

WDCA

Judges Handbook

Welcome to the challenging world of judging academic debate in the state of Wisconsin! The Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association (WDCA) hopes that this booklet of advice and explanation, compiled from a variety of sources, will help you do a good job this season.

Please bear in mind that debaters, especially novices, need guidance not criticism. Yes, debate is a competitive event, but it is academic in nature. You will be deciding winners and losers, but what we really are all wanting the debaters to leave with is the ability to think critically, read academic and political material with understanding, and – above all – to communicate articulately. This booklet is written to help you understand the activity, guidelines and procedures as well as how to help bring out the best orator in every debater. Being the one in the room that both sides want to reach, you are in a unique position to give advice and recognition to our students.

Please feel free to talk with any experienced coach or judge about aspects of judging that may come up as you read this or as you judge rounds.



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Web site: www.wdca.org

Purpose of this Handbook

It is not within the scope of this manual to provide an overview of the mechanics of debate. The coach who hires you should be able to explain the basics of debate or provide resources that will help you. You can also use the resources listed in this handbook on your own. Specifically:

Debate Central's Learn to Debate page at <http://debate.uvm.edu/learndebate.html>

National Center for Policy Analysis site at <http://debate-central.ncpa.org/learn/>

Planet Debate at <http://www.planetdebate.com>

It helps to watch a few rounds of debate before you start judging. This will give you a chance to practice flowing and also to compare your decisions with those of experienced judges. After the rounds make sure you ask the judge about anything you found confusing. Their knowledge and insight is invaluable. Also, compare and contrast how you each viewed the various arguments as they were presented by both teams. If you have differences try to determine why those differences arose.

The Role of the Judge

Debate involves two separate goals: competition and education. The judge is intimately involved with both aspects. Neither one can be allowed to overshadow the other since each are equally important. In order to foster competition, it is necessary for the judge to maintain the fairness of each and every round. The most obvious aspect of fairness is impartiality. Everyone recognizes, however, that all judges will have some biases. These may be stylistic or substantive. Perhaps you prefer articulate and persuasive teams to fast teams. You may be a strong advocate for the use of Kritiks or theory in debate. These are examples of stylistic preferences. If you intend to judge with these preferences in mind, it is absolutely essential that you communicate this to the debaters before the round. Be clear and *define* exactly what you do or do not like. If you are unsure about what jargon is appropriate to explain those preferences, communicate them in plain English. It is important to communicate your expectations of what debate should be. This will allow teams to adapt to you. In terms of substantive biases, as a political partisan you could feel strongly about contentious issues like abortion or foreign policy. When it comes to the debate round, however, you must do your best to put aside these types of preconceptions and judge each round on its own merits. Only vote on the arguments the *debaters* made. When judges enter into the debate round all fairness is lost because the debaters never have a chance to address the questions you raise. There is no final rebuttal against the decision.

The Duties of the Judge

A debate judge in any division has two basic responsibilities. The first is to flow the debate. "Flowing" is debate terminology for note taking because you take notes in such a way as to follow the flow of arguments as they are extended throughout the debate. To "extend" an argument means to carry an argument another step forward, to answer the opponent's challenge and advance beyond it. You organize your notes so that you can flow the extensions across from the arguments in which they were first introduced.

In order to flow the debate effectively you need to have some background on each year's topic. Reading from a few of the many handbooks printed on the topic each year can give you the necessary introductory material. A good overview on each year's debate topic can be found many places: by reading the proposal for the year's resolution, looking in the Forensics Quarterly, performing web searches for "NFL Policy debate topic [insert year here]", or through the coach that hired you. Several excellent judging manuals and debate web resources are listed in the Bibliography. This background will ensure that you understand the arguments used in the debate well enough to summarize them clearly when you are taking notes. Debates are normally divided into two basic types of arguments: justification or on-case arguments, and plan or off-case arguments.

When judging debates on the novice level you are generally safe in flowing on-case arguments on one sheet of paper (legal pad size) and flowing off-case arguments on another sheet. For Public Forum or Lincoln-Douglas, you may wish to separate the contentions or Criteria that are given onto separate sheets. You may need more paper for advanced level debates. Advanced debaters will generally give you the order of arguments they will use in the speech, commonly called “the roadmap”, before they begin their speeches and it’s important to have plenty of room for all arguments with their extensions. Keep in mind that the time they use for that is not deducted from their speech time. Many judges and debaters find it helpful to use different colored pens for affirmative and negative speeches – it makes it easier to see if arguments have been dropped rather than extended by a particular speaker. When flowing the round, many judges do not accept new information from cross examination until it has been extended in constructive or rebuttal speeches. However, if a speaker does not fulfill his obligations by answering or extending arguments by his opponent at the first opportunity, we say that he/she has dropped the argument. For a policy debate example, the first affirmative must answer the attacks made in the negative block in the first affirmative rebuttal; it is not fair to wait until all negative speeches are concluded to answer negative attacks. New arguments that are made, however, allow for new answers.

An experienced judge tries not only to flow the arguments exactly but also tries to take down as much evidence as possible. Then if the two teams argue about what a card means, you will have enough information to decide. You, as the judge, should remember that debate is primarily oral communication. The judge and the opponents should be able to follow the arguments as they are first presented. The complete citation for the evidence should be read the first time that source is used, but consequent references may use abbreviated citations. If a debater is asked to present the evidence with the complete citation, he must do so.

One exception to the general rule of not influencing the round is if you cannot understand or flow the debate. Many judges indicate that they are having trouble flowing by visibly putting their pen down and ceasing to flow. It is also widely considered acceptable to give a verbal cue in this situation – tell the debaters to “slow down!” or “speak clearly!” This is much preferred to a ballot that simply says that “Team X wins because I couldn’t understand Team Y” when Team Y never knew they were unclear or too fast.

Obviously, if you are an inexperienced judge, you will find that your flows are relatively incomplete. Don’t feel uncomfortable; simply do the best you can. Students ask you to do your best – they aren’t perfect at flowing the round and they don’t expect perfection from you; they simply expect an honest attempt to carefully follow the arguments through the round. Also keep in mind that in novice or middle school debates, your flow will probably be less complete. Don’t be surprised if you are responsible for structuring the arguments. Skilled debaters will help with the labels and signposts, but novice debaters do not label as efficiently, and you will have to organize their thoughts as best you can.

For more tips on keeping your flow sheets organized, see the sections on flowing for each category of debate (Policy, Public Forum, and Lincoln-Douglas).

Your second major responsibility is to write a clear ballot. Most ballots include a space for a numerical evaluation of the individual speaker’s skills and a space for specific comments on what things influenced your decision. One slight exception is in Public Forum, where you are asked to give points to each side instead of each debater.

Individual speaker points usually ask that you evaluate the following aspects of good debating:

- A. Material and Evidence – Supporting contentions with sufficient and convincing evidence
- B. Analysis – Getting to the heart of the question. Sound reasoning, logical conclusions.
- C. Organization – Clear and logical presentation of material, following normal speaker’s duties for the various speeches.
- D. Refutation – Direct clash with the opposition, destroying opponent’s arguments and reinforcing your own without being abusive.
- E. Delivery – Effective speaking which results in a favorable impact on the audience.
- F. Cross-Examination Skills – Effective questioning which should identify weaknesses in the opposition’s case that are subsequently used in the remaining speeches.

