

The Student & Campus Guide

How to run the World's Smallest Political Quiz on a campus — at a club table, in a classroom, or all by yourself — and what to do in the five minutes after someone discovers where they stand.

A 15-minute read

1 What OPH is — and why it works

Operation Politically Homeless is a forty-year-old outreach format with one moving part: you give someone the **World's Smallest Political Quiz** — ten statements, Agree / Maybe / Disagree — score it in seconds, and place a colored dot where they land on the **Diamond Chart**. Left/right is only one axis. The chart adds the one the old spectrum ignores: how much of your life should be governed, whoever's winning.

Four things make it work, and every choice in this guide protects them:

The spectacle. A board filling with dots is a crowd magnet. People stop to see where strangers landed, then want their own dot.

The speed. Two minutes, no signup, no lecture. Low friction is the whole sales pitch.

The ah-ha. The core moment is someone discovering their views have a name and a neighborhood. Protect that moment; never talk over it.

The conversation. A dot on a chart is the easiest political conversation opener ever invented — because it's *their* result, not your pitch.

"I took the quiz at an event in 1990, found out there was a name for what I was, and I've been one ever since."

— Survey respondent, on the moment OPH exists to create

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Pick your format

Classic paper (the default that never fails)

Paper quiz cards, golf pencils, sticky dots, the physical chart on an easel. Works with zero connectivity, survives wind and rain in a laminate sleeve, and placing a physical dot is a small public act people genuinely enjoy. Paper is not the legacy option — it is the proven core, and nothing in this guide replaces it.

Hybrid paper + QR (the campus recommendation)

Everything above, plus a printed QR code standing on the table: *"No pen? Take it on your phone."* Phone-takers get their result on screen, you still invite them to place a dot on the physical board (announce their region, hand them the sticker), and the digital version quietly solves the biggest problem in OPH history — what happens after they walk away (see section 7).

Plan for the venue, not the ideal: campus quads usually have decent signal, but fairs and basements don't. The paper kit is your offline mode. Never build an event that dies when the Wi-Fi does.

"At our state convention, 124 of 130 voters used their phones to vote. I was one of the six on paper — and I'm 80."

— Power user who has run OPH 20+ times, on whether phones are viable

Before: space, stuff, people

Getting space

Registered clubs go first. If you're part of a registered student organization, you can usually reserve a table in the union or on the quad free. If you aren't — this is the reason to register one, and OPH is the easiest first event a new club can run.

Club fairs are OPH's natural habitat — the involvement fair crowd is exactly the "stop, look, participate" foot traffic the board feeds on.

Know your campus speech policy. Find the tabling rules and any designated areas *before* the event, and follow them cheerfully. You're playing the long game on this campus.

Timing beats location. The ten minutes between class blocks are worth more than the rest of the hour combined. Schedule around the class-change rushes.

The kit

Chart board and easel · paper quizzes · pencils · sticky dots · clipboards · the QR stand (hybrid) · a sign-up method (tablet, or paper as backup) · tape, and something free — candy moves a shocking amount of political philosophy. Full list in section 10.

People

Two people is the comfortable minimum for a table — one to invite, one to score and talk results. Solo is completely doable with the right format (section 8). Recruit with the truth: shifts are fun, two hours max, and introverts are *good* at this — the format does the talking, you just score and point. The original OPH manual was written by a self-described introvert for exactly this reason.

Running the table

The invitation

Short, cheerful, question-shaped, and about *them*:

"Want to see where you land on the political map? Ten questions, two minutes."

"It's the World's Smallest Political Quiz — most people don't land where they expect."

Don't pitch a philosophy, a party, or a club at this stage. The quiz is the product. Curiosity does the rest.

