



## CATEGORIES

Every candidate in Pixel Primaries is graded in eight categories, each of which aligns with an issue that voters are concerned with. Those categories are as follows:

- Economy & Jobs
- Immigration & Border Security
- Healthcare & Reproductive Freedom
- Climate & Environment
- Gun Control & Public Safety
- Foreign Policy & National Security
- Education & Student Debt
- Bipartisanship & Governance

These categories are distillations of the categories used by Congress to sort bills. They cover the biggest issues in the 2024 election cycle, though they are subject to change in later cycles. For example, as Artificial Intelligence becomes increasingly sophisticated and commonplace, it may warrant its own category.



## CANDIDATE GRADING

Each category is graded on the left-right spectrum commonly used in political science. Accurately defining 'left' and 'right' requires a nuanced conversation, but the basic dichotomy centers around radical progressivism versus radical conservatism. Although sensible critiques of this spectrum exist, the compartmentalized use of it employed in Pixel Primaries curtails many of its issues. Ultimately, the spectrum is effective in quickly communicating where a candidate stands in any given category.

As a result of the left-right spectrum being applied individually to each category, the exact definitions of the spectrum change depending on what category is being examined. The following table outlines the exact definitions of each grade within each category:

	FAR LEFT		MODERATE LEFT		CENTER LEFT		CENTER RIGHT		MODERATE RIGHT		FAR RIGHT
	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5
ECONOMY & JOBS	Advocates full wealth redistribution, a universal basic income (UBI), and anti-capitalist policies.	Pushes for comprehensive wealth taxes, robust public investment in social services, and strong union empowerment.	Favors progressive taxation, significant increases in minimum wages, and expanded worker protections.	Leans left with policies that include moderate wealth redistribution and enhanced labor rights.	Supports bipartisan infrastructure investments and balanced corporate accountability reforms.	Not enough data.	Favors modest free-market reforms alongside limited social safety nets such as minimum wage increases.	Leans right, favoring more conservative fiscal policies with a reduced role for government intervention.	Advocates for lower taxes, decreased regulation, and a greater reliance on market mechanisms.	Pushes strong pro-business measures with significant tax cuts and minimal labor regulation.	Embraces trickle-down economics, massive corporate tax cuts, and an overall reduction in government intervention, including anti-union policies.
IMMIGRATION & BORDER SECURITY	Supports fully open borders, sanctuary policies, and the abolition of detention and deportation systems.	Advocates for near-open borders with minimal restrictions and comprehensive integration programs.	Promotes humane reforms including fast-tracked citizenship and expansive DACA-type initiatives.	Leans progressive with generous asylum provisions and pathways to legal status.	Supports increased border funding while still ensuring protections for migrants.	Not enough data.	Endorses enhanced enforcement measures combined with modest legal immigration pathways.	Leans conservative by emphasizing stricter border controls alongside clear legal criteria.	Favors robust border security with pragmatic exceptions for certain asylum seekers.	Advocates for firm enforcement, strict immigration quotas, and sharply limited asylum programs.	Pushes for extreme measures—aggressive deportation policies, rigid border walls, and broad anti-immigrant bans.
HEALTHCARE & REPRODUCTIVE FREEDOM	Endorses a fully public healthcare system with universal reproductive autonomy and comprehensive public provision of care.	Seeks comprehensive universal healthcare expansion with complete protection of reproductive rights.	Pushes strongly for universal coverage paired with codified reproductive rights.	Supports progressive healthcare reforms that significantly expand coverage and protections.	Favors ACA expansions and moderate reproductive rights enhancements through bipartisan measures.	Not enough data.	Leans conservative by promoting market-based reforms with some limitations on reproductive policy.	Supports privatized healthcare with only minimal public intervention and a cautious approach to reproductive rights.	Favors restricting reproductive rights further while emphasizing private sector solutions in healthcare.	Advocates for strong conservative policies that heavily limit reproductive rights and privatize healthcare fully.	Endorses total abortion bans, defunding key reproductive services, and a wholly privatized healthcare system.
CLIMATE & ENVIRONMENT	Calls for comprehensive Green New Deal-style programs with rapid transitions to renewable energy.	Supports ambitious policies that phase out fossil fuels quickly and massively invest in renewable energy.	Prioritizes aggressive renewable energy targets and strict carbon neutrality goals.	Leans left with significant investments in green energy and robust eco-regulation measures.	Advocates for moderate clean energy funding and carbon taxes as part of a broader environmental strategy.	Not enough data.	Slightly conservative, favoring gradual green measures while maintaining traditional energy sources.	Supports conservative energy policies with limited renewable initiatives and a continued reliance on fossil fuels.	Favors deregulation and market-based approaches to environmental challenges, with only token green measures.	Strongly supports fossil fuel interests, with significant deregulation of environmental protections.	Denies climate change or dismisses its importance, advocating for robust fossil fuel subsidies and minimal environmental regulation.