Your responsibility is to give a score based on each debater’s overall speaking ability. Remember to keep the level of the debate in mind when assigning speaker points. If you are in a Novice round, do not give low points simply because they did not debate at a Varsity level.

The second part of the ballot that is reserved for specific comments may be divided into sections (one section for each of the speakers in the round), or may simply be left for comments. Some judges like to make specific comments after each speech, mentioning arguments that were carried effectively, arguments that were weak for one reason or another and/or arguments that were dropped. The advantage of this method is that it’s easy for the debaters to follow the progress of the debate and your reaction to it. Another advantage is that the ballot is more or less complete when the round is over. Other judges prefer to wait until the debate is concluded and then list the crucial arguments stating which team carried each argument and why. The advantage of this method is that the ballot is usually clearer. You may change your mind as to which team will be the winner several times throughout the debate. With this method, you have made your decision when you begin writing the ballot. Be sure to give comments for individual speakers so that they can learn from the experience. Many judges think that oral critiques are sufficient for these types of comments, but a good judge will write them down as well. Debaters have a lot to think about and discuss during debates, and are apt to forget most of what you say after a few minutes. Some coaches also read the ballots and use the comments to guide practices. If there are no comments on the ballot to use for those purposes, they have to rely on their debaters’ memories of the comments.

How can I write comments during the debate?

Even when the debaters do speak clearly, it can still be hard to listen, flow, and think about which side’s arguments are more persuasive. Convenient times to record speaker comments are during preparation time, at the end of the debate and sometimes even cross-examination. Think to yourself as you listen, how could this speaker improve? If you notice a problem with the debater’s arguments or a way in which the speaker could make her or his case more convincing – make a mental note of it. Even better, develop symbols or short hand that you can include on your flow. Then the next moment you get free – write it down.

How can I make my comments helpful?

We all try to give the most helpful comments that we can. Unfortunately, they sometimes do not help and in a few cases even hurt. An example of that would be a judge telling a debater that, “**you are not even trying to debate. You should quit.**” That comment would really hurt a novice who was having a very difficult time adjusting to debate. Obviously, you should be sensitive when you give your comments. I have a few suggestions as you make your comments:

- 1) **Focus on things the debater can change.** Don’t focus on the debater’s looks or ways of speaking that she or he cannot change (like a lisp, etc.)
- 2) **Focus on how the debater can improve.** Saying, “**your arguments are weak,**” doesn’t offer much hope for improvement. Instead focus on how the debater can improve his or her arguments. For example: “**I would skip the argument that the environment is worthless. Instead, I would focus on how the environment is not seriously harmed and that the damage is not significant.**”
- 3) **Make Specific Comments. For example:** “When you respond to arguments, you need to more accurately state your opponents’ arguments. Practice in front of your partner or your coach, restating arguments that you flow. Check with them whether what you say are the arguments are the arguments.” As you make comments, I would suggest focusing on the same things that *Breaking Down the Barriers* emphasizes.

a) Argumentation

- Did the debater’s arguments directly support or reject the resolution?
- Did the debater use enough evidence?
- Did the debater use persuasive, solid support, is he clear and concise, and is the evidence from a good source?
- Did the arguments work together convincingly?
- Did the arguments make it difficult for opponents to respond?
- Did the debater persuasively compare her or his arguments with her or his opponent?

b) Policy Issue Arguments

- Did the affirmative case, negative off-case observation, or negative disadvantage use clear, outline organization?
- Did the affirmative case have strong significance, inherency and solvency arguments?
- Did the negative adequately attack the affirmative case arguments?
- Did the negative disadvantage have strong links and impacts – and if needed, brinks?

c) Impacts, Transitions, Labels

- How concise, clear, and persuasive are the debater’s impacts?
- How concise, flowing, and persuasive are the debater’s transitions?
- How concise, accurate, and persuasive are the debaters labels?

d) Conclusions

- Did the debater weigh the round while avoiding a simple summary?
- Is the conclusion concise and persuasive?
- Did the debater conclude by urging the judge to vote for his or her case?

e) Delivery

- Did the debater read with energy and a sense of spontaneity?
- Did the debater read with good inflection, calm hand gestures, good posture, and good eye contact?

Always proofread the ballot before you hand it in. Make sure speaker’s points are correctly totaled, double check that you’ve indicated the correct winner, etc. Mistakes are easy to make and embarrassing to correct.

WDCA Standing Rules Regarding Judges

SECTION III - ADJUDICATOR GUIDELINES

At all WDCA sanctioned events including the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament, the following expectations will be met in addition to those detailed within the Bylaws and Standing Rules of the WDCA.

- A. Any judge who finds him/herself in a conflict of interest including, but not limited to, judging a student from a school with which the judge is affiliated, shall notify the tournament director immediately.
- B. A judge shall neither shorten rounds nor render a decision on the ballot until the completion of the round. The judge shall listen to the entire round in a fair and impartial manner before making a decision.
- C. The judge should decide the round based upon the arguments presented in the round and not upon his or her personal beliefs or biases.
- D. The review of evidence by a judge is not allowed unless there is a dispute by the opposition regarding the meaning, context, or validity of the evidence, or suspicion by the judge of falsification.
- E. A judge is expected to adapt expectations and award speaker points appropriate to the level of debate being judged. A judge should not give speaker points lower than 18 in policy debate and below the respective minimums for Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum.
- F. A judge shall fill out the ballot completely. Comments for individual speakers and a written justification for the decision shall be provided. Comments on ballots are to be instructive and constructive. The school of any judge that does not provide a written justification for decisions, as prescribed by the Tournament Director, will be required to pay \$15 to the WDCA Scholarship Fund for each round where no written justification was provided. The first notice would be sent by the tournament host to the coach of said school. Failure to respond and remit payment within one month will result in a letter being sent to the school's principal by the WDCA President. Repeated violations could result in disqualification from WDCA sponsored tournaments by Executive Committee decision.
- G. While oral critiques may be of educational value, lengthy oral critiques are unacceptable. A judge should, therefore, fully communicate his or her decision on the ballot and allow the tournament to proceed as close to the scheduled time as possible.
- H. The WDCA does not recognize "Games Playing" as a legitimate and educational paradigm by which a debate round may or should be judged. A judge may not, therefore, employ a "games player" paradigm to render his or her decision.
- I. During the course of a tournament, judges and observers shall not disclose specific information, flows, or evidence pertaining to any other teams in the tournament without the permission of the involved team(s).
- J. No high school student may be used to judge any round at the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament nor at any WDCA sanctioned tournament.
- K. No judge who completed his or her high school studies during the preceding two years (college sophomore) may be used to judge any varsity round at the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament nor at any WDCA sanctioned tournament without the approval of the tournament host/director.
- L. If while judging a round, the judge leaves to go and confer with his or her team, the team conferred with takes a loss. Any judge who leaves a round for any other, non-emergency reason shall be fined \$20 per round.
- M. Debaters shall not leave a debate round for any non-emergency reason or else they shall forfeit the round.
- N. In Novice Policy, novice packets restrictions and a no counterplan, no kritik rule are in effect for all WDCA sanctioned events throughout the entire season including the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.

