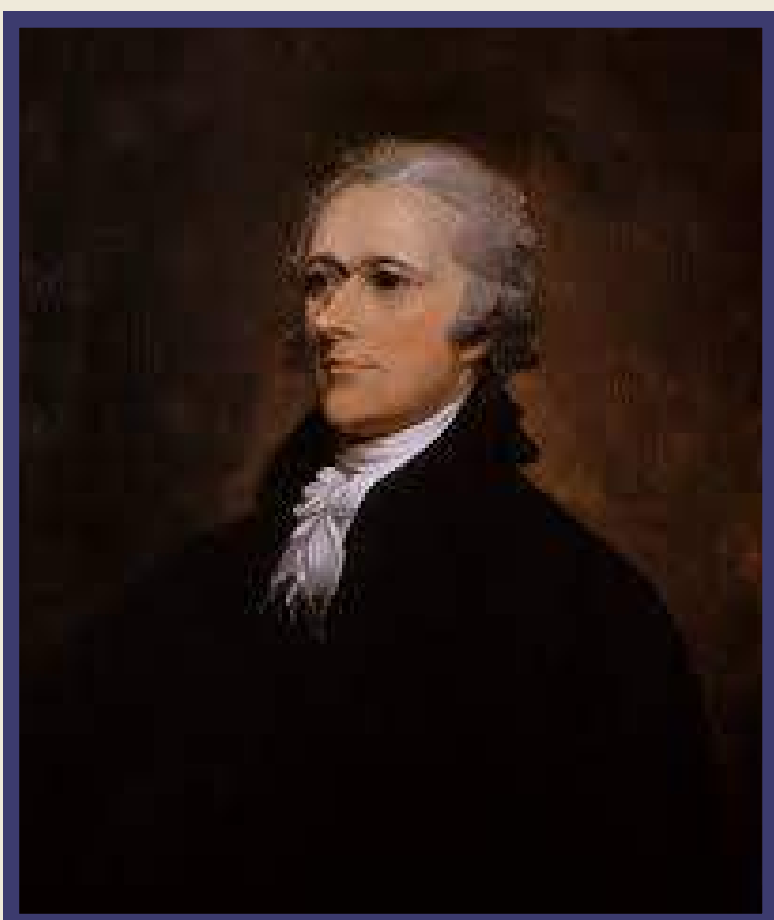
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- Introduce new governmental structures if necessary to strengthen the federal system.
- Reject or modify provisions that have historically proven problematic, ensuring a more just and effective Constitution.
- Compromises and Revisions: If a proposal fails to pass, delegates must negotiate amendments and revisions until a workable agreement is reached.

This committee is designed to critically analyse the flaws of the original U.S. Constitution and explore ways to build a stronger and fairer foundation for governance. The debates should be inspired by what we now recognise as shortcomings in the U.S. system, including the challenges that emerged as a result of constitutional ambiguities or compromises, such as issues that contributed to deep national divisions and even the Civil War. However, since this committee is set in 1787, none of these events had occurred in the delegates' reality.

thus, delegates must stay within the historical context, using only the arguments, political theories, and knowledge available at the time. While discussions should reflect on governance concerns that later became problematic, they cannot directly reference future amendments, historical events, or modern legal concepts. *The success of this committee will depend on delegates ability to subtly incorporate these lessons while maintaining historical authenticity.*

The role of delegates



taken from: Legacy Club of Boston

Delegates are expected to participate actively in debates, defend their positions with logical and historical arguments, and work collaboratively toward a superior governing document. Each delegate must:

- Represent the interests of their respective states while considering the greater national good.
- Engage in informed discussions based on historical and philosophical principles of governance.
- Challenge flawed ideas from the original Constitutional Convention.



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- Present alternative solutions to well-documented historical problems.

Limitations and Challenges

While the committee has full autonomy in drafting a new Constitution, it must also contend with the realities of the time. Some challenges include:

- **Regional and ideological conflicts** – balancing the interests of large and small states, agrarian and industrial economies.
- **Historical biases and perspectives** – overcoming the limitations of 18th-century political thought.
- **The risk of instability** – ensuring that any new system does not repeat the failures of the Articles of Confederation.

We the People: U.S. Constitution Committee has been given a unique opportunity to rewrite history and create a governing document that surpasses the original Constitution. This is not just a reenactment of the past; it is an opportunity to correct historical mistakes and create a more just, equitable, and effective foundation for the United States.

