

# Lincoln Douglas Debate Guide™

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# PREFACE

Welcome to Lincoln Douglas debate!

Lincoln Douglas debate will provide you the opportunity to learn life-time skills as you research, formulate, develop formal arguments and polish your persuasive presentations. LD debate is particularly beneficial because it encompasses many areas of academia: philosophy, history, social science, rhetoric, communication and political science. Any competitor stands to gain immensely from investing time in this competitive event. It is no wonder that it is such a popular component of the UIL activities program.

As you progress in this event, you will certainly want to extend your knowledge in the ethical and philosophical areas LD debaters learn to incorporate into their arguments. We have provided a list of resources that should be helpful for this enrichment. As you compete, watch for new trends that continue to make LD debate unique and challenging forensic events. Remember, also, that philosophies of debate coaches, judges and theorists differ. Therefore, the information included in this book is based on the knowledge of what has worked successfully for the students of the author and editor, but certainly not exclusionary to other concepts as this event continues to evolve.

This handbook also provides UIL rules and contest procedures. Familiarize yourself with these as an essential part of reaching success in this contest. We hope this resource will help you in your preparation to be successful in LD debate and that you will enjoy the learning experience of Lincoln Douglas debate competition!

**Jana Riggins**, *Editor*

UIL State Speech and Debate Director

# A BOUT THE AUTHOR

Larry McCarty has worked for decades as an educator, debate coach and UIL sponsor. As a teacher he has taught classes in Debate, Speech, AP U.S. History, AP U.S. Government, Economics, World Geography, and Media Literacy. During his years at Ingram Tom Moore High School he coached more than 50 students who competed at the UIL State Meet with nine state champions in debate and speaking events. He has presented study reports to the National Federation CX Debate topic selection committee and was the author of one report that provided the national renewable energy topic. He has also served on the UIL Lincoln Douglas topic selection committee.

Working closely with UIL for the past two decades, McCarty has conducted lectures at a number of UIL Student Activities Conferences and the annual UIL Capital Conference. He also conducts workshops for high schools across the state in speech and debate activities and has worked at several summer debate institutes. He has written manuals for speech and debate competition as well as more than 60 topic specific handbooks for both Lincoln Douglas and CX debate.

During the course of his teaching career, McCarty has received teaching excellence awards from his Ingram ISD, the Kerrville Chamber of Commerce and the West Kerr County Chamber of Commerce. He is the recipient of the UIL Sponsor Excellence Award as well as the state and sectional National Federation Outstanding Speech/Theatre/Debate Educator Award. Mr. McCarty holds a degree in speech communication from Southwest Texas State University, where he competed in policy debate for four years. Today he continues to write handbooks for both LD and policy debate, lectures at UIL conferences and school workshops, and writes practice and tournament material for Current Events, Extemporaneous Speaking, Social Studies and Literary Criticism. He served as the UIL State Social Studies Contest Director for a decade and has served as both contest director and assistant contest director at the UIL state CX tournament for more than 15 years.

# T ABLE OF CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| <a href="#">Section 1 Introduction to Lincoln Douglas Debate</a> ..... | 6  |
| <b>Why Debate?</b>   |    |
| <b>What is Lincoln Douglas Debate</b>                                  |    |
| <b>The Basic Format</b>  |    |
| <a href="#">Section 2 Fundamentals of Value Debate</a> .....           | 11 |
| <b>Types of Propositions</b>   |    |
| <b>Parts of the Resolution</b>   |    |
| <a href="#">Section 3 The Value Premise and Criterion</a> .....        | 17 |
| <b>Values in the General Sense</b>                                     |    |
| <b>Understanding the Criterion</b>                                     |    |
| <a href="#">Section 4 Evidence and Research</a> .....                  | 24 |
| <b>Sources of Information</b>  |    |
| <b>Organizing Information</b>  |    |
| <b>Sample Brief</b>  |    |
| <a href="#">Section 5 Preparing the Case</a> .....                     | 34 |
| <b>Writing a Case in Six Easy Steps</b>                                |    |
| <b>Step-by-Step Demonstration</b>                                      |    |
| <b>The Negative Case</b>   |    |
| <a href="#">Section 6 Philosophy and Philosophers</a> .....            | 48 |
| <b>What is Philosophy</b>  |    |
| <b>Philosophers</b>  |    |
| <a href="#">Section 7 Cross Examination Strategies</a> .....           | 58 |
| <a href="#">Section 8 Communication and Refutation</a> .....           | 61 |
| <b>Techniques</b>  |    |
| <b>Sample Flow Sheet</b>   |    |
| <a href="#">Section 9 Tournaments and Competition</a> .....            | 67 |
| <a href="#">UIL Contest Rules</a>                                      |    |
| <a href="#">Computer Guidelines</a>                                    |    |
| <a href="#">How to Run a Meet</a>                                      |    |
| <a href="#">Appendix</a> .....   | 90 |

# SECTION I — INTRODUCTION TO LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE

## WHY DEBATE?

Why should you participate in Lincoln Douglas debate? If you are taking the time to read this manual, you obviously have a least some degree of interest in the activity or you have been given this material to read as part of an assignment for a debate class. But seriously, taking the time to learn more about Lincoln Douglas debate and becoming an active participant in competition will prove very beneficial.

For the individual whose knowledge of the activity is limited, debate is perceived as little more than systematic arguing. Obviously, debate is more than some elaborate form of rhetorical exchange. It is, in fact, more than merely a type of organized argument.

### PAUSE TO REFLECT

#### Ask yourself the following questions

Why am I interested in participating in debate?

What are some things I already know about debate?

What are some of the benefits that result from participating in debate?

At the outset, students who participate in debate competition will almost immediately enjoy the benefits of improved communication skills that result from the time spent involved in the activity. Moreover, you will reap the reward of gaining a tremendous amount of knowledge, not merely about debate itself, but related to the numerous subjects that are considered by participants.

You will learn to develop ideas, research concepts, organize information, prepare arguments, and defend your perspectives in debate rounds. In order to enjoy the maximum level of success in the activity, it is essential that you become aware of all facets of Lincoln Douglas debate.

In addition to the presentation of ideas in formal competition, you will have the benefit of being able to directly ask questions of your opponents. You will also be in a situation that will require you to answer questions directly. The clarification of ideas that occurs during this portion of competitive debate is extremely valuable not only within the immediate context of the actual debate round itself, but in the larger realm of reinforcing knowledge related to concepts and ideals.

I strongly recommend that you read this handbook in its entirety and keep it handy as a reference source. It includes valuable information about Lincoln Douglas debate in addition to several useful graphics as well as a list of handy resources that can be used to guide your research efforts.

# WHAT IS LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE?

There are two relatively unique characteristics of Lincoln Douglas debate. The first is that, unlike Cross-Examination Debate, LD is not a team event but instead involves competition between two individuals, one-on-one. The other characteristic of LD debate relates to the nature of subjects considered by participants. Unlike CX debate, which deals with policy issues, LD draws attention to the discussion of values. In other words, Cross Examination debaters will typically spend more time addressing questions related to “what” while Lincoln Douglas debaters will focus more time on questions related to “why”?

## HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1858, U.S. Senator Stephen Douglas of Illinois, a Democrat, was seeking reelection. His leading challenger was a Republican, Abraham Lincoln. The two candidates agreed to participate in a series of seven debates to be held in congressional districts throughout the state. Douglas ultimately won reelection to the Senate and faced Lincoln in another even more meaningful political contest, the presidential election, a mere two years later.

Earlier in the year Lincoln delivered a speech in which he stated, “A house divided against itself cannot stand.” Douglas claimed this statement was evidence that his opponent was a true abolitionist. Meanwhile, historians note that Lincoln often spoke favorably of the Declaration of Independence and the degree to which it set the stage for such concepts as liberty and equality.

Not only did those debates between Lincoln and Douglas during the mid-Nineteenth Century become the name-sake of a popular speaking contest today, they addressed several issues that are often used by participants in modern-day Lincoln Douglas debates. Frequently during the debates Douglas referred to a well-known statement by his opponent.

“IT IS BETTER TO DEBATE A QUESTION WITHOUT SETTLING IT  
THAN TO SETTLE A QUESTION WITHOUT DEBATING IT.”

This quotation, from the French philosopher Joseph Joubert, provides one of the more obvious reasons for engaging in academic debate. Why? Competitive debate is a process that involves searching for the truth. In other words, when we participate in this competitive activity we are engaging in an activity that raises questions about ideas and, as part of the questioning process, allows for consideration of a host of options and ideas.

Briefly imagine that we are debating a question related to the manner in which U.S. foreign policy is viewed by other nations. Affirmative and negative cases alike should offer a number of ideas to consider, but ultimately, the entire process should lead to some conclusions identifying which questions were more appropriately answered. The basis for evaluating the answers should be the degree to which each provided valid and “truthful” information regarding the topic under consideration.

In summary, debate can be defined as the search for truth. While not all debate rounds will completely fulfill this objective, even in less than ideal situations, debaters will often leave competition with a more complete awareness of issues and ideas.

# The Event Today

Lincoln Douglas debate was sanctioned as an official UIL speech events in 1982. Over the decades that have followed since its introduction as a competitive activity, a variety of approaches have been taken by participants and coaches. In spite of the differences of opinion regarding the nature, manner, scope and conduct of Lincoln Douglas debate, several fundamental and basic characteristics of the event remain consistent. Although it is essential to become aware of as many aspects of the activity as possible, it is even more important to learn the principals and basics associated with LD. Those principles will be addressed within the pages of this text.

## The Basic Format

The following graphic depicts the order of speeches, common abbreviations and time used in Lincoln Douglas debate. A very brief description of each speech is also provided below followed by a more detailed summary of what is normally covered in the speeches. You must learn this basic information.

|   |                  |
|---|------------------|
| <b>Affirmative Constructive (AC)</b> .....          | <b>6 minutes</b> |
| <b>cross-examination by the Negative</b> .....      | <b>3 minutes</b> |
| <b>Negative Constructive (NC)</b> .....             | <b>7 minutes</b> |
| <b>cross-examination by the Affirmative</b> .....   | <b>3 minutes</b> |
| <b>First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)</b> .....       | <b>4 minutes</b> |
| <b>Negative Rebuttal (NR)</b> .....                 | <b>6 minutes</b> |
| <b>Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)</b> .....      | <b>3 minutes</b> |
| <b>(prep time ..... 4 minutes for each debater)</b> |                  |

*What Should Happen in each Speech?*

|   |  |
|---|--|
| AC  | affirmative case is presented  |
| NC  | negative case is presented/arguments against the affirmative case are made               |
| 1AR   | arguments against negative case are made/responses to arguments against affirmative case |
| NR  | negative case is defended/arguments against the affirmative are extended                 |
| 2AR   | debate is summarized/responses to key arguments/presentation of voting issues            |
| (prep time is used by speakers preparing for their next speech) |  |



## **AFFIRMATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE (AC)**

The affirmative constructive speech is also known as the affirmative case. This is the only speech in a Lincoln Douglas debate round that is completely planned and prepared in advance. Accordingly, judges will have high expectations for the quality of delivery demonstrated in the AC and will often have little tolerance for inadequate delivery. You should take special care to know the information within the text of this speech and take extra time to be certain that all terms are pronounced appropriately.

## **NEGATIVE CONSTRUCTIVE (NC)**

The negative constructive speech is one during which two things should occur. Initially, it is a time for you to present the negative case. Second, it is a time for raising arguments against the affirmative case. Normally the time should be divided between the negative case and refutation of the affirmative case on a relatively equal manner. I would recommend that the negative case be approximately three to four minutes in length and should not, in any situation, extend beyond four minutes. During the first portion of the presentation you will be expected to offer a relatively flawless presentation, like that expected of the affirmative constructive and for the same reason. The case is prepared entirely in advance and should be practiced often in advance of actual competition.

The latter portion of the negative constructive speech should be spent raising arguments against the affirmative case. This should be done in an organized and systematic nature and the important parts of your opponent's case should be addressed.

## **FIRST AFFIRMATIVE REBUTTAL (1AR)**

It is during this speech that you will likely realize firsthand the importance of the time distribution during a Lincoln Douglas debate round. Your opponent has spent seven minutes making a presentation and you will have just over half that amount of time, four minutes, to respond. What should you do? More important than what you should do is possibly what you should not do, which is attempt to answer in detail, every point raised by your opponent. Not only will your delivery be really fast (which may or may not be a problem), it is likely that you will be unable to devote sufficient attention to the really essential points in the debate. At best, even if you manage to cover all of the issues the negative raised, a minimum amount of time will be spent on each and each will be given relatively equal attention.

Unfortunately, not all arguments are of equal importance. One of the talents you will gain with experience is the ability to distinguish between the arguments that are essential to the round and those that are more peripheral in nature.

Which arguments should receive the greatest amount of attention? All arguments are essential but, generally speaking, you must strongly defend the affirmative case and its key parts in this speech! Failure to do so could result in a loss while, on the contrary, failure to respond to all parts of the negative case does not necessarily mean defeat on the judge's ballot.

## **NEGATIVE REBUTTAL (NR)**

The negative rebuttal speech, like the negative constructive speech, provides opportunity for the negative debater to present the negative position in a planned and deliberate manner. Remember, as negative you have a distinct time advantage at this point in the round. You have six minutes during which you will be responding to a four-minute affirmative speech.

There are essentially two things that should be done during this speech. First, you should offer analysis of the key issues of the debate as it has transpired to this point. Providing a point by point analysis of arguments is advisable. You can begin by addressing either the affirmative or negative case first. The order is not really important, but what is essential is that you spend time on both. You should identify key arguments raised by your opponent, review arguments you introduced previously, extending the previous arguments. It is vital that you learn to distinguish between repeating arguments and extending them. The second duty of negative rebuttal speakers is to identify several, usually three to five issues that should be considered key voting issues. These arguments are commonly called “voters” and provide the judge with a clear description of issues upon which the decision could be based.

Voting issues should be presented in a manner separate from the rest of the speech and in an orderly form. In other words, do not simply identify major arguments as “voters” as you progress through the refutation of your opponent. This method is not only lacking in organization; the fact that the voting issues are scattered throughout the speech makes it difficult for the judge to identify them on a flow sheet. They should be identified clearly, distinctly and separately, usually toward the end of the negative rebuttal.

## **SECOND AFFIRMATIVE REBUTTAL (2AR)**

The second affirmative rebuttal speech is, without a doubt, the most difficult and challenging speech in a typical Lincoln Douglas debate round. There are several strategies that debaters pursue during this speech. Some will attempt to cover as many points presented during the round as possible while others will devote more attention to only providing voting issues.

Regardless of your approach to this speech, the primary objective is to provide the judge with a specific reason or set of reasons to render an affirmative decision on the ballot.

Which approach is more desirable? Normally I favor a more balanced approach with the second affirmative rebuttal speaker offering a brief review of the more important issues from throughout the round followed by a presentation of several key voting issues. Again, keep the summary portion and the voting issues portion of the speech separate, lest confusion prevail.

## SECTION 2 - FUNDAMENTALS OF VALUE DEBATE

As previously noted, one of the unique qualities of Lincoln Douglas debate is the fact that it involves the consideration of values. But what are “values?”

**VALUE – degree of importance  
OR  
moral principles and beliefs**

***In reality, it all begins with the resolution.***

**KINDS OF DEBATE  
RESOLUTIONS**

**PROPOSITIONS OF POLICY**

**PROPOSITIONS OF FACT**

**PROPOSITIONS OF VALUE**

## PROPOSITIONS OF POLICY

Propositions of policy are the kinds of debate resolutions used in cross-examination team debate. Such topics are often framed in a manner that opens the door for evaluation of problems and solutions. CX Debaters typically identify particular problems or sets of problems and then offer a policy aimed at solving the problem. Here are some examples of policy resolutions.

**Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase social services for persons living in poverty in the United States.**

**Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its exploration and/or development of space beyond the earth's mesosphere.**

**Resolved: That the United States federal government should establish a foreign policy substantially increasing its support of United Nations peacekeeping operations.**

**Resolved: That the United States federal government should establish an ocean policy substantially increasing protection of marine natural resources.**

Each of these resolutions identifies an actor, commonly referred to as an “agent of action.” In each of the examples provided above, the agent of action is the “United States Federal Government.” Also of interest is the fact that two of the topics actually include the term “policy” while the other two leave no doubt that a specific policy is advocated by the proposition. Policy debaters begin identifying a problem or series of problems and then offering workable solutions. Although numerous details regarding policy debate are left out of this discussion, the nature of policy debate should be evident.

### ***Try This:***

***In order to practice identifying both sides of an issue, select one or more of the resolutions provided above and make a list of reasons for and reasons against each resolution you select.***

***(Remember, you do not have to personally support the ideas you choose but should merely practice trying to identify different ways of interpreting issues.)***

## PROPOSITIONS OF FACT

A proposition of fact is a debate resolution that is stated in a direct and relatively absolute manner and reaches a very specific conclusion. It is a statement supporting a concept that is either true or false. In some situations, such a proposition could also reach a conclusion regarding causes of historical events.

**Resolved: Voting rights are necessary in a legitimate democracy.**

**Resolved: In a just society, gender equity is essential.**

**Resolved: War is a legitimate extension of democracy.**

**Resolved: Government regulation is a common cause for economic depression.**

Notice the manner in which the above resolutions are stated. Each of them is written using direct language and reaches a specific conclusion. Although it is possible for quality debate to result from these particular resolutions, the extent of quality value arguments that can be raised is limited. Are such resolutions suited for value debate? Of course, such topics could be used for value debate but the problem remains that value clash is normally less likely, or, at the very least, not as evident.

## PAUSE TO REFLECT

**Ask yourself what to do if you are participating in Lincoln Douglas Debate  
and discover that the latest resolution is a proposition of fact.**

It is entirely possible that you could experience a proposition of fact while participating in Lincoln Douglas debate. The manner in which the resolution is argued, cases are written and claims are made is up to you. It is your responsibility as a value debater to identify value issues that can be used in cases and debate arguments regardless of the topic.

Little can be gained by spending substantial time criticizing debate resolutions. Indeed, some topics are definitely more appropriate and timely than others. That does not mean, however, that quality debate cannot result from practically any topic. Instead of focusing attention on undesirable aspects of resolutions, use that same energy in a positive manner to seek out the best possible arguments that can be made with respect to the new topic. Your personal success will be determined much more by the nature of your personal resolve than by the nature of the resolution.

## PROPOSITIONS OF VALUE

Propositions of value are ideal for Lincoln Douglas debate. They are resolutions that call for an evaluation or judgment of something. Some such topics address contemporary societal issues, while others open the door of consideration for more general concepts. Although the nature of wording for these kinds of debate propositions may vary they all serve a common purpose; to provide an arena for quality and competitive value debate.

Value propositions are normally worded in one of three manners: open-ended, featuring two opposing ideals to be compared and considered, or calling for evaluation of a specific issue using a particular value concept.

### EXAMPLES OF COMMON TYPES OF VALUE RESOLUTIONS

#### *open-ended*

Resolved: Nation-building is a desirable U.S. foreign policy objective.

Resolved: The United States Government ought to provide for the medical care of its citizens.

#### *opposing ideals*

Resolved: When in conflict, freedom of expression ought to be valued above political correctness.

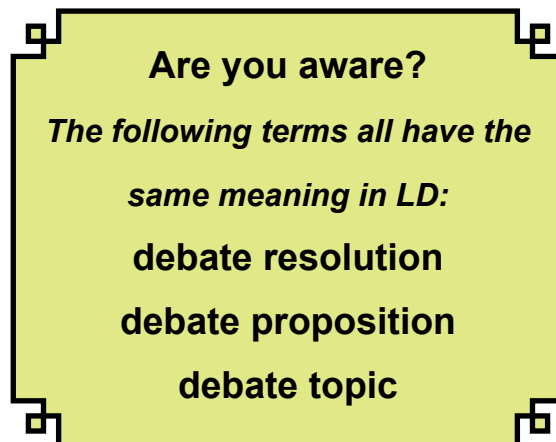
Resolved: Oppressive government is more desirable than no government.

#### *evaluation using a particular value concept*

Resolved: The use of economic sanctions to achieve U.S. foreign policy goals is moral.

Resolved: Sanctuary cities are morally justified.

When reviewing the primary forms of value resolutions used in Lincoln Douglas debate, the possibility exists that you may encounter a resolution that does not seem to directly fit into one of the above categories. The purpose of identifying these categories is to simply to demonstrate the nature of most value propositions.



**Is there a simple way to determine what kind of resolution is being considered?**

**YES!**

**Propositions of policy typically include the word “should.”**

**Propositions of fact normally include a “to be” verb such as “is” or “are.”**

**Propositions of value frequently include the word “ought.”**

## **Key Parts of Value Resolutions**

### ***OBJECT OF EVALUATION***

The object of evaluation is the term or phrase within a value resolution that should be the focus for the value presented in your case. In order to fully understand the manner in which successful cases are developed, it is essential to identify the object of evaluation. Consider the following examples with the object of evaluation in bold print.

**Resolved: Sanctuary cities are morally justified.**

**Resolved: A just society ought not use the death penalty as a form of punishment.**

**Resolved: U.S. immigration policies contradict American ideals.**

With respect to resolutions that involve more than one competing issue, it is possible for there to be more than one object of evaluation. Note the examples that follow.

When in conflict, **the spirit of the law** should supersede **the letter of the law**.

When in conflict, **Native American sovereignty** ought to take precedence over **state sovereignty**.

### ***EVALUATIVE TERM / PHRASE***

Identifying the evaluative term or phrase will enable you to more clearly focus arguments both within cases and used during refutation. In some cases, the evaluative term will indicate a likely choice for the most suited value with respect to the particular resolution in question, while in other situations, this term will merely signal a direction for case and value arguments. Consider the following examples with the evaluative term in bold print.

Resolved: The two-party system **undermines democracy** in U.S. presidential elections.

Resolved: The protection of American society **ought to be valued above** the right to bear arms

### ***QUALIFYING TERM / PHRASE***

Some, but not all, value resolutions will include a qualifying term or phrase. It is also referred to as a “term of reservation” on occasion. The general intent of such a term is to limit the direction of arguments that will result from a particular resolution. The specific kind of limitations included in topics varies in both direction and scope. In some instances, the limit describes situations during which the resolution should be considered, while in other situations the limit is geographic, identifying a particular nation or region to which the topic should apply.

The importance of qualifying terms is that they provide both limits and direction to debate resolutions. Remember, not all propositions will have such a term, but when one is present, it must be given consideration. Examples of these kinds of phrases or terms are shown in bold print in the following resolutions.

Resolved: The two-party system undermines democracy **in U.S. presidential elections**.

Resolved: Television is detrimental to civility **in the United States**.

## **Summary**

One of the things that should be kept in mind while learning about the fundamental aspects of Lincoln Douglas Debate is that, while debate resolutions address a wide range of issues, virtually all propositions have similar characteristics.

