



## *Policy Debate Orientation*

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### *Purpose of academic policy debate*

The purpose of academic policy debate should be an educational experience that is glorifying to God and reflects the skills that are associated with public forums. The purpose is not a pursuit of the “truth” or of a “perfect policy”, but rather, it has been developed for the training of minds in the art of argumentation. It cannot be a pursuit of perfect policy, because if a team were to develop the perfect policy, then all other teams would adopt that policy, and in a very short time we would have a debate tournament that consisted of all affirmative wins by teams running the same policy. Therefore, it is important to understand debate is an exercise in argumentation, not a development of policy.

### *Nature of communication*

Aristotle wrote about persuasion in *Rhetoric*, where he claimed there were three ways to persuade: logos – logic, ethos – ethics or credibility, and pathos – emotion. Debate should not teach actors who can delude the public by fancy speaking, but rather train minds in the art of argumentation based upon logic and reason, which when combined with eloquence, invigorates content.

### *Ethics*

Debate should maintain standards of ethical argumentation. Therefore conduct and attire should reflect respect for other participants and the debate activity. Ethical violations may include: falsification or misuse of evidence, vulgar language, slander and deception, communication with audience members, disrespectful behavior while someone is speaking, speaking much faster than normal conversation, or splitting the negative. A further explanation of what to do if a debater is suspected of an ethical violation will be covered later during the ballot explanation.

### *In The Round*

#### *Team Structure*

Each debate consists of two teams. One team will advocate for change and affirm the resolution as the affirmative team. The other team will advocate for the status quo or negate the resolution as the negative team.

In a tournament each team will debate as the affirmative and the negative at least three times. Each team will find out who they are debating and what side they are advocating for when the information is posted right before each round.

### *Flowing – The Debater's Notes*

Note taking in the debate round is referred to as flowing. Flowing is the taking of notes in a systematic fashion in order to track the arguments made in the round. It is necessary for the judge to flow a round in order to fairly examine all of the arguments and to make sure that each team did not drop arguments. You will be provided a flow sheet that will assist you in this process. By taking notes in the vertical column allotted to each speech, you will see the flow of the arguments across the page. The flow sheet contains hints and reminders to help you with the process. Flow sheets will be available at the tournament and can be viewed on the website.

### *Speakers*

Each team will consist of two speakers. The first speaker on the affirmative team will give the First Affirmative Constructive and the First Affirmative Rebuttal. The second speaker on the affirmative team will give the Second Affirmative Constructive and the Second Affirmative Rebuttal.

Likewise, the first speaker on the negative team will give the First Negative Constructive and the First Negative Rebuttal. The second speaker on the negative team will give the Second Negative Constructive and the Second Negative Rebuttal.

### *The Order of Speeches*

#### *First Affirmative Constructive or (IAC)*

- First affirmative speaker presents this speech
- Eight minutes in length
- The judge should not take or ask for a copy of the case

#### *Cross-examination of the First Affirmative Speaker*

- Second negative speaker is the questioner
- Three minutes in length
- Both speakers face the judge since they are trying to persuade you, not each other

#### *First Negative Constructive (INC)*

- First negative speaker presents this speech
- Eight minutes in length
- If topicality is argued, it should be addressed
- All negative arguments directly refuting the affirmative's case should be made in this speech
- Any portions of the affirmative case not addressed in this speech are conceded by the negative

#### *Cross-examination of the First Negative Speaker*

- First affirmative speaker is the questioner
- Three minutes in length

### *Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC)*

- Second affirmative speaker presents this speech
- Eight minutes in length

### *Cross-examination of the Second Affirmative Speaker*

- First negative speaker is the questioner
- Three minutes in length

### *Second Negative Constructive (2NC)*

- Second Negative speaker presents this speech
- Eight minutes in length
- If topicality is an issue, a ruling should be requested in this speech

### *Cross-examination of the Second Negative Speaker*

- Second affirmative speaker is the questioner
- Three minutes in length
- Topicality ruling, if requested, should be given at this time by the judge

### *First Negative Rebuttal (1NR)*

- First negative speaker gives this speech
- Five minutes in length
- New arguments should not be introduced during or after this speech

### *First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)*

- First affirmative speaker gives this speech
- Five minutes in length

### *Second Negative Rebuttal (2NR)*

- Second negative speaker gives this speech
- Five minutes in length

### *Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)*

- Second affirmative speaker gives this speech
- Five minutes in length

### *Keeping Time*

Competitors will be responsible for keeping their own time during the round. Every competitor must have a countdown timer with an audible alarm (two per team). One timer will be taken with the speaker to the podium for their speech. The other timer is to be used to count down the team's prep time.

