



# #YALILEARNS



**YALILearns Session  
Facilitation Guide**

**UNDERSTANDING  
ELECTIONS AND CIVIC  
RESPONSIBILITY**

## Your Guide to Facilitating a Session on Understanding Elections and Civic Responsibility

This guide will help you to facilitate a session on the YALI Network Online Course "[Understanding Elections and Civic Responsibility](#)." Using this facilitation guide, you and your peers can get informed about the role of citizens in the electoral process and the importance of citizen advocacy.

**Total Time: 105 Minutes**

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### Introduce Yourself (3 minutes)

- Thank your participants for joining and introduce yourself. Be sure to mention that you are an interested YALI Network member who wants to start an important conversation about civic responsibility.
- Briefly share why you are interested in this topic and chose to organize a community dialogue about elections and civic participation.

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### Icebreaker: Introduce Yourself in 20 Words or Less (10 minutes)

- Have participants choose a partner and introduce themselves in 20 words or less by addressing the following points: name, where you are from, what you are passionate about, and what you are doing to solve a problem in your community.
- Ask participants to switch partners after one minute. Repeat this three or four times.
- After several introductions around the room, attendees should have a good idea of who their fellow participants are, even if they have not been introduced to everyone.

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### Group Activity: Brainstorm (10 minutes)

- Divide participants into groups of three to five people.
- Challenge each group to identify 10 reasons voting is important in their community.
- Give each group five minutes to brainstorm their ideas.
- Have one representative from each group present its ideas to the larger group.
- Briefly summarize the ideas presented. Consider discussing the following:
  - Did most groups identify the same reasons?
  - What were the most unique examples presented?

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## Watch Lesson 1: “[Getting the Most From Your Vote](#)” (7 minutes)

### Group Discussion (15 Minutes)

Ask participants to reflect on the first video as well as the ideas presented in their brainstorm. Then invite them to compare the ideas presented in both: What was similar or different? What was surprising?

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## Watch Lesson 2: “[Grassroots Organizing for Civic Engagement](#)” (7 minutes)

### Group Discussion (30 minutes)

- Divide participants into groups of three to five people.
- Ask each group to pick a topic then outline a grassroots campaign for their community on the selected topic. Have each group address the following:
- What are the steps you would need to follow to launch this campaign?
- Whom would you identify as your initial supporters?
- How would you build capacity for your campaign?
- Give each group 20 minutes to formulate their ideas and 10 minutes for all the groups to present their campaigns to the larger group.

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## Watch Lesson 3: “[Engaging with Candidates and Elected Officials](#)” (6 minutes)

### Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share their thoughts on the following after taking a minute to reflect on the third lesson:

- Lots of people complain about vote buying at election time, but it continues to be a problem. Why is this detrimental to free and fair elections and a healthy democracy?
- What are your ideas for reducing or eliminating this problem?
- How can you convince people that this short-term gain can lead to long-term problems, such as corruption?

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## Wrapup (5 minutes)

- Thank participants for attending and briefly restate the importance of elections and civic responsibility.
- Encourage participants to sign up for the YALI Network at [yali.state.gov](http://yali.state.gov).