Being aware of the various kinds of resolutions will enable participants to fully comprehend the differences between policy and value debate. Such a realization also allows for a better understanding of the duties and obligations of individual debaters.

The ability to identify key parts of resolutions, such as the object of evaluation and the evaluative term will enhance the ability of participants to determine the most appropriate value arguments possible.

### ***Try This:***

Review resolutions provided throughout this handbook. Then identify the object of evaluation, evaluative term and limiting phrase (if present) in each.



## SECTION 3: VALUE PREMISE AND CRITERION

A value is merely something that is deemed desirable, worthy, esteemed, regarded highly, respected, or of quality considered worthwhile. One particular dictionary definition explains the term as “something intrinsically valuable or desirable.” If it is intrinsic, it belongs to the essential, fundamental nature or constitution of a thing. More than one source, including several that deal exclusively with philosophy, explains the term quite simply as “anything with worth.” Although there are multiple interpretations of the concept, a thread of similarity connects them all — the generally positive nature of the concept.

*justice*

*liberty*

*utilitarianism*

With respect to Lincoln Douglas debate, the term “value” goes beyond merely describing the nature of this activity as in the phrase “value debate.” The value premise is also one of the major parts of both affirmative and negative cases. Although there are many interpretations, definitions and explanations of exactly what a value premise is, the concept for Lincoln Douglas application is relatively simple. Shown above are a few values commonly used by Lincoln Douglas debaters.

### Pause to Reflect

The term “value premise” has two equally important meanings  
with respect to LD Debate

- A. general meaning – something desirable or worthwhile
- B. specific meaning – a necessary part of affirmative and negative cases

# VALUES IN THE GENERAL SENSE

The concept of values is a very real part of both life and society. Values are concepts, issues, ideals, and forms of philosophy that are commonly embraced, not only by individuals but also by groups, nations, cultures, and entire societies. Some values can be embraced in relatively broad terms while others are more narrowly explained. Regardless of interpretation, the concept of values represents something that may be embraced by large or small groups.

Some are grounded in religion and philosophy while others might simply be based on interpretations of “what is good.” Culture provides another basis for common values, especially those that are unique to particular groups within a society. Yet another entirely different basis for values is the political system that governs a particular nation or even the philosophical merits and basis for that system.

Suffice it to say, an extensive number of issues that could be categorized as values exist and the sources for items on that list is equally lengthy in nature. Often, remembering the source or sources of particular values is helpful in evaluating and explaining the concept. In many cases the idea being referred to as a value is something uniquely connected to its source and, accordingly, somewhat limited in scope due to its origin.

Also remember that each of us, as individuals, has our own unique value system. This system will normally vary somewhat from individual to individual while some elements might remain consistent throughout society as a whole. Not only do we have different value systems from others, we also have overlapping values that we deem important in our own private and individual lives. Granted, some of these values might not be tremendously important for society as a whole but yet, at least according to some philosophers, they are very important to the individual who embraces them.

sample values  
*(in no particular order)*

- |                |                        |               |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------|
| life           | happiness              | individualism |
| utilitarianism | autonomy               | democracy     |
| justice        | categorical imperative | liberty       |
| prosperity     | freedom                | progress      |

***Try This:***

***Using your own personal opinion, rank the values listed above in the order of their importance to society.***

***Add ideas to the list and be ready to explain why the ones you added are important.***

**The next step**



***Understanding the Criterion***

Once the purpose of the value is fully understood, the next step is to become aware of the purpose served by the criterion in Lincoln Douglas debate. The concept of criterion has multiple meanings but, for simplicity sake, it is a concept that provides either a means of evaluating the value or the manner in which the value is achieved.

Although scholars occasionally differ on which interpretation of the criterion is best suited to Lincoln Douglas debate, the ultimate decision regarding how best to utilize the criterion should rest with debaters and / or coaches. The important thing to keep in mind is that there is absolutely no reason to be uncertain about the role of the criterion in a value debate round.

In a much broader sense, there are some theorists who assert that the primary purpose of the criterion is to provide a standard for weighing issues in the round. While the criterion, at least in an indirect manner, deals with the evaluation of issues, it should not be the sole factor used in determining the outcome of the round except in unique situations.

### TIP ON AVOIDING CONFUSION

A key point to keep in mind is the fact that the terms **crit**erion and **crit**eria have very different meanings for policy debate. In general, the term **crit**eria is used to identify specific reasons for rendering a particular decision in a round on the part of the judge.

It is equally important to note, and remember for that matter, the fact that **crit**erion is singular and **crit**eria is plural; thus try to avoid making a relatively common grammatical error by making the statement in your case, “my **crit**eria is.”

### *How to Determine the Most Effective Criterion ...*

As a debater, it is important that you have an effective affirmative and negative case when entering competition. One of the most important components of either case is, without doubt, the relationship between the value and criterion. Some of the basic factors to consider can be identified by asking the right questions. Here are some of the appropriate questions that should be asked regarding a potential criterion.

- \* *Is the criterion related to the value?*
  
- \* *Does the criterion represent a substantial / meaningful issue?*
  
- \* *Can the criterion be defended?*
  
- \* *Will the criterion offer a plausible connection between the value and the resolution?*
  
- \* *Does the criterion represent a commonly embraced ideal?*

These questions are but a mere sampling of the kinds of issues that should be considered when selecting not only the criterion but the value as well. A common mistake made by many Lincoln Douglas debaters and their coaches alike is to view the activity as much more complicated and difficult to understand than necessary. One of the keys to success in the activity is the ability to explain relatively complex concepts and ideals in equally simplistic terms. Certainly part of the practice process should be to spend some time trying to explain ideas to individuals who have little or no exposure to competitive debate. In reality, some of the judges who determine the outcome of LD debate rounds have only a limited amount of exposure to the activity.

# *Free Samples!!!*

Here are some **examples** (with brief explanations) of values and criteria.

**VALUE = JUSTICE**

**CRITERION = EQUALITY**

**EXPLANATION:** Assume for a moment that justice, as used in this case simply means fairness. The case then would claim that when equality in a society increases there is a corresponding increase in justice. The reverse is also true: when equality is diminished then justice is eroded in a direct manner.

**VALUE = LIBERTY**

**CRITERION = FREEDOM**

**EXPLANATION:** Liberty, at least as it is often used in Lincoln Douglas debate, refers to natural rights. In a given society or political system, a legitimate measure of the amount of liberty that is present would be the extent to which individual freedom is allowed. Moreover, the loss of individual freedom often results in diminished liberty. It can also be claimed that the one of the best avenues for arriving at liberty in a society is by the promotion of personal freedom or societal rights that include, for example, freedom of speech, religion, press, etc.

## **KEEP IN MIND**

**the value will be general in nature / the criterion will be specific in nature**

**once a value is determined, options for the criterion may vary substantially**

## *The Selection Process Begins With the Resolution*

What factors should be considered when attempting to select the most appropriate issues to be used as the value and criterion? The first step in the process should be to review the resolution in a careful manner, even using a dictionary to ensure understanding of the key terms. Once a general understanding of the scope of the topic is achieved, the process of selecting an appropriate value can begin.

One of the first things to note about the specific resolution is whether or not a particular ideal that could be a value is included in the actual text. It is not uncommon for LD debate propositions to include an imbedded value. For example:

**Resolved: In the United States, plea bargaining in exchange for testimony is unjust.**

Does the fact that the term “unjust” is in the resolution mean that affirmative cases are obligated to use some form of the term “justice” as a value? Like many questions related to the nature of LD debate, there is no absolute answer. More often than not, when the resolution includes an implied value, it is recommended that cases use that concept for the value. Although it is not an absolute rule that such values must be used, the reasons for such a practice outnumber the reasons for not doing it.

### *Summary*

Keep in mind the fact that you do not have to understand every minuscule detail of Lincoln Douglas debate in order to successfully take part. You are likely to discover, in fact, that as you gain experience through participation, an increasing awareness of concepts and techniques will result. Additional information regarding the value / criterion relationship is located in the section of this manual that deals with writing cases.

The following resolutions, all previously used for competition, exemplify characteristics that should be observed. Notice that some of the topic are worded in such a manner that the value most likely used is provided within the context of the actual wording while other exclude such a term or phrase.

**Resolved: U.S. immigration policies contradict American ideals.**

**Resolved: Gender equity is essential to legitimate democracy.**

**Resolved: A just society ought not use the death penalty as a form of punishment.**

**Resolved: Affirmative action programs are justified in American society.**

**Resolved: Federal government bailouts of major corporations are just.**

**Resolved: A just government should provide health care to its citizens.**

**Resolved: The best government is that which governs least.**

**Resolved: When in conflict, the spirit of the law should supersede the letter of the law.**

***Try This:***

***Make a brief list of the values or value concepts that are specifically stated  
in the value resolutions provided above.***

***Make another list of possible values you might choose for each of the  
value resolutions provided above.***

# SECTION 4: EVIDENCE AND RESEARCH

One of the most fundamental differences between competitive debate and informal arguments is the manner in which evidence and information is used. Participants in Lincoln Douglas debate have a responsibility to provide evidence that serves the purpose of proving key points. Evidence should be used in cases as well as during other speeches when attempting to make a particular claim or point.

While it is highly unlikely that Lincoln Douglas debaters will see any specific resolution repeated during the course of their competitive career, certain themes, ideas, concepts and philosophies will be repeated, often with great frequency. Because of the potential repeated use of these issues it is recommended that information gathered while researching a particular resolution be kept and organized in order to be used again at a later date.

## APPLICATION OF EVIDENCE

***Evidence used in debate rounds generally serves three purposes:***

1. to clarify or interpret a basic concept being used in a case or argument
2. to support a major point used in a case or argument
3. to oppose a major point used in a case or argument of an opponent

## BASIC KINDS OF EVIDENCE

**philosophical – information from a reliable philosophical source or an actual philosopher**

**empirical – information that uses statistics, facts and figures**

**anecdotal – a specific example used to demonstrate a point**

**PHILOSOPHICAL EVIDENCE** – Because Lincoln Douglas debate involves debating values, evidence based on philosophy is definitely applicable. Most of the philosophical information you will use in debate is one of three types: books or essays written by a philosopher, definitions of philosophical terms, or articles, essays and books about specific philosophers or ideas.



**EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE** – Although it is normally associated with policy debate, empirical evidence often serves a purpose for value debate. It is information that is acquired by observation or experimentation and is implemented to uphold or defeat a hypothesis. Some value topics address relatively contemporary or pragmatic issues and accordingly, require proof of a specific or direct manner. It is in these kinds of situations that empirical evidence serves a useful and legitimate purpose for value debate.

**ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE** – This particular kind of information usually describes a particular situation or a specific individual. An anecdote is the short account of an incident or an individual experience. While such information often has tremendous emotional appeal, questions often surface regarding whether the example is the exception or the rule for society. Anecdotal evidence addresses isolated and specific cases, often in a very effective manner. Yet, at the same time, it falls short of providing universal and broad-based proof.

## **LET THE SEARCH BEGIN**

Where should you look for quality information? When the research process begins you will find that a number of options exist. In today's academic world, the notion of research normally begins by turning on a computer and heading for the Internet. Certainly, you will be able to locate an abundance of great information online; however, there are also other sources of information that should be considered.

Of course, there are the typical and usual places to visit when taking part in the research process. Your school library is a great place to begin, especially in the reference and philosophy sections. You will likely find a nice collection of dictionaries, encyclopedias, general reference material and other useful resources in this area of the library. It is very likely that community libraries will have an even more extensive collection of such materials. Almost certainly, a visit to a university library will result in exposure to an even greater assortment of quality material.

Many schools have debate programs that are well-established and have been active for a lengthy period of time. If this is the case with your school, then there may be a collection of valuable resources such as books, files on past topics, reference guides and some debate handbooks devoted to specific topics used in the past. If the program in your particular school is relatively new, then I strongly encourage coaches and students alike to begin the process of assembling a collection of reliable information that can be used both presently and in the future for value debate research.

Ultimately, there is little doubt that your research ventures will lead you to the Internet and the seemingly limitless channels of information available within this venue. Unfortunately, not all of the material you will encounter is well-suited for debate purposes. Another potential challenge with Internet research is the fact that there is an almost overwhelming amount of information available. Whether or not it actually does become overwhelming is up to you! Selection of sites to visit and online articles to read is your own choice. It is up to the researcher to keep things in perspective in order to reap the greatest rewards from this kind of research.

Before actually beginning the quest for those great nuggets of information, it is important to have some goals and objectives in mind. Try to get some perspective regarding the kinds of information you would like to find and the nature of the evidence for which you are searching. Remember, your time is limited so you must begin the difficult research journey with a clear vision of where you want to go.

***Try This:***

***Refer to some of the debate resolutions throughout this manual and begin a list of research topics for each.***

***Locate definitions of the key terms in several of the resolutions.***

***(Have you noticed that certain terms are common to multiple resolutions?)***

## **SOURCES OF INFORMATION**

What kinds of resources are best suited for Lincoln Douglas debate research? The following offers some answers to this question and suggestions for research.

***Do you know?***

***There are two kinds of resources: primary and secondary.***

***Primary resources are original in nature, such as documents, letters, speeches.***

***Secondary resources include information that is reported, discussed or interpreted.***

The kinds of resources used and the general nature of your research should be determined by the specific nature of the topic you are considering. There will be some situations when one particular resource will be more helpful while in other situations a different approach will prove helpful. It is important that you not allow yourself to be limited by always relying on the same resources because different resolutions require varied research strategies. The following list provides a few directions for researching topics.



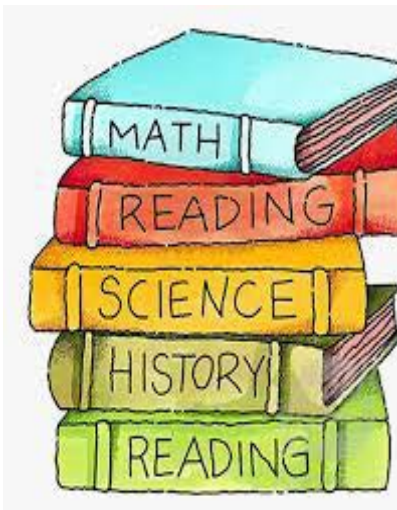
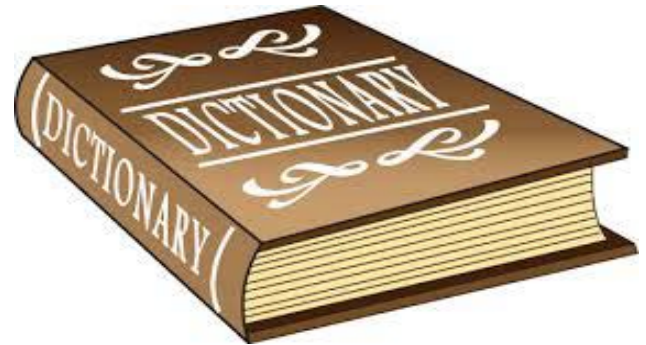
**THE INTERNET**

**ENCYCLOPEDIA**

**JOURNALS**

**DICTIONARIES**

**DOCUMENTS**



**HANDBOOKS**

**TEXT BOOKS**

There are many kinds of resources that you should consider for debate research.

Try to avoid limiting the kinds of material you use.

Avoid the common temptation to rely solely on the Internet!

Remember, spending time on your research efforts will yield tremendous benefits later.

## THE INTERNET

Among the various resources listed above, the Internet is really in a unique category. It is more like a library that is conveniently located as near as your classroom, school library or even your own home. The Internet is like a library in the sense that it represents a vast collection of information and an avenue to limitless amounts of data. Ironically, the fact that information is so abundant on the Internet also creates somewhat of a problem. At times the amount of material that is available tends to become overwhelming.

What steps can you take to make the most of your research time? For starters, begin your online research by relying on commonly used search engines and reliable sources of information. Try to avoid the temptation to spend too much time reviewing material that is either irrelevant or from unreliable websites. Remember, the amount of time you have is limited so try to make the most of your efforts.

The appendix of this handbook contains an excellent section entitled “Internet Debate Research.” Spending some time reading this section and relying on the sites provided will yield remarkable benefits.

## DICTIONARIES



To the extent that the Internet represents a vast destination for researching the latest debate topic, dictionaries serve as your map of sorts to guide you through the process. One of the first steps you should take upon receiving any new resolution is to consult a dictionary for interpretations of the key terms. The manner in which you rely on dictionaries should be focused and precise. The search should also include more than one resource, using care to identify those particular dictionaries that best serve your particular research interests.

While generic dictionaries such as *Merriam Webster's* or *American Heritage* and others are a great place to start and will introduce you to some quality interpretations, it is essential to attempt to move to other kinds of sources. While there is no major problem with the credibility of commonly used dictionaries, more scholarly and relevant sources of definitions are available.

For example, if you are searching for legal definitions, *Black's Law Dictionary* has long been considered a highly reliable source of material. Experienced debaters often use the terms “contextual definitions” or “field definitions” to describe the interpretations of terms that are found in topic specific dictionaries. If the topic deals with economics, an economics dictionary is appropriate; if it is philosophical, a philosophical dictionary is best-suited; political, rely on a political resource. For example, if the term “justice” is being used in an affirmative or negative case, it would be appropriate to provide a well-suited and workable definition. It is essential to determine the context in which the word is being used. In most cases, especially if the topic is oriented in a philosophical direction, then it is strongly recommended that a definition from a dictionary of philosophy be relied on for an applicable definition.

An important note regarding the difference between words and phrases should be considered. It is not uncommon for resolutions to include phrases, or groups of words that form a phrase frequently used with respect to a particular subject. One example of such a phrase is “due process,” a legal and judicial term. When seeking a definition of this phrase, it is far better to find the phrase itself defined rather than locating definitions of the individual words in the phrase.

## **TEXTBOOKS**

All too often debaters overlook some of the more obvious sources of scholarly material that is within easy reach. Textbooks are one such source of information. Books used in government, history, economics, sociology and psychology courses, for example, often have excellent glossaries that not only provide quality definitions but interpretations that are grounded in the appropriate context. There is also great information that can be used as evidence within the actual text of such books.

## **ENCYCLOPEDIAS**

Encyclopedias provide extensive information related to many topics. Most of them are written in a very scholarly manner and are also relevant to the subject being considered. In addition to the traditional kind of material that fits this category, there are also topic specific encyclopedias, often found online, that offer the kinds of specific reference material necessary for LD debate. Encyclopedias of philosophy are abundant collections of information readily available and easily accessible.

A leading standard one that would prove beneficial to LD debaters is the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

## **JOURNALS**

There are a host of journals, both in hard copy and located on the Internet that provide quality debate material. Journals of philosophy, political science, foreign issues, economics and law are all generally easy to locate. These sources of information are rich in valuable data and most of it is provided by highly reliable individuals who contribute to such resources. Journals often provide well-written articles that can be used to provide quality debate evidence.

A word of caution regarding use of law journals is in order. It is not uncommon to find articles in highly reputable law journals that are written by student authors. Normally most law journal articles will provide brief biographic data regarding the writer and, on occasion, it may read student author or JD candidate. In either case, some discretion must be used regarding whether or not you choose to quote these articles.

## **DOCUMENTS**

Documents normally fall into the category of “primary” resources. As an active participant in Lincoln Douglas debate, you should spend some time reading several fundamental documents in order to enhance your general knowledge of common concepts while, at the same time, preparing for future resolutions that might be specifically related to some of these fundamental issues and ideals. You will reap huge benefits from developing an awareness of documents like The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States, The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, and others. These documents and others are readily available.

## **DEBATE HANDBOOKS**

Typically, debate handbooks fit into one of two categories. The first type includes generic information that is applicable to a range of topics while the second type is directly related to a specific resolution. Most of the topic specific handbooks include sample cases and briefs that can be used in debate competition.

Handbooks, while serving a useful purpose at times, should not become a substitute for original research and writing your own cases. Before you choose to use a case or set of arguments from a handbook, remember that your potential opponents are likely to have access to the same material and will be more than ready to counter any of the information in the handbook. By the same token, it is generally a good idea for you to prepare arguments in anticipation of information in such sources.

There are some positive ways to utilize published handbooks. Initially, by reading this material you can get some ideas about various directions for arguments related to the current resolution. You will also be able to use the evidence provided for the construction of your own cases and arguments. Another way of utilizing the material is to seek out some of the sources that are cited in the handbooks and listed in the bibliography. Use the full articles to locate additional information.



# ORGANIZING INFORMATION

Regardless of how much quality material you are able to locate, it only becomes truly useful when it is organized in an effective manner. When you locate information that, in your opinion, supports a valid idea or debate argument it should be recorded in an effective and efficient manner. There are several ways in which evidence and material can be organized. Beginning debaters often explore more than one method of organizing information before ultimately choosing a single method that works best.

One of the more effective ways to organize information is by recording it in debate briefs. Debate briefs are simply collections of data arranged in a logical and efficient manner. A classification system is also involved that enables debaters to locate information quickly. Because of the manner in which debate briefs are typically organized, they are often described as sets of arguments that are ready for use in competition.

## PARTS OF A DEBATE BRIEF

Several key terms are used in reference to debate briefs. (Additional terms commonly connected to debate are located in the glossary) The following terms describe the parts of a debate brief. Each has an important and meaningful role.

**quote** The actual piece of evidence that is being collected is a quote or quotation. Quotations are used to demonstrate your position, clarify potentially confusing terms or to counter arguments introduced by your opponents.

**tagline** When a quotation is actually recorded, it should be immediately preceded by a brief description of its content. Such a depiction, normally less than a complete line in length, is referred to as a tagline.

**cite, citation** Debaters have a responsibility to provide complete information regarding the source of material that is used for evidence. This information, also referred to as a citation (or cite for short) should be provided upon request, although it does not all have to be read when the evidence is presented. The citation should be complete and include all of the following when available; individual being quoted (author, writer, etc.), qualifications of individual being quoted (who is this person?), complete source of information, date, page number, and Internet retrieval URL and date (if any).

Each of the parts of a citation is very important. The citation provides not only key information about the source of material, enhances the credibility your quotation by demonstrating that the person being cited is an expert on the subject, the date should indicate, especially if the evidence is pragmatic or empirical, that the material is relevant and finally, the Internet retrieval date also contributes to the relevance of the material because data provided on websites is often updated frequently.

**evidence** Obviously, the most important information contained in a debate brief is the actual quote. This information is the true essence of the brief because, without the actual evidence, the rest of the brief is essentially meaningless.

When information is being recorded, it is essential that material is kept in the proper context. Not only is it considered unethical to take material out of context, in the current information age or computer technology, information is readily available to practically anyone. If your material is questionable in nature, chances are your opponent will have the same evidence in their possession and point out the manner in which a concept is being misrepresented. Legitimate questions about a debater's credibility or the credibility of a debater's evidence are difficult to overcome. It is essential to avoid such challenges.

