



UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE
Making a World of Difference

CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS

 @UILCIANDE

2019 • INVITATIONAL A



Photo by Gage Skidmore, used with permission
Senator Ted Cruz (R-Texas) speaks at the 2015 Conservative Political Action Conference in National Harbor, Maryland.



Photo by Bradley Wilson, used with permission
U.S. Senate candidate Beto O'Rourke speaks at a rally in Kiwanis Park in Wichita Falls, Oct. 29, 2018.

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- 1. Apple has officially been dethroned as the world's most valuable company. By focusing on enterprise customers, not consumers, and with a market cap of \$851 billion, what company became the most valuable in late November?**
 - a. Microsoft
 - b. Amazon
 - c. Google
 - d. Facebook
- 2. Pope Francis wrote, "We showed no care for the little ones; we abandoned them." He released his unusually blunt letter in the wake of a nearly 900-page grand jury report released where?**
 - a. Boston
 - b. Australia
 - c. Pennsylvania
 - d. Ireland
- 3. What country put out a new currency, "Bolivar Soberano," as it tried to wrestle with inflation topping 1,000,000 percent?**
 - a. Venezuela
 - b. Argentina
 - c. Bolivia
 - d. Haiti
- 4. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention put out a rare alert before Thanksgiving warning people not to eat, to serve or to sell what?**
 - a. Duncan Hines cake mix for *E. coli*
 - b. romaine lettuce for *E. coli*
 - c. Elm Pet Foods for *E. coli*
 - d. Pepperwood Tahini for *Listeria*
- 5. Which of the following was NOT a cause of the massive algae bloom and subsequent fish deaths in Florida this past fall?**
 - a. under-treated sewage water
 - b. record high daytime temperatures in Florida
 - c. fertilizers including nitrogen and phosphorus that seeped into the soil
 - d. leakage from home septic systems
- 6. Israeli Defense Minister Avigdor Lieberman resigned over his government's decision to accept a ceasefire with who?**
 - a. Egyptian fighters in the Sinai Peninsula
 - b. Syrian Muslims
 - c. Taliban insurgents in Afghanistan
 - d. Palestinian militants in Gaza

- 7. In what would have been the first hunt in the lower 48 states since the 1970s, trophy hunters argued that they should be allowed to hunt and kill 22 of what animal, saying the population had grown enough — to an estimated 1,800 animals in the continental states – so that protections were no longer needed?**

 - a. Louisiana pine snake
 - b. grizzly bears
 - c. gray wolf
 - d. bald eagle
- 8. India’s top court struck down a rarely enforced, 150-year-old law that bolstered a culture of repression and fear. What did that law criminalize?**

 - a. women automobile drivers
 - b. recreational marijuana use
 - c. attempted suicide
 - d. consensual gay sex
- 9. In what might have been a reflection of an all-female leadership team or a reflection of the #MeToo movement, what portion of the traditional Miss America pageant was eliminated this year as part of what was called Miss America 2.0?**

 - a. a platform that they would speak about on their national speaking tour
 - b. the publication of bust, waist and hip measurements
 - c. the swimsuit portion
 - d. age restrictions — 17-24
- 10. In the wake of a new estimate from researchers, Puerto Rico’s government put its official Hurricane Maria death toll at what?**

 - a. 64
 - b. about 793
 - c. about 1,472
 - d. about 2,975
- 11. Suggesting he was ready to jettison Canada from the trilateral trade pact if the country did not get on board quickly, U.S. President Donald Trump said that the United States and Mexico had reached an accord to revise key portions of what 1994 trade deal?**

 - a. AGOA
 - b. MEFTA
 - c. NAFTA
 - d. FTAA
- 12. What company announced it is buying the United Kingdom’s coffee chain Costa Coffee for \$5.1 billion, putting it in direct competition with Starbucks?**

 - a. Dr Pepper Snapple Group
 - b. PepsiCo
 - c. SAB Miller
 - d. Coca-Cola
- 13. Beating out Hurricane Katrina, Hurricane Michael became the third most intense hurricane to make landfall in U.S. recorded history as measured how?**

 - a. high tides surging 14 feet
 - b. minimum barometric pressure of 919 millibars
 - c. windspeeds topping 100 mph
 - d. evacuations topping 375,000 people

