

DEBATEWATCH 2020

HOSTING A VIRTUAL DEBATE WATCH

Debate watches have long been a tradition in the United States, particularly on college and university campuses. In today's environment, a practical alternative to in-person gatherings is a virtual debate watch where participants watch the debate together or individually online, then come together to discuss what was seen and heard, ask questions and listen respectfully to other opinions.

General Tips

- See the [Commission on Presidential Debates' website](#) for information on dates, timing and updates.
- Register with CPD's DebateWatch2020: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1BU_fIE-3vbFYbP7nuggULdp9nnCyDGBM121Q9a4tCEs/viewform?edit_requested=true
- Email invitations with instructions and the link for online meeting.
- Communicate to the group the elements of respectful discussion.
- If you choose to use facilitators, identify and prepare in advance.

Pre Debate

- Plan to convene in advance of the debate which begins at 9PM ET.
- The pre-debate programming is televised on C-SPAN at 8:30PM ET.
- If viewing the pre-debate programming, ask participants to log in by 8:20PM ET. If not, ask participants to log in at 8:50PM ET.
- Set the stage by explaining the role of the facilitator, confirm timeline and discuss goals.
- Advise participants that the discussion following the debate will last for ___ minutes.

Watching the Debate

- While not an exhaustive list, the debates may be viewed on major networks: ABC, CBS, CNN, C-SPAN, FOX and NBC. It can also be streamed via network websites.

Post Debate

- Ask participants to turn off the TV or computer immediately following the debate before the post-debate commentary.
- Participants should log back into the online meeting by 10:20 PM ET.
- Facilitator to remind participants of the elements of respectful discussions and begins the discussion.
- Use the "raise hand" or "chat" feature on the platform to take comments in order.
- At the end of the allotted time, close by thanking all for their participation.

Technology

- Use an online platform that is secure and user-friendly.
- Encourage participants to become familiar with the chosen platform. Have experienced technical support available for troubleshooting, if possible.
- Understand and adjust platform settings to prevent disruptions like "zoom bombing."