

PUBLIC FORUM

Public Forum is a two-on-two event where teams argue against each other on the resolution based on current domestic and foreign events. An entire debate is roughly 40 minutes and consists of constructive speeches, rebuttals, and cross-examination of both sides.

CASE LAYOUT

Your speech should go in this order, but the amount of contentions and subpoints change per case. (three is just the usual base)

- 1.State position 6.Second Contention
 a.Aff or Neg a.Subpoints
- 2.Define Terms 7.Third Contention
- 3.State framework a.Subpoints
- 4.First Contention 8.Conclusion
 a.Subpoints

THE COIN FLIP

In Public Forum, the Aff and Neg isn't given specific times. Rather, the round starts with a coin toss; and the winning team selects either:

The side (pro or con) they will argue

The speaker order (begin the debate or give the last speech).

The team that loses the toss will then decide their preference from the option not selected by the winner (i.e., if the winning team decides to speak last, then the losing team may decide which side they will argue). So, the debate can begin with the con side or the pro side, and you could switch between first speaking team and the second the whole tournament.

When picking, you might want to consider: Is one side of the topic more acceptable to judges? Which side is the team stronger? Is the first speaker position critical to "sell" the case by making a good first impression? Is the final focus speech critical for the last word to the judge(s)?

FRAMEWORKS

In PF, teams use "Frameworks" in their cases to help the judge evaluate the round and the stance on a resolution. This means a good framework encompasses your case and the resolution at hand. You can think of it as a "lens" by showing what should or shouldn't matter. For example, if you have a Cost vs Benefit framework (the most common), you're saying whoever has the most benefits should win. Or, if you run a case based on preserving individual rights, whoever best preserves rights should win.

ROUND TIMES

Constructive Speech 4 min
 Team A, 1st speaker
 Present the teams case

Constructive Speech 4 min
 Team B, 1st speaker
 Present the teams case

Crossfire (1st Speakers) 3 min
 Speaker 1 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions

Rebuttal Speech 4 min
 Team A, 2nd speaker
 Refute the opposing sides arguments

Rebuttal Speech 4 min
 Team B, 2nd speaker
 Refute the opposing sides arguments

Crossfire (2nd Speakers) 3 min
 Speaker 2 from Team A & B alternate asking and answering questions

Summary Speech 2 min
 Team A, 1st speaker
 Begin defining the main issues in the round.

Summary Speech 2 min
 Team B, 1st speaker
 Begin defining the main issues in the round.

Grand Crossfire (All Speakers) 3 min
 All four debaters involved with crossfire at once.

Final Focus 2 min
 Team A, 2nd speaker
 Explain why their side won the round / give the main voters

Final Focus 2 min
 Team B, 2nd speaker
 Explain why their side won the round / give the main voters

PAST RESOLUTIONS

- Resolved: NATO should strengthen its relationship with Ukraine in order to deter further Russian aggression.
- Resolved: Single-gender classrooms would improve the quality of education in American public schools.
- Resolved: Immigration reform should include a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants currently living in the United States.
- Resolved: The benefits of domestic surveillance by the NSA outweigh the harms.
- Resolved: The continuation of current U.S. anti-drug policies in Latin America will do more harm than good.
- Resolved: On balance, the rise of China is beneficial to the interests of the United States.
- Resolved: Congress should renew the Federal Assault Weapons Ban.
- Resolved: The benefits of post-9/11 security measures outweigh the harms to personal freedom.

SPEAKER POSITIONS

In PF, there's a first and a second speaker. The first speaker builds and defends the case, while the second speaker attacks the opposing side (they're often known as the "bulldog"). These positions can change per case, but partners debating styles usually align easily within one of the positions.

The second speaker should be extremely quick on their feet and able to easily identify holes in others cases. The first should have excellent speaking skills (they're the only ones reading something prewritten) and know the case inside and out.

Both speakers should constantly be flowing and preparing for the next speech or cross examination period.