

Policy Debate Speech Order

1st Affirmative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-ex by 2nd Negative – 3 minutes

1st Negative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-ex by 1st Affirmative – 3 minutes

2nd Affirmative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-ex by 1st Negative – 3 minutes

2nd Negative Constructive – 8 minutes

Cross-ex by 2nd Affirmative – 3 minutes

1st Negative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

1st Affirmative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

2nd Negative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

2nd Affirmative Rebuttal – 5 minutes

PREP TIME: Each TEAM has 5 minutes of preparation time to use during the round.

Constructive speeches: *new arguments may be introduced; debaters should respond to opponent while building and strengthening their own positions.*

Cross-examination follows each constructive speech.

Negative Block: *2 negative speeches in a row, 2nd Negative Constructive followed by the 1st Negative Rebuttal.*

Rebuttal speeches: *debaters should refrain from introducing new arguments into the round and should focus on answering opponent's arguments and persuading the judge that when both sides are compared, theirs is more advantageous.*

For "Practice Tournaments," speech times may be shortened to:

- 6 minute constructive speeches (1AC, 1NC, 2AC & 2NC)
- 2 minutes of cross-examination (following each constructive speech)
- 3 minute rebuttal speeches (1NR, 1AR, 2NR & 2AR)
- 5 minutes of prep time per team to use during the round

2016-2017 Policy Debate Topic

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic and/or diplomatic engagement with the People's Republic of China.

JUDGING POLICY DEBATES

KEY THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT JUDGING POLICY DEBATES

Before the round:

- **PICK UP YOUR BALLOT AT THE BALLOT TABLE AS SOON AS IT IS AVAILABLE.**
If you do not initially have a ballot assigned to you, please remain near the ballot table until ALL rounds are assigned. If you do not have a round to judge, tournament staff will let you know if there is another helpful role or an appropriate round to observe.
- **GO RIGHT TO YOUR ROUND** --- Your ballot will tell you which room to go to.
- **DOUBLE---CHECK THE BALLOT** --When you get to your round, check to make sure the teams and individual debaters in the room are the ones you are supposed to judge. For example, ask the students, "Is Westside AA here?" If you are in error or if anyone is not present, alert the students and get the right kids or judge into your room or go to the right room.
- **COMMUNICATE ANY PROBLEMS TO THE TAB ROOM ASAP** – If a team (or debater) is not present at the start time, if teams have met in a prior round at this event or any other irregularities. *(Coaches, do NOT judge your own students—in the event you are given a ballot to judge your own school by mistake, bring the ballot back to the ballot table immediately.)*
- **INTRODUCE YOURSELF TO THE TEAMS** --- You are welcome to share some very brief information about yourself with the teams, including any educational, professional or speech/debate experiences that are relevant. Teams may ask about your judging philosophy or experience. Please feel free to be honest about your level of experience and comfort with policy debate.

Once the round starts:

- **BE RESPECTFUL AND GIVE YOUR FULL ATTENTION TO THE DEBATE ROUND** – Please silence and do not use your cell phone, etc. during the round. Stay in the room and keep non---round related conversations to a minimum. While you may be very capable of multi---tasking and following the round, it does not show the highest level of respect to the students and it can have a negative impact on their confidence, especially beginners.
- **GIVE TIME SIGNALS TO THE DEBATERS** – Time the round (speeches, cross---ex & prep time) and tell the debaters how much of their time is left periodically, ideally each minute. Also, tell them how much of their preparation time is left (e.g. you now have three minutes prep time left). Stop debaters when their time is expired. They can finish a sentence or two or a piece of evidence or answer a question in cross---ex but they cannot present more arguments. Speaking times are listed on your tip sheet.
- **IF THE DEBATERS NEED HELP, RESPOND APPROPRIATELY** – Be prepared to offer suitable supportive “coaching” if needed during the round, especially at PRACTICE TOURNAMENTS and with beginner debaters. Students may get stuck or confused at points, encourage them to continue with nonverbal communication or maybe ask a brief question to help them along. Unless they really seem to need it, avoid interrupting their speech or cross---ex. *(Coaches should NEVER be the ones to offer support to their own teams during rounds.)*
- **TAKE CAREFUL NOTES OF THE ARGUMENTS THE DEBATERS PRESENT** --You can use a flow---sheet template and the notes page to follow the round. Your “flow” will form the foundation for making your decision in who won the round and why. Note---taking is one of the most significant skills that we hope students will focus on through debate and modeling judges who are attentive and taking notes is a great way to work on this skill.

After the round:

- **SCORE AND RANK THE DEBATERS** – Determine speaker points and ranks based on each debater’s performance in the round.
- **MAKE A DECISION** --- Write the winning side (aff or neg) and team (school) on the ballot and indicate if you intend a low---point win. (A low---point win is when the team with fewer overall speaker points wins the round.
- **PLEASE REFRAIN FROM REVEALING YOUR DECISION** – Though there can be great educational value in discussing your actual decision and the reasons, it can also be distracting and discouraging, especially for beginners. We want all of our teams to make it through all of the rounds and if a team has two losses before lunch, they might lose confidence for the afternoon.
- **GIVE A BRIEF ORAL CRITIQUE** – After the debate, take just a few minutes to talk to the participants about their performance. Please balance positive feedback with constructive criticism. The students need to know what they can do to improve but they also need to feel enough encouragement to show up for the next round!
 - Try to avoid vague "you need to improve" and "you did a good job." Be specific --- "You need to look at the judge more" and "Your reasoning was very strong."
 - Avoid leaving people without a way to improve. Give specific suggestions-----"You should practice in front of your coach." "Work on cutting out long transitions."
 - Avoid commenting on things like "Your voice is annoying." Focus on things people can change. "You need to articulate more clearly."
- **FILL OUT THE REASON FOR DECISION ON YOUR BALLOT** --- Explain in at least a paragraph which issues convinced you to vote the way that you did. If you need more room, please feel free to use the back of the ballot.
- **TURN IN THE BALLOT TO THE BALLOT TABLE** --- When you do, please wait to have it checked so that we make sure it is accurate. At some events, a student runner may come pick up your ballot in your debate room. In these cases, please make sure the decision and speaker points are correctly completed and use the separate “Judging Notes” form to fill in additional comments.
- **RETURN TO THE CAFETERIA (or designated meeting place)** – Our students benefit from continued discussion with you following rounds. It also helps us keep things running on time if you give only a brief oral critique in the rounds and then speak to the debaters in more detail in the cafeteria or auditorium. Even if you do not need to speak to the teams you just judged, please be available for students and coaches who may have questions that you can help with.