- 14. Within hours of the mid-term election, U.S. President Donald Trump asked for, and got, the resignation of Attorney General Jeff Sessions. Who did Trump appoint to replace Sessions?**
- Loretta Lynch, an attorney in the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York
 - Matthew Whitaker, chief of staff in the AG's office
 - Rod Rosenstein, deputy attorney general and next in the line of succession
 - Don McGahn, White House attorney
- 15. In what the federal health minister described as a "vicious crime," an Australian state has offered a large reward for information after sewing needles were found in what?**
- pomegranates
 - melons
 - baby food
 - strawberries
- 16. Andrea Kremer and Hannah Storm made broadcasting history in a September game between the Los Angeles Rams and Minnesota Vikings. What did they do?**
- They used former quarterbacks, including Troy Aikman, to broadcast the game.
 - They were the first female pair to call an NFL game.
 - They broadcast the game on Amazon Prime, not on commercial cable television, for the first time.
 - They blocked all social media from the game except for their live, sponsored tweets.
- 17. It's the end of an era at the children's TV show "Sesame Street." Carroll Spinney, 84, who joined the program at its start in 1969, retired last fall. He said that almost from the very start, it was not just a job playing which character, the main protagonist of the series and the first Muppet to appear on the show?**
- Mr. Rogers
 - Elmo
 - Kermit the Frog
 - Big Bird
- 18. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration announced "The Real Cost," a campaign aimed at educating 10.7 million people between the ages of 12-17 about the dangers of what?**
- opioids
 - e-cigarettes
 - tobacco
 - marijuana
- 19. The FAA Reauthorization Bill included several provisions that will affect air travelers. Which of the following was NOT included?**
- the Seat Egress in Air Travel (SEAT) Act, regulating seat size
 - prohibiting carriers from involuntarily removing passengers who've already boarded
 - prohibiting live animals from being transported in overhead compartments
 - privatization of the nation's air-traffic-control system

20. What is doxxing?

- a. to search for and to publish private information about someone on the internet, typically with malicious intent
- b. to go walking with a dachshund
- c. to get revenge on public officials by putting signs all over the property of their opponents
- d. to admire a public official, often obsessively, on social media and online

21. Nikki Haley is stepping down as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. She has been mentioned as a possible 2020 presidential candidate. Prior to this, she was governor of which state?

- a. North Carolina
- b. Georgia
- c. South Carolina
- d. Texas

22. Lost amidst the controversy over tennis great Serena Williams' feud with a referee who penalized Williams for cheating, Naomi Osaka became the first player to win a Grand Slam singles tournament from what country?

- a. China
- b. Brazil
- c. Japan
- d. England

23. During a summit meeting between North and South Korea on Sept. 19, Kim Jong-un agreed to visit Seoul, the South's capital. He would be the first North Korean leader to make such a trip. He also agreed to do what?

- a. dismantle missile development facilities
- b. visit Washington, D.C.
- c. sign a peace treaty, formally ending the Korean War
- d. turn over all nuclear weapons to a neutral third party

24. The Japanese space agency JAXA made history in late September by successfully landing two unmanned rovers where?

- a. the moons of Mars
- b. Mars
- c. an asteroid
- d. the comet 21P/Giacobini-Zinner

25. Officials praised the move to give their country another term on the United Nations Human Rights Council as a "vindication" of their President Rodrigo Duterte's drug war. What country?

- a. Argentina
- b. Cameroon
- c. Burkina Faso
- d. Philippines

26. In October, Canada became only the second country to legalize what?

- a. possession and use of recreational marijuana
- b. travel to North Korea
- c. possession and use of Fentanyl
- d. possession and drinking of alcoholic beverages at any age

- 27. The federal budget deficit jumped nearly 17 percent in 2018 to \$779 billion despite a five-decade low unemployment rate. Put simply, what was to blame?**
- dramatic increase in healthcare expenses due to Obamacare
 - inflation
 - widening trade gaps with China
 - the tax cuts Republicans passed in 2017
- 28. Three people were killed, including the shooter, David Katz, 24, at what event in Jacksonville, Florida?**
- a fire drill at a high school
 - a video game tournament
 - a country music concert
 - a party in a gay nightclub
- 29. The caravan swelled to as many as 7,500 people, all planning to march to the United States in protest of poverty, corruption, and gang violence in their home country. Where?**
- Venezuela
 - Turkey
 - Honduras
 - Syria
- 30. Voters chose from a set of candidates that was among the most diverse ever to run in the United States. Following the #MeToo movement, which was true about women elected to the U.S. House?**
- Women will have the majority, 52 percent, almost equal to the percentage of women in the population.
 - Women dominate the Democratic side of the aisle but only five Republican women were elected.
 - There will be at least 100 women in the House for the first time.
 - The speaker of the house will be a woman for the first time.
- 31. In mid-October, in upstate New York, the NTSB was investigating the country's deadliest crash since 2009. What crashed?**
- plane
 - train
 - ship in the Erie Canal
 - stretch limousine
- 32. U.S. President Donald Trump said he would sign an executive order to end birthright citizenship, a right protected under which amendment to the Constitution?**
- 2nd
 - 28th
 - 7th
 - 14th

