

Do your homework on free speech

Freedom of speech isn't free from controversy or discomfort. Students in the newly formed Club America faced that truth in November, when reactions flared throughout the school and community.

Members of Titan Legacy staff attended the group's first meeting on Nov. 5, and they witnessed something unusual: a truly mature conversation about politics that involved students who held opposing beliefs.

Respectful political conversations take place only with the structure of self-discipline, and the will to do political homework outside of what is seen on social media.

This is a lesson AP Government teacher Ms. Erika Lewis hits home: "I would encourage students to inform themselves on policies as opposed to parroting things that they may have heard from others or seen online. Ground yourself in evidence and facts as opposed to political hyperbole or social media soundbites."

It takes effort to show up to political conversations with the intent to hear what the opposing view has to say. In doing this, thoughtful discussion will open up. It takes the willingness to hear,

and the motivation to educate oneself, rather than relying on preconception and personal bias.

To foster growth and understanding, political environments need to be both safe and challenging. These environments should entail openness and a desire to hear all perspectives, backed by research and facts.

This freedom is worth the effort. Lewis says it best: "Educating yourself is never a lost cause. Open yourself up to diverse perspectives that challenge you. If something rubs you the wrong way, ask yourself why instead of being

reactionary. Explore the uncomfortable and unknown. Learning more may not change your mind (which isn't necessarily the goal), but could help deepen and cement your own thinking."

—Titan Legacy Staff

First Amendment

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

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COVER PHOTO: Senior Ray Flynn surrounded by the varsity football team, displays the state runner-up medal after facing off with the Millard South Patriots at Memorial Stadium on Nov. 25 (photo: Bailey Martin)

BEHIND THE SCENES