MAKING A DECISION IN A POLICY DEBATE ROUND

Things to consider:

- Use the notes you took during the debate to help you make your decision.
- Is there a preliminary issue that needs to be resolved, like Topicality (or other stock issue) or anything else presented as a “voting issue?”
- List out the advantages and disadvantages of the affirmative plan.
- Do the advantages of the affirmative plan outweigh the disadvantages presented by the negative?
- Did one team do a more comprehensive job of answering the arguments from the other team? Did one team fail to answer (“drop”) important arguments that weigh in your decision?
- Did one team do a better job of giving you “the big picture” at the end of the round, explaining why they should win, considering the arguments of both sides?
- Consider both the analytical arguments presented by teams, as well as the evidence they present. (Evidence can be evaluated in quality, context, reliability/expertise of source, date, etc.)

Please remember:

Give a decision based on whether the plan is a good idea or not

Remember, policy debate is about which team presented a better policy option. In order to encourage students to provide better arguments, it is important that the decision be based only on arguments presented in the round and not personal beliefs or presumptions.

Write comments for each debater

Please write *at least one good thing* each speaker did. Constructive criticism is helpful to students and coaches, but please make sure you are also positively reinforcing good habits to students and encouraging them to continue debating. Above all, remember that your *positive feedback* is crucial in keeping the students interested and willing to debate regardless of whether they win or lose. Losing teams, in particular, often need more positive encouragement.

CAN I INTERJECT MY OPINION INTO MY DECISION?

- You should NOT make a decision based solely on your beliefs. For example, it would be wrong to vote against a case simply because you didn't agree with the premise. ***(Do not make arguments for or against a team, use what was presented in the round ONLY.)***
- Be sure to demonstrate your impartiality even if you do not agree with the arguments a team is making. Please avoid saying things like “I could never vote to spend so much money on a plan.” or “You were never going to convince me of your argument!”

DETERMINING SPEAKER POINTS IN A POLICY DEBATE ROUND

Speaker points are given by the judge to each individual debater in a debate round. They are used to award individual speakers at the end of the tournament and to break ties between teams with the same win---loss records. A debater might lose the round and still receive high speaker points or win the round and get lower points.

Whereas deciding who wins and who loses is determined by evidence and argumentation, speaker points are generally given on the basis of **style, form, presentation and persuasiveness**. As such, there is some subjectivity, rooted in the judge's personal conception of persuasive speaking style. Potential criteria to make help you make your determination: Clarity of Enunciation, Modulated or Dynamic Voice Tone, Organization and Structure, Explanation of Evidence, Responsiveness, Comparative Weighing of Issues, Eye Contact, Appropriate Use of Non---Verbal Gesture, Verbal Variation (e.g., Pause for Effect, Use of Metaphor), Poise, Good Posture, Respect and Courtesy for Others.

This is only a partial list and you probably have your own additions to what contributes to a persuasive debate style. ***Please strive to use consistent criteria and point assignments in the rounds you judge.***

Range of Speaker Points (You are welcome to use ½ points to further distinguish between debaters.)

30 Points --- Absolutely brilliant! An *outstanding* speaker. Close to a flawless performance. ***(Rarely given!)***

29 Points --- An excellent speaker, exceptionally persuasive. Possesses specific skills to commend.

28 Points --- A solidly good speaker. Above average, though with room to improve in specific areas.

27 Points --- Average speaker. Strengths and weaknesses are closely balanced: Much to praise, much to improve.

26 Points --- A speaker with strengths, but also with recognizable flaws.

25 Points --- An overall ineffective speaker, with glimmers of skill. Capable, but needs work to improve in multiple areas.

24 Points --- Significantly flawed speaker who might improve but only with substantial development across the board. Needs to work on even beginner novice proficiencies.

Speaker Ranks

The best student receives a rank of 1, second best a 2 to 4. Although you may give the same number of points to multiple debaters in a round, you may not give the same rank to multiple debaters in a round.

Low Point Wins

Because a "win" reflects the best policy presented and not the best debating, it is possible for the better speakers to lose. If the losing team receives more (total) points or better ranks than the winning team, ***please check the box on the ballot marked as "low point win."***

Please note that giving a speaker less than 24 points is considered punitive and requires an explanation.

Possible examples for giving a speaker *less than 24 points* include but are not limited to:

1. Repeated use of profane language.
2. Abusive tactics against an opponent, rude behavior towards partner, disrespectful behavior towards judge.
3. Complete unwillingness to participate in the round, even when support & assistance are offered.

Please speak with someone in the tab room before assigning less than 24 points in any round!