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# Judge Training: Judging Individual Events, Judging Parliamentary Debate, Judging Lincoln-Douglas Debate

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## **Judge Training**

### **Judging Individual Events**

### **Judging Parliamentary Debate**

### **Judging Lincoln-Douglas Debate**

Todd Holm  
Justin Foote

When you host a college forensics tournament, finding judges can be one of the most challenging and important tasks you face. Good quality judges are critical to a good and educational experience for our students. Unfortunately, many of our peers are reluctant to judge either because they simply don't want to sacrifice the time or they are worried they aren't qualified or they will do something wrong. While we cannot change our colleagues who don't want to devote time to judging, we can help those who are worried about not knowing what they are doing. Proper training will help novice judges feel better about judging, show them how to provide higher quality feedback, and keep the tournament running on time.

I am sure at one point we have all bemoaned a hired judge's ballot. The ballot was unclear because the lay judge didn't really know what he or she was doing. Frankly, an abundance of untrained judges is the fault of the tournament director. To ask a faculty member to judge a round of persuasion with no instruction is not much different than asking a baseball fan to serve as an umpire for a softball game (and if you ask them to judge an LD debate round the analogy might be more like asking them to be the umpire for a cricket game). The two are similar and some of the rules might even cross-apply. But the difference being between teaching a persuasion class and judging a round of persuasion are vast. But, at the end of the day, the same knowledge and skills that make them a value in the classroom will make them invaluable as a judge. We just need to give them appropriate training.

Hired judges, or "lay" judges as they are sometimes called, are invaluable to our activity. Without hired judges many tournaments could not be held. Yet we often give hired judges no training, pay them just above minimum wage, and are often surprised they didn't do a better job. This article provides a tournament director with a self-contained judge training packet that can be copied and handed to judges or modified with your tournament specific information. This article explains the mechanics of judging Individual Events, Parliamentary Debate, and Lincoln-Douglas Debate by providing lay judges with help in terms of how to express their thoughts about the event they just watched. The following material does not, nor should any judge training, mandate what is good or bad in a performance, but rather describes how to provide valuable feedback based on their educated reactions to the performances.

## JUDGING INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

### Description of Events

Several different events are usually offered at a tournament. The actual “rules” for the events are basic. Please familiarize yourself with the rules of an event before you judge. The descriptions below are an amalgamation of the event descriptions provided by national collegiate forensics organizations.

#### **Limited Preparation Events**

*Time signals are given for both limited preparation events. In extemporaneous speaking the students will expect to receive hand signals while they speak from five minutes left down to stop. Typically, the judge will show a signal at the 30-second mark and count out the last five seconds on their fingers.*

#### **EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING**

For each round, contestants will select one of three topics on current events. The contestant will have 30 minutes to prepare a five-to-seven minute speech on the topic selected. Notes are permissible but should be at a minimum. Maximum 7 minutes. Judge is required to provide time signals.

#### **IMPROMPTU SPEAKING**

Contestants will receive short excerpts dealing with items of general interest, political, economic, and social issues. The contestant will have a total of seven minutes to divide between preparation and speaking. Students should speak for at least three minutes. All contestants in the same section shall speak on the same topic. Maximum seven minutes. Judge is required to provide time signals (oral signals every 30 seconds during prep).

#### **Public Speaking Events**

*Speeches should be timed but no time signals are required.*

#### **INFORMATIVE SPEAKING**

The contestant will deliver an original factual speech on a realistic subject to fulfill a general information need of the audience. Visual aids that supplement/reinforce the message are permitted. The speech must be delivered from memory. Maximum 10 minutes.

#### **PERSUASIVE SPEAKING**

A speech to convince, to move to action, or to inspire on a significant issue, delivered from memory. Maximum time is 10 minutes.

#### **AFTER-DINNER SPEAKING**

Each contestant will present an original speech whose purpose is to make a serious point through the use of humor. The speech should reflect the development of a

humorous comedic effort, not a standup comedy routine. The speech must be memorized. Maximum 10 minutes.

### **RHETORICAL CRITICISM OR COMMUNICATION ANALYSIS**

Contestants will deliver an original critical analysis of any significant rhetorical artifact. The speaker should limit the quotation of, paraphrasing of, or summary of, the analyzed artifact to a minimum. Any legitimate critical method is permissible as long as it serves to open up the artifact for the audience. The speech must be delivered from memory. Maximum 10 minutes.

### **Oral Interpretation**

*Speeches should be timed but no time signals are required. All oral interpretation events at the college level require the use of a manuscript. While the idea of allowing students to compete without the use of a manuscript has been discussed and tested, the current rules require a manuscript be used.*

### **PROSE INTERPRETATION**

The contestant will present a program of prose literature. Original introductory comments and transitional remarks are permitted. Programs may consist of single or multiple selections. Plays are not permitted. Manuscript is required. Maximum 10 minutes including introduction and transitions.

### **POETRY INTERPRETATION**

The contestant will present a program of poetic literature. Original introductory comments and transitional remarks are permitted. Programs may consist of single or multiple selections. Manuscript is required. Maximum 10 minutes including introduction and transitions.

### **DRAMATIC DUO**

A cutting from one or more texts of literary merit, humorous or serious, involving the portrayal of two or more characters presented by two individuals. The material may be drawn from any genre of literature. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. Presentation is from the manuscript and the focus should be off-stage and not to each other. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction.

### **DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION**

The contestant will perform dramatic literature, humorous or serious, representing one or more characters from material of literary merit. Material may be drawn from stage, screen, or radio. Programs may consist of single or multiple selections. Manuscript is required. Maximum 10 minutes.

### **PROGRAM ORAL INTERPRETATION**

A program of thematically-linked selections of literary merit, chosen from two or three of the recognized genres of competitive interpretation (prose/poetry/drama).

A primary focus of the event is on the development of the theme through the use of narrative/story, language, and/or characterization. A substantial portion of the total time must be devoted to each of the genres used in the program. Different genre means the material must appear in separate pieces of literature (e.g., A poem included in a short story that appears only in a short story does not constitute a poetry genre.) Use of manuscript is required. Maximum time limit is 10 minutes including introduction and transitional statements.

### Judging Criteria

Forensics has established no definitive criteria for judging any of the events. What is offered below are evaluative suggestions. Anyone watching a performance can appreciate what the speaker has done, but in the same way a trained critic is better able to identify the components of a piece of art and provide constructive feedback on the components and process, a hired judge may need help identifying the components of a performance which make it better or worse than another performance. Ultimately, at the end of the day, what usually happens is the student who best connected with you, who made you understand or believe something (even if in an unexplainable way) is the one the judge will rank higher.

**Oral Interpretation:** Embodiment of the character/characters, character distinctiveness and believability, and quality of literature. If a single piece was there narrative cohesion; if a program of literature, did the program make a good argument or have a centralized theme? Did the literature support the argument or theme? Was the performance enjoyable? In Duo comment on how well/poorly the performers worked together. Did the performance make you think or help you understand the human condition better? Did the performance take place under 10 minutes?

**Public Speaking:** Fluency, articulation, pronunciation and rate of delivery are important. Were the claims in the speech supported with evidence and/or reasoning? Was the organization appropriate to the subject matter? Did the speaker engage the audience? Did the speech provide new insights, make solid arguments and/or provide a critical analysis? Did you learn something or see the world from a new perspective. In ADS, special attention should be given to the humor and how it furthered arguments (did the speaker *use* humor or just *have* humor). In Rhetorical Criticism or Communication Analysis special attention should be given to the appropriateness of the rhetorical method and the implications or conclusions made in the analysis.

**Limited Preparation:** Clear and justifiable organization, fluency of delivery, support for claims (whether evidence used in extemporaneous speaking or examples in impromptu speaking), and ultimately “did they get the answer right” are considerations. For example, in Extemporaneous Speaking, this would mean providing a reasoned answer, in Impromptu Speaking this would mean a reasonable interpretation of the quotation.