Material in evidence should be complete and, in the event that ellipses are used, they should be kept to a minimum. When too much information is deleted from a quotation, suspicion concerning validity is raised. Finally, as a general rule, longer is preferable to shorter in terms of the length of the quote. In other words, it is much more desirable to have a quotation that includes some analysis than one that is merely a single line stating your position. Again, credibility is of the utmost importance. Evidence of the former nature is often referred to as "one-line" or "conclusionary" and neither term is complimentary in nature. Assume for a moment you are attempting to make the argument that increased voter participation is essential to democratic government. Here are some examples of longer as well as shorter quotations:

#### ***CORRECT***

"Throughout history and in many nations from around the world, there is increasing evidence that voter participation is a key factor that indicates the strength of a nation's government. Conversely, it is also clear that lower levels of voter participation are often accompanied by increasing disenchantment with political officials, commonly reported cases of corruption and broad-based gridlock that often seriously affects the nation's governing bodies."

#### ***INCORRECT***

"Democratic government cannot thrive in the absence of voter participation."

Regardless of the quality of the source, the latter quote offers no meaningful explanation for its conclusion. Although it is generally safe to assume that an expert or person of authority on the subject could logically reach this conclusion, the over-all quality of the evidence is still superior when the quotation actually includes some degree of analysis.



# SAMPLE DEBATE BRIEF

**tagline** → ( ) **Democracy is enhanced by universal participation**

**citation** → Frank, 2022 [Walter M. Frank (legal scholar, attorney), "Individual Rights and the Political Process: A Proposed Framework for Democracy Defining Cases," *Southern University Law Review* 35:47, Fall, 2022, p. 47.]

**quote** → **Also inherent in the freely given consent of the governed is the need for a full citizen participation in the democratic process, for all citizens are the state's lawmaking power and therefore form part of the governed whose consent is necessary to legitimate political authority. This condition not only makes sense in the abstract, but it also resonates with a political history constituting one long expansion of citizen participation in the electoral process.**

## R E M I N D E R S

*When selecting and collecting evidence remember these basic guidelines:*

- evidence is necessary to support all major arguments and claims
- evidence should be used in both constructive and rebuttal speeches
- evidence should be relevant to the topic being considered
- pragmatic or empirical evidence must be current
- all evidence should come from reputable sources
- providing qualifications for the person quoted are essential
- proper and complete citations are ALWAYS necessary
- you need not read the information in the brackets aloud during the round

## SECTION 5: PREPARING THE CASE

Lincoln Douglas debaters typically learn the subject and wording of the latest resolution weeks or months prior to their competition. After spending a brief amount of time reviewing the wording and brainstorming for some ideas, the task of writing a case must begin. Before actually writing the case, it is always a good idea to do a portion of your research on the new topic in order to at least have enough evidence to begin writing the cases.

Case preparation is definitely one of the more challenging facets of Lincoln Douglas debate.

### PAUSE TO REFLECT

*what about using a case from a handbook?*

Students, who write their own cases will definitely have an advantage. The reasons should be obvious. Unlike handbook cases that practically everyone has access to, the cases you write personally are unique and have at least some elements of the surprise factor when entering the round. When you write your own cases, you will have the added advantage of understanding them better. Again, the advantage goes to the individual who takes the extra time and effort to construct their own cases.

Finally, judges often recognize cases from handbooks and when they hear them it is possible that you, as the debater, risk losing credibility.

Writing affirmative or negative cases often appears as a highly daunting task. Simplifying the assignment should be the objective and one of the best ways to do so is by breaking the activity into smaller and more manageable parts. Also helpful is the fact that, by taking this approach, initial steps in the process are less difficult than the latter.

The following formula for writing an affirmative Lincoln Douglas case is not the only one available and certainly not the only one that can be used. It is however one that simplifies the process in such a manner that both beginning and more experienced debaters should be able to utilize.

Although there is absolutely nothing wrong with using this rubric for writing your cases, it is recommended that, as you gain experience with Lincoln Douglas debate, you should develop your own personalized method of constructing cases. Some debaters even develop several styles of writing cases, enabling them to adapt to a variety of resolutions.

# WRITING A CASE IN SIX EASY STEPS

*The basic steps in the process are:*

1. **introduction**
2. **state the resolution**
3. **define key terms**
4. **provide a value**
5. **provide a criterion**
6. **evidence and analysis used for support**

## **Introduction**

Like any good speech, an affirmative case should begin with an appropriate introduction. One preferable manner of introducing the case is by using a quotation that relates to the resolution. Virtually any quotation that addresses a concept in the resolution will suffice. One simple step and the first part of the process is now complete. If you thought this step was simple, the next one requires even less time!

## **State the Resolution**

All you must do to complete this step is to write the resolution, nothing more and nothing less.

## **Define Key Terms**

Like the first two parts of the case-writing process, this step is relatively simple as well. All that is necessary to fulfill this task is to provide definitions of the terms of the resolution that you believe are either truly important or subject to multiple interpretations.

Definitions used at any time during a debate should have a reliable source. Contextual definitions from quality sources are indeed optimal. For example, while a reputable generic dictionary is certainly suited for academic purposes, a legal or philosophy dictionary would be even more well-suited.

Must all terms of the resolution be defined? Absolutely not! Only the terms that are potentially crucial or easily misunderstood need defining. In fact there will be situations in which no terms are defined at all. Remember, however, that affirmative retains the right to define terms of the resolution even if they are not present in the affirmative constructive speech.

## **Provide a Value Premise**

Remember, a value is a concept that is universally embraced and accepted as desirable. This particular part of the process involves just a bit more than merely stating a value. It should also involve at least some degree of support for the concept. You should use two specific quotations at this point. One quote should be used to explain or define the nature of the value and the other to support the value. Why is it necessary to provide these two forms of evidence? Initially, it is purely a matter of credibility for the case. Merely relying on your assertions, regardless of the intellectual depth they might provide, lacks meaningful credibility. Moreover, some values that are commonly used, such as justice, are subject to multiple interpretations and not clarifying the manner in which it applies to your own case is opening the door for confusing debate.

## **Provide a Criterion**

What is a criterion? When you are able to adequately understand this concept, you are well on the way to success in Lincoln Douglas debate. In fact, it is unlikely that there is any other aspect of the event that is more commonly misunderstood. The criterion, as used in Lincoln Douglas debate, serves one of two (or both) purposes. It is intended either to provide a means of achieving the value or a means of measuring the value. Refer back to section 3, Understanding the Criterion in this guide.

## **Evidence and Analysis**

At this point you have completed 5 out of the 6 steps involved in writing an affirmative case, yet much work remains in order to ensure that the end result is a quality product. This portion of the case should be divided into sections. These parts can be identified as “observations,” “contentions,” “points of analysis” or other descriptive terms. Before getting too far along with this part of the process, you must determine your precise objective. While it may vary to some degree from case to case or debater to debater, in the final analysis, you are attempting to use the evidence and analysis to explain the relationship of the value and criterion and how, as a result of that relationship, the validity is thus proven. Remember, debate is ultimately an exercise in determining the truth. When participating in Lincoln Douglas debate the primary duty of the affirmative debater is to prove the truthfulness of the resolution.

Typically, two or three contentions (arguments) followed by two or three sub-points for each is common. How much evidence is required for a well-supported affirmative case? At least one quotation for each major argument is necessary.

What is the best manner of organizing this portion of the affirmative case? There are several schools of thought regarding organization of this part of the case. Some debaters prefer a more rhetorical style marked by the presentation of several arguments without precise and distinct organizational notations such as “A” and “B” or “one” and “two.” The other fundamental way of organizing the case is to use the specific outline notations and by following acceptable outline formatting. Having explained two different formats, the question thus remains, which one is preferable? Normally, the rhetorical style is embraced by both less experienced and more highly experienced debaters because it can result in a more persuasive kind of affirmative case. Whichever format proves more adequate for your personal style is the one you should embrace. Keep in mind that using the rhetorical style format will, at least in some cases, result in a situation in which either the judge or your opponent or both will have difficulty following the organization of the case. If the judge and/or opponent are relatively

experienced, problems of this nature are not likely, but when either the judge or the opponent lack experience, a more organized format is advisable.

### **Additional Information Regarding Evidence and Analysis**

How many major parts should this section of the case offer? Normally two major ideas are optimal. Like a quality outline, there should not be a first point without a second. Such is also true of the affirmative case. If you are however, providing two major positions in this portion of the case, it is essential that these approaches are independent of each other. Merely restating a similar argument by using a different wording and some additional pieces of evidence is both redundant and unnecessary. The question is why? Because if the two major points are essentially the same and the negative debater adequately refutes one of them, then they are both defeated. Not only are these kinds of arguments easy to defeat, they allow the negative more time to defend their own positions throughout the debate.

One additional strategy that you might want to consider is to provide a third major argument that attempts to directly and specifically prove the resolution to be true. This particular part of the case does not necessarily have to address the other two points or either the value or criterion. It is purely an effort to offer two or three reasons, supported by evidence, that the resolution is true.

The benefit of such an argument is that it will, at least in some cases, be dropped by the negative. It is important to remember, however, that some judges will be reluctant to base their decision solely on such an issue because they are purists and believe that Lincoln Douglas debaters must remain true to form and adhere to time tested principles and protocol of the event.

# STEP BY STEP DEMONSTRATION

## 1. Introduction

“The expressive significance of an individual’s vote underscores the importance of electoral process to the body politic. The latter’s influence, authority, and ultimate legitimacy hinges on the collective will of an informed electorate. Electoral integrity, therefore, becomes critical to a legitimate democracy.”

Because I am in agreement with this quotation from

Blake D. Morant (professor of law), “Electoral Integrity: Media, Democracy, and the Value of Self-Restraint,” *Alabama Law Review* 55:1, Fall, 2013, p. 23.

## 2. State the Resolution

I support the *resolution*:

RESOLVED: The two-party system undermines democracy in U.S. presidential elections.

## 3. Define Key Terms

For the sake of clarity I offer the following definitions:

two-party                      characterized by two major political parties of comparable strength

undermine                      to weaken or ruin by degrees.

Democracy                      government of the people; rule of the majority

from *Merriam – Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary*, Eleventh Edition, Frederick C. Mish, Editor in Chief, Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, Springfield, Massachusetts, 2014.

#### **4. Provide a Value Premise (note the two pieces of evidence)**

In defense of the resolution the affirmative case forwards the VALUE of Democracy explained as:

“...rule by the people, as contrasted with rule by a special person or group.”

by *Concise Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Routledge Press, New York, 2013, p. 199.

In support of this ideal I turn to *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*

[Ted Honderd., Oxford U. Press, New York, 2005, p. 183.]

“Until recently, democracies counted very few persons among ‘the people’. Now they include all adult citizens, including, in many nations, recent immigrants, and democracy is virtually universally revered as the best or right form of government.”

#### **5. Provide a Criterion (Note the two pieces of evidence)**

In support of democracy I further offer the criterion of egalitarianism as noted by Jay Shafritz (professor of public affairs in *American Government and Politics Dictionary*) as...

“The principle of egalitarianism is that each citizen, regardless of economic resources or personal traits, deserves and has a right to be given equal treatment by the political system.”

The importance of egalitarianism demonstrated by...

*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2015 [*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Democracy,” 2015, p. Internet access, 09.25.16]

Another egalitarian defense of democracy asserts that it publicly embodies the equal advancement of the interests of the citizens of a society when there is disagreement about how best to organize their shared life. The idea is that a society ought to be structured to advance equally the interests of the members of the society. And the equality of members ought to be advanced in a way that each can see that they are being treated as equals. So it requires equal advancement of interests in accordance with a public measure of those interests. Hence, justice requires the publicly equal advancement of the interests of the members of society or public equality.

## **6. Evidence and Analysis used for Support**

### CONTENTION ONE: EGALITARIANISM IS ERODED IN THE U.S. TODAY

#### A. Political equality is essential

George Edwards III (professor of political science), *Why the Electoral College is Bad for America*, Yale University Press, 2005, p. 31.

Political equality lies at the core of democratic theory. Robert Dahl, the leading democratic theorist, includes equality in voting as a central standard for a democratic process: “every member must have an equal and effective opportunity to vote, and all votes must be counted as equal.” In creating a constitution for democratic government, he adds, “your constitution must be in conformity with one elementary principle: that all members are to be treated (under the constitution) as if they were equally qualified to participate in the process of making decisions about the policies the association will pursue. Whatever may be the case on other matters, then, in governing this association all members are to be considered as *politically equal*.”

#### B. The two-party system is historically significant

Winger, 2007 [Richard Winger (political scientist), “Can United States Voters Still Recruit Someone to Run For President as an Independent After the Identities of the Major Party Presidential Candidates are Known?” *Univ. of Arkansas Little Rock Law Review* 29:763, Summer, 2007, p. 763.]

Practically speaking, the voters of the United States have been choosing the president of the United States since 1828. Also, ever since 1828 there have been two major political parties and a substantial number of minor political parties. The Democratic Party, starting in 1828 if not earlier, has always been one of those major parties. The other major party has been, sequentially, the National Republican Party (1828-1834), the Whig Party (1835-1854), and the Republican Party (1854 on).

#### C. Inequity is detrimental

Steinberg, 2001 [Michael S. Steinberg (attorney), “A Critique of the Current Method of Scheduling Presidential Primary Elections and a Discussion of Potential Judicial Challenges,” *The George Washington Law Review* 69:453, March, 2001, p. 453.]

Although not as dramatic as threats of violence or corruption, the creation of inequity in the value of votes from different states for the office of President is just as damaging to our electoral system.



## CONTENTION TWO: DEMOCRACY IS UNDERMINED

### A. Public confidence in the major parties is declining

Rosenblum, 2014 [Nancy L. Rosenblum (professor of political science), “The Constitution of Civil Society Politics *Primus Inter Pares: Political Parties and Civil Society*,” *Chicago-Kent Law Review* 75:493, 2014, p. 493.]

Public confidence in political parties lies at the bottom of the scale, lower than any other secondary association: 42.6% of respondents express “very little” and only 3.8% “a great deal” of confidence in them. Even active partisanship, Austin Ranney notes, cannot be taken to indicate approval of parties in general as desirable institutions. Insofar as American political life arouses enthusiasm, it attaches to social movements, ideological causes, or unusually inspiring candidates. Of course, antiparty and antipolitical sentiment (the two are not distinguished in the public mind) is episodic. But it is fair to say that there is little appreciation for broad-based state and national parties.

### B. Voter choice is eroded during the primary phase of presidential elections

Steinberg, 2012 [Michael S. Steinberg (attorney), “A Critique of the Current Method of Scheduling Presidential Primary Elections and a Discussion of Potential Judicial Challenges,” *The George Washington Law Review* 69:453, March, 2012, p. 453.]

To the extent that voters of a state may influence their prospective nominees, it seems that the voters of early primary states have a greater chance to influence their prospective nominees than do voters from later voting states.

### C. Equality is essential for democracy

*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, 2015 [*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, “Democracy,” 2015, p. Internet access, 09.25.16]

Few theorists deny that political institutions must be at least in part evaluated in terms of the outcomes of having those institutions. Some argue in addition, that some forms of decision making are morally desirable independent of the consequences of having them. A variety of different approaches have been used to show that democracy has this kind of intrinsic value. The most common of these come broadly under the rubrics of liberty and equality.

# THE NEGATIVE CASE

The format for writing the negative case is practically the same as that used for the affirmative case with several simple differences. Also, the negative case should not be quite as lengthy as the affirmative case. This case should be between 3 and 4 minutes in length, maximum.

**The basic steps in the process are:**

- 1. introduction**
- 2. state the negative position regarding the resolution**
- 3. counter-definitions (if necessary)**
- 4. provide a value premise**
- 5. provide a criterion**
- 6. evidence and analysis used for support**

## **Introduction**

Negative cases often begin with a quotation that supports and introduces the negative position.

## **State the Negative Position Regarding the Resolution**

Negative cases often include a reworded version of the actual resolution with a term or phrase such as “not” or “does not achieve.” It is not necessary to actually reword the resolution. In fact it is probably more appropriate to simply offer a statement that indicates the negative interpretation of the resolution.

### **Counter-definitions (if necessary)**

More often than not, the negative will have little or no problem with the affirmative definitions of terms. If there is no major point of disagreement then this step is totally unnecessary for the negative case. In the event that there is a difference of opinion regarding definitions, then this is the where the counter-definitions should be provided.

Always try to avoid turning the debate into a clash over definitions and their sources. When this occurs, attention is drawn away from the more serious facets of the resolution and the debate generally deteriorates.

### **Provide a Value Premise**

You should use two specific quotations at this point. One quote should be used to explain or define the nature of the value and the other to support the value.

### **Provide a Criterion**

The criterion you select should demonstrate the validity of the value. You should, once again, provide two pieces of documentation, one to define the criterion and the other to support it.

### **Evidence and Analysis**

The manner in which you add evidence and analysis to the negative case should follow the same format and use the same considerations as when constructing the affirmative case. Two contentions / major points are desirable and they should be presented in acceptable outline format. Again, as with the affirmative case, you may choose to take a more rhetorical approach to this part of the case. There is nothing wrong with employing this technique but, keep in mind, organization of the debate might deteriorate as a result.

# NEGATIVE CASE DEMONSTRATION

## 1. Introduction

“Today, U.S. officials appear to engage in coercive interrogation or something very similar to it; so do other western governments; and the possibility that coercive interrogation may be justified in nonremote circumstances has entered mainstream debate. The task for legal scholars at this point is to understand how this practice fits into legal norms and traditions, and how it ought to be regulated.”

Because I agree with this quotation from: Posner & Vermuele, 2013 [Eric A. Posner & Adrian Vermeule (professors of law), “Should Coercive Interrogation be Legal?,” *Michigan Law Review* 104:671, February, 2013, p. 671.]

## 2. State the Negative Position regarding the Resolution

I will argue that *In a criminal interrogation, the end DOES NOT justify the means*

## 3. Counter Definitions (if necessary)

(no disagreement or counter-definitions will be offered)

## 4. Provide a Value Premise

The basis for the negative case will be the value of **LIBERTY** described as...

“Freedom from arbitrary or undue governmental restraint”

by *Black's Law Dictionary*, [Pocket Edition, 4<sup>th</sup> edition, Bryan A. Garner, editor-in-chief, West Publishing Company, 2011, p. 210.]

Importance of this concept is supported by comments from President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a message before Congress in 1941 [Jay Shafritz (professor of public affairs), *The Harper Collins American Government & Politics Dictionary*, Harper Collins Publishers, 1993] during which he stated:

“Those who would give up essential liberty, to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety.”

## 5. Provide a Criterion

The criterion for the negative case is *due process* defined as:

“(law) the administration of justice according to established rules and principles; based on the principle that a person cannot be deprived of life” by the Princeton Online Dictionary

The fundamental position supported by this case is that the presence of due process rights allows for liberty. It is due process that keeps any government restraint from being either arbitrary or undue.

“The due process clause of the Fifth Amendment demands fairness from the federal government. On a substantive level, the due process clause protects us against government action “that ‘shocks the conscience’ or interferes with rights ‘implicit in the concept of ordered liberty.’” On a procedural level, the due process clause bars the government from depriving any person – whether citizen or not – of life, liberty or property without first providing the person with a full and fair opportunity to be heard.”

This quotation from Nancy Chang (Senior Litigation Attorney Center for Constitutional Rights), [*Silencing Political Dissent, How Post-September 11 Anti-Terrorism Measures Threaten Our Civil Liberties*, Seven Stories Press, New York, 2002, p. 25.] demonstrates the relationship between due process and liberty.

## 6. Evidence and Analysis used for Support

### CONTENTION TWO: DUE PROCESS RIGHTS ARE ESSENTIAL

A. Due process rights are a fundamental part of American society

Roger LeRoy Miller (Center for Policy Studies, Clemson University), *West's American Government*, West Publishing Company, 2013, p. 129.

The Fifth Amendment declares that the federal government cannot deprive any person of “life, liberty, or property, without due process of law.” The Fourteenth Amendment places the same restriction on state and local governments.

B. Due process is a valued part of our political system

James MacGregor Burns and J. W. Peltason (professors of political science), *Government By The People*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 2007, p. 155.

Throughout the world men and women are rebelling against the “police state” under which many of them live, against governments where police are unrestrained in how they go about finding, capturing, and punishing so-called “enemies of the people.” And when we get impatient about the time-consuming steps that must be followed before criminals may be taken off the streets, about the endless rounds of appeals and reviews available to those charged with crimes, we need to remember how lucky we are to live in a society that values due process, established rules and regulations that restrain those who exercise governmental power.

### Pause to Reflect

*Notice the manner in which these two “contentions”  
demonstrate the relationship between:*

**the value  
the criterion  
& the resolution**

## CONTENTION TWO: PROTECTION OF DUE PROCESS RIGHTS PRESERVES LIBERTY

### A. Due process serves as a constraint on government authority

David Cole and James X. Dempsey (professor of law and deputy director at the center for Democracy and Technology), *Terrorism and the Constitution*, 2002, The New Press, New York, p. 101.

The due process clause of the Fifth Amendment is another critical constraint on government discretion in the name of fighting terrorism. A fundamental component of due process is the right to confront one's accusers. It is founded on the premise that the truth is most likely to emerge in an adversarial proceeding, where the accused, who is in the best position to defend herself, can confront the sources of evidence against her, and can challenge their veracity, reveal their bias, and catch them in contradiction.

### B. Rights exist in times of war

Laura A. Dickinson (professor of law), *Using Legal Process to Fight Terrorism: Detentions, Military Commissions, International Tribunals, and the Rule of Law*,” *Southern California Law Review* 75:1407, September 2002, p. 1418.

In addition to these severe limits on the individual rights of the accused, the detentions and the proposed military commissions also depart from the constitutional scheme because these policies were implemented through a unilateral assertion of executive authority without explicit congressional ratification or approval by the judiciary. As the U.S. Supreme Court has stated, the constitutional system of checks and balances survives even in time of war or national crisis.

### C. Interrogation methods potentially threaten due process rights

O’Connell, 2005 [Mary Ellen O’Connell (professor of law), “Affirming the Ban on Harsh Interrogation,” *Ohio State Law Journal* 66:1231, 2005, p. 1231.]

The law relevant to the practice of interrogation is found in two great bodies of international legal principles, in addition to domestic law. During armed conflict and occupation, international humanitarian law (IHL) applies. IHL expressly prohibits not just torture, but any form of coercion of detainees during interrogation. Second, international human rights law applies to persons detained outside of an armed conflict, but also, to a certain extent, to wartime detainees as well. Human rights law prohibits torture as well as cruel, inhuman, and degrading interrogation techniques. These international obligations have been partially implemented in United States domestic law. Even where they have not been implemented, the United States remains bound to respect them.

# IS THE NEGATIVE CASE NECESSARY?

This is a very relevant question! In true debate fashion the answer is probably, yes or no, depending on the judge at the back of the room. Because of the fact that Lincoln Douglas debate is not governed by extensive rules and guidelines, no, the negative does not absolutely have to present a case. One of the more recent trends in the event, especially on some circuits, is to use a negative strategy known as “straight refutation” or sometimes referred to as “straight ref.” Using this strategy, the negative debater in the round chooses to spend the entirety of their time by responding to the affirmative case. In some cases, this strategy even proves successful.

