

# JUDGING DEBATE EVENTS

## Thank You

Without judges, we couldn't compete at tournaments, so you're just as vital to this process as the competitors. Thank you for taking time to help out the team!

## What to Have

- Pen or Pencil
- Notepad or computer (to take extra notes or flow)
- Phone with a timer
- Bottle of water (The tournament often has water and snacks for you but its better to be safe than sorry)
- Something to entertain you during downtime (book, phone, etc)

Note: Make sure to arrive at the tournament about half an hour to an hour early for the judge training, which will usually explain how the tournament will run.

## Ballots

The “ballot table” or coaches in tabroom will pass out the ballots before the rounds begin. Be sure to get your school code from your student or a coach so that you can check that you aren't judging your own school. If you are assigned a ballot that has your own school or debaters that you know, please tell the ballot table people so that they can give you a different ballot.

In the upper corner of the ballot (usually), there is the room number that you are going to judge in. Students may be sitting outside the room, or may come in while you wait, but they should not be in the room without a judge there. If you're judging a debate and you're given 2 ballots at a time (usually stapled together), that means that you will judge a round, then call in the next two debaters and judge that round (these are called flights). After filling out the ballots as quickly as possible, you will take them back to the ballot table.

## About Debate

There are two sides to every debate, one supporting the resolution (the topic) being debated, the other side negating the resolution. In Policy and Lincoln-Douglas, the sides will have been decided before the round, but in Public Forum, sides are determined by a coin flip at the beginning of the round. The topic will be pre-supplied at the tournament, or you can find it with a quick Google search for “Current topics in speech and debate,” or by simply asking a student in the round.

All debate events have a unique order to the round, divided into three parts: speeches, cross-examination, and prep time. Speeches are where the bulk of the debating is done, with each team presenting and reinforcing their arguments while refuting their opponents. It is common for judges to “flow” a debate, which means the judges will take notes about the speeches in order to keep track of the points. These points (or “Contentions”) will add up to each side creating impacts, or criteria that highlight how their side's argument literally impacts, or affects the topic at hand. Thus, by judging, you are constantly weighing impacts and arguments.

Cross-Examination is a period of time where debaters can ask each other questions. There are some differences between events, but the purpose of cross-examination remains the same; asking questions that will allow the debater to make stronger arguments.

Each event gives debaters a set amount of prep time, where competitors can take a moment to prepare for the next part of the debate. Competitors can take prep time between speeches and should notify the judges when they begin and end prep.

### Filling out the Ballot and Running the Round

1. Make sure the debaters listed on the ballot are correct before they begin debating.
2. For Public Forum and Policy Debate, ask who is the 1st and who's the 2nd speakers. Put a 1 by 1st speakers and a 2 by the second speakers.
3. For Public Forum, flip a coin, with each team picking heads or tails. The winner gets to choose what side of the debate they're on (aff or neg) or if they speak first or second. The other team will choose the other option. So if the winning team decides they're affirmative, the losing team can decide who speaks first.
4. Keep track of the flow of the rounds. This is just writing down the arguments in the round so you can keep track of the attacks and blocks (that will determine who wins). You can do it on the back of the ballot or on a separate piece of paper.
5. Make a few comments to the debaters in the comments section. This doesn't need to take a lot of time, but try to write at least one compliment and one suggestion. You can do this during their prep time or the end of the round.
6. At the end of the round, you will give "Speaker Points" to each debater between 24-30. For most debaters, a 24 is an F and 30 is absolutely perfect.
7. In the space that says, "The team that won the debate is \_\_\_\_\_" put the debater's name and code.
8. Add your RFD (Reason for Decision) Please put the argument(s) that won the debate. It shouldn't just be, "They were better speakers," because debate events are about the presentation of arguments. For instance, if the topic was on Universal Health Care, you could write: "RFD: I voted affirmative because they proved that the economy would benefit and many lives would be saved. The negative had an excellent argument that \_\_\_\_\_, but affirmative was able to show their impact was bigger."

### General Tips + Comments

- If you're ever struggling to figure out what to write on the ballot, or you're not sure if you should add something, remember the Three C's
  - Compliment: clearly state positive aspects of the performance that are genuine and education-based
  - Criticize: Comments must be constructive and educational in nature, not simply pointing out errors.
  - Correct: The goal is to provide ways for students to improve. Corrections should constitute a significant portion of the ballot.

