As we enter the brief debate season prior to the presidential elections, it is easy to anticipate that we won't see much time set aside for discussing energy policy. That's not the case for the graduate students in an energy policy class I am currently teaching at the Goldman School of Public Policy. Last week, the students studied the formal statements of the four major presidential candidates and discussed their findings. Perhaps not surprisingly, they discovered a dramatic imbalance in the breadth, clarity of positions, and level of detail offered by the various candidates. This makes it difficult, if not impossible, to make a meaningful comparison of the steps each candidate would take as president.

In a perfect world, the debates would provide an opportunity to achieve an accurate comparison. The students asked themselves what questions they would ask the candidates if they had the microphone. What follows are ten of the more compelling questions:

1. Among the issues you would address as president, what priority would you give to energy policies, especially when they appear to conflict with other priorities?

2. Do you believe that the federal government should provide subsidies for energy resources of any type? If so, which ones?

3. What role should the U.S. play in influencing the energy future of other countries?

4. With specificity, what do you mean when you call for grid modernization?

5. What's the appropriate balance between environmental protection and the use of natural resources for the benefit of the economy?

6. Of all your energy proposals, if you could have only one succeed, which would it be? Which is most likely to succeed?

7. Just about every candidate talks about encouraging the development of advanced nuclear technology, but do you see nuclear power as an essential component of our energy future?

8. What should be the primary fuel source for our light-duty vehicle fleet, and why?

9. For Trump: You say that you like clean air and clean water, but you also call for aggressive development of domestic coal, oil, and natural gas. How would you ensure that fossil fuel resources would be developed in a way that protects air and

water quality?

10. For Clinton: In the current political environment, is it likely that Congress will adopt a national renewable power mandate? If not, what would you do to optimize the development of renewable power in all states, not just those that have established mandates of their own?

There are many more energy and climate questions that are debate-worthy, but getting straight-forward answers to these ten would be a great start.