



## CCN Election Assignment Templates

### Assignment 7: Profiling election challenges post-Election Day

The Center for Community News' Election & Democracy Program has created a series of sample templates for faculty to give to students. Faculty are welcome to use any and all of these and amend them as they see fit for their classes.

For any questions, comments or suggestions, email CCN Program Coordinator Sarah Gamard at [sarah.gamard@uvm.edu](mailto:sarah.gamard@uvm.edu).

**When to assign this project:** The day after Election Day.

**Why:** This is a simple way to inform readers on the goings-on of their local election office and its handling of new challenges, such as counting mail-in ballots or fighting election misinformation – especially in battleground states. Thanks to new voting laws, U.S. voters more than ever are taking advantage of ways to vote that allow them to skip waiting in line at the polling place on Election Day, or missing the opportunity to vote altogether. Mail-in ballots, absentee ballots and same-day voter registration laws are increasingly common. But have they presented new challenges for election officials? This project can help analyze that.

**How:** You can do this assignment in one of two ways:

1. If you have a larger class, you can assign students to conduct one interview with a voter about their perceived challenges of this election, or how confused they were with new voting laws such as deadlines or mail-in ballots. You can identify trends in those interviews and compile them with a story, contrasting them with a student-led interview with an election official. (Decide which student will do this interview versus interviewing voters.)
2. If you have just one or two students, you can assign the student to conduct an interview with the election official and the voter, and write the entire story on their own.

## Assignment: Profiling election challenges post-Election Day

Requirements for voter interview:

- For this assignment, you must conduct **at least one interview** over the phone or in person with a local voter about the challenges voters faced – or didn't face, but expected to – during this election, and write a short news story based on that.
- Note: You cannot interview someone you already know!
- The story must include:
  - Voter's full name, the neighborhood or area they live in, and occupation
- Word length: Minimum 200 words
- Deadline: XXX

Questions you can ask the voter:

- *How did you vote? Did you vote by mail, absentee or in person?*
- *What challenges, if any, did you encounter when voting? Long lines or confusion?*
- *Do you trust the validity of the election process?*

Requirements for the election official interview:

- For this assignment, one student must conduct **at least one** interview over the phone or in person with a local election official. If someone doesn't volunteer, they will be assigned at random.
- Word length: Minimum 200 words

Questions you can ask the election official:

- *How long do you expect it will take to count the votes?*
- *Did you run into any unique challenges this election, such as counting mail ballots, educating people on new voting machines or public skepticism over election integrity?*