



Senatus Romano - Roman Senate

Topic A: Determining whether to restore the Republic's authority or maintain Caesar's reforms.

Topic B: Discussing the reassignment of provincial commands and administrative challenges.



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Letter From The Chair

Salvete senators

Welcome to the Roman Senate! We are thrilled to serve as your chairs for EMUN 2026. Our committee is dedicated to promoting meaningful dialogue on this forum. As members of the Roman Senate, we hold the responsibility of addressing the aftermath of the assassination of Julius Caesar with diplomacy and impartiality. This session, we will determine whether to restore the republic's authority or maintain Caesar's reforms—a brief but highly consequential conflict that reshaped the political landscape of history. The Assassination raises enduring questions about territorial occupation, sovereignty, and the role of law. Delegates will be challenged to consider the balance between national security and stability, and to propose solutions that not only address immediate tensions but also lay out the groundwork for long-term peace.

As we engage in debate, let us remember that our discussions have real-world implications. The Roman Senate is not just a forum for words—it is a body with the power to take binding action. We encourage you to think critically, speak diplomatically, and collaborate constructively; to build effective and grounded solutions.

If you have any questions regarding your preparation for the committee and the conference itself, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to your participation!

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Committee Overview

Much of what is considered by historians about the origin of the Roman Senate is catalogued as legend. Despite this uncertainty, the *Senatus Romanus* has been the backbone of Roman civilization since the early years of the monarchy as an advisory council. After the abolition of monarchy in 509 BC, the senate was composed of 500 to 600 senators elected by two consuls and served as yet another advisory council. The senate slowly picked up power and influence over Roman politics as consuls rarely challenged their advice and authority. By the year 45 BC, the senate had built itself a reputation for being the highest influential organization in Rome, which naturally brought opposition by military forces and caused the number of senators to rapidly wane. In 44 BC, Julius Caesar took advantage of this lack of members to raise the capacity to 900 senators, which he filled mainly with his own supporters. This expanded the diversity and reach of the senate as new senators included key geopolitical members of the Roman Republic like knights, municipal Italians, and even a few provincials from Gaul.

Recent Actions

In recent years, civil war has ravaged the political panorama of Rome. The *Senatus Romanus* sided with the wealthy Roman aristocracy which is why when Caesar threatened to go to war with statesman Pompey in 49 BC, the senate declared Caesar an enemy of the state. Through this decree, they gave Pompey extraordinary power to "defend the Republic." After Caesar's victory in the civil war and a brief military campaign through northern Africa, he returns to Rome and is named dictator for one year. Later on, in 46 BC, he was named dictator by the Senate for a period of 10 eligible years. The following years for the Roman Senate revolved around Julius Caesar and his immense influence over politics and society. Among the most relevant events were the Caesarian reforms approved by the Senate. In February of 44 BC, the senate named Caesar as *dictator perpetuo*.



Topic A: Determining whether to restore the Republic's authority or maintain Caesar's reforms.

Background of the Topic

In the aftermath of years of civil war, Julius Caesar emerged as Rome's dominant leader, reshaping the Republic into a system centered on his own authority. After his victory over Pompey, Caesar was appointed *dictator perpetuo* and introduced a wide range of reforms aimed at restoring stability and efficiency to the state. He reorganized provincial administration to curb corruption, granted citizenship to provincial communities, and enacted land reforms that provided property to veterans and the poor. His Julian calendar corrected long-standing errors in the Roman system, and his expansion of the Senate aimed to include broader representation from Italy and the provinces. These changes sought to rebuild Rome after years of turmoil, strengthen its economy, and unify its vast territories under consistent governance.

Following Caesar's assassination on the Ides of March, 44 BC, the Roman Senate faces a defining choice. Some call for a complete restoration of republican authority, arguing that liberty can only return once the dictatorship's laws are repealed. Others believe that undoing Caesar's reforms would plunge Rome back into chaos, threatening both the stability of the state and the loyalty of the people.