As delegates, your task is both ambitious and critical: crafting a government that balances power, protects individual rights, and ensures stability for generations to come. The success of this committee will be judged by its ability to build a constitution that withstands the test of time and truly embodies the ideals of democracy and justice.

ABOUT THE TOPIC

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

The year is 1787. The great experiment of American self-governance, barely a decade old, stands at a crossroads. The Articles of Confederation, once hailed as the safeguard of state sovereignty and liberty, have proven inadequate in the face of economic distress, interstate disputes, and a weak federal government unable to assert authority. The fragile union, born from revolution, now teeters on the brink of dissolution. In response to this crisis, we, the assembled delegates of the thirteen states, convene in Philadelphia with an immense responsibility: to draft a new governing document that will ensure the survival and



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prosperity of our fledgling nation. This assembly, known as the We the People: U.S. Constitution Committee, has been granted the authority to deliberate on the fundamental principles that will define the future of the United States. We are not merely tasked with amending the Articles but with constructing a framework that corrects their failures and establishes a stronger, fairer, and more enduring government.

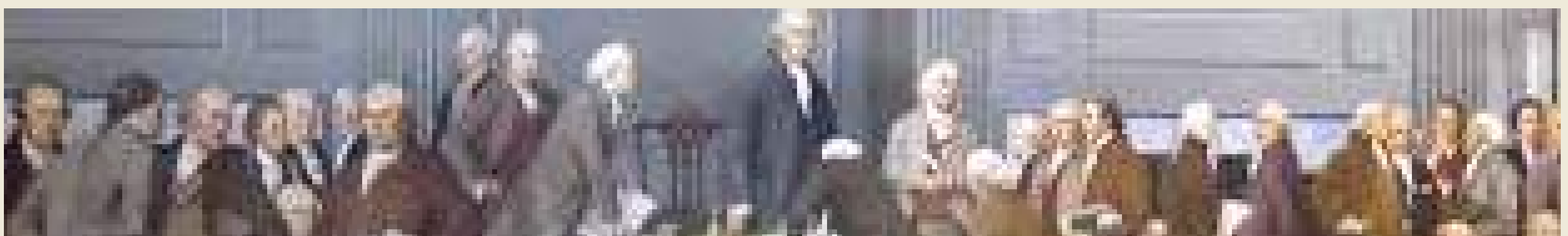
The Importance of a Constitution in This Historical Context

A constitution is more than a mere document; it is the very foundation upon which a nation stands. In this defining moment, our young republic faces challenges that demand a robust and adaptable framework of governance. The instability wrought by the Articles has highlighted the necessity of a government with the strength to unify and protect its citizens while maintaining the liberties for which we fought so valiantly.

We stand on the precipice of history. The eyes of the world are upon us, observing whether this new nation can prove that democratic governance can endure. If we fail, our republic may fragment into competing confederacies, vulnerable to foreign manipulation and internal strife. If we succeed, we will lay the cornerstone for a government that can balance power between national and state authorities, ensure representation and justice, and protect the freedoms of future generations.

Our task is not an easy one. We must grapple with the complexities of federalism, the tension between large and small states, the role of an executive power, the structure of the judiciary, and the delicate balance between order and liberty. The debates we engage in will shape the destiny of this nation, determining whether we build a government strong enough to govern yet constrained enough to prevent tyranny.

As we embark on this solemn duty, let us remember that history will judge our decisions. The path we carve will determine whether this republic thrives or falls. With wisdom, compromise, and an unwavering commitment to the principles of justice and freedom, let us forge a Constitution worthy of the ideals upon which this nation was founded.



taken from: National Park Service





WE THE PEOPLE

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Long before an even remote idea of an organised, federal Constitution, the futility and weakness of the independent states within the nation were laid bare. The Articles of Confederation, according to many of those politically literate, needed to be replaced. Introduced in 1781 as a constitution for the then 13 sovereign States after the Revolutionary War, they remained rather inaccurate and unhelpful. The federal government had little to no power to tax, regulate commerce, or support any upcoming wars. The States, which struggled to feel supported by a strong federal government, were on the brink of both economic and social collapse. Congress has little to no money, inflation rose across the country, and businesses no longer thrived. Farmers and businessmen were thrown in jail for their debts, and some even had their lands and properties sold off to pay their taxes.