Generally speaking, however, it is recommended that you present a negative case. There are several reasons for this strategy. When viewing the debate in its entirety, negative essentially has two ways to prevail in the round; by defeating the affirmative case or by disproving the validity of the resolution through the use of the negative case. At the very least, if and when you might choose to forego the negative case you are surrendering half of the opportunities you have at success. Second, and this is perhaps an even more compelling reason to provide a negative case, judges will often view the straight refutation strategy unfavorably. No, most of them are not going to render an affirmative decision merely because the negative did not present a case, however, many of them are going to be unwilling to leave any margin of error or benefit of the doubt for negative debaters in this instance.

## SECTION 6: PHILOSOPHY AND PHILOSOPHERS

Knowledge of philosophy and philosophers will contribute meaningfully to success in Lincoln Douglas debate. An abundance of information related to this subject exists so it is essential for you to identify the concepts that are most important to learn at the outset. The learning process related to this aspect of LD debate should be continuous and not limited to a particular resolution or some indeterminate time frame.

### WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

Like many such terms, this one has multiple definitions. Although some of these interpretations might be more elaborate than others, many scholars agree that philosophy generally refers to beliefs or systems of beliefs. These ideals may be embraced by individuals, societies, cultural groups, religious groups or simply groups of persons with similar interests. In a much more literal sense, the term philosophy refers to the simple love of knowledge or the love of learning.

One of the best places to begin your study of this subject is by learning some basics about several philosophers who are commonly used by Lincoln Douglas debaters. This group, referred to by some LD participants as the “Big Five” will be discussed in the following section:

**John Stuart Mill**

**Immanuel Kant**

**John Locke**

**Thomas Hobbes**

**Jean Jacques Rousseau**



# Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher whose writings opened new doors among scholars and philosophers in the academic world. Not only did Kant write extensively, volumes have been written about him and his ideas. The abundance of information related to this individual and his ideas is virtually limitless.

In spite of the fact that Kant is known for his truly ambitious contribution to the study of philosophy and the manner in which he introduced entirely new approaches to traditional areas of study, there are a few of his basic concepts that are applicable to Lincoln Douglas debate. As you review this brief introduction to Immanuel Kant, keep in mind the fact that the information provided herein is a dramatic simplification of a well-known philosopher whose ideas are both complex and extensive.

Two facets of Kant's ideas should be of particular interest to debaters. The first is the fact that he supported the belief that means are more important than ends when it comes to human action. The second is the strongly supported principals of a concept known as the *categorical imperative*. A better understanding of each of these aspects of Kant will result from the awareness that his views were seriously grounded in morality and moral issues.

In terms of the position that the means of an action are always more important than the ends, Kant's views are really not that complex. He believed morality was the prevailing motivating issue in the universe. He further believed that moral beliefs are both universal and relatively consistent, at least when compared to outcomes of actions that are much less certain. In the final analysis, regardless of the perceived certainty of an outcome, the guiding principals in life are always even more certain. Kant embraced a host of philosophical views that he believed were absolute, at least to the extent that they should not be compromised in pursuit of a potentially moral or desirable outcome. He would simply claim, "The ends cannot justify the means!"

## *The Categorical Imperative*

The second primary view of Kant that is applicable for Lincoln Douglas debate resides with the concept known as the categorical imperative. Although the term might sound a bit on the daunting side, it really is fairly easy to understand. Here is a hint for dealing with potentially difficult terms and phrases; break them down. In other words, take the two words separately and look for explanations. Categorical normally means in all situations or without exception, while imperative implies that something must be done, perhaps even bordering on the level of urgency. Hence the categorical imperative suggests a situation in which morality dictates a very distinct action and that there is no middle ground.

In short, the categorical imperative represents a philosophical guideline that should implore humans to act in a moral manner and, even further, that this action is pursued out of duty. Some supporters of the concept even take it a step further and suggest that any action we take, because of the morality that is part of our existence, legitimize the same action for anyone else. If we, as individuals violate a rule of society then, by our actions, we are sending a message to others that such actions are not inappropriate. This aspect of the categorical imperative is often compared to the Golden Rule, in that we treat others as we would others treat us.

Kant believes that morality is absolute, and provides a guideline, or maxim, to enable individuals to determine what constitutes an ethical action. The categorical imperative is extremely specific on what it takes for an action to be considered ethical, and provides three formulations that must be met in order for an action to be ethical.

Universal Law formulation: “Act only on that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.” In other words, make sure that your actions are appropriate in every instance.

Autonomy formulation: “Act in such a way that you always treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never simply as a means, but always at the same time as an end.” In other words, always respect human autonomy by treating people as an end in themselves, and never exclusively as a means to your own ends.

Kingdom of Ends formulation: “All maxims as proceeding from our own [hypothetical] making of law ought to harmonize with a possible kingdom of ends.” This formulation combines the first and second formulation, and claims that you should act as if all rational people are obeying the categorical imperative. The kingdom of ends is composed entirely of rational beings, and all rational beings would live by the categorical imperative.

## **John Stuart Mill**

John Stuart Mill was a highly intelligent British philosopher who lived and wrote during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. The range of subjects he addressed during the course of his career was extensive as he was known for his studies in philosophy, economics, political theory and moral theory. Frequently referred to as one of the leading philosophers of the Nineteenth Century, Mill was substantially influenced by John Locke, David Hume and Jeremy Bentham. The two former theorists were leading scholars in the field of political thought while Bentham influenced Mill’s ideas regarding the concept of utilitarianism.

A more complete understanding of Mill’s philosophy can be gained by reviewing the manner in which he was intellectually influenced during his earlier life. He is often referred to as an empiricist, or a philosopher who believes that knowledge is, at least in some manner, related to experience. Some of the leading British empiricists that Mill studied, as well as Mill himself, were often in disagreement regarding various aspects of the concept. Those same individuals, however, were in agreement regarding the basis of the theory; that all knowledge is subject to explanation based on scientific inquiry or personal experience and unknown influences of human knowledge do not exist.

The ideas of John Stuart Mill are particularly applicable to Lincoln Douglas debate in three specific areas. Remember, Mill was an individual who, over the course of his life, studied and wrote extensively about a host of subjects and ideas. The ideas presented here are only a limited number of the ones he studied during his life and the concepts are definitely simplified in this text.

### **Utilitarianism**

Unlike Kant who believed that the moral worth of an action is to be determined on the basis of the manner in which the action is taken, or the “means” of an action, Mill took the opposite approach. Mill maintains that the ultimate moral worth of an action is best determined by the consequences or outcome of that particular action. Based on his ideas regarding the best way to evaluate human action, Mill then attempts to identify the most desirable kinds of action in which humans engage. His ultimate conclusion is that the most meaningful source of motivation is happiness which means that, consequently, he supported the idea that the best action one can take is that which leads to the “greatest good for the greatest number.” Another way of phrasing this same concept is the “greatest happiness for the greatest number.”

The fundamental criticism of Mill and his ideas about utilitarianism is that the entire concept is grounded in the notion that the best motivation in life is the pursuit of pleasure and satisfaction. Critics of Mill frequently refer to utilitarianism as a form of hedonism, a philosophy that supports the view that the best pursuits in life are those that ultimately lead to pleasure and happiness. In response to the critics, Mill would argue that there is nothing fundamentally or morally improper about seeking to enhance the quality of life for all members of society. He would further claim that the ultimate goal of utilitarianism is not so much individual pleasure as it is the general welfare of groups within society. Finally, he would also note that efforts aimed at achieving the greatest good are not always successful so, therefore, humans must continue to seek new ways to promote the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

If you spend any amount of time studying the concept of utilitarianism it is likely that you will encounter the terms act utilitarianism and rule utilitarianism. The most fundamental difference between the two is that the former deals with actions of individuals while the latter addresses laws and guidelines of society. Mill would generally support rule utilitarianism. He would claim that we should not judge society on the basis of the motives of individuals acting out of their own urges. But rather, a nation, society, or political system should be evaluated based on the degree to which it supports, by rule, the greatest happiness for the greatest number.

### ***Liberty and the Harm Principle***

John Stuart Mill wrote extensively about the subject of liberty including an extensive essay (book actually) entitled *On Liberty*. Although his discussion of the subject went to great length to analyze it in detail, his general view of the subject is relatively concise. He essentially believed that individuals possess not only the liberty to feel and believe as they wish but that same level of liberty extends to the actions they pursue within society.

While the concept of liberty supported by Mill approaches an absolute status, the philosopher nevertheless, also offers an element of reservation as well. The *harm principle* is somewhat of a two-fold proposition. Initially it means that individuals have the liberty to do anything they choose so long as it does not bring harm to others or society. The more common interpretation of the ideal states that society or government is justified in taking any action that prevents harm to society. The application of both the concepts of liberty and the harm principle is frequent in Lincoln Douglas debate. Quite often resolutions will set the stage for arguments based on conflicts between individuals and society. Liberty claims support the individual while harm principle claims obviously defend the side of society as a whole. There is ample information available for each to support strong argument positions.

**Try This:**

***Explain the difference between the categorical imperative and utilitarianism to another debater or your coach.***

***Also explain why you would not want to use the ideas of both Kant and Mill in the same debate round.***

## **Social Contract Theory**

Social contract theory is commonly used by Lincoln Douglas debaters. The social contract is a concept that has been analyzed, described and discussed by philosophers and political theorists for centuries. There are a host of differing views regarding the subject; however the basic premise of the idea is normally consistent from theorist to theorist.

In general, the social contract represents an explanation of how and why governments have come into existence. Originally humans lived in a condition known as the *state of nature* that was characterized by two distinct conditions; extensive individual freedom coupled with tremendous uncertainty and lack of security. Ironically, the two conditions tended to, at least according to some of the theorists, defeat one another. Because of the fact that freedom was essentially absolute, those who were more powerful infringed on the freedom of those with less power, hence the erosion of security and the growth of disorder. One of the aspects of the concept over which philosophers disagree is whether the state of nature actually existed during some past historical period or if it is merely a theoretical condition of humans that never actually existed for certain. Regardless of this difference of opinion, one issue on which most scholars agree is that, once humans depart the state of nature, they never return. While the general quality of and desirability of the society and political system in which they live might vary, they will always remain within the political confines of some sort of government.

Social Contract theory, as noted above, is used frequently in Lincoln Douglas debate. It not only provides an explanation of how and why governments have come into existence; it also explains, at least to some degree, the kind of political obligations that individual citizens have to their governments.

Although a number of individuals have written authoritative books and essays about social contract theory, three are particularly applicable for Lincoln Douglas debate. It is important that, even if you do not plan to use any of these persons in your own arguments and cases, that you have at least some awareness of their respective views and beliefs.

# Thomas Hobbes

Thomas Hobbes, a philosopher who lived during the late 16<sup>th</sup> and early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> centuries was one of the earliest major social contract philosophers. The view of humanity embraced by Hobbes was one of definite pessimism. He believed that human beings were, by their very nature, greedy, selfish and totally motivated by self-interest. He further believed that the natural state of humanity was one of total conflict and even, in some cases, war. Because of his generally negative view of human nature, Hobbes generally viewed democracy as unfavorable. His logic was quite simple: if citizens are motivated by little more than self-interest, their actions will not be for the good of society but only for their own perceived benefits.

Although he did recognize that monarchs were often less than ideal leaders themselves, Hobbes believed that a strong leadership was normally the best for a nation. He further believed that sovereign leaders would be kept in check, so to speak, by the influence of wealthy and powerful individuals within the society. It was the sovereign however, according to Hobbes, that had the ultimate authority and who would generally make the best decisions for the nation.

Having lived in during times of war and upheaval in Europe, his ideas were likely influenced, at least to some degree, by events during his early lifetime. The impression left on the young scholar by wars he witnessed led him to believe that war was fundamentally undesirable.

The application for Hobbes in debate rounds should be relatively obvious. His ideas support any system that is necessary to provide security or stability in a nation or society. In spite of his generally pessimistic views of humanity in general, he does offer some valid perspectives about society and the need for government in general.

# John Locke

Lincoln Douglas debaters typically rely on the ideas of John Locke more than any of the other social contract theorists. This is largely due to two reasons in particular: the fact that his views of humanity are of a more optimistic nature than many of his contemporaries and because his ideas were embraced by several of the leaders of the American Revolution. Locke, who lived most of his life in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, before his death in 1704 was widely regarded as a leading political theorist and empiricist of his time. His writings not only influenced the framers of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, they also influenced other political philosophers such as Voltaire.

Locke's most widely read discourse was the *Second Treatise of Government* in which he described elements that he viewed as essential to the well-being of humanity. He identified a number of "natural rights" in which he believed and supported the right of individuals to preserve those rights even in a situation caused by an oppressive government. Unlike Hobbes, Locke viewed democracy in a more favorable light and believed that the voice of the majority should be the primary source of influence on the government.

Locke also wrote favorably of several specific groups of rights; referred to as life, liberty and property. Although he acknowledged the validity of the social contract and further noted that when humans enter this unwritten agreement they must willingly sacrifice some of their freedom, there are certain, specific rights that are always retained. These rights, according to Locke, were natural rights, meaning that all humans possess them by virtue of the fact that they are born.

These views of Locke were echoed in the opening words of the Declaration of Independence where the following words, "endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights" refer to source of rights. The next phrase clearly identifies, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" as classifications of those natural rights.

Again, this terminology is taken directly from Locke's *Second Treatise*.

Ultimately, the framers of the United States Constitution would revisit the ideas of Locke that had been referred to in the Declaration of Independence. This time it would be found in the words of the First Amendment that was part of the Bill of Rights. Typically, when students are asked about the source of their fundamental freedoms such as free speech, free press, freedom of religion, etc. they respond with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution or the Bill of Rights. Ironically, none of these is completely accurate because the ultimate source of these rights, to the extent that they are all natural rights, is, according to the Declaration of Independence, "our creator."

Remember, Locke believed that humans were born with these rights and that government could not, short of allowing for some kind of due process, infringe on these rights. Accordingly, the First Amendment is thus worded in such a manner that it protects what the framers believed to be natural rights.

John Locke was one of the most influential political theorists in British history and his ideas have definite application for Lincoln Douglas debate. Like many of the individuals and concepts discussed in this manual, you may choose not to use his ideas for your own arguments but you must be ready to anticipate the fact that some of your opponents will be using his ideas.

## **Jean Jacques Rousseau**

The ideas of Jean Jacques Rousseau, an 18<sup>th</sup> Century political theorist, were somewhat different from the other two noted social contract writers, Hobbes and Locke. His ideas were popular in his home country of France during the decades that preceded the major revolution in that nation. He was posthumously attacked by critics because it was generally believed that some of his ideas set the stage for a dramatic and violent period of French history.

Rousseau took exception to Hobbes' description of the natural state of humanity as brutish and generally unfavorable. Rousseau believed that humans in the state of nature were incapable of acting in an evil or immoral manner because they were essentially ignorant of the concepts. He further believed in the benefits of political participation and that the sovereignty of the people was best maintained when the will of the people was considered and acted upon by governing officials. When viewing Rousseau's beliefs in their entirety it is relatively simple to understand how supporters of the French Revolution were motivated by his ideas. He was an individual who believed in the voice of the majority and the concept of popular sovereignty.

### ***Summary***

In order to fully comprehend and understand the basics of social contract theory, it is helpful to know at least a modest amount about Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. They all have relevant ideas regarding the general concept and while Locke is normally studied more frequently by LD participants than the other two, they all have meaningful ideas. Perhaps the best way to view the three is to describe Hobbes and Rousseau as occupying places on the opposite ends of a hypothetical spectrum and both have some legitimate ideas applicable for debate. Locke, however, occupies the more middle ground and the fact that his writing found its way into a key U.S. document suggests his importance for Lincoln Douglas debate.

# MORE PHILOSOPHERS

There is practically no limit to the number of philosophers that can be used for application in Lincoln Douglas debate. The list provided in this manual should be a starting point for your study and merely begin to get you headed in the proper direction. Obviously, there are individuals and concepts that are not mentioned in these pages, but that is not to mean that those not noted herein are should not be evaluated and studied. Take the extra time to learn about as many of these learned scholars as possible and, by the extra effort, you will notice an improvement in your ability to discuss such ideas in debate rounds.

## ARISTOTLE

The philosopher Aristotle was a Greek teacher who writing remains the subject of study today by serious students of philosophy and rhetoric. The range of subjects addressed by this individual was truly remarkable and the extent of his credibility, even today, is equally noteworthy. In the classic Greek tradition, he refused to allow himself to be labeled as a member of a limited academic arena but choose instead to pursue knowledge in a broad range of disciplines.

His writing on the subject of rhetoric, ethics and political issues is both relevant and meaningful. Although he does have his share of critics, his fundamental ideas have generally survived unscathed for centuries.

## FRANCIS BACON

Francis Bacon was a 16<sup>th</sup> Century philosopher who, like several of his contemporaries, began his academic career in the field of math and science. He attempted, with limited success to formulate ideas involving both science and philosophy and the relationship between the two. In other words, he attempted to articulate a natural form of philosophy that was grounded in empiricism while, at the same time attempting to develop views regarding the manner in which science is affected by philosophy. His ideas were somewhat revolutionary for his age and they were not generally well received by not only his contemporaries but also church and political leaders.

In some ways Bacon is important because, although there were some exceptions in the ancient world, was one of the first major European philosophers who began his academic career in the science and math background as opposed to the Church.

## JEREMY BENTHAM

Although John Stuart Mill is typically associated with Utilitarianism, Jeremy Bentham is widely regarded as the father of the discipline. He was, however, a contemporary of both John Stuart Mill and his father James Mill. During his life he was an outspoken critic of many of the political leaders of his day, and this criticism was not limited to his home of England but other nations as well. The son of a lawyer, Bentham was also educated in the law, but spent most of his later life engaged in intellectual pursuits and was commonly engaged in

discussions with other persons associated with the academic world of his time.

## WILLIAM JAMES

William James was an early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American scholar who was known for the degree to which he contributed to the fields of psychology and education. In spite of the recognition he gained for his writing and life of study, he is most well-known for the contribution he made in formulating the concept of pragmatism. Reversing the trend established by earlier European philosophers who sought to merge the schools of philosophy and science, James chooses to validate science through practical and real world observations. Pragmatism, the one true American philosophy, was ultimately an attempt to bridge the gap between traditional philosophers and scientists.

## ROBERT NOZICK

Robert Nozick, a Harvard professor of philosophy, author, and 20<sup>th</sup> Century political analyst who is perhaps best known for his 1970s work *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. Nozick contends that individuals are entitled to numerous fundamental rights and that the amount of restriction that should be imposed by government is best kept at a “minimalist” level. Nozick is also known for his fundamental disagreement with Rawls’ theories regarding justice. (See below.)

## JOHN RAWLS

The book entitled *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls is considered by some to be one of the most significant pieces of political literature written during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Rawls spend more than three decades as a professor at Harvard University and is most commonly known for his views regarding justice and its influence on society. For any serious student of Lincoln Douglas debate it is recommended that you familiarize yourself with Rawls. His name will appear in law journal articles on practically any social issue imaginable. He even, during the later years of his life, weighs in on the issue of foreign policy. His views of this issue were no doubt molded and influenced by the time he spent on the front lines during World War II and his observations about the Vietnam conflict.

# JUSTICE

Although a number of philosophical concepts are commonly used in Lincoln Douglas debate, justice is used with a high degree of frequency. It is an ideal that debaters should anticipate being used by opponents, as it is often a favorable issue to use as part of either an affirmative or negative case, especially when the term is included in the text of a resolution.

What does justice mean? There are multiple interpretations of the concept and it is used in a variety of contexts, however, the most appropriate meaning of the term is literally “fairness.” It is this relative simplicity that is, at least in part, the reason that justice is so commonly used in Lincoln Douglas debate. It is a common idea, usually considered highly desirable, and has practically no serious opposition since it is difficult to argue that “fairness” is not a desirable objective.

Normally debaters spend very little time arguing whether or not justice is desirable, but instead argue about the degree to which justice is achieved or not achieved by some kind of program or action.

Those who choose to use and defend justice as a value or even just an argument should avoid the common error of failing to adequately interpret the concept. There are quite a few ways to describe the concept and it is essential, especially when using it as an affirmative or negative case value, to define and support it with evidence.

For use in debate situations, what is an appropriate definition of justice? Although, numerous definitions exist, Greek scholars provided some interesting interpretations. Plato implied that justice relates to the role of individuals within society. Aristotle offered a more specific approach by defining justice as “treating equal equally and unequals unequally.” In light of Aristotle’s interpretation, imagine a school system. Physically, 1<sup>st</sup> grade students are relatively equal with one another while, at the same time, 12<sup>th</sup> grade student are also relatively equal to one another. There is normally a substantial physical difference, however, between 1<sup>st</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. When selecting desks for the two groups it would be considered just, according to Aristotle, to provide the 1<sup>st</sup> graders with equal desks and the 12<sup>th</sup> graders with equal desks but it would be acceptable for there to be major differences between the 1<sup>st</sup> grade and 12<sup>th</sup> grade desks.

John Rawls, a contemporary political philosopher contends, like others scholars, that justice essentially means fairness. But he then goes a step further by also noting that justice assumes a level of virtue and actually describes justice as the “first virtue of social institutions.”

At the most fundamental level there are several broad classifications of the concept of justice. One of the more commonly used categories is criminal justice, an arena that typically refers to legal issues such as due process, trial rights, investigation methods, etc. Another major avenue of discussion regarding the concept deals with the philosophical elements of justice. Regardless of which interpretation of the concept you are defending or opposing in a debate round, it is crucial to understand fully the ideas you are considering. When constructing your own cases, take the extra time to locate quality definitions and support evidence. During debate rounds when responding to opponents’ arguments about justice, take the time to ask during cross-examination if necessary, for clear explanations of both the meaning of the concept and how it is being used.



# LIBERTY

Liberty is a truly important natural right and a concept that is very well-suited for Lincoln Douglas debate. In the U.S. Declaration of Independence, early leaders of this nation began the document by making reference to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” It is noteworthy that liberty is mentioned in the same context as life, a fact that indicates the genuine importance the framers attached to this concept.

Evidence of the status of liberty as a natural right is also found in the Declaration of Independence within the clause, “endowed by their creator.” This phrase makes a strong implication that, at least according to the early leaders of this nation, liberty is something with which all persons are born.

Historians, government experts and political theorists generally agree that liberty is not only a fundamental kind of right, it is also a natural right embodied in the Declaration of Independence and protected within the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Liberty is an ideal that makes an excellent value. Not only does it serve this capacity well, there is a host of other ideas / concepts that are suitable as use for an accompanying criterion. Freedom, for example, is a strong criterion to use with the value of liberty. What is the difference between freedom and liberty? The most fundamental difference, at least with respect to LD debate, is the reality that freedom is a sub-set of liberty. The First Amendment offers protection of several freedoms including religion, speech and the press. The wording of this document strongly suggests that the framers of the Constitution operated from the assumption that the freedoms being protected were grounded in a natural right.

