Thank you for using LegSim! This email provides the information you and your students need to get started. At the bottom you'll also find information about navigating LegSim for the first time. If you or your students have questions, send them to support@legsim.org

Topics covered:

- Registration
  - o Registration instructions
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  - o Language to distribute to students, along with the member authorization code
  - o Common login problems
- Getting Started
  - o What to tell students to do next
- Setup and session management tools for the administrator
- Basic overview of LegSim navigation
- Another tool: Legislative Explorer

Troubleshooting: See http://info.legsim.org/legsim-cheatsheet/

Registration

Registration for instructors

1. Everyone must create a user account. Above you'll see that there are 4 types of account authorizations (administration for the instructor, member for students, executive if you will have a president – instructor is for TAs with sections).
2. Each account in your session must have a unique login name and unique (and valid) email address. To create a new account, go to www.legsim.org, select your session (e.g. Clark College Spring 2011) from the dropdown box, click 'create new account,' and complete the form including pasting the correct authorization code provided by the nice folks at LegSim.
3. The primary instructor should first create an administrator account. The instructor account is intended for teaching assistants (who won't have the ability to make edits to the site).
4. After submitting this information, LegSim will send a link to the email address provided. This may take a few minutes – be patient. You must click on the link in that email to login for the first time. If you see nothing after 15 minutes, please check the junk folder of your email account! If

it is not there, send us an email at support@legsim.org and go do something else. We'll get back to you.

Student registration

5. Students register the same way using the member authorization code you provide. They pay a $16 registration fee via CC as part of the process. The most common mistake students make is they try to login immediately, when they actually need to look for that email. The second most common mistake is that they don't complete the registration process. When that happens, we have to delete their account so they can start over. Send them our way!
6. Once you login to your administrator account, skim the Tutorial and Instruction links. Next, at the very bottom you will see a small 'administration' link. This is where you have the ability to customize your session. For example, the 'committees' link allows you to specify which committees your session will include. [If you have a House session, do not delete the Rules committee!] Under settings, you can also decide whether committees must formally vote to report bills to the floor, or whether the committee chair can do that without a hardwired vote.
7. Your view as administrator is different from a student's. You have the ability to assume a student's account to see what they see. And then at the upper right you'll see an option to revert back to your admin account.

Prepaid Accounts and Mass Member Import option (recommended for prepaid sessions)

If an instructor or school has paid for a session in advance, the administrator of the site can use LegSim to generate a list of user names and passwords to distribute to students. This option is found under the administration link at the bottom of the website, 'mass member import,' after you have logged in as administrator. Copy and paste a list of names per the instructions and legsim generates a file of user names and passwords that you can distribute to students.

Be sure to save the file of user names because it is only created once!

The email address provided studentname@legsim.org is not valid and needs to be changed to a valid one to receive dear colleagues from other participants.

Registration instructions to distribute to students who are registering individually

The process is similar for students. The instructor sends an email to students that includes only the member authorization code. Students pay a $16 registration fee (via credit card) as part of the registration process.

----------*Sample language to distribute to students*--

1. Everyone must create a LegSim user account and pay a $16 registration fee (credit card). Your account must have a unique (and valid) email address.
2. To create your account, go to www.legsim.org, select your session (e.g. Clark College Spring 2011) from the dropdown box, click 'create new account.' Complete the form including pasting

the authorization code provided in this email at the bottom. (Instructor provides the 'member' code)

3. Write down your user name and pw – you will need them later!

4. After you complete and submit the form, you will be redirected to a secure on-line payment processing system. Please provide the same email address.

5. **Once you have completed payment, LegSim sends a confirmation email includes an activation link. You must click on the link in the email to login for the first time. You cannot just login.**

6. If you don't receive the activation email after a few minutes, check your email trash/junk folder. Still can't find it? Contact support@legsim.org

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Common Login Problems

We find that about 10 percent of students have login issues. These can be issues with LegSim but often they are student caused.

- Students who start to register but don't pay/complete the process can't use the same email address twice. They will get an 'already is use' error message. They either need to use a different email address or we need to delete the info.
- If students get an effort message about their authorization code, they probably entered it incorrectly. Copying and pasting can produce an unwanted space at the beginning or end so they should try again.
- **Most Common Issue** Students who complete the process must look for a second 'activation' email from LegSim and click on the link it contains. A lot of students just try to login from www.legsim.org after they register. That won't work. (There's a message that says "we are sending you..." but many don't seem to notice)
- Yahoo, Hotmail and other email providers treat the activation email as spam. If the second email doesn't come, check the junk folder. If it's not there, contact us and we'll resolve it.
- User names and passwords are case sensitive.

Getting Started

What to tell students to do next

Profile instructions. When students login for the first time they will be asked to create a profile. (They can also edit this profile later on). The form asks them about their political views and their constituency. Do you want students to be themselves or to pretend to be someone else? Will there be any restrictions in terms of choosing a constituency?

To **limit duplicate constituencies**, you may want to tell students they can choose a constituency from a state within one letter of first letter of their last name (e.g. Smith = r,s,t).

The **LegSim Lesson Plans** document and the Get out of The Way paper provide insights into these and other questions you may have.

http://faculty.washington.edu/jwilker/353/LegSim%20Lesson%20Plans.doc

**Please do not distribute this document to your students! **

In addition, encourage students to explore the written and video tutorials, as well as the information provided on individual pages. We have devoted a lot of effort to providing instructions about how different features work. Usually (but not always!) problems often originate from a failure to read provided instructions. You can take a horse to water…..

Administrative Special Tools

After you log into your administration account, take a look around. The videos are designed to introduce you to the site. There are also videos for different student roles.

