Policy Debate Document Change Log

This document logs changes to all CCA debate official documents with changes listed in reverse chronological order. This log is intended to help you identify recent changes in the CCA program but should not be relied upon as a guide to the exclusion of reading the primary policy debate documents.

Date: 10-09-2026
Document: Policy Debate Criteria & Competitor Standards
Change: Multiple clarifications provided

Reason: Clarification

1. Case Information sharing prohibition clarified.
2. Tournament Eligibility clarified.
3. Early termination for Negative Team topicality win clarified.
4. Updated rule for prohibiting the purchase of research evidence, case outlines, source books, etc...
5. Revised plan plank numbering to make "Plank 1 – Mandates."
6. Added reference to Comparative Advantage Case Structure RFQ and Individual Speaker Point Guide.

Date: 10-16-2021
Document: Policy Debate Glossary
Change: Revised definition of disadvantage.

Reason: Clarification

Remove

*"**Disadvantages:** The undesirable consequences that the negative claims will flow from the affirmative's plan. These must be shown to outweigh the advantages."*

Replace with

*"**Disadvantage:** An off-case position taken by the Negative Team which argues that adoption of the Affirmative Case would have unintended consequences, separate from the planks of the Affirmative Case, which counterbalance the Affirmative Advantages and undermine the Affirmative's claims of Significance."*

Date: 10-19-2019
Document: Policy Debate Criteria and Competition Standards

Change: Prohibition against requesting a copy of the 1AC.

Reason: Restore previous prohibition to the standard.

"Evidence may be reviewed by the opposing team. Students may ask for, and should receive, a copy of the evidence used in the round upon request. As this is a protection against intentional falsification for both teams and not a substitute for flowing or research, evidence should not be challenged and reviewed frivolously or unnecessarily. A request to review multiple pieces of evidence without sufficient cause is considered pilfering of research, and is prohibited. ***Negative teams are also prohibited from requesting a copy of the complete Affirmative Case."***

Date: 10-21-2017
Document: Policy Debate Criteria and Competition Standards, Glossary, Judge FAQs.
Change: Many and various updates in language and new definitions.
Reason: Provide additional standards. See summary of changes below.

1. Standards ***consolidation****. The document revisions include elimination of the "Debate Guidance Information." Relevant portions of the guidance document have been incorporated into the "Policy Debate Criteria & Competitor Standards," "Policy Debate Glossary", and "Policy Debate FAQ." Various words, spelling, and grammar edits have been completed.*

2. ***Comprehensible Presentation.*** *Comprehensible presentation standards have been further detailed including a specific prohibition of "speed & spread."*

3. Registration ***Eligibility****. Registration eligibility limitations have been added to the standards.*

4. CA ***Case Structure Goals****. A standard for the "goals" element of the Comparative Advantages Analysis Affirmative Case Structure has been added.*

5. ***Extra Topicality.*** *An additional paragraph providing a standard for extra topical mandates has been added.*

5. ***Ellipsing Evidence.*** *A minor language change has been made in the "Ellipsing of Evidence" paragraph. The new wording now specifically requires the students to "be able to verify the context of ellipsed evidence in the event of a challenge at the discretion of the Tournament Director."*

6. Evidence ***Sharing.*** *A specific statement that "evidence sharing at any point during tournament hours is in effect a form of tag teaming and prohibited" has been added to the standards.*

7. Special ***Debate Terminology****. Information concerning the use of "Special Debate Terminology" has been revised and added in conjunction with the standards consolidation.*

8. ***Kritics.*** *A definition for "Kritic" has been added to the glossary.*

Date: 10-15-2016
Document: Policy Debate Orientation Script, Guidance Information, Criteria and Competition Standards, and Glossary.
Change: Remove Criteria Affirmative Case Structure as allowable case type
Reason: Reduce complexity

Remove:

All references to Criteria Affirmative case structure have been removed. Criteria Affirmative case type is no longer an allowable case type.

Date: 10-17-2015
Document: Policy Standards
Change: Update prohibited electronics rule
Reason: Clarification

Remove:

Competitors shall be prohibited from having radios, cell phones, computers, PDA's, pagers, etc. in the round.

Replace with:

Competitors shall be prohibited from having radios, cell phones, computers, PDA's, pagers, programmable watches, programmable calculators, et cetera, in the round.

Date: 10-17-2015
Document: Policy Standards
Change: Update rules of evidence to reflect previously announced change
Reason: Clarification

Remove:

Evidence may be reviewed by the opposing team. Students may ask for, and should receive, a copy of the evidence used in the round upon request.