## ***Try This:***

***Look through some of the resolutions in this manual and select several for which you would use liberty and / or justice as a value***

***Next make a list of ideas or concepts that could serve as a criterion in each of the resolutions you identify.***

## SECTION 7: CROSS-EXAMINATION STRATEGIES

Cross-examination is not only one of the more challenging aspects of Lincoln Douglas debate, it is also one of the more important parts of the debate round. It provides the unique opportunity for competitors to not only illuminate issues that are possibly being misunderstood; it is also a time during which your own ideas can be clarified.

### DO'S AND DO NOT'S FOR CX:

- » **DO** use the time to clarify points you believe to be unclear in the debate
- » **DO** use the time to defend your own positions when they are challenged
- » **DO** answer the questions your opponent asks in a direct manner
- » **DO** respond professionally to questions
- » **DO** ask questions that are relevant to the debate
- » **DO** use all of your allotted time for questioning
- » **DO NOT** use sarcasm during the CX time period
- » **DO NOT** avoid your opponent's questions
- » **DO NOT** give any appearance of rudeness
- » **DO NOT** merely ask your opponent to repeat parts of their case
- » **DO NOT** use prep time before beginning CX
- » **DO NOT** make statements you cannot defend
- » **DO** use the time to clarify points you believe to be unclear in the debate

Cross examination is a time, during the debate round, to clarify arguments and claims made by both yourself and your opponent. This is one of the more important parts of the process so use it wisely and to your best advantage.

**DO** use the time to defend your own positions when they are challenged

If you are unable to defend your own position, it is unlikely that the judge will believe that you have any meaningful credibility. One of the most important things that you must do in a debate round is establish credibility with the judge.

**DO** answer the questions your opponent asks in a direct manner

There is little to be gained by avoiding questions posed by your opponent. You will either appear to be uncertain about the issues in the round or disingenuous, neither of which is a good thing in the eyes of the judge in the round.

**DO** respond professionally to questions

Professionalism is always a favorable attribute to embrace when you are competing in a debate round. Remember, the debate judges see and hear far more than merely what is said during the speeches. Nonverbal elements of communication are extremely vital for successful debaters. Think for a moment about the manner in which candidates for major political office present themselves during their exchanges. It is the kind of professionalism you witness in those events that you should seek to duplicate in debate settings

## **DO** ask questions that are relevant to the debate

During the cross examination period you have exactly three minutes during which you will attempt to bring to light the most meaningful issues in the debate round. There is absolutely no reason for you to not be able to bring those questions to your opponent. Pause a moment before beginning the question period and review the entirety of your flow sheet, seeking to identify the major points you would like to see clarified.

## **DO** use all of your allotted time for questioning

Regardless of why you might choose to not use all of your allotted CX time, if you do not use it all, the judge will most likely perceive you to be inexperienced in the activity. For obvious reasons, this is not a favorable development in a debate round. Judges often view debates as being very close and consequently, their decision will be based on “the little things” observed in the round. The debater who is viewed as lacking experience will not receive the benefit of the doubt in those close rounds.

## **DO NOT** use sarcasm during the CX time period

Sarcastic answers to questions will normally compel judges to search for any reason whatsoever to vote for your opponent. Often, when debaters use sarcasm they are perceived to not know the true answer to the question and are using their behavior to shift attention to another level. This is not a desirable strategy and will generally yield counter-productive results.

## **DO NOT** avoid your opponent’s questions

For some reasons, debaters often have the idea that if they answer their opponents questions in a direct manner they will ultimately forfeit ground in the debate. Regardless of why you might avoid a question the end result will be that you will be perceived as either someone who does not know the answer or someone who is clearly on the defensive and fears losing major ground.

## **DO NOT** give any appearance of rudeness

It is often said that rudeness is the ignorant person’s substitute for intellect. Whether or not it is true, by appearing rude, you will be perceived in this light. Obviously, perception is mentioned often in this section, and with good cause. For the purposes of debate rounds, perception is reality and it is that reality that will ultimately influence your judge’s opinion.

## **DO NOT** merely ask your opponent to repeat parts of their case

Certainly it is acceptable to ask your opponent to repeat any parts of their case that you did not totally understand; however, questions of this nature should not be the first ones asked. When debaters approach the CX period and their first question is “What is your value?” they appear to be either inexperienced or someone who did not pay appropriate attention. If you do need to ask such questions, then phrase them in such a manner that will not indicate you are actually seeking the major points of your opponents case. A question such as, “can you briefly explain the relationship between your value and criterion?” will achieve the purpose. Use caution, however, when you ask open-ended questions because your opponent might attempt to offer an extremely long answer, thus consuming all of your CX time.

## **DO NOT** use prep time before beginning CX

Although there is no specific rule against this practice, it is strongly discouraged. You will need the prep time to prepare for your speeches and you will appear to be inexperienced if you do ask for prep time before CX.

## **DO NOT** make statements you cannot defend

When it comes to answering questions in CX, honesty is indeed the best policy. Experienced debaters will often agree, if there is one thing that is almost always a problem in a debate round it is when you make false or unsubstantiated statements in CX. You will ultimately be made to appear uncertain and lacking in knowledge of the subject.

# SUMMARY

Remember: the cross-examination period is a very crucial part of a debate. It is a time during which you can gain or lose credibility. A common mistake that debaters make, especially those who are relatively new to the activity, is to react adversely to statements made in debate rounds and during cross examination. If you are a beginning debater try to not take things said during CX or your opponent's speeches too personally. Above all, do not react emotionally to what transpires in the round.

When you react emotionally to situations that arise in the round, your chances of success are diminished greatly. Not only do you risk losing credibility, your thought processes will also be affected. You will lessen confrontation by facing the judge and responding, rather than directing eye contact to your opponent.

One of the things that makes the cross-examination period so challenging is that sometimes it will appear that your views, arguments, claims and beliefs are being personally attacked. And to some degree they are; however, that is not to say that your confidence should be compromised as a result.

When engaged in debate competitions use the CX period to your own advantage. Respond to your opponent in a conversational, yet professional manner. Always try to present yourself in a confident manner and provide valid and deliberate responses when being questioned.

# SECTION 8: COMMUNICATION AND REFUTATION

All too often, debaters tend to lose sight of the fact that participation in the event is an activity in communication. Because of this reality, it is all the more important that participants take the extra time to prepare their arguments with care, but equal time should also be taken in order to effectively communicate the ideas in those arguments and cases.

There are some fundamental basics that should be considered. The following list includes some of the more essential aspects of debate communication.

- ❖ **remember the audience**
- ❖ **eye contact**
- ❖ **professionalism**
- ❖ **sincerity**
- ❖ **expression and delivery**
- ❖ **speed of delivery**
- ❖ **vocabulary and word choice**
- ❖ **organization**

## **REMEMBER THE AUDIENCE**

This is one of the simplest, yet all too often overlooked parts of debate participation. To whom do debaters communicate during competition? The answer to this question is simple, the judge. Accordingly, it is not appropriate to refer to your opponent as the target of your communication during the round, with the sole exception being during cross examination. Remember, whenever you utter the term “you” it should be directed toward the judge or judges.

## **EYE CONTACT**

It is always suggested to make favorable eye contact with your judge or judges during the speeches you are giving. Proper posture, coupled with favorable eye contact and appropriate gestures all compliment the communication process. You are engaging in a persuasive activity so remember, that failing to make eye contact will lessen your chances of success.

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

Maintaining professionalism in a debate round goes well beyond just the manner in which you speak. It includes the way in which you are dressed, the common courtesy you demonstrate to your judge, opponent and others in the room at the time of the debate, and the way you generally conduct yourself throughout the tournament. Although judges should not base their decisions on things they observe outside the debate round, the chances are often great that inappropriate behavior at a tournament will be observed by a prospective judge. The potential consequences should be evident.

Professional dress is also strongly recommended. It is suggested that you dress in the same manner you would see a courtroom attorney dress. There are multiple television programs and movies featuring attorneys in this

setting, female and male alike, so just follow the example you can see for yourself.

Will inappropriate dress diminish your chances of success? Not necessarily, but it is extremely rare that a debater will be penalized for dressing too well, yet the opposite is highly likely. Studies conclude that appearance affects your credibility.

### **SINCERITY**

Though there are multiple traits that are appropriate for application by debaters, sincerity is an attribute that is highly complimentary of any persuasive speaking activity. One of the fundamental elements of persuasion is sincerity, making it both applicable and essential for debate competition.

### **EXPRESSION AND DELIVERY**

Like sincerity, expression and delivery are also important parts of debate speeches. If you truly want your judge to evaluate you honestly and fairly, then you should be expected to use expression and attempt to perfect your speaking skills. One of the key ways in which this is achieved is through frequent and meaningful practice. Above and beyond all else, the affirmative constructive speech should be delivered in a flawless and error free manner. This is the only speech in the entire debate that is prepared entirely in advance and the quality of delivery should attest to that fact.

### **SPEED OF DELIVERY**

Like other forms of speaking competition, Lincoln Douglas debate has experienced change over the past years. One trend is that many of today's participants speak at a much faster rate than participants a decade ago. How fast is too fast? There are several legitimate answers to this question. For starters, any rate that is faster than the judge's personal preference should be considered too fast. Next, any rate that is so fast that the quality of communication is seriously diminished is also too fast. Finally, speaking so fast that your opponent cannot understand your arguments might result in the debater being unable to clash with your arguments, but it also may not bring a favorable decision from the judge. Instead, it will likely result in a rather disorganized debate. To that extent it is a good idea to speak at a rate which your opponent is able to understand.

### **VOCABULARY AND WORD CHOICE**

Debaters who seriously wish to achieve success should spend time working on improvement of their personal vocabularies. Not only will this help you grow intellectually and academically, it will also return multiple benefits to you as a debater. Use caution however, when learning new terms to always ensure they are used properly and correctly, lest you risk a major credibility loss.

### **ORGANIZATION**

The degree to which debaters are able to present arguments in an organized manner is, without a doubt, one of the most important factors that leads to success in the event. The key to organizing arguments is the ability to take a quality flow sheet during a debate round. The ability to take and use a flow sheet is often the primary factor that separates an average debater from an excellent debater. Regardless of your talent, ability, intellect or speaking skills, the degree to which you can record information during the round will ultimately affect the extent to which all of those other factors contribute. The following information should help improve skills with taking flow sheets.

## Flow Sheets

In order to achieve success at flowing a debate round you need to follow some broad, general guidelines. Once you get some practice, you can develop your own method, best suited to your own preferences and skills.

- ✓ learn to abbreviate; if necessary develop your own system of shorthand
- ✓ avoid attempting to copy everything your opponent says
- ✓ do not only record your opponents arguments; record your responses as well
- ✓ use multi-color pens or ink in order to separate arguments effectively, if flowing by hand
- ✓ when you are negative, always flow the 2AR
- ✓ refer to your flow sheet as you speak
- ✓ once you get some practice, remain consistent in the method you use
- ✓ review flows and write comments on them following each tournament
- ✓ keep flow sheets for future reference

A flow sheet is merely a form of taking notes during a debate round. Traditionally students and judges alike relied on legal pads for the note-taking. Today, however, an increasing majority of debaters and judges are using computers for flowing the round. There are several free access programs for flow sheets available on line or, like many participants who use computers, you can simply use a spreadsheet format.

The following sample represents only one of several methods that are acceptable. Again, it is suggested that you try several methods before selecting the choice that best suits your skill level.

# Sample Flow Sheet

| AC                    | NC  | 1AR                                 | NR  | 2AR                          |
|-----------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| V=justice             | neg value too   | aff pos superior                    | neg crit denies                             | voter = aff value is sup     |
| C=equality            | not accurate<br>not univ.   | most accurate                       | not in context                              |                              |
| C1. just.<br>is univ. | does not apply  |                                     |   | voter = aff crit is upheld   |
| A. applies to all     | impossible  | in most cases                       | no proof here<br>lack examples              | voter = court issues prove   |
| B. used by courts     | truism<br>proves nothing  | proves aff case                     | only proves neg                             |                              |
| C2 equal. eroded      | how?  | by bad verdicts                     | not signif                                  |                              |
| A. court flawed       | no proof  | 3 examples                          | all are outdated                            |                              |
| B. equal. > justice   | not always<br><br>NEG CASE<br><br>v= justice<br><br>c= functional<br>courts | aff is superior<br><br>invalid crit | neg interp prevails<br><br>totally accurate | voter = neg value crit lacks |
|                       | C1 courts work  | no proof<br>aff examples            |   |                              |
|                       | C2 hist, proves   | not adequate                        | examples undenied                           |                              |
|                       | A. judicial branch  | source is flawed                    |   |                              |
|                       | B. modern trials  | no true examples                    |   |                              |



# REFUTATION

There is a threshold of experience level that debaters cross at some point in their careers. There are a host of factors that indicate the experience level for competitors, and one such factor is to note the way in which debaters use their allotted speaking time. Beginning debaters struggle to use the time they have for speeches and, more often than not, are unable to present enough arguments to use their entire time. The threshold is crossed when debaters move from the position of not having enough to say to fill the time to the opposite, never seeming to have sufficient time for the arguments they want to present.

One of the best ways to cross that threshold of experience is to master the art of refutation and improve skills used in responding to opponents arguments. The following refutation and rebuttal strategies are a few ways in which you can improve your skills in this area.

## **LINE BY LINE RESPONSE TO ARGUMENTS ON THE FLOW SHEET**

One of the best ways to refute your opponent's arguments is to present a line-by-line response to points you have recorded on your flow sheet. As your experience level increases you will likely get to the point at which you will not be able to respond to every single argument on the flow and, when that happens you will need to adjust your style. When possible, however, it is always desirable to simply respond to as many arguments on the flow as possible while, at the same time, identifying arguments you made to which there was no response by your opponent.

## **IDENTIFY FLAWS IN THE VALUE / CRITERION RELATIONSHIP**

Review the relationship of your opponent's value and criterion carefully. Here are some questions that can be asked regarding this facet of your opponent's case. This list is by no means comprehensive, but does cover the more essential issues.

- ◇ Are the value and criterion clearly defined?
- ◇ Are the value and criterion clearly supported by evidence?
- ◇ Does the criterion support the value?
- ◇ Does the value logically support / oppose the resolution (depending on the side)?
- ◇ Do case arguments complete the connection between the value, criterion and resolution?
- ◇ Is the evidence presented in the case from reliable sources?

Each of these ideas represents issues that can be raised against opponent's cases. This is an excellent strategy for the simple reason that the essence of a case is the value and criterion. If serious questions are raised about either of them, the case will be difficult to defend. If your opponent does not provide support for their value or criterion, then it should be requested. If there is a question regarding the qualifications of sources, this is also ground for an argument.

## **CHALLENGE THE LOGIC OF YOUR OPPONENT**

There are countless forms of logical fallacies that have been identified by experts on rhetoric and persuasion. You can gain substantial credibility by referring to them by common names. Here are but a few common logical

fallacies:

**ad hominem fallacy** involves a nonessential attack on the person or individual being cited without questioning the actual information

**begging the question** is a statement of a normally circular nature, for example “courts uphold morality because laws are moral and courts uphold laws”

**straw man argument** occurs when an opponent’s position is exaggerated or interpreted incorrectly so that it can be more easily defeated

**post hoc fallacy** is committed when an event is said to cause another event just because it preceded it in time

**red herring** results from an attempt to divert attention away from the primary argument at hand by focusing attention on a minute or insignificant detail

## **CHALLENGE EVIDENCE**

One of the factors that separates debate from informal argumentation is that debaters are obligated to present evidence in support of their claims. This reality opens the door for several levels of potential objections that can be raised. If the evidence is being used to support a pragmatic or contemporary empirical issue then it can be challenged if it is not current.

The qualification of the source of the evidence is also subject to question, particularly if the individual being quoted is one that is unfamiliar. Finally, listen carefully to the evidence to make certain that the evidence actually supports the claims your opponent attributes to it.

## **IDENTIFY VOTING ISSUES**

One of the things you might have observed regarding the sample flow sheet was the manner in which the last affirmative speech addressed little more than voting issues. When reflecting on the time frame for Lincoln Douglas debate, it is essential to keep in mind the time difference between affirmative and negative after the affirmative constructive speech is completed. The first affirmative rebuttal is a 4 minute speech that must respond to a 7 minute speech. The second affirmative rebuttal is a 3 minute speech that must respond to a 6 minute speech. The simple reason for identifying this reality is so that affirmative debaters can be adequately prepared for this situation

Lincoln Douglas debaters will often, especially when on the affirmative side, identify and cite several issues identified as “voting issues” or “voters” for short. These are key points in the debate that are believed by the debater presenting them to be adequate ground for receiving a favorable decision on the ballot.

Caution is urged regarding use of voters, however, because some judges find the use of them objectionable. They merely want a line-by-line analysis so they as the judge can determine voting issues. This is not typically the case, but if you have had a judge who does not favor them, you should not use them with the same judge in subsequent rounds.

# SECTION 9: TOURNAMENTS AND COMPETITION

Once you have done the work of conducting research and preparing cases it is time to take the next step by becoming actively involved in competition. In terms of official UIL competition, tournaments are held at the district, regional, and state level. There are, however, other tournaments that are held throughout the year, normally sponsored by high schools and universities. These events are called invitational tournaments because schools are invited by the host school to participate.

## **Important Tournament Information**

*or*

## **Some Simple Reminders**

### **Carefully review tournament information**

Not all invitational tournaments are the same. Some are scheduled over a two day period while most are normally held on a single Saturday. You will discover that some such meets share a very similar schedule while others might be somewhat different. It is not uncommon for a school to alter the schedule of its tournament from one year to the next.

Be sure to check other important items on the invitation such as deadlines for entries, deadlines for dropping contestants and penalties for late drops. When making plans to attend a meet, it is essential to organize the necessary information in advance and be certain that all deadlines are met. Another consideration will be the judging requirement. Many tournaments require judges (or a substantial fee) for judges. Normally the number of judges that a school is expected to supply is based on the number of entries from that school.

I strongly recommend that newer coaches volunteer for judging assignments for several reasons. First, by agreeing to judge you will be in the definite appreciation of the tournament host. Second, one of the best ways to learn more about the event is to actually observe other students in competition and the best way to gain this knowledge is by judging. Finally, judges are often difficult to find for larger tournaments and, inevitably, when there is a shortage of them, some rounds will get lesser qualified judges. So every time a qualified judge volunteers to take a ballot, that means one less round will be decided by a person who lacks adequate qualifications.

### **Prepare checklists for tournament material**

It is always a good idea to prepare a checklist of items needed at tournaments. With respect to Lincoln Douglas debaters files and cases are a necessity. Some basic supplies include pens, legal pads, computer (if used by debaters) and any other material needed for competition. Students who attend multiple tournaments normally become accustomed to the kinds of things that need to be taken. It is also essential that all students bring their dress clothes to wear in competition.

### **Competition format**

Invitational tournaments normally feature a pre-determined number of preliminary rounds of debate (typically 3 for a single day tournament and 4 for a two-day tournament). Students competing in debate will normally be on the affirmative and negative side an equal number of times. In the event that there are 3 preliminary rounds each debater will be affirmative once, negative once, and the two debaters competing in the third round will flip to determine who gets to choose sides.

Depending on the number of total debaters entered in competition, the highest-ranking competitors will advance to elimination rounds based on their win-loss record. In the event of multiple students being tied for advancing positions, speaker points are used to break the tie. If a tie still remains there are a number of ad-

ditional tie-breakers possible. Adjusted speaker points, where both the highest and lowest points awarded to the tied contestants are dropped and the highest remaining point total wins, is frequently the next tie-breaking criteria. Others include the opponent's win/loss record (determining which contestant debated the more difficult opponents), opponent's total number of speaker points (high total wins) and head-to-head preliminary round results.

### **Common invitational tournament questions**

**Are students allowed to enter more than one event at invitational tournaments?**

*It depends on the tournament, but many tournaments allow students to cross-enter with the exception typically being that CX debaters cannot cross-enter during one-day tournaments.*

**Are coaches allowed to challenge or protest a judges' decision?**

*There will be frequent situations in which debaters or coaches might disagree with the decision of a judge; however, the judges' decision is normally considered final. Coaches may point out that a technical error or mistake in recording information has occurred.*

**Do all invitational tournaments adhere to all UIL rules and guidelines?**

*No, invitational tournaments may depart from UIL rules and guidelines especially with respect to cross entries, total number of entries and tournament schedules.*

**When are results announced?**

*Depending on the tournament, results might be available soon after each round or, in some cases not until elimination round pairings are announced.*

# Organizations

## [University Interscholastic League \(UIL\)](#)

The University Interscholastic League is the governing body for academic, music, and athletic competition throughout the state of Texas. With respect to Lincoln Douglas debate competition, the league officially sponsors three levels of competition, district, regional and state. The top three students in each district competition advance to regional competition. At regional competition, once again the top three students advance to the state tournament. In addition to serving as the official sponsor for these tournaments, UIL is also a source of numerous resources that can be used for teaching and instruction.

During the fall of each school year UIL sponsors student activity conferences in various parts of the state. These conferences provide a number of teaching sessions for students and coaches alike. Another opportunity for coaches is the Capital Conference held in Austin each summer.

The League releases two official LD debate topics each year. The fall topic is released in early August and is debated at UIL invitational tournaments August through December. In December, the spring topic is released and is debated January through May. These topics are posted on the debate page of the UIL website.

## [Texas Forensic Association \(TFA\)](#)

The Texas Forensic Association is an organization that sponsors invitational tournaments and an annual state tournament for students who earn qualifying points at the invitational tournaments. Lincoln Douglas debate is one of the events that is part of TFA competition. It is important to be sure, prior to attending a TFA meet, that you understand any possible rule differences between this organization and UIL. Often TFA tournaments will use a different Lincoln Douglas debate topic than the UIL. Contact the tournament host to confirm the topic.

## [National Speech & Debate Association \(formerly NFL\)](#)

There are two official National Speech and Debate tournaments, district and the annual national tournament. Students must place at the district meet in order to qualify for the national tournament. Lincoln Douglas debate is an official NSDA event but, like TFA, resolutions used will differ from those used by UIL and rules may differ.



During the course of a typical school year Lincoln Douglas debate participants have numerous opportunities to compete in tournaments, most of which are considered invitational. These forms of competition often share similarities but decisions related to judge assignments, scheduling, and other fundamental aspects of the tournament are often left in the hands of the tournament director.

In terms of official UIL competition, however, the contest rules are specific and clearly provided.