**Delivery:** Students are expected to have a solid grasp of the material they are covering. Hesitations, fluency issues, memorization gaps or other difficulties with delivery do occur but they are not grounds for immediate rank reductions or any kind of penalty unless you believe it reduced their communicative effectiveness. There are no rules saying you must deduct points or ranks for any specific actions, but eventually you will be asked to rank the competitors and rate the quality of their work. Since most tournaments do not permit you to tie speakers scores you can and should use these performance issues as a guide for your ranking and rating. Generally, students will have public speaking and oral interpretation events memorized, however the rules allow for minimal notes in some public speaking events and require the use of a script in oral interpretation events. The practice of having the script present in oral interpretation events is considered by many a way of acknowledging the author's contribution to the performance and also separates the genre of oral interpretation from the genre of acting. So even though they have the script present and will look at it from time to time, many, if not most, students will have their performances memorized.

**Time Limits:** We have very few rules governing student performances. But time limits do exist for each event. While no event has a minimum time, if you believe a presentation was underdeveloped or unduly short you can adjust your rank or rate accordingly. Going overtime is generally frowned upon but it depends on the degree of the infraction. In limited preparation events students quite often end on exactly seven minutes (but that is not a requirement). When a performance goes overtime, the judge determines whether to lower a student's rank and/or rate.

**Oral Critiques:** You should ask the tournament host if you are allowed or expected to provide students with an oral critique at the end of the round. The vast majority of tournaments discourage the practice for the very practical reason that it can cause the tournament to run behind schedule. While some high school tournaments actually encourage giving oral critiques at the end of the round do not assume that is the case for every tournament. It is best to ask first. When in doubt, don't provide oral critiques. Nor should you indicate to students what rankings they received in your round. Keep your ballot confidential and return it to the ballot table promptly. This keeps the tournament running on time.

### **The IE Judging Process** Step-by-Step

1. Bring some things with you: A couple of *writing instruments*, a *stop watch* and (if you are judging debate) *paper to "flow" the debates*.
2. Please *arrive* at least *20 minutes before* your first round. Arriving early will give tournament administration enough time to give you your ballots, tell you

any information you will need for the day and still allow you to get to your round on time. Remember, the round might be in another building.

3. Pick up your ballots: You will be given a **judging schedule** and **ballots** for your first round if they have released ballots at that time. At some high school tournaments will give you all of your ballots for the day at once. We will give you the ballots one round at a time and they are typically released 15-30 minutes before the round begins.
4. You will want to **be in your room and ready to judge at the time the round starts**. You do not need to wait for all students to be present before you begin. Some students may be entered in multiple events during the same time period and may not have the opportunity to “sign in” to your event before needing to perform in their other event(s) (pt. 5 explains “signing in” to an event and competing in multiple events in the same round). Most students do what needs to be done to keep the tournament running efficiently and on time.

### Impromptu

1. AA01 Joe Blow
2. CC09 Krishna Kandath (DE)
3. MM 03 Tomika Jack (TE)
- 4.
5. DD01 Walt Fisher (DE)
6. FF02 Jack Nicholson

5. Typically students will “sign in” on the board. The “sign in” will look something like the image on the right. Signing in gives you a lot of information.
  - A. AA01 is Joe Blow’s “code.” The code is Joe’s unique identifier for the tournament.
  - B. Joe Blow is his name (Joe has mean parents).
  - C. (**DE**) means Double Entered (**TE**) means Triple Entered. DE or TE means a student is entered in two or three events happening concurrently and **they will need to leave** one event to speak in the other(s).
  - D. When a student is triple-entered, she/he moves up in the speaker order. So in this case, if Tomika is in the room, **she would speak first**, then Krishna, then Walt, then back up to the top for Joe. Obviously, sometimes the triple-entered students will do one of their other three events before coming to your event. If the student enters after finishing one of their other events, they will usually cross out the TE and write a DE to let you know they still have another event to go to or just cross it out indicating they have done both of their other events.
  - E. Speaker position number 4 is blank and could mean one of two things: either the student hasn’t gotten to your room yet and you should just start the round on time (they should know not to walk in while someone is

- speaking) or there is no speaker 4. You can check a schedule for the latter.
- F. You should write the students names and codes on the ballot and make sure you have the right ballot with the right student.
6. **Time Signals:** Collegiate events only require time signals in *impromptu* and *extemporaneous*. Many high school tournaments will, however, ask you to give time signals in all events.
- A. ***Impromptu time signals:*** Judges traditionally give oral signals during prep time every 30 seconds (“You’ve used 30 seconds,” “One minute,” “One-thirty,” etc.). Then the judge uses their hand to provide time signals counting down from five minutes with 30 seconds looking like you made a C out of your hand and the last five seconds with our fingers.
- B. ***Extemporaneous time signals.*** Very much like Impromptu but since there is no prep time there are no verbal signals and we just start with five minutes left and count down.
7. ***Make comments on the student’s ballot as a student speaks.*** A common mistake lay judges make is to wait until the performer is done to write notes. Writing while a student speaks is not rude; students expect it. Some novice judges will write their notes on a pad of paper and then transfer the notes to the ballot when the round is over however, this extra step may be an *unnecessary waste of time* and may result in you (and the tournament) running late.
8. ***You will need to rank and rate the speakers***
- A. ***Rank:*** At the end of the round you will rank the competitors in the round. Check the tournament rules on ranking speakers. Collegiate tournaments usually rank from 1 (the best) through 5 (even when six or seven speakers are in the round) for preliminary rounds. When you have six or more speakers in the round, you should tie the rest for 5<sup>th</sup> place. Ties are only permitted for 5<sup>th</sup> place. Most collegiate tournaments rank the final round through 6.
- B. ***Rate:*** You will be asked to rate the speakers in the round. Most collegiate tournaments use either 70-100 scale or a 1-25 scale. Think of assigning a rate much like an honors class and giving grades from 70-100. Collegiate tournaments have developed an unwritten standard on rates of not giving below an 80 (or 15) unless the student has done something offensive, inappropriate, or gone significantly overtime. The low rate makes a statement.
9. ***When weird things happen use your best judgment.*** For example, if you are judging persuasion and a student goes slightly longer than 10 minutes, you do not have to stop her/him. But if the speech is going well beyond 10 minutes with no signs of ending in the near future, you might stop the speaker for the sake of keeping the tournament running on time. One coach who had been

judging for 25 years said he has stopped a speaker just once—at 18 minutes—when the tournament was already running behind. Please be polite and explain the student is already significantly overtime and we need to move on to another performer to keep the tournament running on time.

10. *When in doubt ask someone.* We understand this article provides a very surface level view into the realm of judging and cannot possibly cover everything that might occur in every tournament. If you have a question about the logistics of how things should run ask the competitors (they are quite helpful about most things). If you have a question about ranking or rating the speakers ask to speak with the tournament director after the round (do not ask competitors how to rank a round).

### **Tips for Making Comments on Ballots**

1. Please write comments **while the speakers are speaking**. Waiting until they are done reduces the number of comments, reduces the quality of comments, and causes the tournament to run late.
2. Try to provide a balance of **positive feedback and constructive observations**. But if you are going to have more of one, students would prefer you had more constructive comments. Constructive comments help justify a ranking in the round; saying “Great job” doesn’t little to help a student understand why he/she earned a 3 or 4 rank in a round. You should always time the speeches and *write the time* on the ballot. Coaches and competitors can get a good deal of information from how long the student's speech was in your round. If you indicate the student is rushing but the students time is consistent with their other rounds or their practice sessions, they know that their practiced rate is too fast. But if their time in your round is a full minute shorter than practice, they know they did something anomalous in your round. Providing the time helps provide a context for the other comments.
3. Justify your rank and rate: The students should be able to understand, based on your comments on the ballot, why they received the ranks they did. We call it a “**Reason for Decision**” or RFD. Some judges will even write “RFD” on the ballot and then explain why the student did/didn’t “win” a round. Forensics students are trained to accept criticism to the point they crave it. Two types of useless ballots a student can receive are a ballot with almost no comments and a ballot telling she/he how wonderful one is yet a low rank or rate. If a presentation wasn’t perfect, they want to know why.
4. Tournament directors and coaches prefer you fill the ballot front and back with comments (but you might not always be able to do that). But please provide as much feedback as possible.
5. Keeping all this information straight in your head can be challenging. We are asking you to critically listen to a set of performances, which can be difficult

mental work. Sometimes tracking this information is easier in small bites than looking at the big picture. Many judges will use a grid like the one below to help keep rankings straight.

The material from the provided grid describes that in this case, Jack spoke first, then Kandath spoke and the judge believed Jack was better than Kandath.