- *A request to review evidence should be made in the speech, or cross-examination, subsequent to the opposition's speech in which that evidence was cited.*
- *Evidence should be submitted to and reviewed by the requesting team during that team's prep time, and immediately returned to its owner.*
- *If a competitor believes evidence has been misused, misquoted, or falsified, as with all ethics charges, that individual should bring this to the attention of the Tournament Director.*
- *The judge may request, at any time, and should receive, evidence from either team. However, the judge is encouraged not to interrupt the timed flow of the round if at all possible.*

Replace with:

Evidence may be reviewed by the opposing team. Students may ask for, and should receive, a copy of the evidence used in the round upon request. As this is a protection

against intentional falsification for both teams and not a substitute for flowing or research, evidence should not be challenged and reviewed frivolously or unnecessarily. A request to review multiple pieces of evidence without sufficient cause is considered pilfering of research and prohibited.

- *A request to review evidence should be made in a speech, or cross-examination, subsequent to the opposition's speech in which that evidence was cited.*
- *Evidence should be submitted only at the end of a speech or cross examination and can only be reviewed by the requesting team during that team's preparation time. The evidence must be immediately returned to its owner.*
- *If a competitor believes evidence has been misused, misquoted, or falsified, as with all ethics charges, that individual should bring this to the attention of the Tournament Director. Intentional falsification of evidence is a serious violation which warrants disqualification from competition at the Tournament Director's discretion.*
- *The judge may request, at any time, and should receive, evidence from either team. However, such a request should be reserved for extreme situations such as a charge of falsification or misuse of evidence. The judge is encouraged not to interrupt the timed flow of the round if at all possible.*

Date: 10-17-2015
Document: Policy Standards and Guidance Information
Change: Update allowable case structures to prohibit blended case types.
Reason: Clarification

Added:

Blending the key elements of the three permitted case structures outlined on page 4 of the Policy Debate Criteria & Competitor Standards is prohibited.

Examples of prohibited blending of key case elements would be:

- *Adding a Criteria to a Comparative Advantage or Needs Analysis case*
- *Adding a Goal(s) of the Status Quo to a Needs Analysis Case*
- *Adding Harms to a Comparative Advantage Case*

Furthermore, teams should clearly declare the case structure they are using in the 1AC or be prepared to identify the case structure upon cross-examination.

Date: 5-19-2015
Document: Policy Standards
Change: Update "Fiat Power" explanation
Reason: Clarification

Added:

Fiat Power

"Fiat is the convention in academic policy debate that, for the sake of argument, participants may assume the implementation of a reasonable policy. This allows debaters to focus on the question of whether a policy should be adopted and avoid the irrelevant arguments about whether the policy would (or will) be adopted. However, the political fallout of enacting the affirmative plan may be subject to debate.
In addition:

- ***The affirmative may not fiat that advantages will flow from the plan; advantages must be proven.***
- ***The affirmative may not fiat attitudes. For example, the affirmative may not fiat that the public will love and comply with the plan.***
- ***Fiat is not a magic wand; it may not be used to make a plan work.***

Fiat power is defined in the CCA Debate Glossary as follows: "The affirmative's authority, as defined by the resolution, to implement its plan." The central issue here is the phrase "as defined by the resolution." The resolution will identify the agent of reform. This is typically the United States Federal Government. Fiat power does not extend to the state and local governments or state, federal, or local courts as they are not the bodies that reform federal policy. Fiat does not extend to foreign countries or organizations unless they are specifically identified as agents of change within the resolution."

Date: 3-7-13
Document: Policy Guidance Information
Change: Update "Splitting the Negative" explanation
Reason: Clarification

Remove:

"Splitting the negative is prohibited (see Glossary for definition). However, a division of labor is allowed. A division of labor between the negative speakers is when the 1NC spends the majority of time refuting some, but not all, of the affirmative arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, as long as all on-case arguments are addressed (which means the substance of each negative argument is clear to the affirmative, and the judge); those arguments not addressed are dropped and conceded to the opposing team. 2NC then spends the majority of time refuting the remaining arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, but, again, still addresses all on-case arguments. It is unethical for the negative team to hide the substance of their case from the affirmative team until after 2NC."

Replace with:
"Splitting the negative is prohibited (see Glossary for definition). However, a division of labor is allowed. A division of labor between the negative speakers is when the 1NC focuses primarily on refuting some of the affirmative arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, while minimally addressing all other arguments raised by the affirmative (which means the substance of each negative response is clear to the affirmative, and the judge, even if a complete argument is not presented); those arguments not addressed at all are dropped and conceded to the opposing team. The 2NC then focuses on refuting the remaining arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, but again, still addresses all on-case arguments. The 2NC is permitted to raise additional off-case arguments, but it is unethical for the negative team to hide the substance of their on-case arguments from the affirmative team until after the 1NC."