Included in the information provided below is the “Academic Ethics Code” and participants, competitors, coaches and sponsors alike, should review this important information:

The general Academics Ethics Code means to:

- (1) Participate in contests in the spirit of fairness and sportsmanship, observing all rules – both in letter and in spirit.
- (2) Sponsor and advise individuals and teams without resorting to unethical tactics, trickery which attempts to skirt the rules, or any other unfair tactic which detracts from sound educational principles.
- (3) Accept decisions of officials and judges without protest and extend protection and courtesy to officials.
- (4) Regard opponents as guests or hosts while placing personal and/ or team integrity above victory at any cost. Maintain grace and poise in victory or defeat. Conduct that berates, intimidates, or threatens competitors, based on gender or ethnic origin, has no place in interscholastic activities.
- (5) Provide information or evidence regarding eligibility of any contestant or school to local school administrators or to the appropriate judicial bodies upon request.
- (6) Understand and appreciate the educational values of competition and abstain from modifying or soliciting another teacher to modify grades for eligibility purposes, knowing that such behavior defeats the character-building purposes of extracurricular competition.
- (7) Abstain from any practice that makes a student feel pressured to participate in non-school activities.
- (8) At all times, ensure that competition is relative to a more important overall educational effort, using competition as a tool in the preparation of students for citizenship and successful adulthood.
- (9) Insure that UIL Academic district, regional and state meets receive precedence over non-qualifying contests or meets.
- (10) School districts shall notify the academic district or regional meet director no later than the end of the second school day following academic district or regional competition if a student or a team knows that it will not compete at the next higher academic meet.

# Contest Rules for Lincoln Douglas Debate

## Section 1000: SPEECH

(a) EVENTS AND ENTRIES. The UIL speech program shall consist of events divided into three basic skill categories: debate, oral interpretation and extemporaneous speaking. Students are permitted to enter two events in speech, and Cross-Examination Team Debate (see Scheduling). The eligibility section requirements of each contest shall be met and no more than one event shall be selected from each of the following categories:

(1) *Debate.*

(A) Cross-Examination Team Debate

(B) Lincoln-Douglas

(2) *Interpretation.*

(A) Prose Interpretation

(B) Poetry Interpretation

(3) *Extemporaneous Speaking.*

(A) Informative Speaking

(B) Persuasive Speaking

(4) *Prohibited Double Entries.*

If You Enter:

Team Debate

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Prose Interpretation

Poetry Interpretation

Informative Speaking

Persuasive Speaking

You May Not Enter These Contests:

Lincoln Douglas Debate

Team Debate, Prose Interpretation, Poetry Interpretation

Lincoln Douglas Debate, Poetry Interpretation

Lincoln Douglas Debate, Prose Interpretation

Persuasive Speaking

Informative Speaking

**Note.** There is no restriction on entering Congress in addition to other speech or academic events.

(b) SCHEDULING. In addition to restrictions of individual contest plans, it is imperative that students and academic coaches become familiar with the Academic Conflict Pattern when selecting contests for competition. This pattern is provided on the UIL website. Students who want to double enter may request that they be allowed to speak first or second in a section but may not request to be placed in the bottom one-half of the section. If the double entry is not prohibited above, contest directors may allow the double entry if the necessary accommodations do not inconvenience other contestants. Contest directors are to use their best judgment in the matter. There shall be no protest of their decisions.

(c) RECORDING. Schools and/or individuals are prohibited from recording (audio and/or video) speech contests. The UIL reserves the right to record for educational purposes.

## LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE RULES (Includes Section 1002 of the C&CR)

- (a) THE CONTEST. Lincoln Douglas debate provides excellent training for development of skills in argumentation, persuasion, research and audience analysis.
- (1) *Purpose.* Lincoln Douglas debate is an oral one-on-one argumentation in which debaters attempt to convince the judge of the acceptability of their side of a proposition with a communicative style of delivery. One debater shall argue the affirmative side of the resolution, and one debater shall argue the negative side of the resolution in a given round.
  - (2) *Format.* Round robin or multiple preliminary rounds leading to an elimination bracket. Each round is approximately 40 minutes. One debater shall argue the affirmative side of the value resolution, and one debater shall argue the negative side of the value resolution in a given round. Each debater will argue both sides of the resolution within the tournament format.
- (b) ENTRIES.
- (1) Representation. The debates shall be conducted in one division in each conference. In all conferences, a school may enter three individuals in its district meet. In districts where fewer than a total of eight debaters are competing, each school with a full entry may enter a fourth debater.
  - (2) Eligibility. The student may not enter more than two speech events; and when entered in Lincoln Douglas, the second speech event may not be team debate, prose or poetry. There is no restriction on entering Congress in addition to other speech events. See Section 1000 of the C&CR.
  - (3) Substitutions. During the district meet, substitutions shall not be allowed after a given tournament has begun. Substitutions shall not be allowed after the district meet.
  - (4) Failure to Compete at District. Disqualification from the Lincoln Douglas Debate Contest for the current academic year may result if an academic coach fails to notify the district contest director, in a timely manner prior to the meet, that a debater will not compete and such may be grounds for suspension from Lincoln Douglas debate for the following year.
  - (5) Alternates. When a debater who qualified for the next higher meet cannot participate in the next higher meet, the alternate should be notified. A coach or designee who fails to notify the regional and/or state contest directors that a student will not compete is in violation of the Academic Contest Ethics Code and the school shall be disqualified from Lincoln Douglas debate for the current academic competition, and such violations may be grounds for suspension from Lincoln Douglas debate for the following year.
- (c) THE LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE RESOLUTION. Two topics for debate, one for fall and one for spring, provided by the UIL office, shall be posted during the course of the school year on the UIL website.
- (d) FORMAT AND TIME LIMITATIONS. Continuous speaking time and order of speeches shall be as follows:
- Constructive
- Affirmative, six minutes
- Cross-examination by negative, three minutes
- Negative, seven minutes
- Cross-examination by affirmative, three minutes
- Rebuttal
- Affirmative, four minutes
- Negative, six minutes
- Affirmative, three minutes



- (1) Preparation Time. A maximum of four minutes of preparation time per debater is allowed during the course of the debate.
  - (2) Overtime. Overtime may count against a team at the discretion of the judge.
  - (3) Abuse of Time. Excessive abuse of the time allotments may result in disqualification at the discretion of the contest director.
- (e) DELIVERY. Communication with the audience is to be considered a high priority for UIL debaters. Oral delivery in Lincoln Douglas debate is to be communicative and persuasive.
- (f) EVIDENCE.
- (1) Use. Supporting evidence adds to the persuasiveness of the reasoning and argumentation of the debate. Whenever a debater quotes at any length the words of another, the fact the evidence is quoted material should be plainly stated.
  - (2) Availability of Materials. Speakers may use notes if they wish. If charts, maps, books, or other materials are used by any debater, they shall be left before the audience and shall be available for use by the opposing debaters in refutation. Debaters may use laptop computers in the round in accordance with the rules published in the *UIL Lincoln Douglas Debate Handbook* and other official UIL publications available through the League office and on the UIL website. Coaches are responsible for reviewing these rules in advance of the contest.
  - (3) Available in Writing on Demand. All participants submitting evidence in competition shall do so orally and possess and present promptly upon demand of debater such evidence in printed form or digital storage. The evidence shall display full bibliographic source citation, even if the full citation is not orally delivered. Full citation should include the following elements: author's name, author's qualifications, complete source information, complete date and page number. Citations of online publications or from online data bases also require the publication medium (online), the Internet URL, or the name of the computer service. Failure to meet this requirement can, at the discretion of the judge and contest director, result in:
    - (A) loss of round,
    - (B) the evidence not being counted in the round, or
    - (C) the evidence not being given as much weight in the decision of the round.
  - (4) The contest director shall be empowered with the final decision in questions concerning falsification of evidence. See (i) (7).
- (g) CROSS-EXAMINATION PERIOD. During the questioning period, both opponents shall stand and face the judge. The questioner should control the use of time during the period and may only ask questions. Questioners may not comment on the answers or make any statements of their own views during the cross-examination period. The purpose of the questioning period is to:
- (1) Ask for information to gain clarification and understanding.
  - (2) Set up strategies to use in developing further argumentation.
  - (3) Discover fallacies or inconsistencies in opponent's argumentation.
- (h) SCOUTING.
- (1) Debates Shall Be Public. Debate, by its very nature, is public. Therefore, all debates in League district, regional and state competition shall be open to the public, with the exception of debaters competing in that tournament. Competing debaters shall not observe rounds of district, region, or state competition in which they are not debating.
  - (2) Notes. With the exception of the final debate in district, regional and state competition, only the judge and the two student participants shall take notes. For example, anyone may take notes in the debates which determine first through fourth place. See Section 1000 (c) of the *C&CR* regarding taping and filming.

- (3) Sharing of Notes. During a tournament, participants or judges may not give or accept notes taken during that tournament. For example, a judge or a debater participating in the district contest is neither allowed to give nor accept notes regarding any rounds in that tournament from anyone else during that tournament.
  - (4) Penalty for Debaters. Violation by debaters of the scouting rule is grounds for disqualification of the debater from the current competition. The contest director shall be empowered with the final decision in questions concerning scouting. Such violations may be grounds for suspension of the school from Lincoln Douglas debate for the following year.
  - (5) Penalty for Coaches. Violation by coaches of the scouting rule is grounds for disqualification of their debaters from the current competition. Coaches who violate scouting rules will also be subject to the full range of penalties as outlined in Sections 27 and 29 of the *C&CR*, and such violations may be grounds for suspension of the school from Lincoln-Douglas debate for the following year.
- (i) TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES.
- (1) District Planning Meeting. The contest director is urged to hold a preliminary planning meeting with the Lincoln Douglas coaches in the district in advance of the organizing date for district contests. Recommendations from this meeting concerning site, judging, tournament format, bracketing and other contest procedures should be made to the district director. Suggested meeting agenda is located on the UIL website debate page.
  - (2) Eliminations.
    - (A) Debaters should be paired by the tournament director, who should try to prevent, where possible, debaters from the same school, district, or region from meeting except in power-matched preliminary rounds or elimination rounds. Debaters shall debate in their assigned pairings.
    - (B) At the district meet, the championship may be decided at the discretion of the district executive committee, by round robin or preliminary rounds leading to an elimination bracket where all undefeated contestants shall be placed into the elimination bracket. All places (first through sixth) shall be determined. No ties shall be awarded. First, second and third place shall advance to the next level of competition. Fourth place shall be designated as first alternate. The highest seeds eliminated in the quarterfinal round, or the fifth and sixth seed after preliminary competition, depending on the tournament format determined by the district executive committee, shall be designated as second and third alternates for advancement purposes.
    - (C) At the regional meet, the championship shall be determined by preliminary rounds leading to an elimination bracket, where all undefeated contestants shall be placed into the elimination bracket. First through sixth place shall be determined. No ties shall be awarded. First, second and third places shall advance to the next level of competition. Fourth place shall be designated as first alternate. The highest seeds eliminated in the quarterfinal round shall be designated as second and third alternates for advancement purposes.
    - (D) At the State Meet, the tournament format will be structured to allow for three preliminary rounds for the purpose of seeding for the semifinal round. Those advancing to the semifinal round will be announced after the completion of the third preliminary round. Brackets are not broken at the State Meet. First and second place shall debate for medals. Debaters who refuse to debate in semifinal or final rounds at the State Meet shall be disqualified from the tournament and such violations may be grounds for suspension from LD debate for the following year. Both semifinalists will be awarded bronze medals. Debaters designated as fifth and sixth place will be awarded medals.
  - (3) Choice of Sides. If possible, each student should debate both the affirmative side and the negative side of the resolution during the course of the meet. For example, in a three-preliminary round tournament each student should debate affirmative one round, negative one round, and then flip a coin or come to a mutual agreement for a third round.
  - (4) Judges. Judges shall be selected in odd numbers (1, 3, 5) for each debate. Judges should be:
    - (A) selected on the basis of capability, impartiality and willingness to judge according to UIL standards;
    - (B) at minimum, be high school graduates;
    - (C) instructed to sit apart during the debate;
    - (D) instructed not to discuss their decisions with other individuals or judges while judging a given debate;

- (E) provided with adequate instructions for using the judging criteria for Lincoln-Douglas debate in the UIL program; and
- (F) instructed to direct questions concerning tournament procedure, or other questions to the contest director.
  - (i) District. Judges for the district meet shall be chosen by the contest director subject to the approval of the district executive committee.
  - (ii) Regional. Judges for regional meets shall be selected by the regional Lincoln Douglas debate contest director.
  - (iii) State. Judges for the State Meet shall be selected by the state contest director. Any school that qualifies for the State Meet shall provide an experienced judge for each debater who qualifies for the state competition, unless excused for a valid reason by the contest director. Schools qualifying more than one debater should contact the State Director immediately following regional competition. State judging forms should be entered online following the regional contest by the deadline posted on the UIL website. Unless excused for a valid reason by the contest director, schools which advance to elimination rounds shall provide an experienced judge for each advancing debater who will be available until dismissed by the contest director. Failure to provide a judge could constitute grounds for forfeiture of the round. The contest director is empowered to determine if forfeiture of a round is necessary.
  - (iv) Schools Represented Not to be Known by the Judges. Except at State Meet, so far as possible, the judges should not know which school a debater represents. On the ballot, the contestant is to be designated as the affirmative or the negative or by number.
  - (v) Instructions to the Judge. The contest director is charged with the responsibility of enforcing instructions given on the Lincoln-Douglas debate ballot, and only the most flagrant delinquency in this matter will be considered grounds for question.
- (5) Interruptions. The contest director should permit no interruption of a speaker from the audience during a debate. No cheering shall be permitted during the debate. Any intentional interruption of a debate by an audience member is considered unethical behavior.
- (6) Timekeeper and Signal Standards. The timekeeper should announce to the debaters prior to the contest the types of time signals to be used. Either time cards, hand signals or automatic timers may be used.
  - (A) If hand signals or time cards are used, the time remaining should be indicated.
  - (B) When a speaker uses all of the allotted time, in either the constructive or rebuttal speeches, the timekeeper should so indicate.
  - (C) A timekeeper is provided for convenience. The primary responsibility for staying within the time limits lies with the debater.
  - (D) Overtime may count against the debater at the discretion of the judge.
  - (E) Excessive abuse of the time allotments may result in disqualification at the discretion of the contest director.
- (7) Questions.
  - (A) Questions shall be directed to the contest director before the official decision of the judges is announced. The decision of the meet officials in these matters is final. No arguments with the judges will be permitted.
  - (B) Excessive abuse by either the contestant or the coach shall be reason for disqualification of that school and its contestant for the current competition and may be grounds for suspension for the following year.

- (8) **Ballot Verification.** Unofficial results of those advancing to elimination rounds may be announced prior to ballot verification. Ballots should be returned to contestants or coaches to be checked for possible tabulation errors before official results of those advancing are announced. A student and/or coach not present for the ballot verification period forfeits the opportunity to verify tabulation. Approximately 15 minutes should be allotted for this verification period. This is designed as a time to verify tabulation, not a time to question the decision of the judges.
- (9) **Official Results.** At the end of the ballot verification period, results shall be read as official results. No questions may be raised after this point.
- (j) **RECORDING.** Schools and/or individuals are prohibited from recording (audio and/or video) speech contests. The UIL reserves the right to record for educational purposes.



### **UIL Guidelines: Electronic Retrieval Devices in CX and LD Debate**

Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop and tablet computers, netbook computers, and other portable electronic retrieval devices. The use of electronic retrieval devices by competitors in UIL Cross-Examination Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate rounds is permissible under the conditions specified below.

- A. Internet access may be used to retrieve files, research arguments, and exchange evidence and/or arguments with the opposing team and judge.
- B. Computers or other electronic retrieval devices may neither be used to communicate nor to send or receive information to or from coaches, assistants or other individuals inside or outside the room in which the competition occurs. Examples of information that would be restricted would include *but not be limited to* coach/non-participating competitor generated arguments, advice or arguments to run, questions to ask or response answers during cross-examination period and other information not generated by the participating competitors in the round.
- C. In compliance with the UIL prompting rule, electronic retrieval devices may not be used to send messages or evidence to a debate partner while that partner is speaking or participating in cross-examination period.
- D. **Availability of Evidence:** Debaters have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. This may be done electronically by flash drive or email chain if the opponent and judge have the capability to view the electronic version on their own devices. In the event that an opponent or judge is not using an electronic retrieval device, a debater who presents evidence from an electronic device must provide a meaningful opportunity for that opponent or judge to review evidence. Examples of such access include providing a printed copy of the evidence and showing the evidence on a device provided by the debater. Whatever manner the evidence or access is provided, the evidence must be quickly and easily accessible by the opposing team and judge.
- E. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, internet connection, batteries, extension cords and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts shall not be responsible for providing wi-fi connection, computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants or any technical assistance.
- F. **Sanction:** Contestants found to have violated paragraph C above shall forfeit the round of competition and receive zero points. Contestants found to have violated paragraph B above shall be disqualified from the tournament and shall forfeit all rounds. Contest Directors shall be empowered with the final decision concerning disqualification.

Contestants choosing to use laptop computers or other electronic retrieval devices defined above accept the risk of equipment failure. No special consideration or accommodations, including no additional prep time or speech time, will be given by judges, contest directors or tournament hosts should equipment failure occur.

By choosing to use these devices in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking. Laptops or other electronic retrieval devices should not be a deterrent to eye contact and other proper public speaking skills.

2023-2024

# What to Expect at the District Meet

## FORMAT OF THE TOURNAMENT

Two formats are used for organizing UIL district meets: round robin or preliminary rounds leading to single eliminations. When the tournament relies on the round robin format, every debater entered must debate against every other debater. The advantage of such a format is that all debaters will face exactly the same competition, thus eliminating concerns about the random nature of pairings using other formats. The concerns related to this method are generally twofold. First, because of the fact that all debaters must meet in competition, students from the same school must debate one another, a situation what can be disconcerting for some. Second, it is often difficult to break ties during closely contested tournaments in which a number of students have the same number of wins. Also, the round robin format is not appropriate for tournaments that have more than eight competitors.

The second format, generally recommended and used more frequently, relies on preliminary rounds that lead to a single elimination bracket to determine the final places in the meet. Usually this latter method provides for three preliminary rounds, although in some cases you may have four preliminary rounds. Remember though, decisions regarding the format of a district meet, even including details about such issues as pairing the debaters, should be done prior to the date of the meet during the district planning meeting. Not only is it important to make these decisions well in advance in order to facilitate general planning, such decisions will determine the number of judges needed.

Regardless of whether there are three or four prelim rounds, certain factors should be considered in advance. Initially, it should be determined whether or not power matching will be used in the later prelim rounds. Power matching is done by matching debaters against other debaters with similar records for the purpose of reducing the number of undefeated contestants. Other issues related to pairings should also be discussed by coaches and sponsors. When pairings are done, *in so far as possible*, debaters should not be matched against other debaters from their own school, should not compete against the same debater in more than one preliminary round, and should not, if possible, debate multiple opponents from the same school. In districts with a smaller member of competitors, not all of these desirables can be achieved. Debaters should also be assigned to both the affirmative and the negative side during prelim rounds. When there are three rounds, normally the first two provide side assignments and during the third-round students flip a coin to determine which one gets to choose their side for the round.

Following the preliminary rounds, students then advance to elimination rounds. Ideally, districts will allow for eight debaters to advance to a quarterfinal bracket. The advantage of the quarterfinal method is that more students get the chance to advance out of prelims, and the second and third alternates are clearly identified. More judges are required, especially if panels or judges are being used for the quarterfinal rounds instead of a single judge. Such a format obviously requires more time to complete as well.

When determining which competitors will advance to the elimination rounds, the UIL criteria must be consulted for tie-breaking procedures. When selecting the top debaters for advancing, the following criteria is used, in the order presented, to place students in elimination brackets:\*

1. *win / loss record*
2. *speaker points*
3. *adjusted speaker points (this is determined by dropping the highest and lowest points)*
4. *opponent's win / loss record*
5. *opponent's total speaker points*
6. *preliminary round head-to-head results (when only two are tied)*

\* Districts may determine in what order of priority these criteria are placed, excluding number six.

### ***A Common Question***

***Debater A defeats Debater B in a prelim round but when the quarterfinal pairings are announced Debater B advances and Debater A does not. If both debaters had the same win / loss record, shouldn't Debater A have advanced by virtue of the fact that s/he defeated Debater B in the prelim rounds?***

***The result of head-to-head competition in prelim rounds is a tie-breaking criteria used in UIL competition only as the final criteria when all other criteria have failed to break the tie and only when no more than 2 debaters are tied.***

A ballot verification period must be scheduled after all preliminary rounds and after each elimination round before the winners are announced. It is vital that the coach and/or debater attend verification to check for errors in tabulation. The ballots will be distributed, along with the win/loss record, the points that it took to break into eliminations and any other information coaches need before awards and certification to the next level of competition are officially announced. Coaches should double-check all tabulation to ensure it has been done accurately.

## *Additional Questions*

### *Should debaters be matched against other debaters from their own school in elimination rounds?*

There is a possibility that debaters may be matched against other debaters from their own school because each receives their position on the bracket based on what they earned in their preliminary rounds. The integrity of the bracket is maintained at the UIL State Meet, meaning that the brackets will not be broken.

At the regional level of competition, some regions will break brackets while others choose to follow the procedure used at the state tournament. If brackets are broken at the regional level, however, it should *only* be done to prevent students from the same school debating against one another and NOT to prevent students from the same *district* debating one another.

Maintaining the integrity of the unbroken bracket is justified for the following reasons:

**Maintaining Neutrality:** Breaking brackets essentially means that the contest director would re-seed the elimination pairings to prevent competitors from the same school from debating. Thus, the tournament administrator is adopting an interventionist policy rather than allowing the individual performances as determined by the collective wisdom of the preliminary round judges to determine placement in the elimination rounds.

Breaking brackets destroys the integrity and fairness of the seeding determined by those designated to evaluate the debaters and compromises the tournament administrator's ability to maintain impartiality.

There is really no fair way to break a bracket. Debaters *earn* the spot that they have in the bracket by the record they compile in the preliminary rounds. Consider the following example of a quarterfinal round where the pairings are 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, 4-5. UIL instructions for the breaking of brackets at the District or Region tournament, if officials determine to do so, is as follows: *"The advantage must always go to the higher ranked debater or team."*

For example, if the debaters from the same school are in the 2-7 position (just to use an example), this means that in order to avoid a same school pairing, the school meeting itself now receives a major advantage: The debater or team earning the second seed now moves into the top seed slot and meets the weakest team (the 8<sup>th</sup> team), depriving the debater/team who earned the top spot from having this (theoretically easiest) match.

If the same school match happens in the 1-8 spot, it is impossible to "advantage" the highest seed – there is no higher spot available than #1.

The problem becomes much more serious in the semifinal round if same schools meet. If the same schools are paired in the 1-4 spot, the #1 team cannot be advantaged, so the UIL procedure becomes unworkable. If the positions of the 1 and 2 spots are switched (to avoid the same school pair), then the #3 contestant in the bracket receives a harder pairing as a result – an outcome that will seem unfair to them.