- 33. German Chancellor Angela Merkel made what announcement last fall?**
- She won't seek re-election and won't lead her party as of next year.
 - She opposes the presidency of U.S. Donald Trump and began vocally supporting obvious successors in the 2020 election.
 - She opposes all immigration to Germany saying that Syrian immigrants in particular are "diluting" her civilization.
 - She would step down as the leader of the European Union and leader of the Free World.
- 34. A Boeing 737 Max airliner, only a few months old, crashed into the sea with 189 people on board, minutes after taking off from Jakarta, Indonesia. One of Boeing's newest commercial aircraft in use by Southwest and American Airlines, it was built where?**
- Mobile, Alabama, United States
 - Sao Paulo, Brazil
 - Renton, Washington, United States
 - Quebec, Canada
- 35. Saying in a report issued in November that it makes kids more aggressive and raises the risk of mental health issues, the American Academy of Pediatrics strengthened its advice against what?**
- corporal punishment, including spanking
 - feeding children with peanut allergies peanuts
 - putting children in a time-out corner, depriving them of social interaction opportunities
 - positive reinforcement as a means of behavior modification
- 36. To allow the country to focus on its gas industry, what Persian Gulf country announced in December that it would withdraw from OPEC in January?**
- Saudi Arabia
 - Qatar
 - United Arab Emirates
 - Kuwait
- 37. Saying that violence she led against Rohingya Muslims was "without excuse," Mike Pence denounced Aung San Suu Kyi. What organization stripped Kyi of its highest honor in light of Kyi's "shameful betrayal of the values she once stood for"?**
- National League for Democracy (Thorolf Rafto Memorial Prize)
 - Amnesty International (Ambassador of Conscience Award)
 - the Nobel Foundation (Nobel Peace Prize)
 - the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (Suu Kyi Elie Wiesel Award)
- 38. The Confederate statue "Silent Sam" came down after "dangerous" protests. Where?**
- the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill
 - the University of Memphis (Tennessee)
 - the University of Texas at Austin
 - from city spaces in Baltimore, Maryland
- 39. National Security Adviser John Bolton said he wouldn't learn anything by listening to the recording of the Jamal Khashoggi murder. Why?**
- It was in Arabic.
 - It was too graphic.
 - It was a fake.
 - It was censored by the Syrian government.

- 40. Federal prosecutors prepared charges against Michael Cohen after an investigation for possible fraud and campaign finance violations. In what role was Cohen serving when he allegedly committed the crimes?**
- White House counsel
 - White House chief of staff
 - Special counsel to Donald Trump
 - Donald Trump's campaign manager

ESSAY PROMPT

NOTE: Contestants who do not write an essay will be disqualified. Essay length is not a major grading factor as long as the essay is substantial and demonstrates a sincere effort to discuss the assigned topic. Cover as many corners of the issue as practical, including historical, political, economic, current events and cultural, when relevant. Avoid including your personal opinions, as more than enough information on the subject has been published. A focused, concise and specific essay beats a vague and rambling essay.

The November midterm elections contained some surprises. At the national level, Democrats gained seats and control of the House while the Senate remained under Republican control. Discuss the outcome of the U.S. Senate race in Texas and some ways it was a surprise (or not). Also discuss two other state races in Texas or around the country in which the outcome was a surprise or upset and why.

DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!

ANSWER KEY

ESSAY PROMPT

The November midterm elections contained some surprises. At the national level, Democrats gained seats and control of the House while the Senate remained under Republican control. Discuss the outcome of the U.S. Senate race in Texas and some ways it was a surprise (or not). Also discuss two other state races in Texas or around the country in which the outcome was a surprise or upset and why.