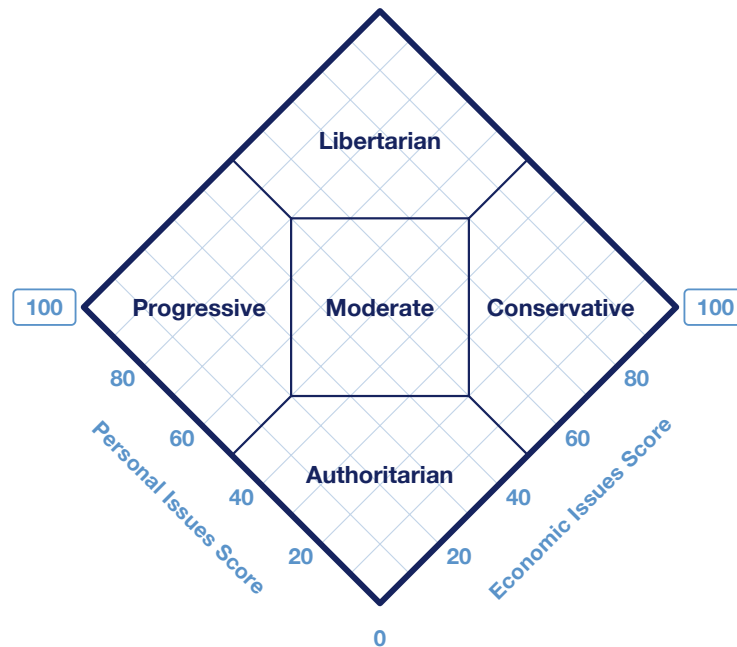
While they take it

Give them room. If they ask what a question means, help them read it, offer the standard clarification, and then let *them* decide — never argue them toward an answer. "Maybe" is a fully legitimate answer, not a failure to commit.

Scoring, in ten seconds

Each axis — personal issues and economic issues — scores **20 points per Agree, 10 per Maybe, 0 per Disagree**, for a 0–100 score on each. Personal score sets one diagonal, economic score the other; where they cross is the dot. With a scored example or two you'll be placing dots without thinking about it.

The dot moment



The Diamond Chart — where every dot lives.

Hand them the sticker and let them place their own dot — the small physical act is half the magic. Then say what their region *means*, in one neutral sentence, and ask a question instead of making a speech:

Libertarian

"You favor freedom on both personal and economic questions. Did you expect that?"

Progressive / Liberal

"Personal freedom high, economic freedom lower — government as economic referee. Sound right?"

Conservative

"Economic freedom high, personal freedom lower — tradition matters. Fair description?"

Statist / Big government

"You trust government to act on both fronts. Genuinely — thanks for taking it."

Centrist

"Case-by-case on everything — you're in the middle with most of the country."

The prime directive: OPH is a mirror, not a debate. You are showing people where *they* stand, not where they should. Never argue with a result, never "correct" someone's answers, never let a booth conversation turn into a fight you technically win while the crowd quietly leaves. Thank everyone, whatever their region — a statist who had a pleasant two minutes at your table is a better outcome than a bystander who watched you debate one.

When someone lands libertarian — or looks intrigued wherever they land — that's the invitation moment. Which brings us to the part OPH has historically fumbled.

6 The classroom edition

The single highest-leverage OPH format on a campus doesn't need a table: a professor displays the QR code at the start of class, students take the quiz on their phones, and the aggregate chart populates live on the projector. Government, poli-sci, econ, philosophy, and civics instructors have used the Quiz for decades as a neutral framework exercise — pitch it as pedagogy, not persuasion:

"It's a two-minute, two-axis alternative to the left-right line — the class sees its own distribution instantly, and it makes a great opener for a unit on political ideology."

CLASSROOM INTEGRITY RULES — NOT OPTIONAL

Anonymous by default. No names on classroom results, ever. Students answer honestly when the dot can't be traced to them — and the whole exercise is worthless if they answer for an audience.

Aggregate only on the projector. The class sees the cloud of dots, never an individual's result. Each student sees their own result privately on their phone.

No grades, no right answers. Say it out loud: "This is a survey, not a test." If the instructor wants a graded tie-in, grade the reflection essay, never the position.

Instructor takes it too — and shares or doesn't on the same terms as everyone else.