**Equal Playing Field:** The point is, there is no universal system available for breaking a bracket that will work all of the time. This puts discretion into the hands of the tournament director. When elimination round brackets are broken, an unequal playing field is created. In every case, the bracket break is unfair to someone.

When a school meets itself, debaters from the same school would be familiar with the positions their opponent would utilize. This doesn't actually create an unfairness considering that both contestants are aware of the positions used by the other. Not only would the negative debater/team know the case used by the affirmative – the affirmative would also know the arguments likely to be used by the negative.

When a school meets itself, there is a countervailing advantage – this match ensures that one team from the school will advance to the next round.

While the breaking of brackets used to be a fairly common tournament practice, it has all but disappeared in the past two decades, with the exception of a few holdouts. The reason so many others have abandoned the practice is that it creates too much discretion in the adjustment of the bracket.

The decision on whether to break brackets at a district or regional competition should be made prior to the beginning of the tournament.

***Is it possible for two debaters who have previously debated against each other to be matched against one another again in the same tournament?***

Yes, although it should **NOT** happen in preliminary rounds. Brackets should **NOT** be broken in elimination rounds in order to prevent this from happening. When a rematch does occur, however, debaters should take the opposite side from the earlier round. This is referred to as a “locked” round because debaters are locked into debating the opposite side from the round before.

***Are Lincoln Douglas debaters allowed to enter more than one event at the UIL district meet?***

Yes, although there are some exceptions. Lincoln Douglas debaters are not allowed, according to UIL rules, to compete in the district UIL CX meet (during the same school year), prose, or poetry. Lincoln Douglas debaters may also be kept from entering certain other academic events based on the Academic Conflict Pattern provided by UIL. The conflict pattern may be found online and in the *UIL Academic Coordinator's Manual*. Note that there is no restriction on entering Congress if you enter LD Debate. The regional and state meets adhere to the conflict pattern without exception; districts are encouraged to do so as well.





# Lincoln Douglas Debate

These directions expand upon but do not replace the information in the UIL Constitution and Contest Rules. The contest director should read the rules in this handbook, then read these guidelines for additional details. See also the Academic Quick Reference Chart, on the UIL website.

## Preparation for the contest

### PLANNING MEETING (DISTRICT)

Conduct a planning meeting with the debate coaches in the district well in advance of the contest. The most successful debate tournaments are those designed to meet the needs of the contestants debating. Items to be discussed at the planning meeting include the items listed below and the detailed agenda posted on the UIL website. Delegate tasks at this meeting. A policy for how the contest director should be notified if a debater cannot attend should also be established.

### REGIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (REGION)

The League office appoints a committee of speech and debate coaches to advise and assist the regional contest director before, during and after the meet. A list will be sent in late fall. Conduct a planning meeting with the Regional Advisory Committee several months prior to the regional meet. Items to be discussed at the planning meeting may include the items listed below or any other decisions which need to be made.

### FACILITIES

Consider the following items in selecting the appropriate building(s) on campus to house the competition, and work with the director to secure permission for the use of the buildings and needed rooms and to ensure their availability.

- number of rooms (one room for every two debaters)
- location of the rooms (buildings) on campus in relation to one another
- facilities for tabulation

### SCHEDULE

Consider the following items in selecting a date and a time.

- minimum loss of school time
- adequate time to run the needed number of rounds (45 minutes for each debate round)
- time for tabulation, verification and announcement of winners

A three preliminary round tournament leading to a quarterfinal bracket (**quarterfinal round is required at regionals**) would require the following amount of time.

#### REGION NOTE:

Because students may be competing in both LD and extemp, the time schedule must be carefully planned and followed.

#### TRY TO PLACE THE ROOMS

used for LD near the rooms used for extemp since competitors may be entering both.

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Round 1.....                 | 45 minutes |
| Round 2.....                 | 45 minutes |
| Round 3.....                 | 45 minutes |
| Tabulation .....             | 30 minutes |
| Verification.....            | 15 minutes |
| Quarterfinals .....          | 45 minutes |
| Tabulation/Verification..... | 15 minutes |
| Semifinals .....             | 45 minutes |
| Tabulation/Verification..... | 15 minutes |
| Finals.....                  | 45 minutes |
| Tabulation/Verification..... | 15 minutes |
| TOTAL .....                  | 5-6 hours  |

Because LD debaters are allowed to enter another speaking event (informative or persuasive) or a nonconflicting academic event, it is important to devise a schedule with this consideration in mind. It is equally important to adhere to the scheduled times.

#### DISTRICT FORMAT (DISTRICT)

There are two methods (formats) which can be used in determining the district championship. The format is primarily dependent upon the number of debaters entered, the time involved, and the availability of judges. The district championship may be decided by the following:

- Round robin. Each debater debates every other debater. No elimination rounds are conducted.
- Preliminary rounds (usually three) leading to a single elimination bracket. All debaters are guaranteed, regardless of records, to debate at least the number of preliminary rounds. The top eight are then selected for quarterfinals, or the top four for semi-finals.

The second format (prelims leading to single elim) is preferred. However, in districts with limited schools and entries, the round robin format may prove more desirable. Use the suggestions from the district debate coaches about which format best fits the needs of the district. More information about the formats is provided later.

#### REGIONAL FORMAT (REGION)

The regional championship shall be determined by preliminary rounds (usually three to four) leading to a single elimination bracket. All debaters are guaranteed, regardless of records, to debate at least the number of preliminary rounds. The top eight are seeded for quarterfinals. All undefeated contestants shall be placed into the elimination bracket. More information about the formats is provided later.

#### JUDGES

A tournament is only as good as its judges. Therefore, judges should be selected on the basis of capability and impartiality. They may be recruited from nearby colleges and universities, or from schools’ coaches, faculties and/or communities. At minimum, they should be high school graduates with debate experience. The number of judges needed is dependent upon the number of debaters entered and (at the DISTRICT level) the format of the tournament. A three preliminary round tournament which includes 24 debaters would require 12 judges per prelim round. Those 12 individuals could also judge Round 2 and Round 3. Each school may be assigned to recruit a certain number of judges or the district committee (at the DISTRICT level, the Regional Advisory Committee at the REGIONAL level) may determine other means of securing an adequate number of competent judges. Recruit extra judges to “stand by” in the event a judge cancels or arrives late.

#### AWARDS

First through sixth place medals are awarded. First, second and third places advance to the next level. The fourth place debater serves as the first alternate, fifth place debater serves as the second alternate and sixth place debater serves as the third alternate. Districts may order medals from any selected vendor. Regions receive medals from the State office

#### INFORMATION TO SCHOOLS

As early as possible, disseminate the following information to the schools/coaches involved.

- date
- site
- time and place to register
- schedule of rounds & (at the DISTRICT level) format
- deadline for entries/ “change in entry” procedures

The UIL provides a database of potential speech judges on its website: [www.uiltexas.org/speech/speech-judges](http://www.uiltexas.org/speech/speech-judges).

- judging requirements per school
- information about the judges (i.e., age requirements)
- entry fees and/or judges fees
- criteria for determining elimination brackets
- hospitality, concession plans

#### CONTEST MATERIALS

The following items are provided by the League office digitally via a link which will be emailed to you prior to the start of the district/region meet. If your meet is in-person, ballots will be mailed (if requested), unless using electronic ballots.

- Instructions for judges
- Computer Guidelines
- (REGION) Coaches’ Information
- (REGION) State Meet information for state qualifiers
- (REGION) “No-Show” forms
- (REGION) Meet Evaluation

## General information about debate

#### TIME LIMITS

Each Lincoln Douglas debate lasts approximately 45 minutes. Each debate, made up of several speeches, is called a round. Lincoln Douglas debate is one-on-one debate of value propositions. The two debaters make the following sets of continuous speeches.

#### CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES

|                                       |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Affirmative.....                      | 6 minutes |
| Cross-examination by negative.....    | 3 minutes |
| Negative.....                         | 7 minutes |
| Cross-examination by affirmative..... | 3 minutes |

#### REBUTTAL SPEECHES

|                  |           |
|------------------|-----------|
| Affirmative..... | 4 minutes |
| Negative.....    | 6 minutes |
| Affirmative..... | 3 minutes |

- Preparation Time. Each debater shall take no more than four minutes total elapsed time during a round of debate.
- Overtime. Overtime may count against a debater at the discretion of the judge.
- Abuse of time. Excessive abuse may result in loss of the round at the discretion of the contest director.

#### SIDES

In so far as possible, each debater should debate both the affirmative side and the negative side of the resolution during the course of the meet. In a three-preliminary round tournament, each debater should debate affirmative one round, negative one round, and then flip a coin or come to a mutual agreement for the third round. When a bracket is used, determine side by the flip of a coin or by mutual consent. During the elimination rounds (quarters, semis and finals), determine sides by the flip of a coin or by mutual consent, unless the debaters have already debated each other during the tournament. If two contestants have already debated, assign them to opposite sides than the first time they debated. This is considered a “locked” round.

#### SCOUTING

Debate, by its very nature, is public. Therefore, all debates in League district, regional, and state competition shall be open to the public with the exception of debaters competing in that tournament. To discourage the “scouting” of a possible future opponent by either a debater, a coach, or anyone else, the penalties for notetaking are explained below. The contest director makes all the final decisions regarding scouting.

#### NOTES

- Taking of notes. With the exception of the final debate in district, regional and state competition, only the judge and the two student participants may take notes. For example, anyone may take notes in the debate that determines first and second place, and the debate that determines third and fourth place.

**ALL DEBATES IN League district, regional and state competition shall be open to the public with the exception of debaters competing in that tournament.**

**For further clarification, FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS are listed on the speech page of the UIL website.**

- Sharing of notes. During a tournament, participants or judges may not give or accept notes taken during that tournament. For example, a judge or a debater participating in the district contest may neither give nor accept notes regarding any rounds in that tournament from anyone else during that tournament.
- Penalty for debaters. Violation by debaters of the scouting rule is grounds for disqualification of the debater from the current competition. The contest director makes all final decisions regarding scouting. Such violations may be grounds for suspension of the school from Lincoln Douglas debate for the following year.
- Penalty for coaches. Violation by coaches of the scouting rule is grounds for disqualification of their debaters from the current competition. Coaches who violate scouting rules will also be subject to the full range of penalties as outlined in Sections 27 and 29 of the *C&CR*, and such violations may be grounds for suspension of the school from Lincoln Douglas debate for the following year.

#### TAPING/FILMING

The UIL prohibits schools and/or individuals from recording audio and/or video of speech or debate contests

## Guidelines for use of computers

Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop and tablet computers, netbook computers, and other portable electronic retrieval devices. The use of electronic retrieval devices by competitors in UIL Cross-Examination Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate rounds is permissible under the conditions specified below.

- A. Internet access may be used to retrieve files, research arguments, and exchange evidence and/or arguments with the opposing team and judge.
- B. Computers or other electronic retrieval devices may neither be used to communicate nor to send or receive information to or from coaches, assistants or other individuals inside or outside the room in which the competition occurs. Examples of information that would be restricted would include but not be limited to coach/non-participating competitor generated arguments, advice or arguments to run, questions to ask or response answers during cross-examination period and other information not generated by the participating competitors in the round.
- C. In compliance with the UIL prompting rule, electronic retrieval devices may not be used to send messages or evidence to a debate partner while that partner is speaking or participating in crossexamination period.
- D. Availability of Evidence: Debaters have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. This may be done electronically by flash drive or email chain if the opponent and judge have the capability to view the electronic version on their own devices. In the event that an opponent or judge is not using an electronic retrieval device, a debater who presents evidence from an electronic device must provide a meaningful opportunity for that opponent or judge to review evidence. Examples of such access include providing a printed copy of the evidence and showing the evidence on a device provided by the debater. Whatever manner the evidence or access is provided, the evidence must be quickly and easily accessible by the opposing team and judge.
- E. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, internet connection, batteries, extension cords and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts shall not be responsible for providing wi-fi connection, computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants or any technical assistance.
- F. Sanction: Contestants found to have violated paragraph C above shall forfeit the round of competition and receive zero points. Contestants found to have violated paragraph B above shall be disqualified from the tournament and shall forfeit all rounds. Contest Directors shall be empowered with the final decision concerning disqualification.

Contestants choosing to use laptop computers or other electronic retrieval devices defined above accept the risk of equipment failure. No special consideration or accommodations, including no additional prep time or speech time, will be given by judges, contest directors or tournament hosts should equipment failure occur.

By choosing to use these devices in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking. Laptops or other electronic retrieval devices should not be a deterrent to eye contact and other proper public speaking skills.

For further clarification, access Frequently Asked Questions Concerning the use of Computers in Texas UIL Debate at: [www.uil-texas.org/speech/debate/frequently-asked-questions-concerning-the-use-of-computers-in-uil-debate](http://www.uil-texas.org/speech/debate/frequently-asked-questions-concerning-the-use-of-computers-in-uil-debate).

# After entries are received

## ENTRIES

Do not begin pairing (matching debaters together) until all the entries have been submitted via the UIL online Entry System and are in the tournament director’s possession.

## SUBSTITUTIONS

Prior to the beginning of the contest, students may be substituted for entries (names) on the official entry if the substitutes present the contest director with letters from the designated administrator certifying eligibility. At the conclusion of the meet, submit the letters to the district director to be filed. After the tournament has begun, no substitutions will be allowed and make sure to input changes online.

## PAIRINGS

One of the most complex steps in preparing for a debate tournament is the actual scheduling of contests. The process of arranging matches in debate is called “pairing” because it brings together the pair of debaters who will debate each other.

Careful attention to details is imperative in pairing. An accurate and up-to-date list of entries is critical. For this reason, the pairing process seldom can begin more than a few days before the contest.

**The following requirements (constraints), regardless of which format is utilized, should be observed when pairing preset preliminary rounds, *in so far as possible*.**

- no contestant should debate against the same contestant more than once;
- each contestant should debate both affirmative and negative rounds; and
- no school should repeatedly debate the same school.

Pair the debaters using the format determined by the executive committee.

(DISTRICT) The district championship may be decided by round robin or preliminary rounds leading to a single elimination bracket.

(REGION) The regional championship must be decided by preliminary rounds leading to a single elimination bracket.

- ROUND ROBIN (DISTRICT) In this method of pairing, each debater is paired against another for a specified number of rounds. No debater is eliminated if he loses a round, and all debaters continue to debate until the stated number of rounds has been completed. Since all debaters meet all debaters other than themselves, this assumes that debaters will debate students from their own schools, if their school has multiple entries. The winner is the debater with the best win-loss record, followed by the highest number of total speaker points. There are no no elimination bracket rounds. (See “Tabulating Results” which follows for further criteria, if needed.)

To conduct a round robin, first number the debaters. This should be done by chance, allowing each debater to draw his number, or, if representatives of debaters are not present, appoint someone to draw for each debater. Sides are random because numbers are drawn at random. Suppose there are seven debaters. Since seven is an odd number, one debater does not debate in each round. The first round is arranged by writing the numbers down in their order, 1, 2, 3, in column form and then 4, 5, 6, 7 in column form up to the left, setting 4 opposite 3, 5 opposite 2, 6 opposite 1, and 7 at the top for the debater not debating that round. Repeat this arrangement except to drop the position of “1” down one space each time until it reaches the bottom and then move its position to the left and up to the top of left column, and the round robin schedules have been completed. If the number is listed first, the debater is affirmative that round. If the number is listed second, the debater is negative that round. The Round Robin schedule ensures that no debater is uneven by sides at the end of the tournament by more than one. Debaters cannot flip for sides in this scenario, since the sides work properly only if the contestant whose # is listed first is affirmative in each round.

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 7-  | 6-  | 5-  | 4-  | 3-  | 2-  | 1-  |
| 6-1 | 5-7 | 4-6 | 3-5 | 2-4 | 1-3 | 7-2 |
| 5-2 | 4-1 | 3-7 | 2-6 | 1-5 | 7-4 | 6-3 |
| 4-3 | 3-2 | 2-1 | 1-7 | 7-6 | 6-5 | 5-4 |

This arrangement holds good for any odd number. Keep your eye on the “1”—it revolves. Conversely, if the number of debaters is even, “1” remains stationary, and the “2” revolves, thus:

|     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 1-2 | 1-8 | 1-7 | 1-6 | 1-5 | 1-4 | 1-3 |
| 8-3 | 7-2 | 6-8 | 5-7 | 4-6 | 3-5 | 2-4 |
| 7-4 | 6-3 | 5-2 | 4-8 | 3-7 | 2-6 | 8-5 |
| 6-5 | 5-4 | 4-3 | 3-2 | 2-8 | 8-7 | 7-6 |

| Three debaters |     |     | Four debaters |     |     | Five debaters |     |     |     |     | Six debaters |     |     |     |     |
|----------------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|-----|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| 3-             | 2-  | 1-  | 1-2           | 4-1 | 1-3 | 5-            | 4-  | 3-  | 2-  | 1-  | 1-2          | 6-1 | 1-5 | 4-1 | 1-3 |
| 2-1            | 1-3 | 3-2 | 4-3           | 3-2 | 2-4 | 4-1           | 3-5 | 2-4 | 1-3 | 5-2 | 6-3          | 2-5 | 4-6 | 3-5 | 2-4 |
|                |     |     |               |     |     | 3-2           | 2-1 | 1-5 | 5-4 | 4-3 | 5-4          | 4-3 | 3-2 | 2-6 | 5-6 |

Choice of sides may be determined for the first round by prescribing that odd numbered debaters take the affirmative and even numbered debaters take the negative. It is unethical for debaters to forfeit rounds to manipulate the round robin standings. All debaters should debate as assigned.

- PRELIMINARY DEBATES to DETERMINE SEEDING in the SINGLE ELIMINATION BRACKET (**quarterfinals or semifinals**). All preliminary rounds (usually three or four) may be preset (a schedule written prior to the beginning of the first round which is complete for all of the preliminary rounds) or some rounds (usually two) may be preset and the third round or any subsequent round may be power-matched (based on the record accumulated in the first two rounds).
  - **Preset rounds:** In the preset rounds, in so far as possible, assign contestants to debate persons of different strength. For example, a student listed first by his coach on the entry form should debate persons listed first, second and third by their coaches. If possible, no contestant should debate against another person from her own school, debate against the same student more than once, or repeatedly debate the same school during preset preliminary rounds.
  - **Power-matched rounds:** An individual with some debate tournament administration experience is required to set the power-match round and extra time (approximately 30 minutes after all the ballots of the first few rounds are turned in) must be built into the schedule before the round to be power-matched, even if using computer software. Power-matching is recommended when, in a three-preliminary round tournament, the number of debaters is greater than 12. A power-matched round pairs teams with equal records against one another. This means that undefeated contestants debate other undefeated contestants, contestants with one win and one loss debate contestants with the same record, and contestants with two losses debate other contestants with two losses. This method, though time-consuming, helps in minimizing the number of undefeated debaters who may not advance into the elimination round.  
 Procedure for the assignment of byes in a power-matched round: If the number of contestants competing is uneven, the bye must be assigned before the beginning of power-matching. In a 3-preliminary round tournament, the bye in round 3 must be assigned to the contestant with the lowest seeding (considering win/loss record and speaker points), UNLESS that contestant has already received a bye. In that case, the bye would be assigned to the contestant with the next lowest seeding (considering win/loss record and speaker points). The same procedure would be followed in the fourth round of a 4-preliminary round tournament, except that that bye must be assigned to the lowest seeded contestant on the side (affirmative or negative) with the excess number of contestants.
  - **Power-protect rounds:** A power-protect round means that the top seeded teams in the tournament meet only lower seated (bottom) teams in prelim rounds of the tourney. No major debate tournament, either at the college or high school level uses such a “power-protect” scheme and UIL does not endorse this structure.

#### BYES

If the number of debaters entered is odd, one debater in each round will receive a “bye” when three preliminary rounds lead to an elimination bracket. This means one person sits out of a particular round.

- *in so far as possible:*
  1. Randomly draw for byes.
  2. Do not assign a given debater more than one bye.
  3. Do not assign a given school more than one bye.

*These guidelines should be followed whenever possible.*

- Remind coach and debater with a bye that it is against contest rules for debaters competing in the contest to watch other rounds.
- Tabulating byes. A bye is tabulated as a win. Speaker points for the round in which the bye is given are determined by averaging the total number of speaker points received in all other rounds.

#### ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Assign rooms to the pairings. Try to use rooms which are nearby one another and easily accessible. Repeating use of the same rooms helps reduce travel time between rounds, thereby keeping the contest on time.

## JUDGING ASSIGNMENTS

Assign judges to the pairings, using a single judge or a panel of judges (3 or 5). The recommends panels, when feasible, in round robin formats and the semifinals and finals of a preliminary round tournament format. Vary judges as to sex, race, age and philosophy of debate. For example, to balance a panel, one might place a lay person (non-debater) on a panel with a former debater or coach, and a university student with debate experience. Make every effort to prevent a judge from judging a debater more than once. It is important therefore, to keep a record of which debaters a judge has heard.

## BALLOTS

Contest officials may complete the top portion of the ballots before the tournament begins, if using paper ballots. If pairings are altered due to cancellations or errors, remember to correct the ballots.

### Sample Judge Card

Name: Smith, John

School: Hometown High School

| Round    | Affirmative | Negative | Win | Room |
|----------|-------------|----------|-----|------|
| 1        | 1A          | 8A       | A   | 102  |
| 2        | 2A          | 4B       | N   | 106  |
| 3        | 6B          | 3B       | A   | 110  |
| Quarters |             |          |     |      |
| Semis    |             |          |     |      |

## The day of the tournament

1. Duplicate pairings for distribution to coaches and debaters, or be prepared to push out from the digital management system if using e-ballots. After all debaters have registered, meet with the coaches to distribute pairings. If the decision has not been made whether or not to alter (break) brackets to prevent debaters from the same school from debating prior to the last round, meet with the coaches and decide. (see discussion concerning breaking brackets on the following page)
2. Hand out ballots to judges. If you plan to use coaches as judges, avoid having a coach judge his own debater. Debaters can be noted on the ballot with a code such as an assigned school number plus their initials. Judges should not have access to information about a debater's affiliation or record in the tournament. Judges should not discuss their decisions with other individuals or judges while judging a given debate or prior to completing and submitting their ballot.
3. Check to make sure that all rooms are unlocked and that the debate rounds have started.
4. Collect and check each ballot after each round. Before releasing a judge, ballots should be checked to see that a decision has been given (affirmative or negative), debaters have been correctly identified as affirmative or negative, points have been awarded, reasons (comments) for decision have been written, and the judge has signed the ballot. The judge should initial if they chose to give a "low-point" win.
5. Distribute ballots for the next round. Be careful to avoid assigning a judge to debaters they have previously judged.
6. Begin tabulating results. Double check the recording of each round.