POTENTIAL DISCUSSION POINTS

- | | | |
|-------|-------|--|
| 1. A | 21. C | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>History.</i> A first-term president's party loses an average of 32 seats in the midterm election. The polarization of the country coupled with some 40 retirements, made this a tough election cycle for the incumbents and party in power. • <i>Texas in U.S. Senate.</i> Incumbent Ted Cruz was predicted to win. He did. Texas has not voted for a Democratic presidential candidate since 1976, and has not voted for any Democrat to statewide office since 1994. However, the race was much closer than expected. Cruz won with only 50.92 percent of the vote according to the Texas Secretary of State's office. Only 219,427 separated Beto O'Rourke, who became popular with Hispanics and younger people, and Cruz. Cruz was never popular but ran successfully on Trump's coattails. In the last week of the race, Trump traveled to Texas to campaign for Cruz. Republicans will start the new U.S. Congress in January with a 53-47 majority in the Senate. • <i>Texas legislature.</i> Led by a slate of female candidates, Democrats flipped 12 seats in the Texas House, marking the biggest shift in the lower chamber since the 2010 midterm elections. The Republicans' 95-55 advantage over the Democrats will shrink to 83-67, which could boost the role Democrats will play in electing the next Texas House Speaker. Democrats made most of their House gains in North Texas, where shifting demographics, along with Democratic enthusiasm for the top of their party's ticket, placed GOP incumbents up and down the ballot on the defense. • <i>Braun wins Indiana Senate.</i> Polls had the Senate contest in the Hoosier State neck-and-neck heading into Tuesday. It wasn't so much that Republican Mike Braun won that was surprising — by Election Day, Indiana was the only Senate race that remained a tossup as it was the margin by which he dispatched incumbent Joe Donnelly, 51 - 45 percent although Braun had been leading by double digits earlier. • <i>Democrat wins in Oklahoma City.</i> Former Democratic congressional aide Kendra Horn pulled off the upset of the night for Democrats by defeating Republican Rep. Steve Russell in Oklahoma's 5th District, which includes Oklahoma City. • <i>Virginia suburbs go Democrat.</i> Democratic state Sen. Jennifer Wexton won over Virginia GOP Rep. Barbara Comstock. • <i>Democrat wins in Atlanta.</i> With all precincts reporting in Georgia's 6th District, Democratic activist Lucy McBath upset GOP Rep. Karen Handel with fewer than 5,000 votes separating the two. • <i>South Carolina District flips too.</i> Democrat Joe Cunningham's win in South Carolina's 1st District was a blow to Republicans who thought they would hold on to the seat even after South Carolina Rep. Mark Sanford lost a GOP primary earlier this year. • <i>Mississippi.</i> Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith has defeated Democrat Mike Espy in a special Senate election in Mississippi, a contest tainted by race-related controversies. Hyde-Smith, who becomes the first woman elected to Congress from Mississippi, will serve out the remaining two years of former GOP Sen. Thad Cochran's term. • <i>Georgia's gubernatorial race.</i> Republican Brian Kemp has declared victory in the Georgia governor's race with election results showing him with a narrow lead over Democrat Stacey Abrams. Abrams refused to concede in light of various election irregularities. • <i>Florida's gubernatorial race.</i> Andrew Gillum, the Florida Democratic Party's first African-American candidate for governor, congratulated Republican Ron DeSantis as the governor-elect of Florida. Gillum's announcement follows an automatic recount that showed him gaining just one net vote in the process, making the margin against DeSantis officially 33,683 votes, or 0.41 percentage points • <i>Tennessee's Senate race.</i> Rep. Marsha Blackburn was elected as Tennessee's first woman senator, beating out former Gov. Phil Bredesen for Sen. Bob Corker's hotly contested open seat. Blackburn won and made history in the solidly Republican state. |
| 2. C | 22. C | |
| 3. A | 23. A | |
| 4. B | 24. C | |
| 5. B | 25. D | |
| 6. D | 26. A | |
| 7. B | 27. D | |
| 8. D | 28. B | |
| 9. C | 29. C | |
| 10. D | 30. C | |
| 11. C | 31. D | |
| 12. D | 32. D | |
| 13. B | 33. A | |
| 14. B | 34. C | |
| 15. D | 35. A | |
| 16. B | 36. B | |
| 17. D | 37. B | |
| 18. B | 38. A | |
| 19. D | 39. A | |
| 20. A | 40. C | |

CURRENT ISSUES & EVENTS

CONTESTANT ANSWER SHEET

DO NOT write your name or school on this paper. Clearly write the **LETTER** corresponding to the best response to each question in the space below. Each objective question is worth 1 point. Write your response to the essay on the paper provided. The essay is worth as much as 10 points. You have 60 minutes.