- O. Challenging the Validity of Evidence at a Sanctioned Tournament:
1. Challenges regarding the validity or potential falsification of evidence must be made by the opposing debate team or debater.
 2. If the validity of the evidence is questioned within the round by the opposing team, the judge shall follow these guidelines to determine the most appropriate action:
 - a. The judge should first determine if the evidence in question can be proven invalid or fraudulent immediately following the round. If proven invalid or fraudulent within the context of the round, the judge should give a loss to the team using the invalid or fraudulent evidence. The judge should then immediately notify the Tournament Director. Following notification, the Tournament Director will convene a coaches committee of no fewer than three other coaches. This committee will then determine whether or not the team using the invalid or falsified evidence shall be disqualified from the tournament.
 - b. If the evidence cannot be proven invalid or fraudulent immediately following the round, the judge should first consider whether or not it is important to the decision. If the evidence is not important to the decision, then the judge should disregard the situation. If it is important to the decision, the judge should evaluate the evidence on its own merits considering the following:
 - Is it believable?
 - Is it taken from a known and reliable source?
 - Is the evidence consistent with other evidence?
 - Is the evidence consistent with itself?
 - Other considerations...
- The judge is then to decide whether or not they will give credibility to the evidence based on the preponderance of the evidence at hand. The judge will then render their decision for the round.

WDCA Standing Rules regarding Novice Division Restrictions

SECTION VII - NOVICE POLICY DEBATE ARGUMENT LIMITS

Until a date determined by the Executive Committee, arguments in the novice division are restricted to those contained in the official novice evidence packet. Following that date, packet restrictions are removed but affirmatives remain limited to the plan texts specified in the novice evidence packet. In the event that an argument is presented from outside the novice evidence packet, the judge should not consider that argument in their decision, regardless of whether the issue is raised in the debate. If the affirmative team presents a plan that is not found in the novice evidence packet, they should receive a loss. Tournament directors should enforce these novice evidence packet restrictions.

Policy Debate: An Overview

Time Frame for Policy Debate

Constructives

1 st Affirmative Constructive (1AC)	8 Minutes
Cross Examination of 1A	3 Minutes
1 st Negative Constructive (1NC)	8 Minutes
Cross Examination of 1N	3 Minutes
2 nd Affirmative Constructive (2AC)	8 Minutes
Cross Examination of 2A	3 Minutes
2 nd Negative Constructive (2NC)	8 minutes
Cross Examination of 2N	3 Minutes

Rebuttals

1 st Negative Rebuttal (1NR)	5 Minutes
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	5 Minutes
2 nd Negative Rebuttal (2NR)	5 Minutes
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	5 Minutes

Preparation Time (to be used between speeches)

5 minutes each time (occasionally may vary by tournament)

Total 74 minutes

Tips on Keeping Flow Sheets

As stated earlier, a “flow sheet” is a diagram of the course of arguments within the round. As a critic, you are responsible for keeping track of all arguments given. In flowing a debate you should:

1. Start by outlining the first affirmative constructive (1AC) on the far left side of the page.
2. Remember this is only a reminder of the points presented, so use abbreviations when you can. For example, DA for a disadvantage, CX for cross-examination, etc.
3. Use a separate sheet or leave some space for case, plan, counterplan, disads, topicality, and overviews. It is sometimes helpful to use a separate piece for each main contention and advantage. This gives you more space for negative refutation. Again, novices will probably require less.
4. Number and letter the arguments as they are given to keep consistency in the round. When evidence is given flow the author’s name, the date of the evidence, and the source/qualifications (if given) Debaters will often refer to either their letter and number system or the author and date rather than restating the key issue.
5. Note any points dropped or not responded to, and you may want to note any evidence you want to check after the round.

For those new to judging and flowing, *Breaking Down Barriers* offers many suggestions for improving your flowing in the Clashing (chapter 6) and in the What to do in a Debate and at Tournaments (the beginning of chapter 17). CDE Debate has a book called *Techniques of Flowsheeting* that focuses entirely on this skill. Online you can also access “25 Tips for Taking a Better Flow”, at <http://debate.uvm.edu/NFL/rostrumlib/CheshierNov00.pdf>

Speaker Points in Policy

As stated in the introductory section of this handbook, speaker points are awarded to individuals, and should be a reflection of their speaking ability. These points are not to reflect who won or lost the round, but rather who has the better oratory skills. It is important when giving out speaker points to adjust your expectations to the level of debate that you are judging. Just because you are judging a Novice round doesn't mean that you should be handing out 15's to the debaters because they weren't up to Varsity standards. In fact, instances where debaters are given less than 18 speaker points should be rare – perhaps reserved for teams that are abusive or vulgar. 18 is the minimum allowed at the state debate tournament. Therefore, judges generally keep their typical range from 20-30. Finally, keep this guide in mind: most speaker awards are won with a total of around 80 speaker points. If the debater in your round is worthy of this honor, a score of less than 27 will put that student behind in this race. Normally debaters expect that the team receiving the higher speaker point total is the team winning the round. If this is not the case, you should explain why so there is no confusion. Next to the speaker points on the ballot is a line for Rank. On this line, you should rank the debaters from 1 to 4 according to their points. If there is a tie for speaker points in a round, use your best judgment to determine who receives the higher rank.

Reasons for Decision

Your reasons for decision will depend heavily on your judging paradigm (more information about paradigms and deciding rounds can be found in the Judging FAQ section). In most rounds, however, your decision will be based on a two-tier analysis. The first tier is known as “a priori” issues. Basically, these are issues that must be considered before the benefits of the case are weighed against the disadvantages. A priori issues can justify a decision on their own merits without including any other arguments made in the round. Once again, depending on your paradigm different issues may be considered a priori.

Two issues that are almost always considered a priori are Topicality and *major* procedural, ethical, or philosophical violations. Topicality violations argue that the Affirmative *plan text* (not including enforcement and funding or any of the case supports/advantages) does not provide an example of the Resolution. You can vote against the Affirmative team on Topicality if it is argued by the negative (and you agree that the negative has won the argument). If the Negative team loses topicality, however, they do not incur a loss for their team. Like other issues in the round, Topicality should be evaluated by the judge only as argued in the debate by the two teams – personal opinion is irrelevant.

Other violations may include Affirmatives that don't present a complete case in the 1AC, flagrant and frequent disregard of time limits, continual interruption of opponent's speeches, derogatory or demeaning comments made by one team against another. Because the loss of a round is the harshest punishment a judge can inflict it is not a step to be taken lightly for ethical violations. You should carefully consider whether or not a deduction in speaker points or a conversation with their coach would be more appropriate. For these issues, you should write comments on the ballot. If it affected the outcome of the round, you should state that in your reason for decision. If it did not, you should still write down your comments so that the coach has a written record to refer to when they speak to the debater.