Some of these farmers fought back in 1786. What is commonly known as Shays' Rebellion began in Massachusetts. The uprising was multi-faceted, but its focal point was the debt crisis at the end of the Revolutionary War. Daniel Shays, a former captain in the Continental Army, led this uprising. Those who served in this army and state militia veterans struggled immensely, like farmers, as they saw nothing of what was promised to them for their military service. Shays's protesters called themselves the "Regulators".

By December, this conflict exacerbated those in office. Governor James Bowdoin sent over 1,200 men to scatter these Regulators and neutralise the uprising. General Benjamin Lincoln was in charge of these men, who intercepted the Regulators—who approached the federal armoury in Springfield, Massachusetts with over 1,500 men. On that day, January 25th of 1787, the army fired and killed 4 and injured 20 Regulators. While they quickly scattered, many who were soon captured received a general pardon.

Political Context

Politically, the United States was facing instability following the Revolutionary War. The Articles of Confederation, adopted during the Revolution, established a weak central government with limited powers, most notably the inability to tax or regulate interstate commerce. This weakness became apparent in events like Shays' Rebellion, where disgruntled farmers in Massachusetts revolted against economic conditions and harsh tax policies. The rebellion underscored the need for a more robust system of governance to maintain order and avoid future insurrections (National Archives).



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At the Constitutional Convention, key figures such as **George Washington** (Virginia) were instrumental in pushing for a new framework. Washington, though publicly neutral, was a prominent advocate for a stronger national government, which provided the credibility needed for the convention's success. Likewise, **James Madison** (Virginia), known as the "Father of the Constitution," brought a detailed plan that would become the foundation for the new government.



taken from: Governing Magazine

The political factions at the Convention were divided into two broad camps: the **Federalists**, who supported a strong central government, and the **Anti-Federalists**, who feared the concentration of power in the hands of a few and argued for a weaker central government with more power left to the states (Gilder Lehrman Institute). These tensions were key in shaping the debates surrounding the new Constitution.

Economic Context

Economically, the United States was struggling. The country had incurred significant debts during the Revolutionary War, and the Articles of Confederation provided no effective means of raising revenue or regulating commerce. States were issuing their own currencies, leading to inflation and economic instability. Interstate commerce was impeded by tariffs and trade restrictions, and the lack of a unified currency system further exacerbated the problem. Economic factions within the Convention were particularly concerned with creating a system that could stabilise the nation's finances, regulate interstate trade, and secure the payment of national debt.

The economic concerns of key figures like Alexander Hamilton (New York) reflected a vision of a strong, centralised government capable of managing financial affairs. Hamilton advocated for a national bank and a strong executive branch to ensure economic stability (National Archives). His views often clashed with those of smaller states and Anti-Federalists, who feared that such centralisation would threaten individual liberties and state autonomy.



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Social Context

Socially, the new nation faced deep divisions. Although the ideals of the Revolution, liberty, equality, and democracy, were central to the American identity, these principles were not universally applied. Enslaved African Americans, women, and Native Americans remained excluded from the political and social systems of the new government. Furthermore, the social structure in the United States was still heavily influenced by class, race, and regional identities.

Key figures such as George Mason (Virginia) and Edmund Randolph (Virginia) were particularly concerned about the protection of individual rights. Mason, in particular, would become a staunch advocate for the inclusion of a Bill of Rights, fearing that without explicit protections for individual freedoms, the new government would replicate the tyranny of the British monarchy. This concern would lead to significant debates about the scope and power of the federal government and the protection of civil liberties (National Archives).

Additionally, the economic interests of the South, where slavery was integral to the economy, would become a major point of contention. Figures like Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (South Carolina) argued that any federal government that threatened slavery would be unacceptable to the Southern states. These regional divides highlighted the complex social and economic realities that the framers of the Constitution had to navigate.

Cultural Context

Culturally, the United States was in the process of defining its identity after the Revolution. The country had emerged from a long struggle against British colonial rule and had inherited many of the cultural and political traditions of Europe, including the influence of Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke and Montesquieu. Locke's ideas on natural rights and the separation of powers played a critical role in shaping the framers' understanding of government. Montesquieu's

advocacy for the separation of powers also influenced the framers' design of the new government (National Archives). However, despite these Enlightenment ideals, there was a deep-seated cultural suspicion of centralised power, rooted in the colonists' experiences under British rule. This fear was particularly pronounced among Anti-Federalists like Elbridge Gerry (Massachusetts), who was wary of a powerful executive branch.