Good assignment tie-ins: compare the two-axis map to the left-right line as measurement instruments; predict-your-quadrant-then-take-it (the gap is the essay); or track how the class

distribution compares to published national distributions.

7 Capture & follow-up — where OPH lives or dies

Here is the uncomfortable finding from surveying people who run OPH today: **about half of all OPH interactions end with nothing captured** — a great conversation, a dot on a board, and no way to ever reach that person again. The event feels like a win and leaves nothing behind. Your table will beat this with two habits:

Habit one: results first, then the ask

Never gate the result behind an email — show them where they landed, let the moment happen, *then* make a specific offer:

"If you want to see what your result means — and argue with it — we're doing exactly that Thursday at 7 in the union. Want the invite?"

The ask works because it's concrete: they know exactly what they're signing up for and what happens next. "Join our mailing list" is not an offer; a meeting this week is.

Habit two: the two-touch follow-up

The most effective OPH operation surveyed runs the same pipeline every time, and it's stolen straight from the best chapter playbooks: **touch one** is the same-week event — a short, welcoming intro meeting they were invited to at the table. **Touch two** is a personal message about a week later — not a newsletter blast; a person, writing to a person, with one next thing to do.

The hybrid QR format automates the mechanics: a phone-taker who opts in is captured correctly the first time (no deciphering handwriting at midnight), your event gets a completion count and a results breakdown, and the follow-up sequence starts itself. You still bring the human touch — the tool just stops the leak.

Set a capture goal before the event. A good campus table converts roughly one in five completions into a real contact or club follow. Count completions, count captures, count who actually showed Thursday — those three numbers are how you'll know if this guide is working.

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Running OPH alone

No club, no volunteers, no table? OPH scales down further than any outreach format alive:

The clipboard walk. One organizer surveyed retired the booth entirely: a hat that says *SURVEY*, a clipboard, and a walk through a high-traffic area. The uniform does the inviting.

The dorm-lounge table. A chart, dots, and a bag of candy on a Tuesday night reaches the people who'd never stop at a quad table.

The one-friend version. The Quiz works at a table for two. "Where do you think you'd land?" is a better political conversation than any argument you've ever had.

The share link. The digital quiz travels where you can't — group chats, class Discords, a QR in your dorm window. Your link, your count.

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Rules, respect, and integrity

Follow campus rules to the letter — reservations, placement, noise, cleanup. Being the club that's easy to host is a superpower.

Never block a walkway, never grab an arm, never chase. The board attracts; you don't have to.

Photos: ask. Wide crowd shots of the board are great; identifiable faces need a yes. Same rule for tagging.

Weather-proof the kit. Laminate the chart, bring tape and clips. A board that survives wind is a board that's still recruiting at 3 PM.

Report honest numbers. Completions, captures, attendance — real counts, even when they're small. Inflated numbers help nobody and the habit rots everything else.

Guard the aggregate. If you publish your event's results breakdown, publish it as percentages of completions and say how many. A flooded or joke-heavy dataset gets discarded, not spun.

The quick-start checklist

A WEEK OUT

- ☐ Table reserved (or classroom slot confirmed with the instructor)
- ☐ Two volunteers per shift recruited — introverts welcome
- ☐ Kit inventory: chart, easel, quizzes, pencils, dots, clipboards, tape
- ☐ QR sign printed and tested on two phones (hybrid format)
- ☐ Follow-up event scheduled for the same week — this is your table pitch

DAY OF

- ☐ Set up before the class-change rush, board facing traffic
- ☐ Seed the chart with your own team's dots — an empty board is shy
- ☐ Candy out, clipboards loaded, pencils counted
- ☐ Everyone knows the prime directive: mirror, not debate
- ☐ Everyone knows the ask: results first, then the Thursday invite

WITHIN 48 HOURS

- ☐ Count logged: completions, captures, breakdown by region
- ☐ Photo of the finished board saved (and shared, with consent)
- ☐ Thank-you sent to volunteers and the venue contact
- ☐ Touch one confirmed: the same-week event is ready for guests
- ☐ Touch two scheduled: personal follow-up messages, one week out

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