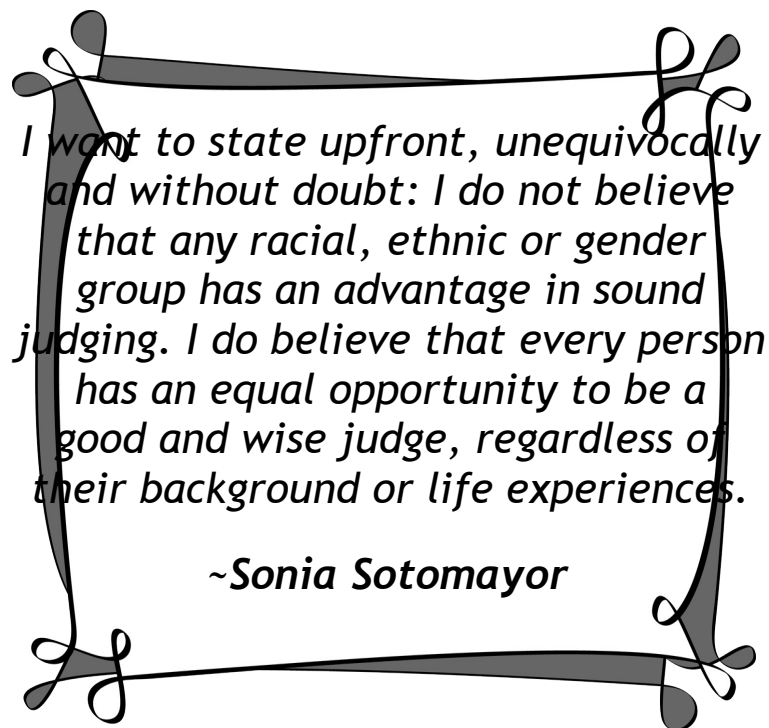
Sometimes your judging paradigm will lead you to include other issues within the first tier of your decision. Other times, the debaters themselves will argue that specific issues, like kritiks, deserve to be considered at the a priori level. A specific example would be Extra-Topicality, a plan that goes beyond the scope of the Resolution (rather than not falling within it). Some judges feel that this is an a priori issue, while others feel that the correct response is to sever the aspects of plan that make it Extra-Topical and thus remove those sections of the Affirmative case from their decisions. I have seen debaters argue this issue both ways.

Once you have clarified any of the a priori issues, and assuming that none of them cause a loss to one team or the other, you can begin to weigh the other issues in the round. Often, good teams will attempt to do this for you and you should address their analysis, whether you agree or not, in your decision. When teams fail to weigh the round for you, or when you disagree with their analysis, you can fall back on logic, common sense, and your judging paradigm to guide you to a decision.

In all cases, you must present a clear and detailed reason for every decision you make. It helps to address specific arguments and evidence directly and use them in your analysis of the round. You should avoid any contradictions in your decision as well as this undermines the legitimacy of it.

EXAMPLE FLOW, COMMENTS AND DECISION:

Note: For the sake of clarity, the following flow does not contain the abbreviations, shorthand, or symbols that judges use to make flowing easier.