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Gerry's objections to the new Constitution were rooted in his belief that it could lead to the erosion of individual freedoms and the rise of a new form of tyranny (Gilder Lehrman Institute, "Historical Context: The Survival of the US Constitution").

Legal Context

The legal context for the drafting of the Constitution was shaped by the failure of the Articles of Confederation to provide an effective legal and governmental structure. Under the Articles, Congress lacked the authority to enforce laws or levy taxes, and the legal system was fragmented across state lines. The inability to address issues like interstate commerce, currency disputes, and debt repayment created a legal vacuum that threatened the survival of the union.

The Constitutional Convention sought to create a new legal framework that could address these issues. The Virginia Plan, proposed by Edmund Randolph, called for a strong central government with a bicameral legislature based on proportional representation. This plan favoured larger states, as their populations would be represented more heavily (National Archives). In contrast, the New Jersey Plan, presented by William Paterson (New Jersey), called for equal representation for all states, regardless of size. This proposal was favoured by smaller states, who feared being dominated by the larger states.

The debates between the proponents of these two plans would culminate in the Great Compromise, which established a bicameral legislature with the House of Representatives, based on proportional representation, and the Senate, based on equal representation for each state (National Archives). This compromise was crucial in ensuring the support of both large and small states for the new Constitution.

Additionally, the creation of an independent judiciary and a strong executive branch was pivotal in addressing the legal weaknesses of the Articles. The Constitution granted the federal government the power to regulate interstate commerce, levy taxes, and raise an army, while also establishing a system of checks and balances to prevent any one branch of government from becoming too powerful.

CURRENT SITUATION



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A Fragile Experiment in Crisis: The Political and Social Climate of 1787

By 1787, the American experiment in self-governance was on the verge of collapse. The young republic, having thrown off British rule just a few years earlier, is now trapped in a web of uncertainty and dysfunction. The Articles of Confederation, created to protect the sovereignty of the individual states, have instead produced a government too weak to respond to economic unrest, interstate rivalries, and mounting civil disorder. With no power to tax, no executive authority, and no real capacity to enforce its own laws, the federal system is paralysed.

This weakness has become painfully evident in the wake of events like Shays' Rebellion, where armed citizens rose against local and national economic injustice, revealing the federal government's inability to protect stability or respond decisively. Across the thirteen states, distrust grows not only toward centralised power but also toward one another. Trade disputes, uncollected debts, and conflicting laws threaten to fracture the nation further.



taken from: U.S. Constitution.net

It is in this tense and uncertain atmosphere that state delegates convene in Philadelphia. While the original purpose of this gathering is to revise the Articles of Confederation, the moment demands something far greater: a complete reimagining of how the United States should govern itself. With the union's survival at stake, these deliberations offer a rare opportunity to create a government that can command respect, ensure justice, and preserve liberty not only for the present generation but for those to come.

Proposed by James Madison and John Tyler in the Virginia Assembly, the Constitutional



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Convention emerged. They originated a plan to invite several States' representatives to a convention at Annapolis aimed at fixing the nation's commercial problems. Madison, Tyler, and a young Alexander Hamilton saw this as a chance to fix the country's downward spiral and power vacuum.

Representatives from each of the States have been summoned on a cold Tuesday morning on May 29th. Though initially intended to address the shortcomings of interstate commerce, taxation, a weak federal government, and the Articles of Confederation, the Convention's hopes have suddenly expanded. Many delegates, arriving with broader visions, opt for a more radical approach: revising the very framework of the national government to create a stronger state and avoid tyranny. The urgency of the task is as palpable as unsettling—economic instability, debt, and domestic unrest have shook the nation to a halt.

As the delegates assemble in Philadelphia's State House, it's clear that debate will be divisive and fierce. Each State, bringing its priorities and grievances, will provide difficulties in paving the road to consensus and peace. Nevertheless, hope remains as stable as resolve. Careful negotiation and compromise can allow for a new foundation to be set—one that permits a stronger, more enduring nation.

