

You are shocked.

You've just spent weeks doing research on a hot topic of interest...and you realize that, although you may think you have a good solution to your problem, you may be powerless to impact this issue.

You read about American college Freshmen and their interest in politics and political issues. **(1. Hint: At this point you'd better do a Google search to learn what you need to know about these students.)**

Then you begin to think... What if you could organize a movement of young voters to support one candidate who would support your view about your issue when in office?

You wonder...by how many votes does a candidate win? Popular votes must be important. For example, students of voting age with a commitment to an issue can be marshaled to get other voters out if they believe they can influence an election. Another quick search on the last presidential election tells you the popular vote for Clinton and Dole. **(2. Hint: subtract the loser's from the winner's total, of course!)**

Whoops! You remember that the electoral votes are critical in the swing states for a presidential election that is close. Hmm...what were those states? **(3. Hint: You can search on these phrases! Another Hint: Your American Government book may help.)**

So, you check out the latest census figures for college enrollment **(4. Hint: do it)** and figure out how many college students will be of voting age for this election. **(5. What do you get?)** How about how many college students will be voting in one of the swing states? **(6. Go to this URL and figure it out <http://www.census.gov/statab/states/>)**

But wait...what are young voters likely to think about your issue anyway? Perhaps they might not naturally support your position **(7. Any data on that?)** or they'll vote for the wrong candidate because they're ignorant about *which* candidate stands for *what*!!

You're pretty confident about your powers of persuasion. You decide that you could probably do a lot to convince young voters to either vote or campaign for this issue by writing a persuasive letter directed to youth ages 18-24 at a key college or university in a certain state. Your high school friend has been doing research on characteristics of colleges at the College Board site. **(8. Find a large school in any one swing state.)**

You do it.

You write that persuasive letter telling them what you know, anticipating questions and objections. Your goal is to persuade them to see your solution using reasoned arguments and compelling data organized into a persuasive, intelligent letter. You supply proof of your research sources in the form of a bibliography, so they'll know you've done your homework---after all, these ARE college students!

Send your persuasive letter (snail-mail please) and supporting bibliography to a specific student union or another organization at a specific college or university. Submit a copy of all the material you send, plus a description of the search strategies you used to get each answer to the numbered boldfaced questions above, to [Debbie Abilock](#).