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Topic B: Discussing the reassignment of provincial commands and administrative challenges.

Background of the Topic

During Caesar's rule, the Senate's control over the provinces weakened as he personally appointed governors (*proconsuls* and *propraetors*) to manage distant territories and command armies. These officials wielded immense power, collecting taxes, administering justice, and maintaining local security, often with little oversight from Rome. Following Caesar's victory in the civil war (49–45 BC) and his appointments after the Senate reconvened in 46 BC, provinces such as Gaul, Spain, and Syria were placed under loyal commanders, including Decimus Brutus, Gaius Trebonius, and Marcus Antonius. By early 44 BC, with Caesar's assassination on March 15, uncertainty over these positions created a dangerous power vacuum, as multiple generals claimed authority and the loyalty of legions became a critical factor in determining who truly controlled Rome.

The Senate now faces urgent decisions regarding provincial governance. Confirming Caesar's appointees could maintain short-term stability, but risks legitimizing the concentration of power that enabled dictatorship. Reassigning provinces through senatorial authority might restore republican oversight, yet it could provoke a rebellion from ambitious commanders whose armies remain loyal to their former leader. Administrative challenges extend beyond military loyalty: corruption, uneven taxation, and potential revolts threaten the integrity of Rome's far-flung territories. How the Senate navigates these issues will determine whether the Republic can maintain cohesive governance over its provinces or whether fragmentation will leave Rome vulnerable to another ambitious general seizing power.



Questions To Consider

Topic A:

- 1) Was Caesar's dictatorship legally valid under Roman law, or should it be declared null and void?
- 2) Should the Senate reclaim its full authority over legislation and appointments?
- 3) How can the Republic prevent future dictatorships while still managing crises effectively?
- 4) How can the Senate maintain public order if the people or army still support Caesar's policies?
- 5) Which of Caesar's reforms (calendar, citizenship expansion, debt forgiveness, land distribution) should be preserved?
- 6) How can the Senate prevent ambitious generals from exploiting power vacuums again?

Topic B:

- 1) Should governors appointed by Caesar retain their positions, or should the Senate reassign them?
- 2) How can the Senate ensure that provincial officials remain loyal to Rome, not to individuals?
- 3) What reforms are needed to prevent corruption, tax exploitation, and mismanagement in the provinces?
- 4) Should provincial borders or command structures be reorganized to reduce military rivalries among factions in the Senate?
- 5) Should the Senate delegate diplomacy to generals or keep it centralized in Rome?
- 6) How can the Senate prevent future governors from using provincial legions to seize power, as Caesar once did?

Key Terms and Definitions

Senatus / Senate: The governing council of Rome composed of senators (*Patres Conscripti*), responsible for legislation, administration, and advising magistrates.

Dictator Perpetuo: "Dictator in perpetuity." Caesar held this title from February 44 BC, granting him authority for the rest of his life.

Provincial Commands / Provinces: Territories outside Rome controlled by governors with military and financial authority. Provinces like Gaul, Spain, and Syria were crucial for legions and resources.

Proconsul / Propraetor: A governor of a province with administrative and military powers. Proconsuls usually commanded armies while propraetors governed smaller provinces or areas without legions.

Citizenship Expansion: Citizenship granted to select communities in Italy and the provinces, integrating them into Roman political life.

Land Reforms / Veteran Settlements: Distribution of land to army veterans and urban poor to reward service and stabilize society.

Provincial Administration Reform: Measures to reduce corruption in tax collection and improve governance of far-off territories.

Members

For the sake of the debate's dynamics and engagement, members will be divided into three main factions:

Caesarians:

- Marcus Antonius
- Marcus Aemilius Lepidus
- Gaius Octavius
- Gaius Dolabella

Liberatores:

- Marcus Junius Brutus
- Gaius Cassius Longinus
- Decimus Junius Brutus
- Gaius Trebonius

Moderates or Independent:

- Marcus Tullius Cicero
- Calpurnius Piso

Sources and Further Reading

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Senate-Roman-history>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar



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