115th United States Congress - Committee on Immigration Policy

As we have discussed in class, immigration policy in the United States has changed a great deal from the early years of the republic to the present. Many people are also dissatisfied with how the laws currently work, so Congress has decided to hold hearings in advance of their debates on immigration reform. You will be responsible for testifying before Congress on behalf of one particular group in order to help shape a major immigration reform law. You will be responsible for telling the story of your specific group, and drawing lessons from your experience and research to help shape this legislation.

Your project will consist of three components: your group’s testimony before the Congressional committee, a visual aid, and a written position paper that answers the specific question below.

Committee testimony:
Your presentation should tell the story of your group to Congress, and also make use of your visual aid.

Each group’s story should tell Congress (the class) who you are, when your group came to the US (in waves?), and what were your push/pull factors (why you came to the US). Where did your group settle and generally what did you do? What contributions did your group make to American society? How did your group help to shape the US - culturally, economically, politically, etc.? You may want to use your visual aid to help illustrate answers to these questions.

Your testimony should also evaluate the obstacles (if any) that your group faced in becoming Americans. Describe this transition - is that transformation complete? Why or why not? What factors/qualities/qualifications have contributed to your success or lack thereof in completing this transition?

To conclude your testimony, your group should offer 3 concrete recommendations to the committee about what should or should not be included in this law, based on your experiences.

Those questions should give you a basic outline of what to include in your Congressional testimony. EACH member of the group is responsible for contributing to the testimony. It is up to your group how you divide the presentation/testimony, but each group member should make a roughly equal contribution. It should be clear to the Speaker of the House who was responsible for what elements of your testimony.

Visual Aid:
Your group should have visual aids to help in your testimony to Congress. Due to some budget cutbacks at the federal level, PowerPoint will not be available in the Congressional chamber, so you're going to have to find another option. Congressmen are fond of their posters, but you can bring in any sort of chart, graph, map, painting, photograph, piece of music, or other cultural artifact that will help illustrate your testimony before Congress.
**Written Response:**
To help Congress decide on their ultimate proposals for this new immigration law, you will also need to bring with you a written petition, which answers the following question:

Based on your group’s experience, what specific changes to modern immigration laws should Congress make that would help your group (or other similar immigrant groups) to become Americans? You should consider this from a political, legal, economic, social, and cultural standpoint.

All responses must be written *individually* by group members and include Chicago style citations.

Along with your written position paper, you should turn in a full bibliography for the project, including sources for your Congressional testimony and your visual aid.

**Groups to research:**
- East Asian Immigrants
- Eastern/Southern Europeans
- Native Americans (pick a tribe other than the Cherokee)
- Caribbean/Latin America (other than immigrants from Mexico)
- South Asian

**Grading:**

Grades will be determined primarily based on your individual contributions to the presentation, your written response, and your visual aid. Coordination with your group and the overall effectiveness of your presentation will also be taken into account.

This is the final major assessment of Term I.

**Due Dates:**

Red Section – Friday, November 9. Cont. Monday, November 12

Blue Section – Monday, November 12. Cont. Tuesday, November 13

*The visual aid and written components of the project must be turned in/completed by the first day of presentations!*