



THE 2024 GRATON PRIZE IN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW

Endowed by Claude Dewing Graton, Class of 1900, the Graton Prize is awarded annually to the best essay responding to a current question in constitutional law. This year's prize will award up to \$4,000 to the best response to each of three questions:

1. When interpreting an ambiguous law, should courts defer to the expertise of the government agency charged with administering it? Why has this question again come before the Supreme Court and why are the stakes so high? Should the Supreme Court overturn its earlier rulings?
2. Is a president of the United States immune from criminal prosecution for actions performed while in office?
3. Is a president of the United States disqualified from office by engaging in insurrection against the Constitution? If so, do President Trump's actions contesting the results of the 2020 presidential election meet this threshold?

Notes and directions:

Any regularly enrolled UMaine undergraduate may enter the contest. A qualifying essay must respond to only one of the set questions and should illustrate its answer by drawing (where appropriate) on the intent of the Framers, actions of Congress and/or the executive; and landmark decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court. **Essays must have two cover sheets:** one with the title only, the other with the student's name, class, and contact information. Essays must be submitted via email to Deborah Grant, the Political Science Administrative Specialist (dlgrant@maine.edu), no later than **Thursday, 28 March, 2024**.

Judging criteria include:

1. Clarity of issue identification and thesis
2. Strength of argument and analysis
3. Quality of research
4. Coherence of organization and grammar
5. At least eight (8) direct quotations from relevant U.S. Supreme Court decisions, cited according to standard practice using the U.S. Reports

Due to the pervasiveness of generative A.I., **qualifying essays must also include an appendix** containing the student's notes and/or essay outline from which the essay was composed.

Questions about the contest may be directed to Robert Ballingall, Assistant Professor of Political Science, robert.ballingall@maine.edu. Extra copies of this announcement are available in the office of the Administrative Assistant, Department of Political Science.