Date: 11-01-12
Document: Judge FAQ
Change: Update resolution specific information on pg #4 consistent with Letter of Intent
Reason: New resolution for 2013

Remove:
Topicality is confusing, how do I know if a case is topical?

The affirmative team must *try to do* the following regarding topicality. (Whether or not the plan *succeeds* in doing these things is a question of solvency, significance, or inherency.)

1. make a reform
2. to United States federal policy
3. for the domestic agricultural production of food

The affirmative case must *propose* to do ALL of the above for a topical case. If a case does not try to do ALL of these, it is not topical.

Replace with:

Topicality is confusing, how do I know if a case is topical?

The affirmative team must *satisfy* the following regarding topicality. (Whether or not the plan *succeeds* in doing these things is a question of solvency, significance, or inherency.)

1. The United States Federal Government
2. Attempt to reform.
3. Title II of the Social Security Act as amended.

The affirmative case must *satisfy* ALL of the above for a topical case. If a case does not do ALL of these, it is not topical.

Date: 11-01-12
Document: Policy Debate Tournament Rules; Item B Judging, 4 Judge Orientation
Change: Prohibit printed materials for judges and standardize announcement.
Reason: Increase consistency of tournament administration.

Remove:

4. Judge Orientation

To maintain consistency, all judge orientations shall be conducted according

to the CCA Judge Orientation script or video presentation.

Replace with:

4. Judge Orientation
    a) To maintain consistency, all judge orientations shall be conducted according to the CCA Judge Orientation script or video presentation.
    b) To avoid distraction, the judge may have no printed materials in the competition room except for the flow sheet and ballot.
    c) To accommodate eventualities, the following announcement shall be made to the judges at the conclusion of the orientation:

If during the debate round you have a question, or get confused, please do not interrupt the round:

1) Listen attentively to the students.

2) Take good notes.

3) After the round is completed, please go to the judge's quiet room and request help to clarify any questions you may have.

4) In the event of a Topicality ruling if you are unsure or not convinced vote for the Affirmative team on Topicality and continue the round.

In the event of an emergency, such as a sick or missing competitor or facility problem, please contact the hall monitor outside of the competition room for guidance.

Date: 11-01-12
Document: All (except Judge FAQ and Debate Tournament Rules)
Change: None
Reason: No changes for the 2012/2013 Season

Date: 11-01-11
Document: All
Change: None
Reason: No changes for the 2011/2012 Season

Date: 11-01-10
Document: Glossary
Change: remove and replace Criteria Affirmative definition.
Reason: Correct typographical errors

Remove:

Criteria Affirmative: A case which the affirmative team selects 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. Here, criteria refers simply to the standard basis on which a decision is to be made. To justify this case, they need to demonstrate that: 1) the goal cited by the affirmative team is, in fact, a significant goal of the status quo; 3) the status quo is inherently incapable of meeting this goal; and significant harms result from the inability of the status quo to meet the goal. The affirmative team must also justify the criteria by which the attainment of the goal can be judged. The essential elements of the criteria affirmative are the justification or goal/criteria and need, the plan, and advantages.

Replace with:

Criteria Affirmative: A case which the affirmative team selects 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. Here, criteria refers simply to the standard basis on which a decision is to be made. To justify this case, they need to demonstrate that: 1) the goal cited by the affirmative team is, in fact, a significant goal of the status quo; 2) the status quo is inherently incapable of meeting this goal; 3) and significant harms result from the inability of the status quo to meet the goal. 4) The affirmative team must also justify the criteria by which the attainment of the goal can be judged. The essential elements of the criteria affirmative are the justification or goal/criteria and need, the plan, and advantages.

Date: 11-01-10
Document: Tournament Rules
Change: Add language for double loss in semifinal round
Reason: Correct an omission in the rules

Add the sentence "In the event of a double loss in the semi-final round the team not receiving the ethical violation shall advance to finals." to section "F Scoring-1 win/loss record" on page three of the tournament rules.

Date: 11-01-10
Document: Tournament Rules
Change: Add language limiting the number of byes per tournament for a team
Reason: Correct an omission in the rules

Add the phrase "no team shall receive more than one bye in any given tournament." to item "E Preliminary Debate Rounds-2. Byes" on page two of the tournament rules.