

Office of the President of the United States
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20500
202-456-1414



Dear Cabinet Members:

As you know, the members of the Cabinet advise the president. President George Washington had only four secretaries: Secretary of War (now Defense), Henry Knox; Secretary of the Treasury, Alexander Hamilton; Secretary of Foreign Affairs (now State), Thomas Jefferson; and, after the Judiciary Act of 1789, Attorney General, Edmund Randolph. According to Article II, Section 2, of the U.S. Constitution, the president “may require the Opinion, in writing, of the principal Officer in each of the executive Departments, upon any subject relating to the duties of their respective Offices.”

As the country grew, so did the Cabinet. Today there are 15 Cabinet secretaries. Each has an area of specialty on which to advise the president. They also carry out the policies of the president and administer federal laws. In addition, numerous independent agencies, most in the Executive Branch, carry out federal programs and policies.

Please be informed that at the next cabinet meeting you will be asked to prepare a report on your highest priority program. The purpose of this meeting is to inform me of the program that ranks the highest priority for the coming fiscal year. As you are well aware in this time of fiscal constraint when our national debt exceeds 27 trillion, we in government must set our priorities on all programs under our administration. Please read the article here: <http://www.slate.com/id/2292072/> and be prepared to give me details on why your most department is most important and its special programs needs to be maintained or increase its current annual budget in our time of crisis. Prepare all necessary documentation for your presentation with any supporting graphics and testimonials that you believe necessary to make your case for continued support for this program. You will have five minutes at the cabinet meeting to present your case. Be prepared to defend your position with any questions that I may have for you.

I look forward to seeing you and I await your recommendations on how the federal government is continued its most critical programs in these times of economic restraint. If we all work for the best interest of this country, we will achieve the goals of the Preamble to the Constitution.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Barack Obama", written on a light-colored background.

The President of the United States

Simulated Cabinet Meeting

Washington D.C. is an extremely competitive, political town and you must work hard to keep your agency an important part of the government. It is the beginning of the fiscal year and the legislative calendar and you must compete with other agencies and departments for a part of the budget and a high profile emphasis from the president. It is through his “bully pulpit” that you will garner support for the needs and programs of your department with Congress during the next year. It’s up to you as agency chief _____, to clearly label the major functions of your department and identify a pressing current issue before your department and prepare a presentation for the president. Explore your department’s major functions and discuss the major problem that your department needs to tackle and how you will go about this in the upcoming year. You must prepare some kind of visuals (which could include charts, tables, or graphs) for your meeting with the president.

Your Meeting to with the president should include:

- ∞ A president (played) by the winner of the class election who will provide an opening statement on the dangers facing the nation due to our debt and then listen to the report, question you, and consult with you when making the final decision
- ∞ Cabinet members (name of the chief of the department should be on one of the name tags in your group) who present the main points of the department
- ∞ Department deputy chief(s) who will present the main problem the department plans to tackle
- ∞ A 4-5.5 minute presentation (you will be docked if your presentation is longer than 5.5 minutes or shorter than 4 minutes.
- ∞ Questions asked by the teacher, president or the class

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/government/cabinet.html>

The Departments included in the simulation may include

The President’s Cabinet

Dept. of Agriculture	Dept. of Justice
Dept of Commerce	Dept. of State
Dept. of Defense	Dept. of Labor
Dept. of Education	Dept. of Transportation
Dept. of Energy	Dept. of Treasury
Dept. of Health and Human Services	Dept. of Veterans Affairs
Dept. of Homeland Security	Dept of Housing and Urban Development
Dept. of the Interior	

You will be graded as follows:

- 10% on dress
- 20% on presentation of key issue
- 30% on flair and creativity of presentation (charts/graphs, etc. included)
- 40% on presentation of department’s major department duties

- I.) Intro <15 Sec.
- II.) What Does the Department do/why important? 1.5 minute
- III.) History <45 sec.
- IV.) List of Key Agencies under the Department <45 sec.
- V.) 2 Current Topics- Go into depth with one <2 min