Individual Speaker Point Guide

Category	4 — Excellent	3 — Good	2 — Developing	1 — Weak
Argumentation	Consistently refutes arguments by showing flaws or weaknesses in opponents' reasoning and evidence. Overcomes arguments through direct refutation, linking arguments, and showing significance. Challenges evidence with stronger, more credible, and current evidence. Effectively weighs and compares impacts; clearly explains why arguments matter.	Refutes major arguments with clear reasoning. Some explanation of significance and impact. Uses relevant evidence to challenge opponents. Generally engages in meaningful clash.	Attempts refutation but responses are generic or incomplete. Misses key impacts. Limited explanation; shallow or inconsistent clash. Some clash in argumentation but needs development.	Little to no meaningful refutation. Rarely engages substance or identifies flaws. Fails to explain significance. No clear weighing or clash.
Communication	Conversational quality that sounds spontaneous and genuine. Effective use of vocal techniques: changes in rate, pitch, and volume that give the voice variety and expressiveness. Proper pronunciation and enunciation throughout. Non-verbal communication (appearance, posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions) enhances the message. Attentive and engaged while seated.	Clear delivery with minor issues in pace or expression. Generally attentive and professional while seated. Pronunciation and vocal variety are adequate. Non-verbal communication is appropriate.	Frequent delivery issues interfere with understanding. Inconsistent attentiveness or some distracting non-verbal behavior while seated. Pronunciation or vocal variety needs improvement. Delivery lacks energy or professionalism.	Difficult to understand due to poor delivery. Disengaged or disrespectful non-verbal behavior while seated. Marked by distracting mannerisms, poor volume, or unclear articulation. Lacks basic communication skills.
Cross-Examination	Questions are assertive, thoughtful, pertinent, and asked in a respectful, clear, and concise manner. Questions clarify issues, check understanding, or expose weaknesses in reasoning. Answers are clear, responsive, and consistently supported with relevant evidence. Demonstrates the ability to think and respond spontaneously.	Questions and answers are effective and appropriate. Generally answers questions and has relevant evidence available. Questions have some strategic value. Respectful and clear.	Questions lack strategy or focus. Answers are unclear, evasive, or inconsistent. Inconsistently supports answers with relevant evidence. Seems unprepared.	Questions are ineffective, irrelevant, or disrespectful. Avoids substance or fails to answer questions. Rarely or never supports answers with evidence. Unprepared or unwilling to engage.
Justification	Claims are supported with clear logical reasoning and high-quality, relevant evidence that is clearly explained and persuasively applied. Effective use of logos (logical appeal), pathos (emotional appeal), and ethos (speaker's character or likeability) to persuade. Presents evidence and reasoning in an appealing and persuasive manner. Demonstrates the relevance and importance of evidence; offers clear citations.	Reasoning and evidence are generally relevant with adequate explanation. Most claims are supported, though explanation may be limited. Citations are generally provided. Evidence is usually applied appropriately.	Evidence or reasoning is weak or poorly explained. Claims are loosely connected to evidence. Reasoning is unclear or underdeveloped. Citations may be incomplete or unclear.	Claims are largely unsupported. Evidence or reasoning is absent, misused, or irrelevant. Little to no explanation of evidence. Missing or inadequate citations.
Organization	Presents arguments, evidence, and support in a methodical sequence in accordance with required case structure. Uses effective transitions and signposts that enable the judge to follow key lines of argumentation. Presents clear, unified arrangement of ideas. Uses speaking time strategically and effectively.	Clear structure with minor organizational lapses. Transitions are mostly effective and speeches are generally easy to follow. Most arguments are well-ordered with effective use of signposting. Generally uses time well.	Organization is inconsistent with weak transitions. Ideas are not well-ordered or clearly connected. Signposting is limited or unclear. Time management issues present.	Little to no clear structure; difficult to follow. Dropped arguments or failure to address key points. Lacks transitions, signposts, or logical flow. Poor time management.