



Contest topics: Please select ONE of these topics.

Climate change

The increased use of renewable energy is increasing the mining of *critical minerals*. How can policymakers address climate change in a way that does not merely substitute fossil fuels with environmentally destructive mining?

- *Understanding of the issue (40 points total)* – Describe how critical minerals connect with the issue of climate change. What are the impacts of mining for critical minerals? How are communities in the U.S. and around the world affected by this mining?
- *Problem solving (40 points total)* – What laws could be put in place to encourage more responsible mining of critical minerals? What are some ways to address climate change that do not expand mining? How should our Christian and Anabaptist values influence our views about climate change and mining?
- *Letter to Congress (10 points)* – Write a letter to your members of Congress encouraging them to consider your policy recommendations (maximum 200 words). Please submit as a separate page at the end of your essay.
- *Writing style (10 points)* – Essays will be granted up to 10 points for writing style, grammar, spelling, citation, creativity and coherency.

Immigration

Immigration continues to be a polarizing issue in the United States. But, if we could for a moment ignore the politics and the rhetoric on both sides, what would we find at the heart of the debate? Why do people migrate to the U.S.? What factors influence this decision?

- *Understanding of the issue (40 points total)* – Interview a recent immigrant in your community. Why did they choose to come to the U.S.? How does this immigrant's story compare with (1) the common reasons people migrate to the U.S. today; (2) stories of migration in the Bible; and (3) the stories of your ancestors or yourself?
- *Problem solving (40 points total)* – What federal government policy changes should be made to address (1) problems with our current U.S. immigration system; and (2) the root causes of migration to the U.S.? How should our Christian and Anabaptist values influence our recommendations?
- *Letter to Congress (10 points)* – Write a letter to your members of Congress encouraging them to consider your policy recommendations (maximum 200 words). Please submit as a separate page at the end of your essay.
- *Writing style (10 points)* – Essays will be granted up to 10 points for writing style, grammar, spelling, citation, creativity and coherency.

Mass incarceration

Although “freedom” is an important value to many in the United States, the U.S. incarcerates more people than any other country in the world. Why does mass incarceration continue to disproportionately impact communities of color and how could we imagine a different system?

- *Understanding of the issue (40 points total)* – What role does the legacy of slavery, segregation and racism play in policies that put people in prison in the U.S.? How do U.S. incarceration rates compare to other countries? How has the Black Lives Matter movement or other events/resources changed the way you look at the U.S. criminal legal system?
- *Problem solving (40 points total)* – What are the consequences of the high U.S. rate of incarceration? How should our Christian and Anabaptist values influence our response to mass incarceration? What federal policies should be changed in order to reduce racial disparities in the criminal legal system? What are legitimate alternatives to incarceration? If you could dream up a criminal legal system of tomorrow, what would that look like?
- *Letter to Congress (10 points)* – Write a letter to your members of Congress encouraging them to consider your policy recommendations (maximum 200 words). Please submit as a separate page at the end of your essay.
- *Writing style (10 points)* – Essays will be granted up to 10 points for writing style, grammar, spelling, citation, creativity and coherency.