<b>Jack</b>				
<b>Jack</b>	<b>Kandath</b>			
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>Jack</b>	<b>Kandath</b>		
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>Jack</b>	<b>Kandath</b>	<b>Blow</b>	
<b>Fisher</b>	<b>Nicholson</b>	<b>Jack</b>	<b>Kandath</b>	<b>Blow</b>

Then Fisher spoke and the judge thought Fisher was better than the other two. Then Joe Blow spoke and did a very poor job so he went to the bottom of the round. Finally, Nicholson spoke and did better than Jack, Kandath and Blow but not as well as Fisher.

In the give case there were only five competitors in the round so the ranking was 1. Fisher, 2. Nicholson, 3. Jack, 4. Kandath, and 5. Blow. Keeping track as you go makes determining who spoke best much easier when the time comes time to rank the speakers.

### **How to Say What You are Thinking or Feeling**

Every activity has its own language. Forensics is no different. Here are some helpful ideas on how to express what you are thinking or feeling.

#### **Public Speaking Events**

*“I am really confused.”* Asking this question could come from any number of things. The following comments may help assist in framing your confusion: “Your substructure was muddled and confusing,” “You are making some claims here (and identify the claims if you can) that don’t seem to be related to the subject matter,” “I don’t understand how X is related to your topic of Y, can you make that connection clear for me,” “I got lost in all the technical jargon,” or “I am having difficulty visualizing the technology you are discussing, a visual aid might help me better understand.”

*“I disagree completely.”* Disagreeing with a student’s argument or performance choices is valid as long as you are proceeding with an open mind. If the speaker is arguing we should ban dissecting frogs in basic biology classes and you thought

that was the best experience you ever had or dissecting a frog led your son/daughter to become a doctor, you might disagree. But if the student shows you economic impacts, physical dangers and educational disadvantages, the student has done a good job of presenting a solid argument. If the arguments have not convinced you, the student has failed to meet their burden of proof. You might make comments like “You haven’t convinced me that this is a problem” or “I don’t see significant improvement to the education of students if we switch to your solutions.” Sometimes you might just disagree with one part of the speech. For example, if a student were giving a speech on homelessness and their solution was to give homeless people foreclosed or abandoned properties you could say “I think your solutions treat the symptom, not the cause.”

Sad but true, sometimes speeches are boring. While you could talk about how the performance was really boring, you are going to help the student more if you can explain why you were bored with the student’s performance. Comments like “Your delivery was monotone and flat, use more vocal variations to engage the audience,” “This is not a topic of interest to me and you didn’t really show me how it related to me,” “your voice started to fall into a vocal pattern that lulled me into a state where I wasn’t really listening to the words anymore but just the sound of your voice, work on being more naturally conversational,” “I don’t see how any of this information will ever impact me, show the audience how we will be impacted by it.” Each of these comments could convey the feeling that the performance was “boring.”

“*Who cares?*” Ouch, but an important question. One of the key elements to speech construction is giving an audience a reason to care. Students demonstrate the significance of their argument in a variety of ways. Sometimes they use numbers to show the extent of a problem or the number of people who could be helped by a new invention. Sometimes they talk about a specific case study or situation. But they should find a way to link an issue to their audience. When you are apathetic, the student may have failed to give you a reason to care. Some comments may include “What is the importance of this topic that makes us need to focus on the issue now?” or “I don’t see how the topic relates to most people” or even “the significance of your topic was not as great as others in the round.”

“*You look funny.*” Part of good public speaking is presenting a nonverbal component that enhances the vocal presentation. So if a student is using the same gesture over and over, she/he will indeed look funny. In order to let the student know that they are over using a gesture, describe the gesture and note that varying gestures will make their presentation more dynamic. Meaningless gestures and awkward gestures can distract from the performance. If the student is wearing something you find distracting you should note what was distracting to you. Obviously comments about body shape, physical differences, sex, or gender are inappropriate because they are beyond the student’s ability to control.

### Oral Interpretation Events

*“I had no idea what you were going on about.”* Generally students will use a program of literature to build an argument or make a point or help explain a concept to us. Literature is another “way of knowing” and the text gives us insight into the human condition. Sometimes the purpose of the piece is brought together and focused for us in the introduction. If you find you have no clue why they have chosen the literature or what you are supposed to be getting out of the performance, the introduction most likely did not help focus your attention. But a solid program of literature will have a clear argument. So saying something such as “Your theme or argument wasn’t clear” or “I don’t think your literature built the argument you identified in your introduction” will convey how you did not understand what the student was attempting to convey.

*“It all sounded the same.”* You may ponder this question if the performance was fairly vague. Maybe the student was monotone or if there were multiple characters throughout the performance there may not have been adequate vocal character distinction or the level of emotional intensity was the same throughout the performance.

*“The voices didn’t fit.”* Characterization is a challenge for many students, especially if they are portraying someone of the opposite sex and their own voice is very high or very low. But characterization is part of what they need to do. So indicating the character voice for the 90-year-old woman sounded like a teenage boy tells them which character to work on and how. If someone is struggling with something and you aren’t hearing the same the characterization in their voice you should comment on how the student failed at fully performing the character.

*“The students performance was like the voice and the body were disconnected.”* Sometimes students focus on just one aspect of delivery (vocal or nonverbal) and the other one does not get much attention. Letting them know that vocally their characters are great but nonverbally they still need work (or vice versa) is a good way to describe the aforementioned issue.

*“WOW, it was just loud and huge.”* Like with so many things, sometimes students believe if some is good more is inherently better. The belief that more is better is not always true and probably what you are experiencing. If the performance is just loud and high energy (or soft and low energy) students aren’t really showing you a range of abilities. Performances such as these are not inherently or intrinsically wrong, but performances of varying emotions are sometimes more impressive seeing one big one for 10 minutes. Sometimes students will just yell or cry or whisper or giggle for the whole piece. If you like the performance let them know, if you don’t like the performance, let them know. If one person does a performance and you like it and another one does a similar performance and you dislike it try to explain why you disliked what the one student did and how the piece could be performed better.

*“The Duo just didn’t work together.”* Again, may ask this question for many reasons. Did the piece didn’t suit them? Did you not feel chemistry between the students? Were they just acting in response to what the other person had said or done and not really reacting to the other person?

*“I couldn’t understand a word they were saying.”* Did a character’s accent/dialect of vocal characterization prevent you from being able to understand what was being said? Was speaking rate and volume too rushed, too quiet, to low pitched?

*“I really hated the literature.”* A fair reaction. If you were offended (and not in a growth and learning kind of way) explain what about the piece made you dislike it or uncomfortable. Students get to choose their own material. Making choices comes with consequences. If your ranking was influenced by literature choices let them know. “I was offended by the language of the piece” or “This was way too graphic for me.”

### **After Thoughts**

At the end of the tournament we hope you had fun. We appreciate all you did for the tournament staff and the students you judged. Judging can be an intellectually draining experience. The days can be long. But at the close of the day you can go home knowing you have helped students learn to be more and do better than they did before performing to you. You are helping to educate and enlighten our students. Given the importance of communication to the success in each person’s life, your feedback is not something that should be underestimated.

We hope you learned and grew as a result of your judging experience. We hope you heard about something new. We hope someone made you laugh and someone made you think hard and someone made you reflect on your own life. We hope you see that students are working hard to become artists, scholars and effective citizens. We hope you will join us again next year.

### **JUDGING PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE**

Judging collegiate debate with no previous experience can seem like a daunting challenge, however, with a few helpful hints judging can be a very rewarding experience. Familiarizing yourself with the style of debate you will be judging can help alleviate some of the stress that accompanies having to judge an event you may not feel very comfortable judging. Judges new to the event should keep two things in mind: First, debate teams should attempt to find out your debate background *and*, to some extent, modify their strategy to your particular level of experience. Second, entering a debate round expecting the experience to be bad will likely become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The following section will help prepare a novice debate judge to efficiently manage and critique a parliamentary debate round.

**What to do before the round**

## 1. Gather the proper material to use during the debate.

Debate judges can never have enough pens and paper as these two items will become invaluable as the day progresses. Pen and paper are the most basic necessities to "flowing" a debate and filling out your ballot. Flowing a debate means taking notes about what arguments each team member makes during each speech of the debate (methods to flowing the debate will be explained later). A debate judge should have at least two pens and should have at least two pieces of paper for each debate round. Some judges prefer to use different color ink pens for each team as a means of keeping who said what separate, but using different colored ink is not a must. You will also want to make sure you bring enough paper to successfully flow the round (typically between two and five pages). Finally, teams normally time both their own and their opponent's speeches, however, having a stopwatch would be helpful so you can time the speeches, especially if you want to comment on how debaters chose to allocate their time during speeches.