- Some of the debaters will ask, "Do you disclose?" or "Do you have any critiques?" This means, "do you say who won or give comments?" Unless the tournament specifically says, "Yes," please don't let them know who won. They will see the ballots after the tournament, and it holds up the next round.
- If you have any questions before the round, the ballot table and most coaches will be more than happy to answer them. If you have questions in the round the competitors should be able to answer them, just make sure to not interrupt their speeches or prep time.
- Some debaters think that, because they have a parent judge (or "Lay judge"), they can throw in new arguments in the final speeches. Please don't vote on those new arguments! It's not fair to the debater who doesn't get another speech. That said, they may introduce new facts or data, just not an entirely new argument.
- When you walk in to judge, the debaters may ask your judging experience and how you judge, or your paradigm. If this is your first time judging that event, please tell them, (If debaters don't ask, jump in and tell them this if you feel uncomfortable) If they are good debaters, they will adjust to you and debate in a style you will be more comfortable with.
- Please take some notes as you listen to the debaters. They will be taking specialized notes called "flows," which helps them to stay organized and make sure they don't miss any arguments. Write down the main arguments you hear and if the other side attacks or blocks them. Flowing is usually easier in two types of pen, ex. affirmative arguments (in blue) and the negative arguments (in red). This keeps their speeches and arguments clearly separated.
- Leave your opinions outside the rounds, since the majority of these issues are picked specifically because they're controversial. Remember, you are not changing policy, just evaluating the arguments in front of you, so just evaluate those arguments and make a decision as to who presented the most effective arguments. Sometimes you may have to vote on arguments you didn't love, but when the debater's opponent didn't attack it, they win.

## Events

### Public Forum

- This debate is a two on two debate event where they will argue a topic that is based on current domestic events. Debaters will flip a coin to see who is pro or con or who is first or second speaker. Be sure that you write down on the ballot who is on pro/con.

### Round Times

|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1st Speaker - Team A              | 4 min |
| 1st Speaker - Team B              | 4 min |
| Crossfire                         | 3 min |
| 2nd Speaker - Team A              | 4 min |
| 2nd Speaker - Team B              | 4 min |
| Crossfire                         | 3 min |
| Summary - 1st Speaker, Team A     | 2 min |
| Summary - 1st Speaker, Team B     | 2 min |
| Grand Crossfire                   | 3 min |
| Final Focus - 2nd Speaker, Team A | 2 min |
| Final Focus - 2nd Speaker, Team B | 2 min |

### Lincoln Douglas

- This is a one on one debate event where debaters tackle various issues that society has to deal with through a moral lens. Debaters use evidence, values, and philosophy to try and prove their side of the debate.

### Round Times:

|                                  |       |
|----------------------------------|-------|
| Affirmative Constructive         | 6 min |
| Cross-Examination by Negative    | 3 min |
| Negative Constructive            | 7 min |
| Cross-Examination by Affirmative | 3 min |
| Affirmative Rebuttal             | 4 min |
| Negative Rebuttal and Summary    | 6 min |
| Affirmative Summary              | 3 min |

## Congress

- In student congress, all of the contestants will come into the room at the same time (usually between 15-25). They are going to be speaking for and against bills that they would like passed into laws, as well as electing a Chair who runs the round and chooses who speaks.
- Competitors act in the manner of a senator or representative, including speaking as a legislature and acting in a professional manner. Students are less competing against each other, and more with each other.
- Speeches are three minutes, followed by a two minute questioning period (most judges keep track of how many questions a competitor asks)
- It's very important to organize your ballots so that when a congress person gets up to speak, you can easily find their ballot and fill out that they gave a speech. Save yourself work and hand the ballots out to the congress people and have them fill out their names and codes.
- As a judge, you are mainly judging them on their speaking ability, their logic and analysis and how much they participate in the round, so it's important that you make some notes on the ballot to let you know who is who. At the end of the round, you will be ranking them 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, etc. to 15th. If someone didn't speak put down "DNP" (Did not participate) and you don't have to rank them.

## Policy

Policy debate focuses on the advocacy of a plan or policy action. The affirmative team should outline the harms with the current system, then present the policy that would satisfy the need they have outlined, and any advantages they want to present. The negative team may argue that the affirmative policy fails to meet the need they have outlined (i.e. the affirmative does not solve the problem). The negative also has the option to present disadvantages to the policy (the policy may solve the problem, but it will create new problems).

## Stock Issues

Often, judges view the round in terms of stock issues, or major questions that both teams need to address. They are:

- Topicality: Does the affirmative plan meet the terms of the resolution? Is it an example of the resolution?
- Harms: What's the problem with the status quo?
- Significance: What is the scope of the problem with the status quo?
- Inherency: Does the plan exist in the status quo (the way things are now), and what structural or attitudinal barriers exist?
- Solvency: Does the affirmative plan solve the problem?
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## Disadvantages

A disadvantage is a somewhat more structured way of arguing that the negative consequences of a plan provide a reason not to vote for it. Disadvantages have several important parts:

- Uniqueness: is the disadvantage happening in the status quo? If a disadvantage argues that an affirmative plan will cause the economy to stagnate (stop growing), then it can be proved non-unique if an affirmative effectively argues that the economy is already stagnating, so the plan wouldn't make the economy any worse.
- Link: does the plan cause the problem to happen? If a disadvantage argues that releasing detainees held at Guantanamo Bay would cause terrorism to increase, the negative has to prove that prisoners there are involved in terrorism and that their captivity is important to preventing terrorism.
- Impact: does the plan cause something bad to happen? If a disadvantage argues that limiting the government's ability to conduct sneak and peek searches under Section 213 of the USA PATRIOT Act would impair the government's law enforcement ability, the negative has to prove that law enforcement by the government is a good thing.