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 21. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 22. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 23. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 24. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 25. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 26. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 27. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 28. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 29. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 30. _____ |
| 11. _____ | 31. _____ |
| 12. _____ | 32. _____ |
| 13. _____ | 33. _____ |
| 14. _____ | 34. _____ |
| 15. _____ | 35. _____ |
| 16. _____ | 36. _____ |
| 17. _____ | 37. _____ |
| 18. _____ | 38. _____ |
| 19. _____ | 39. _____ |
| 20. _____ | 40. _____ |



FOR JUDGE'S USE

Points from **OBJECTIVE**
questions (each correct
answer counts 1 point) _____

If in the top eight places,
add the points from the
ESSAY question _____

TOTAL POINTS _____

Reminder: Team score is based on the cumulative score of the multiple choice portion of the contest only. Do not count the essay scores toward the team championship.

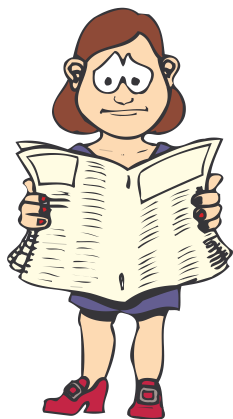
Grading

the CI&E Contest



**University
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League**

*Making a World
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*Current
Issues
&
Events*

1. Distribute contests to students, who will then have 60 minutes to finish.
2. Grade the objective portions of the test.
3. Enter results of the objective portion of the contest into the UIL online entry system. Do not add essay scores to determine the overall team winner!
4. To determine the overall individual winner, pull the top eight papers. In the event of ties, select enough papers to fill eight slots. For example:

Slot	Place	# of correct answers
1	1	36
2	2 (tie)	35
3	2 (tie)	35
4	4	34
5	5 (tie)	32
6	5 (tie)	32
7	5 (tie)	32
8	8	30

Tie for last slot: If a tie for the eighth slot exists, then grade all those tied for the eighth slot, as in the example below. Then, add the scores from the essay portion of the contest to the objective scores.

Slot	Obj. only place	Objective score	Essay score	Total score	Final place
1 (Joe)	1st	36	5	41	2 (tie)
2 (Bo)	2nd (tie)	35	7	42	1
3 (Moe)	2nd (tie)	35	3	38	5
4 (Sue)	4th	34	7	41	2 (tie)
5 (Flo)	5th (tie)	32	8	40	4
6 (Bill)	5th (tie)	32	5	37	6
7 (Mary)	5th (tie)	32	4	36	did not place
8 (Lina)	8th (tie)	26	7	33	did not place
(Jim)	8th (tie)	26	6	32	did not place

Tie for second place: To break tie for second place, judge Joe's essay against Sue's essay. Award points accordingly. Break all ties for first through sixth place.

5. In a 3-person judging panel, must every judge grade each essay? Yes. If more than one person judges essays, make certain that judges reach agreement on which essay is the best. Do not rely solely on point totals. One judge may be more stringent than another. It is possible that a weaker essay, graded by a more lenient judge, can be awarded more points than a stronger essay, graded by a more strict judge.
6. Judges should not be excused until verification is completed and results announced as official.

Rubric

for the CI&E Essay

Judges may award all or no points. This is a working document for as many as three judges. Final points are a compromise among judges, NOT A RUNNING POINT TOTAL or pure point averaging. Return this form to the student with the objective portion of the contest.

■ Points AWARDED:

An 8-10 ESSAY opens with a declarative statement that extends the prompt without re-stating it. The thesis is supported by substantial, relevant information that analyzes the prompt from a range of perspectives — for example, political, social, cultural and economic. It does not provide a mere shopping list of facts. It interprets the facts without editorializing. The essay is well written and organized with few spelling, grammar or punctuation errors. The essay is clear, precise and succinct.

A 5-7 ESSAY offers a clear thesis with limited development. It either deals with one aspect in depth or with all aspects more superficially while providing limited analysis. Generally good writing and organization skills displayed. May contain errors of fact that do not seriously detract from the quality of the essay.

A 2-4 ESSAY lacks a thesis or presents a confused or undeveloped thesis. It deals with the prompt in a superficial way and offers no analysis. Instead, it tends to editorialize. May contain major fact errors, display poor writing skills and rely on bloated, pretentious language.

A 0-1 ESSAY displays little or no understanding of the prompt. The response is poorly written and organized and may contain significant fact, grammar, punctuation and/or spelling errors that detract from the clarity of the response.

Judge 1

Judge 2

Judge 3

Consensus

Comments:

OVERALL ESSAY SCORE _____

(maximum of 10 points)

OBJECTIVE SCORE _____

(score from the objective portion of the test)

OVERALL SCORE _____

(add essay score to objective score)