

Town Hall, Democracy, and Informed Citizens

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The Course: POLS 155

600 undergraduate students
Majority are 1st year students
A General Education Foundation course

The Tasks

- ✓ Select a Social Issue
- ✓ Research the issue
- ✓ Determine a policy statement
- ✓ Participate in Town Hall
- ✓ Support the policy statement at the Town Hall Meeting

Librarian's Role

- Assist in finding appropriate articles
- Help narrow or broaden research on specific Social Issues
- Discuss possible policy statements
- Instruct on how to locate and search newspapers and magazines.
- Answer questions on determining biased and non biased sources
- Develop handouts, tutorials, and guides on how to look for Town Hall articles.

Social Issues, Spring 2013

Addressing Homelessness
Birth Control and Reproductive Rights
California Prison Overcrowding
California Water Politics
Campus Alcohol and Drug Use
Crime Prevention
Decreasing Un/Underemployment
Energy Policy
Food Politics
Freedom of Press
Funding College
Gun Policy
Human Trafficking
Immigration Policy
Improving K-12 Education:
Curriculum/Program Design
Improving K-12 Education: Funding
Internet Privacy and Freedom
LGBTQ Rights



Town Hall meeting in auditorium for opening session.



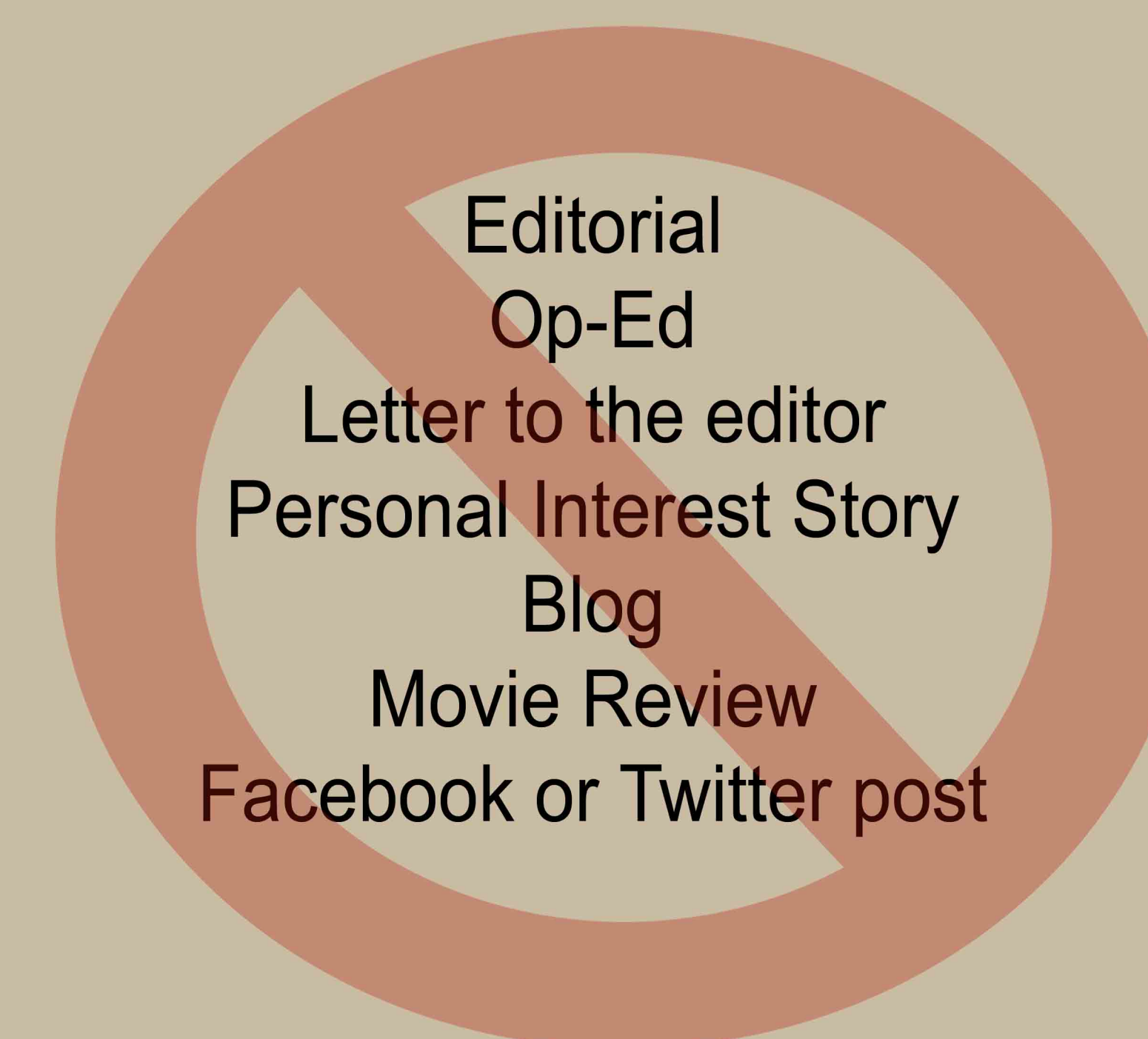
Town Hall break out session.



The screenshot shows a New York Times article with several annotations. An orange box highlights the text "Describes what happened without stating opinion." with an arrow pointing to the article's lead paragraph. Another orange box highlights "Factual information" with an arrow pointing to a sentence in the second paragraph. A red circle with a slash through it is placed over the text "The court's ruling on the one hand reaffirmed that the federal environmental agency has the tools to address emissions of carbon dioxide. On the other hand, it limited the options of environmental advocates who have been pressing the agency to move faster in the face of considerable resistance in Congress."

Non Biased Articles

- State both sides of the issue
- Has a named author
- Supports statements with verifiable statements
- Does not use first person



Approved Periodicals

New York Times
Sacramento Bee
Washington Post
Los Angeles Times
Christian Science Monitor
Chico News and Review
Atlantic Monthly
CQ Weekly
Economist
National Journal
Newsweek
Time

Student Outcomes

- Knowledge of newspaper sources
- Awareness of social issues
- Experience discussing research outside the classroom
- Ability to locate, interpret, and analyze news articles
- Understanding of bias in reporting
- Becoming a more informed citizen
- Increased awareness of policy and political decisions
- Participation in a democratic activity