2AR

2NR

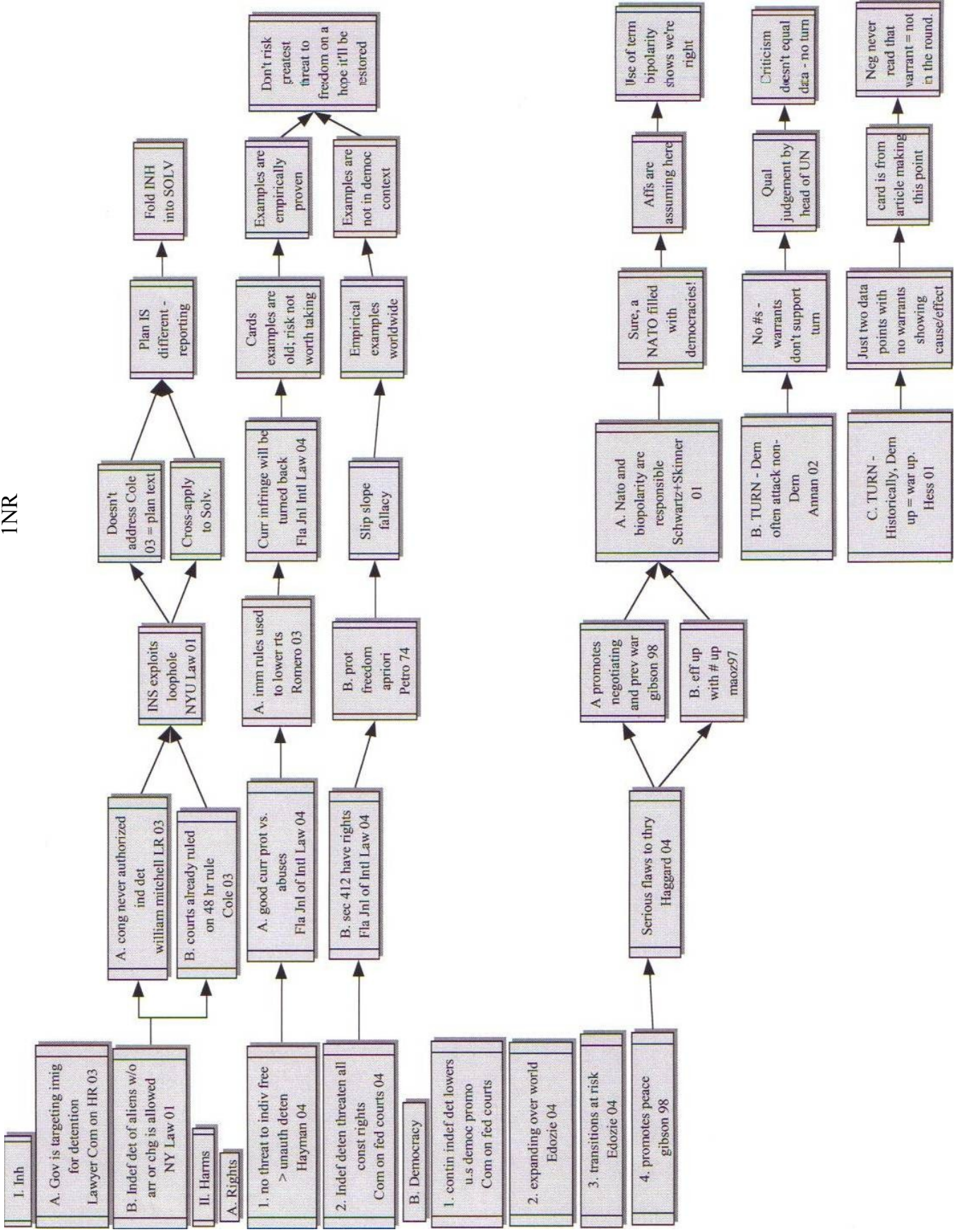
1AR

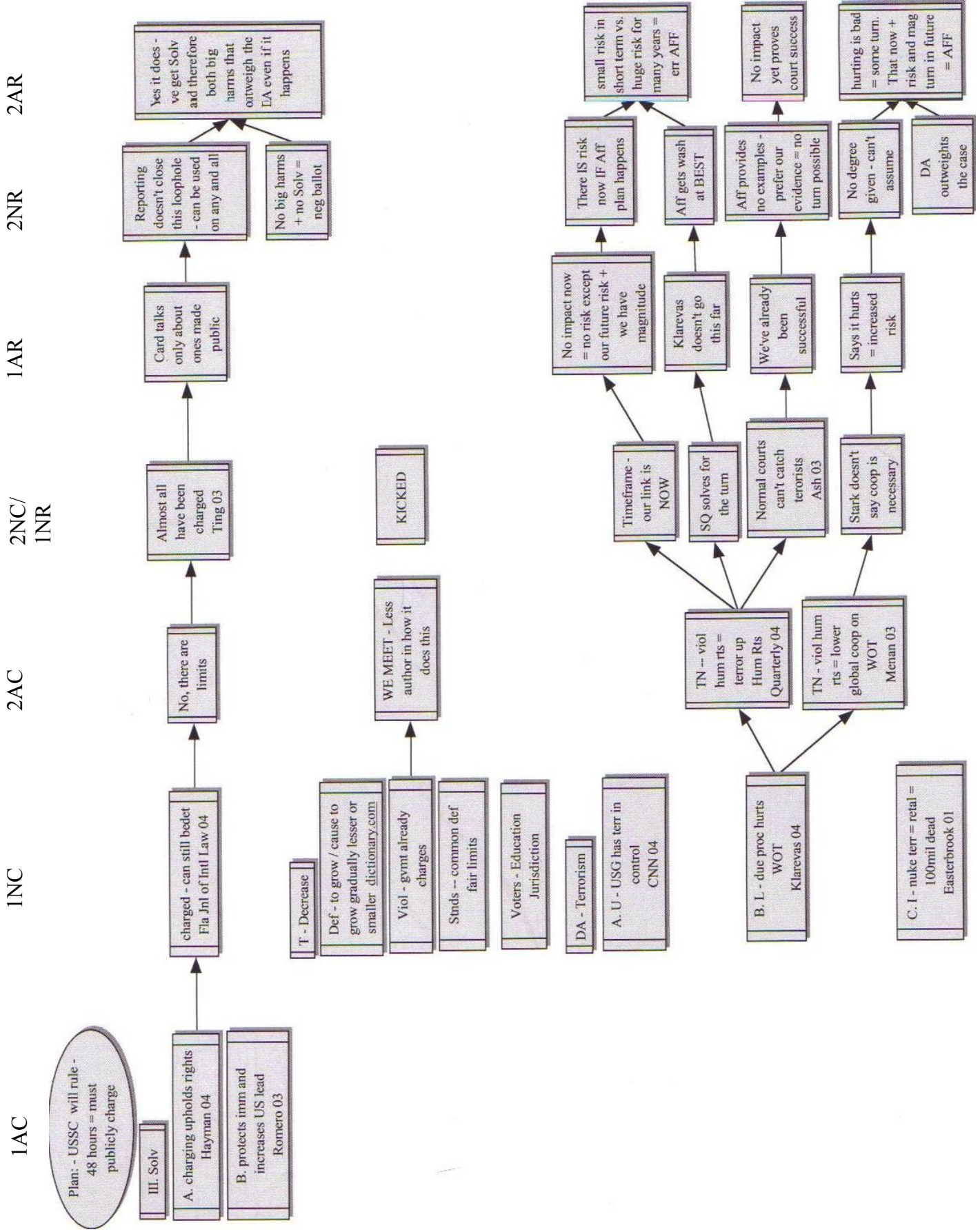
2NC/
1NR

2AC

1NC

1AC





Sample Decision:

Example of a Ballot

A judge's reputation is often related to how well he or she writes a ballot. Try to leave the students with a reason(s) why one team won, one lost.

Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association Policy Debate Ballot

Division JV Round 2 Room 122 Date 11/18 Judge F. Prefect School Sunnydale HS

Aff Team/Code <u>DC JD</u>	Neg Team/Code <u>GG LR</u>
Names Points (10-30) Rank (1-4)	Names Points (10-30) Rank (1-4)
<u>Joe James</u> <u>25</u> <u>4</u>)	<u>Lori Lemas</u> <u>28</u> <u>1</u>)
<u>Dorian Dunn</u> <u>26</u> <u>3</u>)	<u>Roger Ramone</u> <u>27</u> <u>2</u>)

Decision: The winning team is the (Circle) Affirmative Negative Team/Code GG LR
 Low Point Win (Circle) Yes No

Comments for 1st Aff
 Very clean read of the 1AC. I appreciated how clear the tags were. In CX try not to look to your partner after you answer each question; it shows you weren't very confident of your answers. Other teams will notice and try to exploit that. IAR: Please explain more about WHY reporting makes so much of a difference. This is key to your solvency! Good job weighing the DA, but you really do need some evidence.
Comments for 2nd Aff
 Try to fit in time for a counter-definition in addition to your "we meet" on T - many judges want to hear a competing interpretation. I would explain how your plan solves for the problem you bring up yourself in the NYU Law card. That's the problem you're having on solvency right now. Love what you did with bipolarity, democracy and the Schwartz card. Great analysis! I appreciate the risk to freedom argument in 2AR, but without examples, you simply

Comments for 1st Neg
 Your T violation was basically the same argument as your inherency/solvency. This makes it too easy for an Aff to cover it all with fewer arguments. Go for a different violation if you want to run T. Great cross-ex questions trying to pin down the differences between the Aff and the SQ - can be used to bolster your solv. attacks. Fantastic job on the DA in the block. Great analysis that really puts the Affs in a tough spot.
Comments for 2nd Neg
 Kicking the T violation probably a good idea, as you definitely wanted to focus on the Inh/Solv problems of the Aff...and a great job there. Ting O3 is a huge card for you - great job impacting that in the round. In rebuttal, you started a little unorganized but recovered well. You were clutch in explaining how Ash takes their turns. Thank you for then weighing the DA against the weakened case. Your impact story was very compelling.

Reasons for Decision:
 First, I side with the Affirmative on most of the harms issues. The 2AR's point of not risking freedom on the HOPE that it'll come back is a very good one. The negatives persuade me that losing freedom doesn't lead to a "right-less" state, and so I don't give it a priori weight, but losing freedom is still quite bad. In the democracy harm, both sides present scenarios where democracies have cause peace or war. The Hess card doesn't have the warrants to carry a turn, but I can't just ignore the Annan card. However, Gibson and Schwartz show real examples of peace due to a more democratic, bipolar NATO. Therefore, I find that the positives and negatives of democracy wash. Affs are left with the Harm of rights to weigh in the round.
 Next, I am left with some serious questions regarding the Affirmative's solvency. The loophole that the negatives keep bringing up is never satisfactorily answered. At no time does the Aff bring up a card saying that making all charges public solves and the negatives successfully prove that publishing is the only significant difference between the Aff plan and the SQ. So the impact of the Affs solving their harm becomes very minimal.
 Finally, the DA. The key here is the insufficient response the AFF gives to the Ash O3 card. This card clearly says that without the SQ's system of catching terrorists, it cannot be done. So the first turn comes down to more terrorists that CAN be caught versus less terrorists that can't. Since the negs win the immediate timeframe and magnitude seems a wash, I can't pull the trigger on this turn. The second importance of Ash O3 is that with a court system that can't make for terrorism, it would matter how

Judging FAQ– Edited by the WDCA DRDWhat does it mean when debaters “split the block”?

Negatives may choose to “split the block” and defer some responses to second affirmative constructive arguments until the first negative rebuttal. This is a widely accepted practice and is, in fact, encouraged by many coaches. This is partially because most judges and debaters view the negative block (the second negative constructive and the first negative rebuttal) as a single speech. If you do not feel that this is an acceptable strategy you should communicate your position to the debaters before the round. On the other hand, if the negative team has used the spread technique, including a large number of unimportant arguments simply to make it impossible for the affirmative to answer them all during the rebuttal, common sense should prevail.

What is a paradigm and how does it influence my decision?