Before a team takes prep time, they must inform the judge. For example, "The negative team is now taking prep time." When ready, the team then announces how much prep time was used. For example, "The negative team has now used two minutes of prep time for a total of three minutes for the round." Each team gets five minutes of cumulative

preparation time. The team that is speaking next is charged with the prep time and there is no prep time prior to cross-examination

### Oral Critique

Judges may offer comments on a variety of areas related to the round but must be careful to NOT reveal the judges decision. The judge's decision is written on the ballot which the teams will receive after the tournament is over.

Participants will time the oral critique by setting the timer for 10 minutes. When the time piece rings, the oral critique time is finished.

It is also important to remember, just as the debate was a presentation to you by the debaters, not a conversation, the oral critique is a presentation by you to the debaters, not a conversation. The debaters have been instructed to listen to your comments but not to ask or answer questions from you as the judge.

### Affirmative Cases

There are only three case structures that the judge may hear: Needs Analysis, Comparative Advantage, and Criteria Affirmative. The outlines below are provided for the judge to make it easier to follow when listening to a debate round. The judge is not expected to memorize these outlines.

#### 1) Needs Analysis Affirmative

Advocates select the needs analysis when they believe that:

- a. a significant inherent need (or harm) exists in the status quo that can best be solved by adopting the plan advanced by the affirmative team; and
- b. adopting the affirmative team's plan will solve the need and thus provide significant advantages.

The essential elements of the needs analysis affirmative are the justification or need (or harm), the plan, and the advantages.

For example:

#### I. Definitions

#### II. Harms

1. Main point
  - a. Sub-point (optional)
  - b. Sub-point (optional)
2. Main point
  - a. Sub-point (optional)
  - b. Sub-point (optional)

#### III. Plan (in any order)

Agency  
Mandates

Funding  
Enforcement  
Addendum (optional)

- IV. Advantage(s)  
1. Main point  
2. Main point

### *2) Comparative Advantage Affirmative*

The affirmative team accepts the goals of the status quo and argues that its plan is a better way of attaining these goals and that its plan will produce greater advantages than the status quo.

The three essential features of the comparative advantages case are:

- a. identify the goals of the status quo,
- b. integrate the plan with the goals, and
- c. provide significant advantages directly linked to the plan.

For example:

- I. Definitions
- II. Goals
- III. Plan (in any order)  
Agency  
  
Mandates  
Funding  
Enforcement  
Addendum (optional)
- IV. Advantage(s)  
1. Main point  
  
2. Main point

### *3) Criteria Affirmative*

The affirmative team selects the criteria analysis after they have concluded from an examination of the problem that the status quo is inherently incapable of attaining an important goal of the status quo and that this failure causes significant harm. To justify this case, they need to demonstrate that:

- a. the goal cited in their case is, in fact, a significant goal of the status quo,
- b. the status quo is inherently incapable of meeting this goal, and
- c. significant harms result from the inability of the status quo to meet the goal.

The affirmative team also must justify the criteria by which the attainment of the goal can be judged. Here, criteria refers simply to the standard basis of which a decision is to be made.

The essential elements of the criteria affirmative are the justification or goal/criteria and need, the plan, and the advantages

For example:

I. Definitions

II. Goal

III. Harms

1. Main point
  - a. Sub-point (optional)
  - b. Sub-point (optional)
2. Main point
  - a. Sub-point (optional)
  - b. Sub-point (optional)

IV. Criteria (weighing mechanism)

V. Plan (in any order)

- Agency
- Mandates
- Funding
- Enforcement
- Addendum (optional)

VI. Advantages

1. Main point
2. Main point

### *Affirmative Plans*

All three case types will include a plan. An affirmative plan should include the following planks:

#### *Plank 1 – Agency*

In this plank, the affirmative team specifies who will be responsible for administering its plan. This may include identifying who will enact the plan and/or who will do the work of the plan. The affirmative team must provide the essential details of the agency that will put its plan into effect.