RELEVANT ACTORS

Committee Members, Stakeholders, and Key Figures

(The following info draws from The National Archives America's Founding Documents)

The success of this committee depends on the contributions of its diverse members, each bringing unique perspectives shaped by their state's interests, political ideologies, and personal beliefs. These delegates, among others, will engage in intense debates, shape compromises, and ultimately determine the fate of the U.S. Constitution. Their political affiliations, regional interests, and personal ideologies will influence the discussions, making every decision a test of negotiation and statesmanship. Below is a list of key delegates and stakeholders who will influence the proceedings:



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taken from: National Geographic Kids

- **Political Affiliation:** Federalist-leaning, though publicly neutral
- **Role:** Presiding Officer of the Convention

Important Info: George Washington, revered as the hero of the Revolutionary War, provided critical legitimacy to the Constitutional Convention. His presence as the presiding officer of the convention was vital in ensuring that the proceedings remained respectful and orderly. Although Washington did not directly advocate for specific policies, his support for a strong national government was well-known, and his influence was felt in many decisions. His leadership, grounded in his military experience and status as a national symbol, provided the Convention with a sense of unity and direction. Washington's position was particularly important in maintaining the confidence of delegates and securing the ultimate success of the convention.



taken from: Biography

- **Political Affiliation:** Federalist
- **Role:** Chief Architect of the Constitution

Important Info: Often called the "Father of the Constitution," James Madison arrived at the Constitutional Convention with a detailed plan for the new government. He had spent considerable time researching historical governments and had developed the Virginia Plan, which would propose a strong central government with three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. Madison's vision was rooted in a belief in the necessity of a powerful national government to maintain order and ensure stability. He also championed the idea of separating powers to prevent any one branch from becoming too dominant. His meticulous planning and deep knowledge of political philosophy made him one of the most influential figures at the Convention.



taken from: PBS

- **Political Affiliation:** Federalist
- **Role:** Advocate for a Strong Centralised Government

Important Info: Hamilton was a fervent proponent of a powerful federal government and a strong executive branch. His vision of a centralised government included the establishment of a national bank and a strong financial system, as well as a powerful executive who would be able to act decisively in times of national crisis. Though his views were controversial and met with resistance, especially from Anti-Federalists and smaller states, Hamilton's ideas pushed the Convention to reconsider the balance of power between state and federal governments.



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His arguments on behalf of a strong national government were instrumental in shaping the final Constitution, though his vision of executive power remained a contentious issue throughout the debates.

Important Info: At 81 years old, Franklin was the oldest delegate at the Constitutional Convention. Despite his age, he played a crucial role in mediating between the various factions at the Convention. His diplomatic skills and ability to broker compromises were essential in bridging divides between Federalists and Anti-Federalists. Franklin's primary goal was to foster unity among the states and to ensure that the newly formed government would serve the interests of all citizens. His wisdom and reputation as a statesman helped to keep the Convention focused on its ultimate goal: forming a more perfect union.

Important Info: Sherman played a pivotal role in crafting the Great Compromise, which resolved the conflict between large and small states over representation in the new legislature. The Virginia Plan, proposed by Madison, called for proportional representation based on population, which would have benefited larger states. Conversely, the New Jersey Plan, advocated by William Paterson, proposed equal representation for each state, which would have favoured smaller states. Sherman's compromise established a bicameral legislature, with the House of Representatives based on population and the Senate based on equal representation for each state. This compromise was vital in ensuring the participation of both large and small states in the new government.

Important Info: Paterson was a strong advocate for the interests of small states and opposed the creation of a strong central government. In response to the Virginia Plan, he presented the New Jersey Plan, which proposed a unicameral legislature with equal representation for each state. Paterson's plan sought to preserve the autonomy of smaller states by ensuring that they would not be outvoted by larger states in Congress. Although the New Jersey Plan was ultimately rejected, Paterson's push for



taken from: History National Geographic

- **Political Affiliation:** Moderate
- **Role:** Mediator and Elder Statesman



taken from: History on The Net

- **Political Affiliation:** Moderate
- **Role:** Architect of the Great Compromise



taken from: Constitution day

- **Political Affiliation:** Anti-Federalist
- **Role:** Advocate for Small-State Interests



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equal state representation played a key role in shaping the debate on the structure of Congress and the relationship between the states and the federal government.