First, there are different ways of making a decision. The framework you chose to view the round from is called your judging paradigm. While many judges prefer a specific paradigm to others most judges do combine various aspects of the different paradigms to create a hybrid approach. As with other biases, you will want to communicate your paradigm to both teams before the round starts. A number of typical paradigms are listed below:

1) Speaking Style

- a) The decision is based on the ability of each team to articulate their positions and to persuade the judge.
- b) Less focus is given to the winners of individual points or to weighing the advantages versus the disadvantages.

2) Stock Issues

- a) The decision is based on the affirmative winning all five of the stock issues.
 - i. Inherency – that the Affirmative plan is not (and, sometimes, will not) be implemented in the Status Quo.
 - ii. Significance – that the Affirmative plan identifies a qualitative or quantitative problem. This is usually incorporated into Harms.
 - iii. Harms – that the Affirmative plan identifies a problem that has negative impacts or implications.
 - iv. Solvency – that the Affirmative plan can solve for the significant harms that were identified.
 - v. Topicality – that the Affirmative plan falls within the scope of the resolution.
- b) Less focus is given to additional Affirmative advantages, Negative disadvantages, and Negative counterplans.

3) Policy Maker

- a) The decision is based on a calculus that weighs the probability and impact of Affirmative advantages (and the solving of identified harms) versus the probability and impact of the Negative Disadvantages (and/or the advantages of the Negative counterplan).
- b) Less focus is given to arguments regarding debate theory.

4) Tabula Rasa (Blank Slate) (Often referred to as TABS)

- a) The decision is based on any/all arguments presented in the round.
 - i. This means that debates can be won on substantive issues (like advantages vs. disadvantages) or on theoretical issues (abuse of fiat, Topicality as a reverse voter, etc.).
 - ii. It is most often up to the debaters to weigh the issues for the judge and explain why their positions should win the round.
- b) Because all positions and arguments are viable this provides less of a guide for making decisions.

5) Gamesplayer

- a) Views debate purely as a competitive experience so the only thing that matters is finding a way to pick a winner and a loser.
- b) This is not considered an acceptable framework by the WDCA.

How do I write out and justify my decision?

After you choose the winner, your work is not over. You need to justify your decision. That means you need to give reasons for your decision. You should give reasons that are as good as you expect the debaters to give. Here are some suggestions for giving good justifications for your decision.

1) Explain why you chose one side's position over another. Avoid writing ballots like this classic example of a ballot gone wrong:

- i. **Significance: Affirmative**
- ii. **Inherency: negative**
- iii. **Solvency: Affirmative**
- iv. **Disads: Negative on DA 1 and Affirmative on DA 2**
- v. **Topicality: not argued**

This judge fails to offer any reasons for his or her conclusion. We do not know why he or she concluded that the negative 'won' inherency or the first disadvantage. The comment about topicality is irrelevant, although it does tell debaters that this is one of the five issues on which this judge is willing to vote.

2) Assess both sides' arguments and you should explain why the assessment led to the decision. Unfortunately, just giving reasons is not adequate either. You should explain why you chose one team's arguments and how this led you to make the decision. For example, a judge who explains, "**I voted negative because the negative demonstrated the plan would cause nuclear war,**" just does not tell debaters very much – unless the debate is very lopsided. Such a decision will tell a coach even less. Why does the judge believe the plan would cause nuclear war? Why does the judge believe this disadvantage justifies a negative ballot? What about the affirmative advantages? A judge should assess the debaters' arguments and then explain why that assessment led to a decision in favor of one side. For example:

I voted negative on the nuclear war disadvantage. The negative argued that warfighting would increase the thinkability of war because it requires the defense department to plan for 'winnable' 'small' nuclear wars. The affirmative only had one response. They argued that thinkability is non-unique because we already plan for nuclear wars. Unfortunately, the negative pointed out that warfighting uniquely increases thinkability because it instills a mindset of winnable, small nuclear wars - not just nuclear wars like the present system. The negative demonstrated that nuclear war is much more likely and a much more serious consequence than the danger of Soviet aggression. The Soviet danger is not very great given the negative's arguments that Gorbachev has reduced tensions and the Soviets are more concerned with their internal problems.

Public Forum Debate: An Overview

Public Forum Debate (PFD) is a team event that advocates or rejects a position posed by the monthly resolution topic (announced online at www.wdca.org). The clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or “citizen judge”, i.e. a member of the American jury. The debate should:

- Display solid logic, lucid reasoning, and depth of analysis
- Utilize evidence without being driven by it
- Present a clash of ideas by countering/refuting arguments of the opposing team (rebuttal)
- Communicate ideas with clarity, organization, eloquence, and professional decorum

Since Public Forum is more about policies and theories, the types of arguments that are utilized are very different than other types of debate. Weight is given to arguments as a whole, not just to evidence and plans. Debaters should show analytic skills and the ability to think on their feet.

FORMAT & TIME LIMITS

The round starts with a **coin toss**; the winning team selects either the **side** (pro or con) they will argue or the speaker **order** (electing to begin the debate or to give the last speech).

The team that loses the toss will then decide their preference from the option not selected by the winner (*i.e., if the winning team decides to speak last, then the losing team may decide which side they will argue*). Following these rules, the debate may begin with the con side, arguing against the topic. Some judges elect to have the first speaker’s team sit to their left, to align the position of the teams to the columns on the ballot. Seating arrangements are simply up to your opinion.

Speech Limits and Order

Speaker 1 (Team A, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Speaker 2 (Team B, 1st speaker)	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 1 & 2)	3 min.
Speaker 3 (Team A, 2nd speaker).....	4 min.
Speaker 4 (Team B, 2nd speaker).....	4 min.
Crossfire (between speakers 3 & 4)	3 min.
Speaker 1 Summary	2 min.
Speaker 2 Summary	2 min.
Grand Crossfire (all speakers)	3 min.
Speaker 3 Final Focus.....	2 min.
Speaker 4 Final Focus.....	2 min.

Each team may use up to two minutes of prep time.

During "**crossfire**," the two previous speakers stand, asking and answering questions in a polite, but argumentative exchange. Unlike traditional cross-examination, both speakers may question each other, however, the first question of the crossfire period is usually asked to the speaker who just finished.

Summary speeches are rebuttals that extend earlier arguments made or answer opposing refutations, and may incorporate new evidence, but not new *arguments*.

In the **grand crossfire**, all four debaters may remain seated, asking and answering questions. The team that had the first summary usually asks the first question. After that, any debater may question or answer.

The **final focus** is a compelling restatement of why the judge should vote pro or con. Given the short period, the team must decide what arguments weigh most importantly on the decision. No *new* arguments are accepted in the final focus speeches.

EVALUATION & JUDGING

The judge is the chairperson of the round (facilitating the coin flip and giving time signals if requested), and may halt any crossfire lacking civility. S/he may not *interact* in the crossfire beyond reminders of rules and decorum.

Judges evaluate teams on the quality of the arguments actually made, not on their own personal beliefs, and not on issues they think a particular side *should have covered*. Judges should assess the bearing of each argument on the truth or falsehood of the assigned resolution. The pro should prove that the resolution is true, and the con should prove that the resolution is not true. When deciding the round, judges should ask, “If I had no prior beliefs about this resolution, would the round as a whole have made me more likely to believe the resolution was true or not true?” Teams should strive to provide a straightforward perspective on the resolution; judges should discount unfair, obscure interpretations that only serve to confuse the opposing team. **Plans (formalized, comprehensive proposals for implementation), counterplans and kritiks (off-topic arguments) are not allowed.** Generalized, practical solutions should support a position of advocacy.