#### *Plank 2 - Mandates*

In most debates, this is the essence of the plan. In this plank, the affirmative team specifies the mandates given to the agency that administers the plan. The affirmative team must specify exactly what it requires the agency to do. Any new legislation needed to carry out the affirmative team's plan will be included in this plank.

### *Plank 3 – Enforcement*

In this plank, the affirmative specifies how the plan will be enforced. In the need and inherency issues the affirmative has provided many reasons people will resist its plan. Now it must provide a means of making people behave the way it wants them to. The affirmative may find it necessary to provide fines, prison terms, or other forms of coercion or incentives to make people act in the way necessary for its plan to work. In some circumstances, the affirmative may be able to demonstrate that under the new conditions created by its plan people will act in the desired way because it is now in their self-interest to do so. Most often enforcement will be through "normal means," meaning it is not specified by the plan, but simply uses the existing law enforcement mechanisms of the status quo.

### *Plank 4 – Funding and Staffing*

In this plank, the affirmative team specifies how it will get the funds and staff the agency needs to carry out its mandates. These actions usually occur through "normal means," unless the mandates require a large change in the funding and staffing of the resolitional actor, typically the US Federal Government.

### *Plank 5 – Addendum (Optional)*

In this concluding plank, which is optional, the affirmative team adds such further provisions as may be necessary to complete the implementation of its plan. This plank is quite often unnecessary.

## ***Making a Decision***

### *Stock Issues*

The mechanism that we ask you to use to measure and determine who has won or lost the debate round is called the four stock issues.

The first of these four stock issues is topicality. Topicality is an unusual stock issue in that it is the only one that you would render a decision in the middle of the round.

Topicality is the question: has the affirmative team stayed within the bounds of the resolution? The negative has a reasonable expectation that the affirmative team will stay within the bounds of the resolution. As you were told earlier, the resolution is designed to limit the discussion. If the affirmative team does not stay within the bounds of the resolution, the negative team must ask for a topicality ruling or make a topicality argument in the first negative constructive speech. This is marked on your flow sheet. In the event that you as the judge determine that the affirmative case is not topical, that the affirmative did not try to stay within the bounds of the resolution, then you will stop the round and render a decision at the end of the cross examination following the second negative constructive speech. This is also marked upon your flow sheet.

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At that time, you have the choice of making two decisions. Either, 1) the affirmative case is in fact topical and the debate round will continue, or 2) the affirmative case is not topical, the debate round will end, and the negative team will be declared the winner.

This is the only circumstance under which you will announce your decision to the debaters in the debate round. In all other circumstances, and for all other reasons, who has won the debate round and why is reserved for the ballot, which will be given to the team members at the end of the tournament.

The second stock issue is significance. The question of significance is: did the affirmative team make a large enough or important enough change to justify the risk of change?

All federal policies have a risk with them when they are changed; there are unintended consequences. And in the event of that change, there needs to be a compelling or weighty reason – a significance – to the affirmative's case to justify that change. Typically, significance is expressed in terms of qualitative or quantitative importance

The third stock issue is that of solvency. The question of solvency is: has the affirmative team presented a case that will in fact fix the problems that they have pointed out in the status quo, and thereby bring forth the advantages?

The last stock issue is that of inherency. The question of inherency is: can the current system, and will the current system, fix the problem without the affirmative plan? For if the problem can and will be fixed without the affirmative plan, then there is no need for the affirmative case. The negative will try to convince you that the current system can fix the problem and will fix the problem without the affirmative's plan case. The affirmative, in order to show that their case is inherent, needs to show you that the present system cannot or will not fix the problem.

These four stock issues must be won by the affirmative team in order to win the debate round. If the negative team wins any one of these four stock issues, the negative team wins the debate round.

### *The Decision*

The judge's decision should be based on what is said in the round by the affirmative and negative teams. If the judge has prior knowledge of a topic, feel free to share your thoughts on the ballot or during the oral critique since debate should be educational in nature just do not base the decision on prior knowledge.