### Round Times

|                                   |       |
|-----------------------------------|-------|
| 1st Affirmative Constructive      | 8 min |
| 2nd Negative Cross-Examination    | 3 min |
| 1st Negative Constructive         | 8 min |
| 1st Affirmative Cross-Examination | 3 min |
| 2nd Affirmative Constructive      | 8 min |
| 1st Negative Cross-Examination    | 3 min |
| 2nd Negative Constructive         | 8 min |
| 2nd Affirmative Cross-Examination | 3 min |
| 1st Negative Rebuttal             | 5 min |
| 1st Affirmative Rebuttal          | 5 min |
| 2nd Negative Rebuttal             | 5 min |
| 2nd Affirmative Rebuttal          | 5 min |

## Debate Terms

### Actor

A person or persons responsible for carrying out the work of the plan.

### Affirmative/Aff

Supports the resolution

### Ballot

A sheet of paper on which you record the decision (who won the debate), the reasons for why which team won), and speaker points awarded to each debater.

### Blocks

A set of prepared prewritten arguments and evidence against a specific argument.

### Breaking / Break Rounds

Rounds that cut out people who have received the lowest ratings, sometimes start in the fourth round or goes straight to finals.

### Burden

What a team (usually the affirmative but not always) must do to prove its case and win the debate.

### BYE

a round in which there's no competition; usually because the opponent doesn't show up.

### Case

The pre-prepared speech (made up of contentions, definitions, and sometimes a framework) that is read in the constructive period

### Cards

Another term for evidence

### Clash

Directly answering/challenging the other team's argument in a debate.

### Constructive Speech

The first speech given by each debater (both teams) in a round, used to build a case.

### Contention

Major reasons that are the foundation of a case, read in the first constructive speech

### Cost-benefit-analysis

A comparison of the advantages and disadvantages being proposed.

### Counterplan

A negative argument that proposes a new plan

### Criteria

The way in which a value is measured in LD

### Cross Examination

Time allowed in the debate for questioning

### Crossfire

A part of Public Forum debate when both teams are allowed to question each other in a brief period of time.

### Docket

Complete packet of legislation distributed by a tournament for Congress sessions

### Drop

When a team fails to , or chooses to discard an argument from the debate round

### Extend

To carry an argument another step forward in rebuttal; to answer the opponent's challenge and advance beyond it.

### Flowing

How you take notes in a round

### Framework

the set of standards the judge will use to evaluate a case, mainly used in PF. Cost v Benefit is the most common

### Inherency

How or why the status quo is harmful

### Internal Link

How the Impact happens starting from the uniqueness

## Negation/Neg

Opposes the resolution

## Novice

A beginning debater

## NSDA

National Speech and Debate Association

## Paradigm

Your criteria for judging. Students will often ask you about this before the rounds begin.

## Permutation/Perm

When Aff says they will do both the Aff Plan & Neg Counter Plan.

## Postings

Papers posted before each round that uses codes to show which room or flight students will be competing in.

## Precedence

Chair must choose speakers who have spent the longest time not speaking (or not at all)

## Preparation time (In Round)

The time allotted to each team for preparation during the debate. Usually used before rebuttals or final speeches

## Rebuttal Speech

Rebuilds the case

## Refutation

Attacks the ideas of the opposition.

## Resolution

Statement to be debated.

## RFD

Reason for Decision (seen on ballots)

## Solvency

Whether it solves the problem (mostly will) or not.

## Speaker Points

How the judge rate speaking skills on a scale of 1-30

## Status Quo

The term used to represent the present state of the affairs, the way things are now

## Stock Issues

Issues that must be addressed by the affirmative in policy (topicality, inherency, harm, and solvency)

## Tab Room

The room where coaches and judges hang out during tournament, and where ballots are counted (it's usually the library)

## Topicality

Coming under the jurisdiction of the resolution.

## Uniqueness

Why the Aff Plan is the only thing that would cause the Impact

## Value claim

a statement about what an individual thinks is good or bad. These apply to what people hold to be important, sacred, and clear.

## Value premise (value)

The key evaluative term in Lincoln Douglas debate. It identifies the aff or neg's highest value. (Ex. Freedom)

## Voting Issues

Issues in a debate determining who won

## Warrant

Why the evidence supports the claim