## 2. Locate the topic release room.

Finding the resolution release room will help you integrate yourself into the activity before your individual round begins. The release room serves the dual purpose of allowing teams a common place to discuss strategy with coaches and provide a room for all the teams to gather prior to the resolution release. Parliamentary debate resolutions change with each round and tournament directors need an area to easily disseminate the resolution for each round to every team; the release room provides such an area. Because there may be many teams in the room at one time, a novice debate judge should be comfortable finding a spot along the perimeter of the room since they only need to hear the upcoming resolution for debate. Lay judges can use their time in the release room as an opportunity to ask tournament staff and/or team-coaches questions they would like answered or simply to converse with those involved with the activity as a means to increase knowledge. At some tournaments, the judge will be given three resolutions to release in the round. In such a round the judge should wait until both teams are present in the room. When both teams are present, each team will be allowed strike one of the three resolutions, leaving the remaining resolution as the topic for debate. Tournament directors should explain to the judges how the resolutions would be selected prior to the round.

## 3. Check the round schematic sheet before the round begins.

The schematic sheet should be located in an open area where both competitors and judges can view the information on the sheet. Reviewing the schematic sheet before the round begins will help a new judge identify the time the round starts, the room where the debate will take place, and the position of the teams who will be debating. Finding your schedule and round information ahead of the round can help alleviate some of the stress due to the ambiguity of novice debate judging.

## SAMPLE SCHEMATIC

University of the Twin Cities Battle for the Bell			
<b>Round 3 Release 1:20 (Armstrong Hall 111) Start time: 1:35pm</b>			
<u>Government</u>	<u>Opposition</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Judge</u>
Ohio CH	vs. Butler GY	Gordy 123	<b>Your Name</b>
Miami FS	vs. CSU TR	Lasher 43	LE Norton
Mar RW	vs. Hill MJ	Gordy 342	Grace Walsh
Butler PC	vs. SMU AB	Gordy 344	Bob Derryberry

4. Familiarize yourself with the basic structural characteristics of parliamentary debate.

A. Parliamentary debate involves two teams debating a different resolution in each round. The Government team must defend and support the resolution. The Opposition team must negate and argue against the resolution. Each team consists of a pair of students who will assume different roles within the debate. The Government team will designate who will hold the position of Prime Minister (PM) and who will be the Member of Government (MG). The PM speaks first and presents the case for debate and the MG will speak later and defend the PM's position. The Opposition team will designate who will hold the Leader of Opposition (LO) position and who will be the Member of Opposition (MO). The LO will attempt to refute the Government case and provide their team's arguments against the resolution. The MO will further defend their team's position.

B. Know the time limits [7-8-8-8-4-5.] Even if you are not entirely sure what each speaker will be attempting to accomplish on each speech, you can at least know how long each competitor should speak during each portion of the debate. A speech running short on time should not warrant a comment about use of time (unless severely lacking in content) but no speaker should extend a speech beyond the set time limit.

**7-8-8-8-4-5**

- Prime Minister Constructive Speech - 7 Minutes
- Leader of Opposition Constructive Speech - 8 Minutes
- Member of Government Constructive Speech - 8 Minutes
- Member of Opposition Constructive Speech - 8 Minutes
- Leader of Opposition Rebuttal Speech - 4 Minutes
- Prime Minister Rebuttal Speech - 5 Minutes

C. Do not be surprised if teams knock on their desks when they make good arguments or "boo" when their opponents make bad arguments. Knocking

and booing are common behaviors in parliamentary debate, but make sure to not let this behavior get out of hand. If the behavior becomes too ram-bunctious, do not hesitate to tell the teams to calm down. You are in charge of the round and should not be afraid to let teams know when they are going overboard. During the round, the judge will often be referred to as the Speaker of the House (“Madame Speaker” for women; “Mister Speaker” for men) or even Mr./Ms. Adjudicator.

- D. Teams have the opportunity to ask questions during their opponent’s first two speeches. Typically a team will normally ask no more than three questions but the questions cannot occur during the first or last minute of a speech. Students may stand up and raise a hand in order to gain acknowledgement before asking their question. Making sure a question is acknowledged is not the judge’s responsibility. Let the debaters handle when they will allow questions (other than questions asked during the first and last minute of a speech). However, if a debater consistently ignores a question from their opponent’s the debater may be docked speaker points when filling out your ballot. Questions during the round are termed *points of information* and time does not stop for teams to ask and answer questions. Oftentimes, when a debater asks a question the student speaking will respond with some version of, “I will get to your question after this point.” Asking a debater to wait for an answer until later in the argument should not be considered rude. As a debater is speaking, he/she usually prefers to get to the end of the current line of reasoning before attempting to answer an opponent’s point of information.
- E. Know how to handle either a Point of Order or Point of Personal Privilege during each team’s last speech. If a team raises a Point of Order, stop the time. Unlike Points of Information, Points of Order and Points of Personal Privilege cause the time to stop as a comment about the information of the round is under discussion. A *Point of Order* typically concerns arguments made in the last speech not present during the previous speeches. Because arguments must be given prior to a team’s last speech, introducing new arguments in the last speech are unethical. A *Point of Personal Privilege* will be brought forth when a competitor feels an argument or attack has become personal in nature and does not pertain to the debate round. When faced with a Point of Order, the judge has three options. First, you could decide, “point well taken” meaning you agree with the Point of Order. Therefore, you should discard the previously given arguments discussed by the Point of Order and continue with the debate. Second, you could decide, “point will be taken under consideration” which means you will think about the situation and rule after you have looked at the round holistically. Third, you could decide, “point not well taken” in which case you disagree with the Point of Order. Therefore, the debate should continue as if the Point of Order was never raised. For example: As the Prime Minister gives their last speech and

opponent stands and states, “Point of Order!” The first thing everyone should do is stop their timer. The debater raising the Point of Order will then state the objection he/she found in the current speech (i.e. “The Prime Minister is bringing up a new argument not raised during the previous speeches”). After the Point of Order has been raised and clarified you should check over your notes and give an appropriate response, such as, “Point well taken” meaning you have agreed with the debater raising the Point of Order and the Prime Minister should conclude the remainder of the speech without arguing the point in question.

On the schedule above you would be judging a round that starts at 1:35 pm in Gordy Hall Room 123. You will be judging a team from Ohio University (representing the Government) and a team from Butler University (representing the Opposition). The topic will be released to all competitors, coaches and judges at 1:20 pm in Armstrong Hall Room 111.

5. Pick up your ballot.

After the topic is announced, the debate teams will scatter to their assigned rooms or other areas to prepare for their upcoming round. As a lay judge, the preparation time is your opportunity to take a breather. After the topic announcement, parliamentary debate teams have between 10 and 15 minutes (at the tournament’s discretion) to prepare their arguments. Use the preparation time to find the ballot table and pick up your ballot for the round. The style of the ballot will differ depending on the host school’s preference, but ballots should include basic information such as the room number and starting time of the round. Most schools will not release their topics until the ballots are ready to be distributed, so after the topic is announced feel free to pick up your ballot. After you have your ballot, take the remaining time to gather any last minute material for the round and begin to make your way to your assigned room.

6. Let the teams prepare the round.

You have your ballot, your materials, and you are now ready to begin judging the debate round. However, until the round is about to begin allow the teams to prepare their arguments without interruption. Stay out of the room to be used for the round; some teams get nervous during prep when a judge enters the room. Some teams do not want a judge to know their strategy for any number of reasons. Please try to be respectful if a team asks you to wait for them to prep before entering the room. Staying out of the room until a few minutes before the round is scheduled to begin keeps you from hearing a team’s arguments and prematurely determining their effectiveness. Typically, entering the room five minutes before the round is scheduled to start is fine. One of the keys to judging collegiate debate is to remove your predetermined views of a resolution from the round and critically judge the arguments provided by the debate teams. Hearing a team’s arguments before the round begins may influence a judge’s views.

