

Essay Requirements

- **Must be research-based (include 3-5 sources cited correctly)**
- **Must be between 850-1,500 words**
- **Must answer one of the prompts listed below**
- **Must attend one of the writing and research workshops**

Prompts

1. In 1619, Africans were brought to the Virginia colony. During 400 years of slavery, emancipation, and the fight for civil rights, African Americans have persevered and impacted their communities, states, and the nation. What lessons can you learn from the perseverance of African Americans in the United States? Why is it important to study their struggles and triumphs, and how can you ensure that their contributions to American history and culture are not forgotten?
2. The United States has a long and notable history of suppressing and destroying Black communities. Do you believe that this topic has become too normalized in society? Is it still beneficial to talk about race? On the other hand, the United States has recently established Juneteenth as a federal holiday. What is the significance of this holiday, and how does it contrast with events that have negatively impacted the Black community?
3. The United States Supreme Court plays an instrumental role in shaping our understanding of the US Constitution. Name a case heard by the Supreme Court that helped or confined women running for public office. Take it a step further, and explain how it benefited or hindered specifically African American women running for public office. Did this case affect the record-breaking number of women running for office today? If so, how?
4. Civil discourse is an engagement in discourse intended to enhance understanding. However, it is a concept that goes beyond a simple dictionary definition; it involves a combination of personal experience and 'big ideas.' Perhaps it is something you recognize from an occurrence in your own life. Maybe you can easily recognize when it is missing. Differing perspectives are a vital part of learning, democracies, and civil society. For this essay, we ask you to share your comprehension of what civil discourse is meant to be and explain what it looks like when it works – and when it doesn't – and why. Look at different times in history or a time where you, yourself, were part of an exchange intended to understand something – how did you go about it?