George Mason (Virginia)

- **Political Affiliation:** Anti-Federalist
- **Role:** Advocate for Individual Rights
- **Important Info:** George Mason was one of the most vocal critics of the proposed Constitution, particularly due to the absence of a Bill of Rights. As an Anti-Federalist, Mason was deeply concerned that the Constitution did not explicitly protect individual liberties from the potential overreach of a strong federal government. He argued that without clear protections for rights such as freedom of speech, religion, and the press, the government could become tyrannical. His objections were significant in leading to the adoption of the Bill of Rights in 1791, following the ratification of the Constitution.

James Wilson (Pennsylvania)

- **Political Affiliation:** Federalist
- **Role:** Advocate for Popular Sovereignty
- **Important Info:** Wilson was a staunch believer in the principle of popular sovereignty, which holds that government derives its legitimacy from the consent of the governed. He strongly supported the idea of direct election of government officials by the people, arguing that this would ensure that the new government would reflect the will of the citizens. His views on democracy and the importance of the people's voice in government would influence the debates over the structure of the new government and the election of officials, particularly concerning the executive and legislative branches.

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney (South Carolina)

- **Political Affiliation:** Pro-Slavery Federalist
- **Role:** Defender of Southern Economic Interests
- **Important Info:** Pinckney was a staunch defender of slavery and the Southern economy, which was heavily reliant on enslaved labour. He argued that the institution of slavery should be protected in the Constitution and that any attempts to limit slavery would be unacceptable to Southern states. Pinckney's advocacy for the protection of slavery was



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one of the most contentious issues at the Convention, as the practice was a significant economic and political divide between the North and South. His views contributed to the compromises over slavery that would appear in the final document, including the Three-Fifths Compromise, which allowed enslaved individuals to be counted as three-fifths of a person for purposes of representation in Congress.

Elbridge Gerry (Massachusetts)

- **Political Affiliation:** Anti-Federalist
- **Role:** Skeptic of Centralised Power
- **Important Info:** Although Gerry supported reform of the Articles of Confederation, he was deeply suspicious of a strong federal government. He was particularly wary of the creation of a powerful executive branch, fearing it would lead to a system of tyranny. Despite his objections, Gerry reluctantly signed the Constitution but later became a leader in the Anti-Federalist movement. His opposition to centralised power would have a lasting influence on the eventual adoption of the Bill of Rights, as it became clear that protections for individual freedoms would be necessary to gain broader support for the Constitution.

Edmund Randolph (Virginia)

- **Political Affiliation:** Federalist-leaning
- **Role:** Presenter of the Virginia Plan
- **Important Info:** Randolph, a key member of the Virginia delegation, proposed the Virginia Plan, which called for a national government with three branches and a legislature based on proportional representation. The plan was highly influential, serving as the foundation for much of the Constitution. Randolph's plan favoured larger states, but he also supported the idea of checks and balances within the government. Despite his early support for the Virginia Plan, Randolph ultimately refused to sign the final Constitution, citing his concerns over the lack of a Bill of Rights.

SPECIAL PROCEDURE

At this Constitutional Convention, delegates are called upon not merely to debate, but to build.



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In the spirit of 1787, procedure will be guided by a balance of order, respect, and collaboration. While discussion must remain structured to ensure fairness, delegates are encouraged and expected to think creatively and boldly, just as the Founding Fathers once did.

To reflect the historic nature of this gathering, standard rules of debate have been adapted to better suit the atmosphere of deliberation and compromise. Instead of traditional moderated caucuses or formal resolutions, delegates will convene Councils, form Committees of Detail, and propose Articles for consideration. Every voice will be vital in shaping the future of the Union.

In this chamber, decorum and substance are paramount. Delegates are expected to maintain the dignity of their office, to debate with civility, and to seek consensus where possible—but never at the expense of the ideals they represent.

Through spirited debate, careful drafting, and thoughtful negotiation, the Convention shall strive to produce a new Constitution worthy of a lasting Republic.

SPECIALIZED MOTIONS

Motion to Open Session → Motion to Call the Convention to Order	This is a procedural motion marking the official commencement of committee proceedings. It is typically declared by the Presidency and does not require a vote.
Motion for Roll Call → Motion to Conduct a Roll of the States	This is an administrative procedure conducted at the beginning of each Session, where delegations indicate their presence with “Present” or “Present and Voting,” the latter implying a commitment to vote during substantive voting procedures.
Motion to Set the Agenda → Motion to Establish the Order of Deliberations	This is a procedural motion used to determine the order in which topics on the committee’s agenda will be discussed. Requires a simple majority to pass.
Motion to Read Opening Speeches → Motion to Proceed to Opening Addresses	This is a procedural step where delegations deliver their prepared Opening Addresses, outlining their stance on the Deliberations. Typically occurs immediately after establishing those objectives. The delegate moving for this motion must state the time per speaker and the global time.
Moderated Caucus/Formal Debate → Motion to Convene a Council	A motion to Convene a Council is to call for a debate by placards, also known as Moderated Caucus. The delegate moving for this motion must state time per speaker, global time, and topic of the debate. The President will call upon the next speaker as the former has concluded.