7. Fill out your ballot with the information for team sides and speaker positions. When the teams enter the room and their preparation time has expired, each team will usually sign into the round by writing their side (Government or Opposition) and speaker position (for the Government that would be who is the Prime Minister and Member of Government and for the Opposition that would be who is the Leader of Opposition and Member of Opposition) on the board. First, check to make sure the teams have identified themselves correctly as either the Government or Opposition (as indicated on the ballot). Second, write down the student's names in each of the corresponding speaker positions on the ballot.
8. Answer any questions from the debate teams *within reason*.  
As you are filling out your ballot most teams will ask questions to gauge your preference for certain arguments. A common question is, "What is your judging paradigm?" Questions about a judge's paradigm allows the debaters to get an idea of the types of arguments you like to hear and gauge how much experience you have judging collegiate debate. Do not try to hide your inexperience in collegiate debate. Being honest with the debaters will help improve the round for everyone. A typical response may sound like, "I prefer clear refutation directed at the arguments given in the round. I have judged X amount of tournaments." Another common question is, "How do you feel about speed?" Asking about speed (speaking rates) allows debaters to determine if they will be able to speak quickly throughout the round. Some forms of debate encourage increased speaking rates. Although Parliamentary debate is normally not such an activity you should be aware some students might utilize the tactic. A common response may be, "I am not used to fast speaking rates and if you go too fast during the round I will ask you to slow down." Most teams will take the information you provide into consideration when presenting their arguments. Questions about the upcoming round usually do not take much time and are fairly basic.

### **What to do during the round**

1. Let the round come to you.  
Although the judge is the individual in charge of the debate, the students are the ones who select which arguments to attempt and which arguments to avoid. Although you may have envisioned other arguments being made after hearing the resolution, you should judge the round based on the arguments presented, not the arguments you thought should be run (you can mention what you thought could have been stronger arguments during your critique of the round).
2. Pay attention to stock issues.  
A Parliamentary debate round can center on a fact, value, or policy resolution. Stock issues become important during debates centered on a policy resolution. Failing to meet any of these stock issues can severely hurt a team's case. Stock issues are minimally detailed below:

*Harms*: The Government team should demonstrate harm(s) in the status quo, which would cause the implementation of the resolution. Harms can be actual or potential.

<u>Round 1</u>	
<b>GOV. EWS-TH</b>	<b>OPP.</b>
<b>PM Joe Blow</b>	<b>LO Tomika Robertson</b>
<b>MG Krishna Pandey</b>	<b>MO Walt Fisher</b>

*Inherency*: The status quo cannot solve the given harms in a case. If the articulated harms can be “solved” simply by continuing the status quo, a case lacks inherency.

*Significance*: A given case must demonstrate the harms cause a meaningful problem. Significance can often be a contentious area during a debate, as each team will try to demonstrate their arguments as being more significant than their opponents.

*Solvency*: Refers to the degree in which the given plan can solve the given harms. The plan will usually be presented as a separate point followed by a portion of reasoning defending why the given plan will help solve the problems of the status quo.

*Topicality*: refers to the degree in which a team follows the logical bounds of the resolution. Topicality becomes a focal point of debates when proving a team has not followed the logical understanding of the resolution—typically leads to an easy loss for the team. Topicality issues usually arise due to the vagueness and/or misinterpretation of some debate cases.

### 3. Pay attention to the given judging criteria.

Early in the Prime Minister's speech the speaker will typically give a judging criteria to help you determine what issues should be given specific consideration during the debate. The three most common judging criteria are:

*Preponderance of evidence*: Refers to which team can provide the most convincing arguments for or against the resolution.

*Cost-benefit analysis*: Refers to the most successful outcome when compared to the given costs for implementing a plan.

*Net Benefits*: Refers to which team can demonstrate their arguments create the maximum benefit. An example is implementing option A saves 1,000 lives but implementing option B saves 10,000 lives—option B is a net-benefit win.

#### 4. Flow the debate.

As mentioned earlier, flowing a debate means taking notes as the speakers present their arguments. Flowing can occur in any number of manners and some basic structure is outlined here. One method of flowing a debate is taking detailed notes on a single sheet of paper top to bottom, similar to just attempting to remember the key points raised during the entire debate. Flowing is a fairly simple method for novice judges to remember the main arguments presented in a debate, but can get very messy and convoluted. A more efficient method for flowing a debate involves separating a sheet of paper lengthwise into six columns. Flowing in this manner affords judges specific columns to write both the arguments a team provides as well as the responses given as refutation to the opponent's arguments. Make sure to write down any pertinent information you deem necessary to critically analyzing the debate. While flowing the debate on a separate sheet of paper, feel free to write down any comments and critique that arise during the round on the official judging ballot. Writing comments down during the round will help speed filing out the ballot after the conclusion of the round.

#### 5. Questions to ask yourself while the round proceeds.

- A. *"Which team is providing the strongest arguments?"* Asking this question can help a novice judge determine which team has been creating the most effective and worthwhile arguments. Although simply creating strong arguments should not guarantee a win, oftentimes the team providing the strongest arguments is able to fully defend their points and refute their opponents' positions.
- B. *"Which speaker is conducting the round the best?"* At the end of the round you will need to rank the speakers based on performance. Asking which speakers are conducting the round best will help you determine the ranks of the speakers at the conclusion of the round and a strong debate can win a round by outsmarting their opponents. Although parliamentary debate is a team activity, speakers are also judged individually.
- C. *"Does each argument make sense?"* Teams will most likely focus on making the strongest arguments they can. However, not all lines of argumentation are successfully articulated. Make sure you pay attention to individual arguments to determine whether they truly fit the resolution and the debate. Many teams will try to throw out as many arguments as possible in the hope of getting their opponent to focus their energy in non-essential areas. Focus on the main arguments that connect directly to the topic of debate.
- D. *"Which arguments should carry the most weight?"* During the debate you will hear many different arguments. Asking which arguments carry the most weight should relate to the judging criteria provided earlier in the debate. When determining the answer for which argument should carry the most importance in a round, pay close attention to which criteria you were given so you can apply the necessary import to each argument.

Sample Debate “Flow”

PM Constructive	LO Constructive	MG Constructive	MO Constructive	LO Rebuttal	PM Rebuttal
<p><b>I. Definitions</b></p> <p><b>Stray</b> = Animals without an easily identifiable owner</p> <p><b>TDP</b>=Thermal <u>Depolymerization</u>, a process by which organic matter is converted to crude oil in less than 48 hours.</p> <p><b>II Criterion</b> = Utilitarianism</p> <p><b>III Observations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stray pets cost \$1Billion/year</li> <li>• 3.7 Million Animals/year</li> <li>• Oil Shortage</li> <li>• increased price</li> </ul> <p><b>IV Plan</b></p> <p>Use TDP on Euthanized pets</p> <p>Funding by Cong.</p> <p><b>V Benefits</b></p> <p>Bonus reduced Landfill</p>	<p><b>LO Constructive</b></p> <p><b>Stray Def.:</b> Would this include livestock that get out? How long will strays be kept B4 euthanizing?</p> <p><b>II Utilitarianism</b> OK</p> <p><b>TURN:</b> \$1B is a lot, but stimulates the economy.</p> <p>US spends \$61 B on pets, this would reduce that econ</p> <p><b>TURN:</b> Producing more oil increases dependency on oil</p> <p><b>DISADS:</b> Burning oil is horrible for the environment</p> <p>Pets are like family members to some.</p> <p>Poor people will be hit hardest because they can't afford pet ID tattoos</p>	<p><b>MG Constructive</b></p> <p>Livestock ≠ pets</p> <p>Standard hold time for strays is 6 weeks.</p> <p>Pull across Util. as criterion</p> <p>This is \$1B in waste that could be spent on Ed or healthcare</p> <p>People will still have <u>pets</u>, these are pets that weren't being cared for properly.</p> <p>We are dependent on foreign <u>oil</u>, alt energy can still be pursued</p> <p>These are the uncared for pets.</p> <p>If you can't afford to have a pet, you <u>shouldn't</u> have a pet</p>	<p><b>MO Constructive</b></p> <p>Why shouldn't livestock be approached this way? Is \$\$ more important than love for pet?</p> <p>More people are benefited by live pets than dead ones. Service animals are <u>key</u> to recovery.</p> <p>We won't eliminate \$1B cost, at best reduce 25% and still costs money to <u>trans</u> dead animals.</p> <p>We are in an energy <u>shortage</u> and this can help short term while we look for long term solutions.</p> <p>The poor are still disproportionately hurt</p>	<p><b>LO Rebuttal</b></p> <p>The round comes down to 3 things.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 This increases dependency on fossil fuels</li> <li>2 The savings is minimal and offset by loss of family pet income.</li> <li>3 This unfairly impacts families = socioeconomically disadvantaged.</li> </ol> <p>Pets are calming for children.</p>	<p><b>PM Rebuttal</b></p> <p>The <u>Opp</u> is well intentioned but fail to see long term.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 we are dependent on oil, we go to war over oil, if this gets us out of war more are served, can still look for alt energy</li> <li>2. We benefit \$ from creating oil, reducing unneeded spending on shelters</li> <li>3 We reduce landfill waste which is an argument that went unaddressed by the OPP</li> </ol>