GUN CONTROL & PUBLIC SAFETY	Seeks a full repeal of the Second Amendment and comprehensive, far-reaching gun control measures.	Favors very strict gun control policies including near-total bans on assault weapons and exhaustive background checks.	Strongly supports significant gun control reforms, such as AR-15 bans and other restrictive measures.	Leans left with aggressive regulation aimed at reducing gun violence through tighter control measures.	Endorses expanded background checks and red flag laws as moderate gun safety measures.	Not enough data.	Slightly conservative, favoring modest gun rights while accepting some regulations.	Leans right by strongly emphasizing the right to bear arms with minimal restrictions.	Supports limited gun control reforms and robust protections for gun ownership rights.	Strongly favors arming civilians (including proposals such as arming teachers) and minimal restrictions on gun access.	Advocates for extreme deregulation of gun laws with virtually no restrictions on gun ownership.
FOREIGN POLICY & NATIONAL SECURITY	Embraces complete anti-militarism and global pacifist policies that eschew any form of military engagement.	Prioritizes diplomatic solutions and significantly cuts military spending in favor of humanitarian aid.	Leans left with a strong focus on humanitarian intervention and diplomatic conflict resolution over military solutions.	Supports progressive foreign policies that emphasize diplomacy and human rights over military action.	Advocates for a balanced approach with robust humanitarian aid and modest defense commitments.	Not enough data.	Slightly conservative, emphasizing continued military alliances while ensuring measured defense spending.	Leans right by advocating for strong military spending and assertive defense policies.	Supports proactive military measures and a strong national defense posture.	Favors a robust military expansionism with high defense budgets and a readiness for intervention.	Endorses extreme military interventionism and aggressively increases defense spending while aligning with authoritarian allies.
EDUCATION & STUDENT DEBT	Calls for radical reforms that include fully free education at all levels and complete student debt cancellation.	Supports comprehensive free public college and extensive cancellation of student debt.	Advocates for full student loan forgiveness paired with free public higher education.	Leans left with robust education reforms that significantly reduce tuition costs and ease student debt burdens.	Supports moderate debt reduction plans and increased funding for public education initiatives such as enhanced Pell Grants.	Not enough data.	Slightly conservative, favoring limited government intervention in education and more market-oriented reforms.	Leans right by emphasizing school choice, voucher systems, and modest reforms to student debt.	Advocates for a stronger conservative approach to education that reduces public spending and limits debt relief measures.	Favors significant cuts to public education funding and prioritizes privatization of educational institutions.	Calls for radical retrenchment of public education spending, vehemently opposing student debt relief while promoting fully privatized education.
BIPARTISANSHIP & GOVERNANCE	Very partisan left—rejects bipartisan collaboration in favor of strictly ideological policies.	Strongly partisan left, prioritizing ideological purity over compromise.	Leans left with limited bipartisan engagement and a focus on advancing progressive priorities.	Moderately partisan left, with some openness to collaboration but still driven by core progressive values.	Slightly left-of-center—occasionally works across the aisle while maintaining a largely partisan stance.	Not enough data.	Slightly right-of-center—willing to collaborate in limited instances, though generally upholding conservative principles.	Moderately partisan right, strongly adhering to conservative ideals with minimal compromise.	Leans right with limited bipartisan efforts and a focus on advancing conservative policies.	Strongly partisan right, demonstrating rigid ideological stances and little willingness to engage in compromise.	Very partisan right—rejects any bipartisan approaches in favor of an uncompromising conservative agenda

## RECORD VS RHETORIC

Within each category, a candidate is also graded twice. Each category cell (shaped like a pill) may contain up to two bars (one on top and one on the bottom).

The top bar grades a candidate's voting record by pulling every bill they have sponsored or co-sponsored in the last four years, sorting it into one of the eight categories, then assigning it a numerical value based on the bill description. The final grade is the calculated average of every bill value within a given category. Receiving this grade requires the candidate to have held a position in Congress. As such, not every candidate in Pixel Primary will have a top bar in their stat block, since they have never held office.

The bottom bar grades a candidate's rhetoric. These are their claims, their promises to constituents, etc. Pixel Primaries determines this grade by pulling text directly from each candidate's website.

The inclusion of two bars allows users to evaluate a candidate's commitment to their own promises. For example, the cell on the left displays a candidate who promised to promote radical left policies but sponsored bills that were, on average, more moderate. This underdelivery isn't entirely uncommon, since politicians often have to back more moderate bills to push the needle in the direction they are advocating for.