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Unmoderated Caucus/Informal Debate → Motion for State Consultation	A State Consultation is a motion where the delegates are free to stand, move, and talk without requiring recognition from the High Command. The delegate moving for this motion must state global time and topic of the debate.
Motion to Suspend Session → Motion to Suspend Convention	This is a motion to pause committee proceedings for breaks, meals, or the end of the day. The motion requires a simple majority to pass.
Motion to Resume Session → Motion to Resume Convention	This is a motion to resume committee proceedings after breaks, meals, or the beginning of the day. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.
Motion to close Session → Motion to Terminate Convention	This is a procedural motion marking the end of the day's or conference's final committee session. Usually initiated by the Presidency but may be motioned by a delegate. Requires Presidency approval and a simple majority.
Motion to Propose an Article	This is a motion to officially introduce and present an Article for the committee's consideration. The draft must meet sponsorship and formatting criteria as outlined by the Presidency. It works as a type of working paper.
Motion for a Constitutional Inquiry	This motion allows delegates to request clarification of discussion on an article or clause of an Article. The delegate moving for this motion shall state the Article in question, the amount of interventions allowed, and the allotted time per intervention. Requires a majority vote.
Motion to Table an Article	This motion allows a delegate to temporarily suspend or archive the discussion on the current matter and allow the committee to move to another topic. Requires a majority vote.
Motion to Establish a Subcommittee	This is a motion that proposes the formation of a subcommittee that shall focus on a particular issue or set of issues. Delegates moving for this motion must state the time that this subcommittee will be in operation, how many delegates shall be in it, and the topic this subcommittee will focus on. The Presidency will then ask the delegates present to volunteer for the subcommittee. Requires a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote.



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DOCUMENTS

Previous Document

The previous document that will be expected from each delegate is the Constitutional Vision Statement. It shall outline their proposed vision for the new Constitution. This document will be the foundation for their participation in the committee, providing insight into their priorities, ideas, and how they view the current system of governance.

STRUCTURE

Introduction (100-150 words)

Delegates must:

1. Briefly introduce themselves (i.e., their represented state or interest group).
2. State the overarching vision they hold for the new constitution.
3. Clarify the central philosophy behind their approach, referencing any major influences (e.g., the Virginia Plan, the New Jersey Plan, or the writings of Montesquieu, Locke, Rousseau, etc.).

Key Constitutional Issues (200-300 words)

Delegates must describe their position on several key constitutional issues, such as:

- Federalism
- Legislative Structure
- Executive Power
- Judiciary
- Individual Rights
- Slavery

Proposed Solutions (100-200 words)

Delegates must clearly state specific proposals that the delegate plans to push for during the convention, including any key compromises they believe are necessary to unite the states under a new governing framework.



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Conclusion (100-150 words)

Delegates must:

1. Summarise their vision for the constitutional process.
2. Call for collaboration and a strong, unified effort to draft a document that is fair, balanced, and durable for the future of the republic.

Final Document

The document resulting from the committee will be the Draft of the New Constitution that delegates will debate, amend, and vote on during the committee.

STRUCTURE

Title

- Preferably Resolution for the Draft of the Constitution of the United States of America

Preamble

- A brief introductory statement outlining the purpose of the document, such as forming a more perfect union, establishing justice, and ensuring the welfare of citizens.

Article I: The Legislative Branch

Article II: The Executive Branch

Article III: The Judicial Branch

Article IV: The States

Article V: The Amendment procedure

Article VI: Supremacy

Article VII: Ratification

Signatures of Convention Members



QAR

1. How must a stronger state, if desired, manage interstate commerce in the future?
2. How should each State grapple with its own autonomy and a possible submission to a stronger federal government?
3. How should the United States of America conduct its election processes?
4. What mechanisms would be in place to ensure fair representation in a larger government?
5. How would a larger government operate effectively in a federal state?
6. How would an executive branch allow for an easier and more effective management of both resources and morale?
7. In what ways should jurisdiction change or be considered by the Convention?
8. How shall a stronger federal government begin taxing its citizens?
9. In what ways shall a stronger government impact the very divisive issue of slavery in the United States of America?