6. Questions you might find yourself asking during the debate.
- A. *“I am not really sure the Government team is debating what the resolution states.”* If you find yourself pondering this question it may result from the Government team not being *topical*. Remember, topicality is one of the *stock issues* discussed earlier. Providing a vague case, or an interpretation of a resolution not allowing for a proper debate, means a team has not met one of the stock issues and should lose the debate if pointed out by the other team. However, if the other team fails to acknowledge the mistake made by the Government team the judge should not use the mistake to evaluate the round. Only judge the round based on arguments provided in the debate, not any mistakes that you notice.
  - B. *“The teams seem to be arguing different topics.”* A proper debate requires clash between the two teams. If teams seem to be arguing different topics they may not have provided sufficient clash for the debate. Debate rounds lacking clash can be difficult, however, attempt to sift through the mess as best you can and determine which team provided the best, most sound arguments.
  - C. *“The Government team is not really debating but rather just reaffirming what is currently occurring in the status quo.”* Luckily for you the Government team is committing a truism and most likely the debate will be over quickly. To have a successful debate the Government team must argue something that is not considered absolutely true; they need to provide *clash* (as previously mentioned). We can’t argue who the president of the United States is, but we can argue who runs the country.
  - D. *“The Opposition team does not want to accept any of the definitions provided by the Government teams.”* Rarely will an Opposition team argue each of the definitions provided by the Government team but is common to have the Opposition team argue at least one of the given definitions. If a debate comes down to arguments about definitions a judge needs to determine which definition is the most viable for the round and proceed from with that definition.
  - E. *“Why is every argument ending in nuclear war?”* Although not as likely to occur in Parliamentary Debate, the use of terminal disadvantages (a disadvantage that results in the end of global life, oftentimes through nuclear war or famine) is fair game. Such a tactic usually arises when the debate is centered on a policy resolution because if a team can argue a given action offered by their opposition will result in a total loss of life then they will typically win the round due to the fact saving lives is usually the goal of most arguments. If you wish to avoid hearing rounds that end in nuclear war, announcing to the debaters before the round to avoid terminal impacts will be the best bet in assuring that you do not hear such arguments.

### What to do after the round

1. Review the flow you just completed for the debate and write your critique of the round.

Congrats, you have just completed a parliamentary debate round as a judge. When the debate ends the students will most likely shake hands (and thank you for judging). Students may ask for feedback. Normally, Parliamentary Debate judges do not disclose who has won or lost the round. Feel free to mention oral critiques can set back the tournament timeline and you will be open to questions when they see you later in the tournament. Do not worry; tournaments usually encourage this action to keep everything running on time. Next, begin reviewing your flow to determine which arguments were the most important to the round and which team “won” each of those arguments. At the conclusion of the round continue writing your critique of the round on the ballot. Make sure to include critical information for both teams. Debaters enjoy receiving definitive feedback so they can learn to become stronger debaters. Please provide both critique and praise where applicable. Even if you experience a clean debate by one team, feel free to articulate ways in which they can improve even if that means simply being ready for stronger teams as the tournament progresses. Later in the tournament, if a student approaches you to ask about a round you judged, please offer any suggestions you have on how they could improve as a debater or how they could have made the round stronger.

2. Determine which team won the debate.

After reviewing your flow and offering critique to both teams, decide which team ultimately won the debate round. Fill out your ballot accordingly, making sure to mark the correct team with their abbreviation. Make sure you complete your ballot in an expedient manner to keep the tournament running on time. Technically a round should only take 40 minutes plus the 10-15 minutes of preparation students are given, for a total of approximately 55 minutes for the round. Add five minutes for students to walk to and from rounds and it takes an hour. Most tournaments schedule rounds every 75 minutes which means if you take more than 15 minutes to finish your ballot and walk it back to the ballot table you are already late for your next round.

3. Determine how each speaker performed during the debate.

After determining which team won the debate, take the time to rank and give the proper speaker points for each competitor.

*Rank:* The first task you need to accomplish is ranking the four speakers on their ability during the current debate round. The best speaker should be ranked number 1 and the remaining speakers ranked accordingly. Rankings cannot be tied. *Speaker Points:* After ranking the debaters, you need to determine the number of speaker points they will receive for the round. Typically the points vary between 1 and 30 (1 being the lowest score and 30 being the highest) although if the numbers are different on the ballot use the tournament specific numbers. 30 to 25 typically refer to top speakers. 24-20 typically designates intermediate

speakers. 19 to 15 tend to designate weaker speakers. Lower than 15 is usually given to those speakers who do not prepare for the round, miss giant portions of arguments, or personally offend someone in the round.

#### 4. Double-check and return your ballot.

After filling out your ballot according to the tournament's guidelines, review over your work and fill in any last minute comments or thoughts and sign the ballot. The last step a judge needs to accomplish is to return their ballot to the ballot table so that it can be tabulated. Typically, a student or coach will check to make sure that your ballot has been completed correctly. If the ballot table asks you to fill in any forgotten areas do not feel bad, even the best and most experienced judges miss something now and then; make the corrections and get ready for your next round.

### **List of Common Debate Terms**

*A priori*: Literally means “from earlier,” meaning the argument should be taken into account, in terms of judging, before all other arguments.

*Agency*: The body in charge of successfully implementing a plan or argument.

*Bright-line or Brink*: The threshold at which point an action or consequence will/must happen.

*Clash*: Ability for a team to argue on a topic.

*Fiat*: The ability for the GOV team to “wish” a plan into action. Usually done through “normal means.”

*Flow*: The notes you take for the debate. To go down the flow simply means the debater will present their arguments in the same position in which they were previously ordered.

*Funding*: The ability to successfully gather money and support for a plan or argument.

*House*: A decision making body. Usually defined by the Government team.

*Kritik*: A theoretical argument used to show why a case should not be implemented based on issues larger than the set up of the current debate. Often just termed the “K”.

*Non-Unique*: A harm or benefit that can happen for either team and is balanced equally and not important.

*Off case and On Case Arguments*:

On case—the arguments and ideas brought forth by the GOV team.

Off case—the arguments and ideas brought forth by the OPP team.

*Permutation (perm)*: Test to a counter plan or kritik, way to test mutual exclusivity. A modification shows you could do both the plan and counter plan thus negating the Opposition arguments.

*Plan*: The action a team argues should be taken to alleviate the given harms in a case.

*Point of Information*: A question raised during the constructive arguments of the debate. Usually the person will stand up with an arm stretched out.

*Point of Order*: A point made to argue one of the rules of debate have been violated. Usually used to show an opponent has brought new information into the debate during the rebuttal speeches.

*Point of Personal Privilege*: A point brought forth to the judge to establish an opponent has gone outside the round of the debate and personally insulted the other team.

*Roadmap*: The first part of a speech, usually untimed, used to tell the judge the order of the arguments to be presented.

*Status Quo*: The current state of affairs.

*Timeframe*: The timeline for a plan or argument to take place.

*Turn*: Term used to show an opponent's argument better fits your team's argument.

## HOW TO JUDGE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

Judging collegiate Lincoln-Douglas (LD) Debate carries many of the same concerns as judging Parliamentary Debate, but some important distinctions and intricacies need to be detailed. The following section will help novice judges to competently prepare to judge a LD round successfully. Similar to Parliamentary Debate, each new judge should keep two things in mind. First, debate teams should attempt to find out your debate background *and* modify, to some extent, their strategy to your particular level. Second, entering debate round expecting the experience to be bad will likely become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The following section will help prepare a novice debate judge to adequately manage and critique an LD debate round.