### *Prima Facie*

The affirmative team must present a prima facie case, or a complete case, in their first speech, the 1AC. A case that, in and of itself, provides good and sufficient reason for adopting the resolution, and must provide all four stock issues. If the affirmative team has not presented a prima facie case in the 1AC, the negative team should challenge that in the 1NC, but does not ask for a ruling until the end of the debate.

### ***Filling out the Ballot***

Ballots will be provided at the tournament and are available on the website.

### ***Affirmative or Negative and the Reason Why***

**Stock Issues:** Record your decision on each of the four stock issues by checking the appropriate box either affirmative or negative. Remember, the affirmative must win all four stock issues to be awarded the win in the debate round, the negative need only win one stock issue in order to win the round.

**I voted for the...** The win will be given to either the affirmative or the negative team. There is a third option on the ballot for a double loss. If the winning team creates an ethical violation, a double loss should be given.

**Reason For Decision/Comments:** A reason should be given why the judge voted the way he/she did. Those reasons should primarily be focused on the stock issues.

### ***Speaker Points***

Speakers shall be given speaker points in each of the following criteria - one (1) being low and four (4) being high. Some judges find it helpful to think of speaker points in terms of letter grades with a four being an "A", three a "B", two a "C" and one a "D".

- 1) *Organization* is putting a speech together that has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. It uses main points, transitions, signposts, internal previews, and internal summaries which will enable you to understand the thesis and its development in the speech. It should be systematic and methodical.
- 2) *Argumentation* involves refutation and rebuttal which is tearing down an opponents' case by refuting their evidence with stronger, more credible and current evidence; and challenging the opponents' reasoning with stronger, clearer, and more logical reasoning by using direct refutation, linking arguments, and showing the significance of arguments.
- 3) *Cross-examination* will employ assertive, thoughtful, pertinent questions and responses using the ability to think and respond spontaneously without much preparation time. Participants should not avoid questions but answer courteously. It provides the opportunity to investigate, clarify, interrogate, and question.
- 4) *Justification* will use Aristotle's theory of the Available Means of Persuasion: logos (logical appeal), pathos (emotional appeal), and ethos (the speaker's character or likeability) by presenting evidence and reasoning in a winsome manner. Justification is the evidence and reasoning used to support a good argumentation.
- 5) *Communication* is the use of verbal and non-verbal technique. Verbal technique includes changes in a speaker's rate, pitch, and volume that gives the voice variety and expressiveness and is characterized by proper pronunciation and

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enunciation. The second facet of communication is the use of non-verbal communication. This communication occurs as a result of appearance, posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, and other non-linguistic factors. Good communication will have a conversation tone and make sense to the average listener.

### *Speaker Ranking*

After the speaker points have been totaled, the speakers will be ranked 1-4 based upon these totals. The speaker with the highest total points will be ranked first. The speaker with the second highest total will be ranked second, and so on. Ties in speaker ranks are prohibited and should be broken at your discretion.

### *Ethics*

The ethics box at the bottom is the place for the judge to describe any unethical behavior in the round. Ethical violations may include: falsification or misuse of evidence, vulgar language, slander and deception, communication with audience members, disrespectful behavior while someone is speaking, speaking much faster than normal conversation, or splitting the negative.

### *Sign and Date*

The last item on the ballot is a signature line and a place to write the date.

A quick review:

- Debate is an exercise in argumentation, not a pursuit of perfect policy.
- Judge based on the student's arguments, not your preferences or personal knowledge.
- Guard against becoming the fifth competitor in the room and advocating for your preferred position on the topic.
- The debate round is a presentation by the debaters to you, not a conversation you participate in. Conversely the oral critique is a presentation by you as the judge to the debaters.
- The four stock issues: topicality, significance, solvency, and inherency, are the basis for your decision in the round.
- Assistance is available in ballot return should you need help with your ballot.

### *At the Tournament*

The judge coordinator will help you before, during, and after the tournament to know where the tournament is located, where to park, when to show up, to where to direct your questions, and how to acquire other information you may need to make your judging experience successful.