MIAS



GLO

- **Anti-Federalist:** A member of a political faction that opposed the creation of a stronger national government and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution, fearing it would undermine states' rights and individual freedoms.
- **Bicameral Legislature:** A two-chamber legislative body, such as the U.S. Congress, which consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate.
- **Bill of Rights:** The first ten amendments to the U.S. Constitution, ratified in 1791, guarantee fundamental rights and liberties to individuals.
- **Checks and Balances:** A system that ensures no one branch of government becomes too powerful by providing each branch with powers to limit the actions of the others.
- **Compromise:** An agreement reached by mutual concession, often necessary to resolve differences and achieve consensus during the Constitutional Convention.

SSARY



GLO

- **Constitutional Convention:** The 1787 meeting in Philadelphia where delegates convened to draft the U.S. Constitution, replacing the Articles of Confederation.
- **Federalism:** A system of government where power is divided between a central authority and constituent political units, such as states.
- **Federalist:** A member of a political faction that supported the creation of a stronger national government and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
- **Great Compromise:** Also known as the Connecticut Compromise, it resolved disputes between large and small states by establishing a bicameral legislature with proportional representation in the House and equal representation in the Senate.
- **New Jersey Plan:** A proposal at the Constitutional Convention advocating for equal representation of states in a unicameral legislature, favouring smaller states.
- **Popular Sovereignty:** The principle that the authority of government is created and sustained by the consent of its people, expressed through elected representatives.

SSARY



GLO

- **Proportional Representation:** A system where the number of representatives in a legislative body is based on the population of each state.
- **Ratification:** The formal approval process of the U.S. Constitution by the states, which required the consent of nine out of thirteen states.
- **Separation of Powers:** The division of government responsibilities into distinct branches to prevent any one branch from exercising the core functions of another.
- **Three-Fifths Compromise:** An agreement during the Constitutional Convention that counted enslaved individuals as three-fifths of a person for purposes of taxation and representation.
- **Virginia Plan:** A proposal for a new national government structure, favouring large states, which called for a bicameral legislature with representation based on population.

SSARY



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SUGGESTED

- The Virginia Declaration of Rights (1776) was an early statement asserting that individuals possess natural rights which the government must protect. Drafted by George Mason, it influenced later foundational documents like the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights.
- Thomas Paine's Common Sense (1776) argued forcefully for American independence, dismissing monarchy as illegitimate and calling for self-government. Its accessible style mobilised widespread support among colonists.
- The Articles of Confederation (1777) established the first U.S. national government, creating a loose alliance of sovereign states. Its weak central authority led to major political and economic problems, prompting calls for reform.
- The Treaty of Paris (1783) formally ended the Revolutionary War. Britain recognised American independence and ceded territory to the United States, marking a major diplomatic victory for the new nation.
- The Virginia Plan (1787) proposed a strong national government with a bicameral legislature based on state population. It favoured larger states and set the stage for debates over representation.
- The New Jersey Plan (1787) countered with a proposal for equal state representation in a unicameral legislature, protecting the interests of smaller states against domination by larger ones.

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SUGGESTED

- The Anti-Federalist Papers (1787–1788) voiced opposition to the Constitution, warning that it centralised too much power and lacked protections for individual rights. Their pressure led to the Bill of Rights.
- The Northwest Ordinance (1787) organised the Northwest Territory, setting procedures for admitting new states and banning slavery there. It was a major achievement under the Articles of Confederation.
- State constitutions (1776–1780) were experiments in republican governance. They established principles like the separation of powers, but varied widely in structure and effectiveness.
- The Bill of Rights (1791) consists of the first ten amendments to the Constitution, guaranteeing fundamental liberties such as freedom of speech, religion, and due process, in response to Anti-Federalist concerns.
- The Great Compromise (1787) blended the Virginia and New Jersey Plans, creating a bicameral Congress with proportional representation in the House and equal representation in the Senate.
- The Federalist Papers (1787–1788) were essays by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay defending the Constitution. They argued for a stronger federal government while addressing fears of tyranny.

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