### What to do before the round

1. Gather the proper material to use during the debate.

Debate judges can never have enough pens and paper as these two items will become invaluable as the day progresses and are the basic necessities to flowing a debate and filling out your ballot. Flowing a debate means taking notes of what arguments each competitor makes during each speech of the debate (methods to flowing the debate will be articulated later in this section). A debate judge should have at least two pens and should have multiple pieces of paper for each debate round. Some judges prefer to use different color ink pens for each competitor as a means to keeping who said what separate, but using different colored ink is not a must. You will want to make sure you bring enough paper to successfully flow the round (typically between three and five sheets of paper). Finally, competitors normally time both their own and their opponent's speeches, however, having a stopwatch would be helpful so you can time the speeches and manage the preparation time, especially if you want to comment on how they choose to allocate their time during speeches.

## 2. Check the round schematic sheet posted before the round begins.

The schematic sheet should be located in an open area where both competitors and judges can easily view the information on the sheet. Reviewing the schematic sheet before the round will help a new judge identify the time the round should start, the room where the debate will take place, and the position of the competitors who will be debating (either Affirmative or Negative). Finding your schedule and round information ahead of the round can help alleviate some of the stress due to the ambiguity of novice debate judging.

**SAMPLE SCHEMATIC**

University of the Twin Cities Battle for the Bell Lincoln-Douglas Debate Tournament			
<b>Round 3</b>		<b>Start time: 1:35pm</b>	
<b><u>Affirmative</u></b>		<b><u>Negative</u></b>	<b><u>Room</u></b>
BSU OP	vs.	STU NR	Gordy 123
SDU FS	vs.	BSU TR	Lasher 43
Mar RW	vs.	Hill MJ	Gordy 342
Butler PC	vs.	SMU AB	Gordy 344
			<b><u>Judge</u></b>
			Lange
			Holm
			Hangaard
			Dalton

## 3. Familiarize yourself with the basic structural characteristics of LD debate.

- A. LD debate involves two competitors debating a set resolution for each season. One competitor must defend and support the resolution; this is the Affirmative debater's responsibility. One competitor must negate and argue against the resolution; this is the Negative debater's responsibility. The Affirmative competitor will speak first and create the case for debate. The Negative competitor will attempt to refute the Affirmative case and provide their arguments against the resolution.
- B. Know the time limits [6-3-7-3-6-6-3]. Even if you are not entirely sure what each speaker will be attempting to accomplish on each speech, you can at least know how long each competitor should speak during each presentation. LD debate incorporates both cross-examination and preparation times into the round. The first speech in the round is the Affirmative constructive speech (6 minutes) and is followed by 3 minutes of cross-examination from the Negative debater (during cross-examination, the debaters will oftentimes refer to pieces of evidence read during the previous speech and the evidence will be shared amongst competitors in the round). The second speech is the Negative constructive (7 minutes) and is followed by a second round of cross-examination. The third speech is the

first Affirmative rebuttal (6 minutes). Following is the Negative rebuttal (6 minutes). Concluding the round is the second Affirmative rebuttal (3 minutes). In addition to their times to speak, each competitor has 4 minutes of preparation time to use at his/her discretion. Competitors will rarely use all of their four minutes at one time so it is the judge's responsibility to make sure a competitor does not get more than the allotted time.

**6-3-7-3-6-6-3**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive – 6 Minutes
2. Cross Examination – 3 Minutes
3. 1<sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive – 7 Minutes
4. Cross Examination – 3 Minutes
5. 1<sup>st</sup> Affirmative Rebuttal – 6 Minutes
6. Negative Rebuttal – 6 Minutes
7. 2<sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Rebuttal – 3 Minutes
8. Prep Time – 4 Minutes (to be used at the debater's discretion)

4. Pick up your ballot.

Approximately 10 to 30 minutes before the round is set to begin the ballot table will release the ballots to individual judges. Make sure to pick up your ballot in a timely manner. The style of the ballot will differ depending on the host school's preference but all ballots should include basic information such as the room number and starting time of the round. After picking up your ballot, take the remaining time to gather any last minute material for the round and begin to make your way to your assigned room.

5. Let the competitors prepare their round.

You have your ballot, your materials, and you are now ready to begin judging your debate round. However, until the round is about to begin allow the competitors to prepare their arguments without interruption. Stay out of the room if you can handle the anticipation—some competitors get nervous during prep when a judge enters the room. Some competitors do not want a judge to know their strategy for any number of reasons. Please try to be respectful if a debater asks you to wait for them to prep before entering the room. Staying out of the room until a few minutes before the round is scheduled to begin also keeps you from hearing a competitor's arguments and prematurely determining their effectiveness. Typically, entering the room five minutes before the round is scheduled to begin is fine. One of the keys to judging collegiate debate is to remove your predetermined views of a resolution from the round and critically judging the arguments provided by the debaters. Hearing a competitor's arguments before the round begins may influence a judge's views.

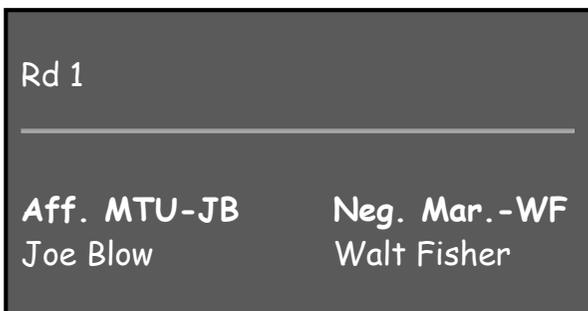
6. Fill out your ballot with the needed information for competitors.

Upon entering the room, each debater will usually sign into the round by writing their name and position on the board. First, check to make sure the competitors

identified correctly as either the Affirmative or Negative. Second, write down the student's codes in each of the corresponding debater positions on the ballot.

7. Answer any questions of the debaters *within reason*.

As you are filling out your ballot most debaters will ask questions to gauge your preference for certain arguments—known as a judging philosophy. A common question is, “What is your judging paradigm?” Asking about a judge's preferences allows the debaters to get an idea for the types of arguments you like to hear and gauge how much experience you have judging collegiate debate. Do not try to hide your inexperience in collegiate debate. Being honest with the debaters will help improve the round for everyone. A typical response may sound like, “I prefer clear argumentation directed at the information given in the round. I have judged X amount of tournaments.” Another common question is, “How do you feel about speed?” Asking about speed (speaking rates) allows debaters to determine if they will be able to speak quickly throughout the round. LD debate has come to encourage increased speaking rates. A common response may be, “I am not used to fast speaking rates and if you go too fast during the round I will ask you to slow down.” Most competitors will take the information you provide into consideration when presenting their arguments. Questions about the upcoming round do not take much time and are usually fairly basic.



### What to do during the round

1. Let the round come to you.

Although the judge is the individual in charge of the debate, the students are the ones who pick which arguments to attempt and which arguments to avoid. Although you may have envisioned other arguments being made after hearing the resolution, you should judge the round based on the arguments presented, not the arguments you thought should be run (you can mention what you thought could have been stronger arguments during your critique of the round).

2. Pay attention to stock issues.

LD debate should, at its core, incorporate five stock issues (Harms, Inherency, Significance, Solvency, Topicality). Failing to meet any of these stock issues can severely hurt a competitor's arguments. To better understand each of the specific stock issues, they are minimally detailed below:

*Harms:* The Affirmative debater should demonstrate harm(s) in the status quo, which would cause the implementation of the resolution. They can be actual or potential.

*Inherency:* The status quo cannot solve the given harms in a case. If the articulated harms can be “solved” simply by continuing the status quo, a case lacks inherency.

*Significance:* A given case must demonstrate that the harms cause a meaningful problem—typically loss of life for a collegiate LD round. Significance can often be a contentious area during a debate, as each competitor will try to demonstrate their arguments as being more significant than their opponents.

*Solvency:* Refers to the degree in which the given plan can solve the given harms. The plan will usually be presented as a separate point followed by a portion of reasoning defending why the given plan will help solve the problems of the status quo.

*Topicality:* Refers to the degree in which a debater follows the logical bounds of the resolution. Topicality becomes a focal point of debates when proving that a competitor has not followed the logical understanding of the resolution—typically can lead to an easy loss for that debater. Topicality issues usually arise due to the vagueness and/or misinterpretation of some debate cases.