Quality, well-explained arguments should trump a mere quantity thereof. Debaters should use quoted evidence to support their claims, and well-chosen, relevant evidence may strengthen – *but not replace* – arguments.

Clear communication is a major consideration. Judges weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained, and they will discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. A team should not be penalized for failing to understand his or her opponent’s unclear arguments.

When deciding the round, you should keep in mind both the speaking skills and the arguments made in the round. Be careful not to let your personal views interfere with what was actually said in the round. Speaker points for Public Forum are given to the team as a pair, not to individual speakers. There is a place designated on the ballot for individual speaker comments to be written.

In short, Public Forum Debate stresses that speakers must appeal to the widest possible audience through sound reasoning, succinct organization, credible evidence, and clear delivery. Team points provide a mechanism for evaluating the relative “quality of debating” by each side.

Rules and information above adapted from the National Forensic League, www.nflonline.org

Flowing a Public Forum round

Keeping track of what is said and countered in the round is the most different part of judging a Public Forum round. Here are some tips to keep in mind to make it easier.

Group your flow by arguments. Use some sort of visual record to keep a set of arguments and refutations together. Many judges find it useful to use rows for this. They would set up a column for each speech and write the statements down in that column. The first speech determines which row arguments are placed into. Then any refutations, clarifications, or restatements are placed in the corresponding row. New arguments would be given a new row at the bottom of the page. Then, when you are reviewing the flow to make your final decision, you are able to read across the row for everything said about that argument. Some judges tweak this method by using separate pages for each argument. Other judges group their flows according to Contentions and Scenarios. Scenarios are the general picture of what would happen, or what is currently happening in regards to the topic. Contentions are the specific examples or evidence that supports the scenario.

Either way you choose to flow, make sure that you are able to keep up with the statements as they are made. Many debaters in Public Forum will expect you to flow Crossfires. Clarifications and refutations may not be brought up again, due to the short speech times, but should be recorded as if they were brought up in a speech.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate: An Overview

Lincoln Douglas debate centers on a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what *ought to be* instead of what *is*. Values are ideals held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. Neither side is permitted to offer a *plan* (a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation); rather, they should offer reasoning to support a general principle. Debaters may offer generalized, practical examples or solutions to illustrate how the general principle could guide decisions. Hallmarks include:

1. **Parallel Burdens:** No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is debatable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.

- *Burden of proof:* Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As the resolution is a statement of value, there is no presumption for either side.
- *Burden of clash:* After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his/her opponent.
- *Resolitional burden:* The debaters are equally obligated to focus the debate on the central questions of the resolution, not whether the resolution itself is worthy of debate. Because the affirmative must uphold the resolution, the negative must also argue the resolution as presented.

2. **Value Structure:** The debater establishes a value structure (or framework) to serve two functions: a) to provide an interpretation of the central focus of the resolution, and b) to provide a method for the judge to evaluate the central questions of the resolution. The value structure often (but not always) consists of:

- *Definitions:* The affirmative should offer definitions, be they dictionary or contextual, that provides a reasonable ground for debate. The negative has the option to challenge these definitions and to offer counter-definitions.
- *Value Premise/Core Value:* A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serves as the highest goal to be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved. In general, the debater will establish a value which focuses the central questions of the resolution and will serve as a foundation for argumentation.
- *Value Criterion/Standard:* Generally, each debater will present a standard, used to:
 - explain how the value should be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved.
 - measure whether an argument protects, respects, maximizes, advances, or achieves the value.
 - evaluate the relevance and importance of an argument in the context of the round.

The relationship between the value premise and the criterion should be clearly articulated. During the debate, the debaters may argue the validity or priority of the two value structures. They may accept their opponent's value structure, prove the superiority of their own value structure, or synthesize the two.

3. **Argumentation:** Debaters are obligated to construct logical chains of reasoning which lead to the conclusion of the affirmative or negative position. The nature of proof may take a variety of forms (e.g., a student's original analysis, application of philosophy, examples, analogies, statistics, expert opinion, etc.). Arguments should be presented in a cohesive manner that shows a clear relationship to the value structure. Research should be conducted and presented ethically from academically sound and appropriately cited sources.

4. **Cross-Examination:** Questioning should clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments in the round.

5. **Delivery:** Effective oral communication requires clarity of thought and expression. Arguments should be worded and delivered in a manner accessible to an educated non-specialist audience. This communication encompasses:

- *Written:* Cases and arguments should be constructed in a manner that is organized, accessible, and informative to the listener. The debater should employ clear logic and analysis supported by topical research.
- *Verbal:* The debater has the obligation to be clear, audible and comprehensible, and to speak persuasively to the listeners. Additionally, debaters should strive for fluency, expressiveness, effective word choice, and eloquence.
- *Non-verbal:* The debater should demonstrate an effective use of gestures, eye contact, and posture.

Throughout a round, debaters should demonstrate civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.

Flowing a Lincoln-Douglas Round

When Flowing Lincoln-Douglas, you should always keep in mind the values that are presented. These are the “Big Picture” arguments that will guide the flow of the round. Usually a good method for keeping track is to keep one sheet for the arguments that concern the value(s) that are presented, and one sheet for the Criteria. You may judge a round when all of the debating is focused on just one Value and one Criterion, but sometimes you will encounter more. Keeping them separate on paper will help you to follow the arguments about each. You will be expected to flow during the Cross-Examination time, and sometimes ideas brought up in those times will only be mentioned in passing during a regular speech. A good way to keep track of these is to either use a different colored pen, or to put them as margin notes inside the columns for the speeches. Remember that there will only be 4 speeches in the round, as each side has just one debater.

Order/Time Limits of Speeches:

Affirmative Constructive	6 min
Neg Cross-Ex of Aff	3 min
Negative Constructive	7 min
Aff Cross-Ex of Neg	3 min
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min
Negative Rebuttal	6 min
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 min
Each debater has 4 min. prep used before their own speaking times, at their discretion.	

Speaker Points in LD

Speaker points in LD are determined with virtually the same recommendations as Policy speaker points. Most ballots that you will receive will list the ranges for speaker points as the following:

- 20-21 Below Average
- 22-23 Average
- 24-26 Good
- 27-28 Excellent
- 29-30 Outstanding

When determining speaker points, remember that this is an indicator of speaking ability, and not just how skilled the debater is at argumentation. The speaker that has the highest points may not be the one that wins the round. Perhaps they dropped arguments, or failed to refute. Though you are able to consider those as a part of the score, these should not be the primary concern when deliberating on speaker points. Think more of the aspects described on the previous page, in item “5. Delivery” in the Overview.

