

American Government

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Photo-Essay Assignment – Political Participation (The personal is political)

Description

In this assignment, you will have the opportunity to attend a political event that takes place **either in person or online**. A political event may be, for example, a public debate between politicians or scholars on societal issues, a public protest or demonstration with a political cause in any open space, a political party's convention, a trade union meeting, volunteering for a candidate during elections, etc. You may observe a live or a virtual event organized by BMCC or other CUNY school or organization in New York City, either in person or via Zoom. Most importantly, the purpose of the event **must be political!**

During your attendance, you would need to take 10-15 photographs, which you will then use to create a photo-essay for the purpose of describing and evaluating what went on during that event. Your photo-essay should be between **1100-1200** (or more if you wish) words in length, incorporating the following:

1. A title page that includes your name, name of the event you have attended, and one of your photos as a “cover” image.
2. A 200-300-word introduction to the images, describing in detail what action, event or campaign did you attend. If it was a virtual event, you need to include the link. In this case, your 10-15 photographs must be screenshots.
3. Then, your 10–15 images will follow, each on a single page and preferably centered on the page. Each image must feature a title or caption in the following format: Your name, Title or Caption, Location of Photograph, Event Name, and Date.
4. Then, provide a narrative context for your images by telling a story. This will be a 750-1000-word analysis of the photos where you:
 - a. Think critically of the separate items at the event: themes, goals, speakers, etc.
 - b. Note the successes or failures of the event based on your judgment.
 - c. Use course material that we have discussed in class to relate on themes, topics or ideas that relate to your project.
 - d. You may also use material from other sources (up to 5) in the specific context of the event that you attended. These may be media coverage, books, journals, etc.
5. Conclude your essay by considering the following questions:
 - a. Elaborate on the importance of political participation. Why does it matter now more than in the past? Think of the event you had attended in a broader context, for example, the COVID-19 pandemic, the war in Ukraine, the economy, racial

inequality, polarization in Congress and US society, climate change, or other current challenges the nation faces.

- b. What are your feelings about the event: theme, speaker, people's participation, outcome, etc.?
- c. What challenges/concerns did you face?
- d. Would you participate in any political activity in the future? Why yes or why not?

Format and Style

- **1100-1200 (or more) words**, Times New Roman, double-spaced, 12-point size, 1-inch margins.
 - Word Format preferred.
 - MLA or Chicago Manual style for references.
 - Bibliography (not included in the word count requirement).
- The essay must be turned in on **Open Lab** by the time and date it is due.