### 3. Flow the debate.

As mentioned earlier, flowing a debate means taking notes as the speakers are presenting their arguments. Flowing can occur through any number of methods and some basic structures will be outlined here. One method to flowing a debate involves separating a piece of paper lengthwise into five columns. You should have a couple sheets of paper formatted in the same manner, as LD cases tend to include more information than a judge could reasonably fit onto a single sheet of paper. Flowing in this manner affords judges specific columns to write both the arguments a debater provides as well as the responses given as refutation to the opponent’s arguments. Make sure to write down any pertinent information necessary to critically analyzing the debate. A second method to flowing a debate is to separate multiple pieces of paper into five columns and having a piece of paper for each specific argument given during a round. Although flowing each argument on a separate piece of paper will take a decent amount of paper, if you can manage, this method will provide the most effective method to flowing an LD debate. While flowing the debate on separate sheets of paper, feel free to write down any comments and critique that arise during the round on the official judging ballot. Writing comments down during the round will help speed filling out the ballot after the conclusion of the round).

## 4. Questions to ask yourself while the round proceeds.

- A. “*Which debater is providing the strongest arguments?*” Asking which debater is providing the strongest arguments can help a novice judge determine which debater has been creating the most effective and worthwhile arguments. Although simply creating strong arguments should not guarantee a win, oftentimes the debater providing the strongest arguments is able to fully defend their points and refute their opponent’s points.
- B. “*Does each argument make sense?*” Debaters will most likely focus on making the strongest arguments they can create. However, not all lines of argumentation are successfully articulated. Make sure you pay attention to individual arguments to determine whether they truly fit the resolution and the debate. Many debaters will try to throw out as many arguments as possible in the hope of getting their opponent to focus their energy in nonessential areas. Focus on the main arguments connecting directly to the topic of debate.
- C. “*Which arguments should carry the most weight?*” During the debate you will hear many different arguments. Asking which arguments carry the most weight should relate to the impact of each argument provided throughout the debate. When determining the answer for which arguments carry the most weight, pay close attention to which criteria you were given so you can apply the necessary import to each argument.

## 5. Questions you might find yourself asking during the debate.

- A. “*I am not really sure the Affirmative competitor is debating what the resolution states.*” If you find yourself pondering this question it may result from the Affirmative team not being *topical*. Remember, topicality is one of the *stock issues* we talked about earlier. Providing too vague a case, or the interpretation of a resolution that does not allow for a proper debate, means a competitor has not met one of the stock issues and should lose the debate if pointed out by their opposition. If, however, the other debater fails to acknowledge the mistake made by their opponent the judge should not use the mistake to evaluate the round. Only judge the round based on arguments provided in the debate, not mistakes you find throughout the round.
- B. “*Why is every argument ending in nuclear war?*” The use of terminal disadvantages (a disadvantage results in the end of global life, oftentimes through nuclear war or famine) is common in LD debate. *Demonstrating* how your opponent’s plan will result in the end of life helps establish the benefits of a debater’s own line of action. If you wish to avoid hearing rounds that end in nuclear war you should announce to the debaters you dislike terminal disadvantages during the initial round of questioning prior to the start of the round. However, letting debaters know you are not a fan of terminal disadvantages will not guarantee a

round free of nuclear war, but at least you have made your preference known.

- C. “Why is everyone talking so fast?” Speed-reading is a tactic that allows a debater to get as many arguments out as *possible*—increasing the opportunity their opponent misses an important part of the information. Speed-reading is a common practice in LD debate. However, the practice by no means must occur. If you are uncomfortable with the fast speaking rate of a debater simply tell them, mid speech, to slow down. If they do not heed your advice, do not consider it your fault if you miss part of their argumentation.

### What to do after the round

1. Review the flow you just completed for the debate and write your critique of the round.

Congrats, you have just completed a LD debate round as a judge. When the debate ends, the students may ask for feedback. Feel free to mention oral critiques can set back the tournament timeline and you will be open to questions when they see you later in the tournament. Do not worry; tournaments usually encourage this action to keep everything running on time. However, if time permits feel free to give limited feedback. Begin reviewing your flow to determine which arguments were the most important to the round and which debater “won” each of those arguments. If you wish to view any specific piece of evidence ask for those articles at the conclusion of the round before the competitors begin packing their material. After reviewing your flow, and any evidence, continue writing your critique of the round on the ballot. Make sure to include critical information for both debaters. Debaters enjoy receiving definitive feedback so they can learn to become stronger debaters. Provide both critique and praise where applicable. Even if you experience a clean debate by one competitor, you should feel free to articulate ways they can improve, even if that means simply preparing to face stronger debaters as the tournament progresses. Later in the tournament, if a debater approaches you to ask about a round you judged, please offer any suggestions you have on how they could improve as a debater or how they could have made the round stronger.

2. Determine which debater won the debate.

After reviewing your flow and offering critique to both debaters, decide which competitor ultimately won the debate round. Fill out your ballot accordingly, making sure to mark the correct competitor with their correct abbreviation. Make sure you do fill out your ballot in an expedient manner to keep the tournament running on time. Technically a round should only take 45 minutes including the four minutes of preparation students are given. After some additional time to clean up and return argumentation cards to each respective debater and round will average approximately 55 minutes. Add five minutes for students to walk to and from rounds and it takes an hour. Most tournaments

schedule rounds every 75 minutes. Taking more than 15 minutes to finish your ballot and walk it back to the ballot table may make you late for your next round.

3. Determine how each speaker performed during the debate.

After determining which competitor won the debate, take the time to give the proper speaker points for each competitor. Typically the points vary between 1 and 30 (1 being the lowest score and 30 being the highest) although if the numbers are different on the ballot use the tournament specific numbers. 30 to 25 typically refer to top speakers. 24-20 typically designates intermediate speakers. 19 to 15 tend to designate weaker speakers. Lower than 15 is usually given to those speakers who do not prepare for the round, miss giant portions of arguments, or personally offend someone in the round.

4. Double-check and return your ballot.

After filling out your ballot according to the tournament's guidelines, review your work and fill in any last minute comments or thoughts, and sign the ballot. The last step a judge needs to accomplish is to return their ballot to the ballot table so it can be tabulated. Typically, a student or coach will check to make sure your ballot has been completed correctly. If the ballot table asks you to fill in any forgotten areas do not feel bad, even the best and most experienced judges miss something now and then, make the corrections and get ready for your next round.

### **List of Common Debate Terms**

*A priori*: Literally means "from earlier," means the argument should be taken into account, in terms of judging, before all other arguments.

*Agency*: The body in charge of successfully implementing a plan or argument.

*Bright-line or Brink*: The threshold at which point an action or consequence will/must happen. Usually used in impact arguments.

*Clash*: Ability for a team to argue on a topic.

*Fiat*: The ability for the GOV team to "wish" a plan into action. Usually done through "normal means."

*Flow*: The notes you take for the debate. To go down the flow simply means the debater will present their arguments in the same position in which they were previously ordered.

*Funding*: The ability to successfully gather money and support for a plan or argument.

*Kritik*: A theoretical argument used to show a case should not be implemented based on issues larger than the set up of the current debate. Often just termed the "K".

*Non-Unique*: A harm or benefit, which can happen for either team and therefore is balanced equally and not important.

*Off case and On Case Args*:

- On case—the arguments and ideas brought forth by the AFF team.
- Off case—the arguments and ideas brought forth by the NEG team.

*Permutation (perm)*: Test to a counter plan or kritik, way to test mutual exclusivity. A modification would show you could do both the plan and counter plan thus negating the NEG arguments.

*Plan*: The action a team argues should be taken to alleviate the given harms in a case.

*Point of Information*: A question raised during the constructive arguments of the debate. Usually the person will stand up with an arm stretched out.

*Point of Order*: A point made to argue one of the rules of debate have been violated. Usually used to show an opponent has brought new information into the debate during the rebuttal speeches.

*Point of Personal Privilege*: A point brought forth to the judge to establish an opponent has gone outside the round of the debate and personally insulted the other team.

*Roadmap*: The first part of your speech, usually untimed, used to tell the judge the order of the arguments you will present.

*Status Quo*: The current state of affairs.

*Timeframe*: The timeline for a plan or argument to take place.

*Turn*: Term used to show that an opponent's argument better fits your team's argument.

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