For the administrator, there is a small administration link at the bottom. Here you will find options for configuring your session. For example, the Committee link enables you to delete, edit or add committees. There's a lot there, and not everything functions, so let us know when you have questions.

On the main site itself, you'll see an 'edit content' button on many of the pages. If you want to change the text of that page you can do so. Most people don't fiddle with these though.

You'll also notice on the main site that many pages are pretty much blank. Those pages come alive when stuff starts to happen. For example, there is nothing on the floor page until – there is legislation that has made it to the floor. Etc.

The administrator is special in having access to every page that any type of member can see. For example, the leader and committee chairs are able to do things other members can't such as referring bills, or scheduling hearings. The admin sees the same tools. The sole exception is scheduling floor votes. Whereas the leader is constrained by hard-wired rules (in the House bills must be scheduled based on their order on the calendar, barring a special rule), the admin has the ability to schedule a vote on any bill that has been placed on the calendar.

Finally! The admin can 'assume' any students account from the admin home page. To revert back to admin status, click on the small 'release' link at the upper right.

Navigating LegSim, for first time instructors

Roles

Administrators can do everything students can do (except vote?), they can assume student accounts (on the home page), customize the site (e.g. number and names of committees), appoint the chamber

leader, and circumvent the hard wired floor scheduling procedures (by accessing the small 'administration' link at the bottom).

The Chamber leader has the ability to manage legislation, schedule debates and votes, appoint members to committees, and designate committee chairs (from the floor/leaders desk)

Committee chairs manage committee activities, including opening hearings, drafting reports, and scheduling committee votes on motions to report and amendments sponsored by committee members (by clicking on the 'manage committee' tab on the committee page)

Ordinary members can submit legislation, send dear colleagues, form and lead caucuses, participate in hearings and debates, propose amendments and vote (their home pages offer easy access to the different places where these activities occur). We can also create a student account for you to play with.

Process

Many tools and features are not visible until there is action at that stage. The best way to see these missing features is to introduce and move a mock bill through the process. If you prefer that we run a mock bill for you, we are happy to do it.

The legislative process has many facets as does LegSim. Here is a brief run down.

Student profiles. You can assume a student account and click on the 'edit profile' option to see what they are asked to do.

Organizations. Students (or the instructor) can create caucuses and encourage/require other members to join. The administrator then designates on of the caucus members to be its leader (under the administration link at the bottom of the main site)

Committees. Students can express their committee preferences, but it is up to the chamber leader to assign committee members and chairs (according to a process determined by the chamber). If you want to provide additional instructions about requests, click on the 'edit' link on the page (also available on most pages, and add your additional instructions).

Bills. Students propose legislation under the Clerk tab. Under instruction, there is a sample bill. There are different types of bills that are probably worth pointing out.

Legislative referral. The chamber leader refers bills to committees under Floor/leaders desk.

Committee consideration. The chair uses the 'manage committee' tab to manage referred bills. The first necessary step to take action on a bill is to open a hearing. Once that is done, members can discuss, propose committee amendments, and prepare a report. The bill is reported only after a majority of the committee formally votes in favor of a motion to report (drafting a report isn't enough – the committee also has to vote). A bill that is referred to more than one committee usually has to be reported by all committees before floor action can occur.

Legsim: Getting Started

Floor scheduling. The chamber leader needs to create a calendar or calendars (under Floor/leaders desk). Then bills reported from committee can be placed on the calendar. The chamber leader has to open debates on calendared bills. Once a debate is opened, members have the opportunity to propose floor amendments by going to the Floor and clicking on the Floor Page for the bill.

Voting. LegSim has hard wired floor scheduling processes that differ for the House and Senate and correspond fairly closely with how things work in those chambers. These processes are described in detail on the website. The administrator can circumvent this hard wired process for any bill that is on the calendar by going to administration/manage legislation.

White House. The President (executive) has the ability to formally veto legislation. Currently, the chamber must then introduce, refer, report and pass a Resolution to override (by 2/3rds majority). This won't change the formal status of the bill on LegSim (we will get to this eventually!)

Finally! You may be interested in *Legislative Explorer (legex.org, see below),* a data visualization of how bills become law (or don't)
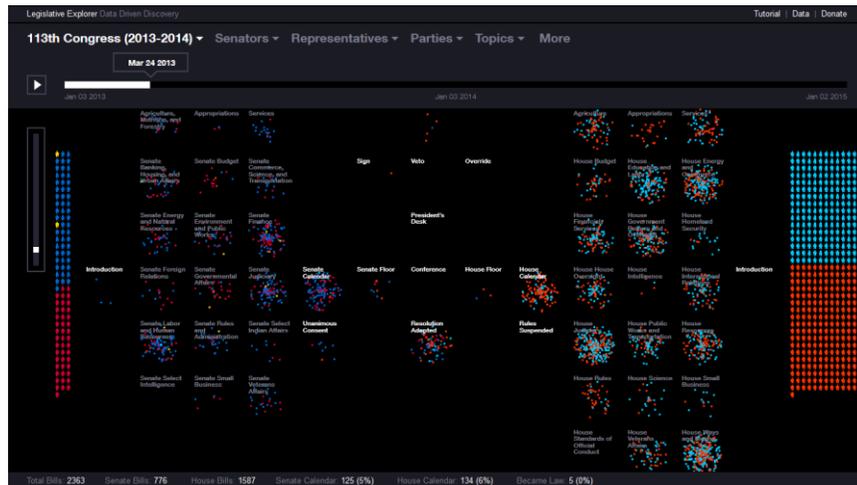
"Your Legislative Explorer is a wonderful tool. I'm gobsmacked at its awesomeness. As a high school government teacher, I will be using this a lot and wanted to give back, even if it's just a little bit. Thank you for creating this!"