Judging Recommendations

The Lincoln-Douglas Education Project believes that LD debate is primarily an educational activity. Because it is also a competitive activity, LD teaches by rewarding academic excellence with the incentives of speaker points, ballots, and tournament awards. Judges control these incentives and are therefore the most influential teachers in debate. The LDEP encourages the following practices by judge-educators to promote fair, academically constructive debate:

1. Model professional, respectful behavior at all times. Treat all students, coaches, and other tournament participants with civility and kindness. Do not tolerate rude or disrespectful behavior from contestants, and report any such behavior to the student's coach and the tab room. Follow all announced tournament policies and instructions. Maintain appropriate professional distance from any students you are eligible to judge.
2. Recuse yourself from any possible conflicts of interest. The following are examples of relationships to students that constitute conflicts of interest: past teammate, present or past coach, paid assistant, past summer workshop teacher, future summer workshop colleague, parent or other relative, personal friend. Notify the tab room immediately if you have a possible conflict of interest.
3. Judge the debaters on the quality of the arguments they make, not on your own personal beliefs or on the arguments you wish they had made. Set aside personal biases as much as possible. Remember that the debaters do not get to choose their sides and that they cannot read your mind. They can respond only to the arguments their opponents actually make.
4. Prefer balanced, straightforward interpretations of the resolution to unfair or obscure interpretations. If the debaters offer different interpretations of the resolution, make your decision on the basis of whichever interpretation better fits ordinary English usage and provides more equal grounds for reasonable public debate.
5. Weigh arguments only to the extent that the debaters make their relevance to the resolution clear. The National Forensic League states that: "Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As an LD resolution is a general statement of value, there is no presumption for either side." A good question to ask as you decide each round is, "If I had no prior beliefs about this resolution, would the round as a whole have made me more likely to believe the resolution was true or false?"
6. Prefer quality and depth to mere quantity of arguments. Reward students who present detailed, well-explained arguments. Judge the quality of arguments presented in the round as a whole. To promote substantive, serious debate, do not penalize students for failing to address frivolous or minor points due to time constraints.
7. Consider quoted evidence only as support for arguments explained by the debaters. Well-chosen evidence may strengthen arguments. However, quoted evidence should not replace arguments by the debaters, and all evidence should be explained in relation to the resolution.
8. Treat clear communication as a major consideration. Remember that LD is a speech communication event. Weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained. It is acceptable to discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a normal educated adult. Do not penalize a debater for failing to understand his or her opponent's unclear arguments.
9. Use the full range of speaker points allowed by the tournament to evaluate overall performance. Rate student performance honestly and avoid point inflation. Points in the highest range should be rare. Points in the low range are appropriate for poor arguments or poor communication. Use points below the tournament's announced floor only to punish rude or flagrantly unethical conduct.
10. Write constructive suggestions for each debater and a thorough reason for decision. The ballot should remain a valuable educational tool for students and their coaches long after the tournament is over. Even if you make oral comments after the round, use the ballot to provide a permanent record of strengths and weaknesses and of the specific issues that led you to decide as you did.
11. Pursue suspected dishonesty with students, coaches and tournament officials after the round. If you believe a student is plagiarizing, fabricating, or otherwise misusing research sources, confront the student after the debate and follow up with coaches and tournament directors as appropriate. Do not unilaterally sanction a student for what you believe is academic dishonesty.
12. Communicate directly with coaches about student performance and conduct. Coaches are educators responsible for the academic development of their students, but they rarely have the chance to watch their students compete. Clear lines of communication help to correct problems, prevent misunderstandings, and maximize the educational value of tournaments.

e-mail: ldep@hws.edu *The Lincoln-Douglas Education Project* www.hws.edu/ldep

Glossary

Advantage – A beneficial result from an Affirmative case.

A-spec – Agent Specific Topicality, when the Affirmative did not specify which agent would fulfill duties of the plan

Bright Line - A definition that leaves no grey area. (i.e. poverty line is \$10,830 for one person. Anyone below this is in poverty, anyone above this is not.)

Contention – The sub-points inside of speeches. These are usually identified in the first speech of the round.

Counterplan – An alternative to the Affirmative plan that is presented by the Negatives to solve the same problem. It should have a plan text, solvency, and be competing with the Affirmative plan.

Criterion – How you show that you have achieved the value presented in a Lincoln-Douglas round.

Critique – *see Kritik*

Cross-Apply – When a response is applied to more than one argument in the round.

DA – Stands for Disadvantage.

Disadvantage - This is negative consequence of passing the Affirmative plan. It consists of at least 3 parts: 1) Uniqueness (the status quo is sufficient) 2) Link (How it connects to what the Affirmative plan will change) 3) Impact (What will happen)

Drop – An argument is dropped when no response is made in the round.

Extend – To apply a piece of evidence in subsequent speeches by referencing (sometimes just by the tag, author, and year).

Extra-Topicality – When the Affirmative plan does more than what the resolution states.

Fiat – The Affirmative’s right to assume that the plan is passed according to their text.

Flow – The act of or the product created when taking notes in the round.

Hegemony – The combination of soft power (political influence) and hard power (military force). Hegemony is directly related to the country’s leadership ability.

Impact – What will result from an argument.

Impact Calculus – The analysis of impacts presented in the round. Usually a judge would consider Magnitude (how big, how bad), Time Frame (how fast and how long it will last), and Probability (how likely) the impacts are. Debaters will ask you to do “impact calculus” towards the end of the round, asking you to evaluate their impacts as more important than the other team’s.

Inherency – The reason why the Affirmative plan cannot be passed right now.

Internal Link – The connection made between an action taken in the Affirmative plan and the effect of that action.

Kritik – A philosophical argument that claims that there is a fundamental flaw that hinders the enactment of the plan or gives reasons that the plan should be rejected.

Mutually-Exclusive – Two or more things that cannot happen at the same time. Usually is referred to when comparing a counterplan and the Affirmative plan, but it is found elsewhere.

Negative Block – The 2NC and the 1NR. These speeches are consecutive, and sometimes treated as one speech. (See FAQ in the Policy section for more on “Splitting the Block”)

Non-Topical – When a plan or counterplan does not follow the text of the resolution.

Off case – An argument that is not related to Inherency, Harms, Significance, Solvency, or an Affirmative advantage.

On case - An argument that is related to Inherency, Harms, Significance, Solvency, or an Affirmative advantage.

Open Cross-Ex – Sometimes called “Tag Team”. This allows the debaters to answer or ask questions in lieu of their partner during cross-ex.

O-spec – Over Specification. When the Affirmative names too specific of an agent to carry out or oversee their plan.

Paradigm – The philosophy through which you will judge the round. See the handbook for more details.

Pic – “Plan Inclusive Counterplans”. A counterplan that modifies the Affirmative plan in some small way, while keeping the plan intact.

Political Capital – The power that a political figure holds to gain support for their issues.

Prep Time – Time that debaters may use in between speeches to prepare.

Presumption - the concept that the present system is innocent until proven otherwise.

Scenario – The big picture in which debaters present their contentions. In policy, a scenario may include several stock issues.

Severence – When the Affirmative changes the plan text after the 1AC to avoid a negative argument as part of a permutation.

Solvency – How the plan will decrease the harms from the status quo.

Standards – Reasons why the definition is good in the Topicality argument.

Stock Issues – Significance (often included within Harms), Harms, Inherency, Topicality, and Solvency.

Tag – A summary statement presented before the author and date of a piece of evidence.

Time Suck – An argument that is ran to waste the other team’s time in the round.

Topical – Being related to the resolution.

Turn – To use the other team’s argument in a way that is beneficial to you.

Value – The lens through which we should view the world. It is the big picture that dictates what is important in a Lincoln-Douglas round.

Value Criterion – *See Criterion*

Value Heirarchy – The way that you rank the values from most to least important in an LD round.

Voters – The arguments that the judge should consider when deciding the outcome of the round. When used in a Topicality argument, voters are the reason why a judge should look at Topicality as important to the round.

Weighing – An overview of all the arguments that were presented in the round and how the impact calculus indicates a winner.