## After prelim rounds

### TABULATING RESULTS

To determine the eight quarterfinalists (required at regionals) or the four semifinalists who will advance (break) to the elimination rounds, **the following criteria are a widely accepted method of determining seeding** (placement on the elimination bracket following preliminary rounds). **However, the district schools at their planning meeting, contest director or regional director, may elect to rearrange the order.** UIL does not mandate a specific order of seeding criteria. The criteria should be determined before the contest begins.

- Win/Loss record. If several debaters have the same record, use the next criterion.
- Total number of speaker points. The highest point total wins. If there is a tie, use the next criterion.

**TABULATING BYES**

**EXAMPLE:**

**Round 1 - 23**

**points**

**Round 2 - Bye**

**Round 3 - 19**

**points**

$23 + 19 = 42 \div 2 = 21$

**21 points for**

**Round 2**

- Adjusted speaker points. Drop both the highest and lowest points awarded to tied contestants. Highest remaining point total wins. If there is still a tie, use the next criterion.
- Opponents' win/loss record. Determine the record of each of the opponents debated by the two contestants tied in points. The student in the tie who debated the more difficult opponents (best record) wins. If there is a tie, use the next criterion.
- Opponents' total number of speaker points. High total wins.
- Head-to-Head Prelim round results.

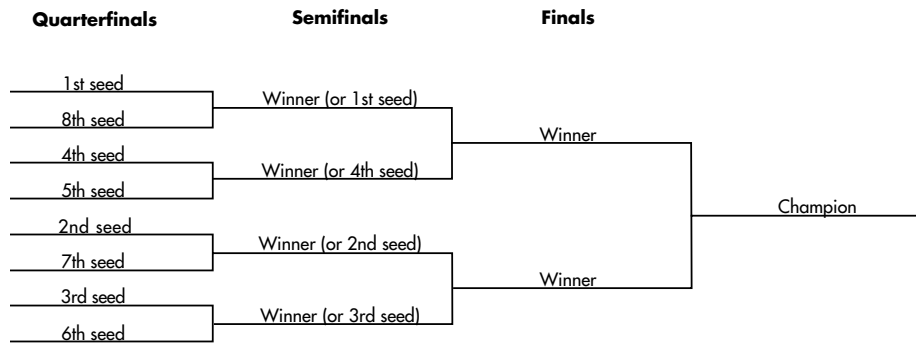
**TABULATING BYES AND FORFEITS**

If a debater received a bye, or was involved in a forfeit round, special attention is necessary in tabulating results. Credit the debater who received either a bye or a forfeit with a win, and award the individual speaker the average of his points in all other rounds. For a debater that is forced to forfeit a round, the director must exercise some discretion. If a debater is forced to forfeit because of sudden illness, for example, the director may credit the debater with a loss in the round and his average of speaker points from the other rounds. On the other hand, if a debater forfeits for violation of the tournament rules, the director may credit the debater with a loss in the round and award zero speaker points.

**DETERMINING PLACEMENT ON THE BRACKET**

Given the debaters who will advance based on the best records, seed the debaters onto the bracket as follows:

**IN THE ALTERING of quarterfinal or semifinal brackets, the advantage must always go to the higher ranked debater.**



**ALTERING (BREAKING) BRACKETS**

You may alter brackets so that two debaters from the same school will not have to debate early in the bracket. **In the altering of quarterfinal or semifinal brackets**, the advantage must always go to the higher ranked debater. **For example, if the first seed is scheduled in semifinals to debate the fourth seed**, and the two debaters are from the same school, one of the two debaters in the bottom bracket (second seed and third seed) may be moved up to the top bracket. Because the advantage should always go to the higher ranked debater (in this case the first seed), move the third seed instead of the second seed (theoretically a more difficult debater) to the top bracket to debate the first seed. In the bottom half of the bracket, the advantage also goes to the higher ranked debater (the second seed) because the debater is now debating the fourth seed (theoretically an easier debate) instead of the third seed as in the original bracket. If the decision whether or not to break brackets has not been made before the first debate, it is recommended that brackets not be broken.

**ALTERING (BREAKING) BRACKETS AT REGION**

The integrity of the brackets is maintained at the State Meet, and therefore, brackets are not broken. If a region selects to break brackets, the bracket should be broken only to prevent the same school from debating itself, not to prevent two schools from the same district from debating themselves.

**WHEN DEBATERS CHOOSE NOT TO DEBATE**

All places (first through sixth) must be determined. However, debaters are not required to actually debate to determine winners. Wins in the semifinal or final rounds may be determined by coin toss or by coaches/debaters agreeing on places.

**IF THE DECISION whether or not to break brackets has not been made before the first debate, it is recommended that brackets not be broken.**

**BRACKETS ARE NOT broken at the State Meet.**



## DETERMINING SECOND AND THIRD ALTERNATES

(DISTRICT) Fourth place shall be designated as first alternate. The highest seeds eliminated in the quarterfinal round, or the fifth and sixth seeds after preliminary competition (depending on the tournament format determined by the district executive committee), shall be designated as 5th and 6th place (second and third alternates). (REGION) Fourth place shall be designated as first alternate. The highest seeds eliminated in the quarterfinal round shall be designated as 5th and 6th place (second and third alternates) accordingly..

Fifth and sixth place receive points and medals.

## Ballot verification

A ballot verification period must be scheduled after all preliminary rounds and after each elimination round before the winners are announced. This period is for the coaches to check for errors in tabulation, not to challenge the judge's decision. Distribute ballots to the coaches, indicate the win/loss record and points that it took to break into eliminations (if running a preliminary seeding tournament), the record that it took to win the tournament (if running a round robin format), and any other information the coaches need before the awards and certification to the next level.

When the ballot verification period is over, official results may be announced. These results are official and are not subject to change. Ballots may be returned the day of the meet.

## After the tournament

### REPORT TO DIRECTOR

(DISTRICT) Individual contest directors shall give the contest roster/results to the district director immediately after the contest. The district meet director is responsible for entering results into the UIL Online Entry System. District results must be submitted into the online system and made available for public review by 5 p.m. on the Monday following the second district week.

(REGION) Individual contest directors shall give the contest roster/results to the regional director immediately after the contest. The regional meet director is responsible for entering results into the UIL Online Entry System and making them available for public review by 5 p.m. of the Monday following the regional meet. Regional directors shall also provide a list of contestant absentees if alternates were not present to take these individuals' places.

### WINNERS' INFORMATION AND AWARDS

Present the medals to the winners. Please inform each advancing debater and alternates that winners' information is posted on the UIL website. The State Meet webpage will serve as the information hub for the state tournament. They should review the information immediately.

### LD STATE MEET COACHES

The coach of each advancing debater and alternate should be given an LD State Meet Coaches' link. This is included in the contest materials and contains critical information. Make coaches aware of the judge deadline. Schools must provide a judge to be eligible to compete at State. Judge forms must be submitted online, by the designated deadline.

### DISTRICT DEBATE NO-SHOWS

Compile a list of debaters (and their schools) who did not show up to compete. Forward this to the District Executive Committee.

### REGIONAL DEBATE NO-SHOW FORMS (REGION)

Complete a regional Debate No-Show Form for any debater who did not compete and failed to notify the regional contest director in advance. Give these completed forms to the regional director along with the contest results. Submit a copy of each form to the UIL state office, to the attention of Jana Riggins.

### MAILING RESULTS

Mailing full meet results to participating schools is optional since results will be posted online.

### EXTRA CONTEST MATERIALS

Destroy or distribute any extra contest materials.

### INDIVIDUAL POINTS

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| 1st place ..... | 15 |
| 2nd place ..... | 12 |
| 3rd place ..... | 10 |
| 4th place ..... | 8  |
| 5th place ..... | 6  |
| 6th place ..... | 4  |

### SPEECH TEAM POINTS

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| 1st place ..... | 10 |
| 2nd place ..... | 5  |

### SPEECH

#### TEAM POINTS

The UIL Online Entry System will calculate and award speech team points.

# A PPENDIX

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Glossary .....   | 91    |
| Frequently Asked Questions.....                        | 93    |
| Affirmative and Negative Case Rubrics .....            | 94-95 |
| <a href="#">Internet Debate Research</a> .....         | 96    |
| LD Debate Resources.....                               | 103   |
| LD Debate Judging Guidelines .....                     | 106   |
| Sample UIL LD Debate Ballot.....                       | 107   |
| Required Judge for State Meet.....                     | 108   |
| <a href="#">History of UIL LD Topics</a> .....         | 109   |
| <a href="#">Best Practices for Virtual Meets</a> ..... | 113   |
| <a href="#">Accomodation Request</a> .....             | 118   |
| <a href="#">TILF Scholarship Information</a> .....     | 119   |

## Links to Resources:

More resources available online at:

[www.uil texas.edu/speech/debate](http://www.uil texas.edu/speech/debate)

Intro to LD Debate Video: [https://youtu.be/vkC\\_Gw0LqDc](https://youtu.be/vkC_Gw0LqDc)

# GLOSSARY

actor – (see also agent of action) the part of the resolution that refers to the agent that will accomplish or be expected to enact an ideal or policy

affirmative – one of two sides in a debate; the affirmative has the obligation to support the resolution

agent of action – the phrase in a debate resolution that indicates the source or action suggested by the topic

anecdotal evidence – information about a particular situation or individual case that dramatically exemplifies an issue

break – advance to elimination rounds

bye – when an odd number of debaters or debate teams exist in competition, one team or debater will not have an opponent so a bye is awarded; a bye is recorded as a win and speaker points are based on the average for the remaining rounds

card – a term used in debate to describe a piece of evidence; the term originated when debaters actually recorded quotations on note cards and read from them in debate rounds

case – the collection of evidence and analysis used to support the resolution by affirmative debaters or oppose the resolution by negative debaters; the affirmative constructive speech

categorical imperative – a philosophical concept introduced by Immanuel Kant; idea that claims individuals are morally compelled to act in a certain manner in specific situations, without exception

cite / citation – the source of information that precedes a quotation

contention – a major point, claim, or presentation of evidence and analysis in either the affirmative or negative case; a major debate argument / claim

contextual definition – (see also, field definition) a definition that is grounded in a specific subject; for example, a legal definition of this nature would be supplied by a legal dictionary or resource

criterion – an ideal that is part of affirmative and negative cases used to measure / evaluate the value

documentation – another term used for evidence

drops – arguments to which an opponent does not respond

elims – elimination debate rounds of a tournament during which the final places are determined

empirical evidence – evidence that provides “real world” or “pragmatic” proof of an issue; evidence that typically relies on statistics or some form of scientific proof

field definition – (see also, contextual definition) a definition that is grounded in a specific subject; for example, a legal definition of this nature would be supplied by a legal dictionary or resource

flow sheet – the method used by debaters to take notes during a debate round

harm principle – a concept associated with the writing of John Stuart Mill; the term identifies situations in which the government is justified in allowing for rights violations for the sake of preventing a greater harm

impact – the general effect of an ideal, concept or argument; meaning differs substantially between LD and CX debate

negative – one of two sides in a debate; the negative has the obligation to oppose the resolution

out round – an elimination round in a debate tournament

philosophy – collection of beliefs and values often embraced by either individuals or society; love of knowledge or learning

power match – matching debaters or debate teams in later prelim rounds based on their respective records; high-ranking debaters and teams are matched against other high ranking individuals or teams

power protect – matching debaters or debate teams in later prelim rounds in such a manner intended to preserve records; high ranking debaters or teams are matched against lower ranking debaters or teams

pragmatic – practical or “real-world” application of a concept or ideal

prelims – the randomly matched initial debate rounds during which the contestants earn records that will enable or prevent them from advancing to elimination rounds

proposition – another term used for a debate resolution

qualifications – information about the person being quoted that contributes to credibility of evidence

resolution – an official debate topic, also commonly referred to as a proposition

roadmap – (see signpost) informing judge and opponent, at the start of a speech, of the order in which issues will be addressed

signpost – (see roadmap) informing judge and opponent, at the start of a speech, of the order in which issues will be addressed

spreading – speaking at a very rapid pace in order to cover as many arguments as possible

state of nature – the theoretical condition of humanity embraced by social contract theorists in which individuals have an abundance of freedom / liberty but lack any meaningful degree of security

tagline – a single line of information that describes the content of a quotation that follows

term of art – a term, either word or phrase, in a debate resolution that is commonly associated with the particular subject addressed by the resolution

utilitarianism – the philosophical view supports actions that lead to the greatest happiness or greatest good for the greatest number; often associated with the philosopher John Stuart Mill

value – a concept representing something that is considered good, desirable or of high quality and typically embraced by a society, culture or political group; a necessary part of Lincoln Douglas affirmative and negative cases

voter – an argument / claim introduced by debaters that they believe to be crucial to the outcome of the round

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

**If the value is implied in the resolution, should that be the value selected by the affirmative?**

*It is not an absolute necessity, however, many judges expect cases to include such a value.*

**Is the negative required, by rule, to present a negative case?**

*No, however debaters who choose not to use a case on negative risk losing credibility with some judges.*

**How often are UIL resolutions released?**

*UIL releases one resolution for the fall and one for the spring; fall topics are normally released in August while spring topics are released in mid-December.*

**How are UIL resolutions selected?**

*Coaches, student debaters and other interested parties are encouraged to submit suggestions for topic areas and/or specific wordings of resolutions throughout the school year. Topics can be submitted by accessing the LD Debate suggestion form online at <https://www.uiltexas.org/speech/debate>. Patterned after the NFHS Policy Debate Topic national wording process, a committee that includes representatives from across the state and from high schools of varying sizes meets annually during the summer to develop the wording of potential topics. All suggestions received are considered by the committee. Outside reviewers selected from the forensic community offer research and analysis of the topic wordings and make recommendations before a topic is selected for debating in UIL.*

**If a student competes in Lincoln Douglas debate, are they allowed to compete in CX debate?**

*Not in official UIL district competition; Lincoln Douglas debaters may not enter prose or poetry either. See UIL Debate webpage for expanded explanation of this rule.*

## **Affirmative Case Rubric**

### **Introduction**

*place a quotation here*

### **Resolution**

*write resolution here*

### **Definitions**

*definitions of key terms*

### **Affirmative Value**

*quote to define the value  
quote to support the value*

### **Affirmative Criterion**

*quote to define the criterion  
quote to support the criterion*

### **Contention One**

*sub-point and quote to prove validity of resolution  
sub-point and quote showing how value relates to resolution*

### **Contention Two**

*sub-point and quote proving criterion / resolution relationship  
sub-point and quote proving criterion / value relationship*

### **Summary Statement (optional)**

*a statement summarizing major points of affirmative case*

## **Negative Case Rubric**

### **Introduction**

*place a quotation here*

### **Statement opposing Resolution**

*write statement here*

### **Counter-definitions (if necessary)**

*counter-definitions provided if necessary*

### **Negative Value**

*quote to define the value  
quote to support the value*

### **Negative Criterion**

*quote to define the criterion  
quote to support the criterion*

### **Contention One**

*sub-point and quote to disprove validity of resolution  
sub-point and quote showing how value relates to resolution position*

### **Contention Two**

*sub-point and quote proving criterion / resolution position relationship  
sub-point and quote proving criterion / value relationship*

### **Summary Statement (optional)**

*a statement summarizing major points of negative case*

# Internet Debate Research

## Rich Edwards, Baylor University

### 2023

#### Terms

*Internet Provider:* The commercial service used to establish a connection to the Internet. Examples of a service provider are America Online, Sprint, ATT, MSN, Road Runner, etc.

*Internet Browser:* The software used to manipulate information on the Internet. The four major browsers in use are Chrome (the Google product), Mozilla Firefox (the successor to Netscape), Safari (the Apple product) and Edge (the Microsoft product). Each type of browser will give you access to the same group of search engines, which is the main thing you will care about.

Firefox has one feature that other browsers lack: it can report to you the last revision date of a Web page (select “Page Info” from the top “Tools” menu to access this function). I teach debaters that a Web page may be dated from the last revision date if no other date is shown on the page; Internet Explorer, Chrome and Safari offer no way to know this date.

The “Wayback Machine” offers another option for discovering the dates that a website was first created and last revised. The Wayback Machine archives Internet sites, and is available at <https://web.archive.org/>. The procedure here is as follows: (1) Copy the URL of the website for which you need the date; (2) Go to the webpage for the Wayback Machine; (3) Paste the URL of the desired website into the search box of the Wayback Machine. For almost all website, the Wayback Machine will then report the time the website was created and the last time it was revised.

*URL:* This stands for Uniform Resource Locator. It is the <http://www.baylor.edu> etc.

*Internet Search Engine:* The software used to search for information on the Internet. You will use the same group of search engines, regardless of which browser (Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, or Safari) you may be using. Examples of search engines are Google, Bing, Teoma, Yahoo, Excite, and LookSmart. My personal favorites are Google and Bing.

*Metasearch Engines:* These are Internet search engines which will submit your search to other search engines. While there were once many metasearch engines, the only major ones remaining are Dogpile and Webcrawler. The metasearch engines advertise that they are superior to any one search engine since they will report results from multiple search engines. While this is useful for some purposes, it is not the best means to conduct debate research. The metasearch engine sends a simple search request to other search engines, meaning that you are foregoing the opportunity to use the “advanced search” function that almost all major search engines make available to you. This means that you often are losing the capability to do exact phrase searching, limitation by date, limitation by domain, or limitation by file type. It is also often true that you will receive fewer hits from each of the major search engines than if you were to issue the search directly within that search engine.

*Domain:* Each web page on the Internet will have a closing three letter code such as “.com,” “.edu,” “.gov,” “.net,” etc. The domain tells you something about the origin of the web page. In most instances, the “edu” domain means the web page is housed in or provided by a college or university. The “gov” domain means the web page is maintained by a federal, state, or local government. The “com” and “net” domains usually mean a commercial enterprise. Most of the major search engines (in the advanced search options) allow the debater to limit a search to particular domains.

*PDF:* This stands for “portable document file” and indicates that a document is being made available in a format which will look just like an original document in print (complete with page numbers). PDF files are designed to be viewed and/or printed in Adobe Acrobat Reader (available free for download from the Internet). The advantage for the debater is that information gathered from a PDF file can be cited at a particular page number (the same page number it would have as if you had access to the original printed document). Almost all congressional hearings (starting with the 105<sup>th</sup> and 106<sup>th</sup> Congresses)



are available in PDF format. This not only means that you can download a hearing which will be identical to the printed one, but it also means that you have almost immediate access to a hearing once it has been held. PDF files also carry the advantage that they generally are made available from well-established sources on the Internet. Again, however, the software necessary to “read” PDF documents is available free on the Internet. You will know that a document for download is available in PDF format if the Internet URL ends in “.pdf”. Most of the major search engines allow you to search for only those Web pages which make available a PDF download.

*HTML*: This stands for “hypertext markup language” and is the code used for creating web pages. You don’t really need to be an HTML programmer to be able to write a web page since numerous programs can create the code for you from simple-to-operate menu choices. If you want to view the HTML code used to construct a web page you can do so by selecting the top menu choice for “View” (In either Firefox or Chrome) and coming down to the choice for “Developer Tools.” By selecting “View Source” under “Developer Tools” you will see displayed the native HTML code which creates the Web page.

## ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Debaters can now explore the potential of artificial intelligence to assist with debate research and the construction of cases, by creating an account at <<https://openai.com/blog/chatgpt>>.

As explained in a recent CNBC article written by Ryan Browne, entitled “All you need to know about ChatGPT, the A.I. chatbot that’s got the world talking and tech giants clashing,” offered the following description: “ChatGPT is an AI chatbot developed by San Francisco-based startup OpenAI. OpenAI was co-founded in 2015 by Elon Musk and Sam Altman and is backed by well-known investors – most notably Microsoft. It is one of several examples of generative AI. These are tools that allow users to enter written prompts and receive new human-like text or images and videos generated by the AI” (<https://www.cnbc.com/2023/02/08/what-is-chatgpt-viral-ai-chatbot-at-heart-of-microsoft-google-fight.html>).

While ChatGPT is impressive in its ability to generate essays on any topic, debaters should remain wary about the accuracy of statistics and source citations provided – elements that are essential to ethical debating. Consider the following example of the following search query entered on March 1, 2023: “Write an essay complete with citations on the benefits of a universal basic income.” Within one minute, ChatGPT produced a 636-word essay complete with numerous statistical claims of the economic benefits of UBI. Unfortunately, the single source citation was to a United Nations document that could not be found using the URL listed at the end of the essay.

An example of the problems created by use of artificial intelligence to create and support arguments was recently illustrated by a problem in a court case argued before U.S. federal judge, Brantley Starr. Shweta Ganjoo, writer for Techclusive, explains why Judge Starr has banned the use of ChatGPT in his courtroom:

According to the judge, these AI platforms are incredibly powerful and have many uses in the law — form divorces, discovery requests, suggested errors in documents, anticipated questions at oral argument. “But legal briefing is not one of them. Here’s why. These platforms in their current states are prone to hallucinations and bias. On hallucinations, they make stuff up — even quotes and citations,” the judge’s order further read. Last week, ChatGPT had fooled a lawyer into believing that citations given by the AI chatbot in a case against Colombian airline Avianca were real while they were, in fact, bogus. Lawyer Steven A. Schwartz, representing a man who sued an airline, admitted in an affidavit that he had used OpenAI’s chatbot for his research. After the opposing counsel pointed out the non-existent cases, US District Judge Kevin Castel confirmed that six of the submitted cases “appear to be bogus judicial decisions with bogus quotes and bogus internal citations.” (*No ChatGPT-Drafted Content in My Court: U.S. Judge Tells Lawyers*, May 31, 2023, <https://www.techclusive.in/news/no-chatgpt-drafted-content-in-my-court-us-judge-tells-lawyers-1380889/>)

## Maximizing the Use of the Search Engine

Why use a search engine? This is the only way to find material on the Internet unless you already know the URL you are looking for. The problem is that you must know the URL precisely; close will not be good enough. In the early days of the Internet folks used to use printed resources such as *Internet Yellow Pages*. But now there are simply too many pages for these types of publications to be useful. Google and Bing, for example, index about 30 trillion Internet pages.

*Procedures for effective searching:*

What about capitalization? For Internet search engines capitalization no longer matters. Searching for “SECURITY COOPERATION” will produce the same results as “Security Cooperation” or “security cooperation.”

What about quotation marks? Use quotation marks whenever you want the search engine to look for words together as a phrase (assuming you are using a search engine that enables exact phrase searching). If you search for Basic Income (without the quotation marks), the search engine will look for web pages containing the word “basic” and “income” but it will not require that the words be next to each other. By putting quotation marks around “Basic Income” you are requesting only those pages containing the whole phrase. There is no need to put quotation marks around a single word.

How can one limit a search to a particular domain? The best Internet search engines have an “advanced search” or “power search” capability. One of the options in the advanced search engine is the capability to limit by domain. Limited your search to the .gov domain will, for example, provide an efficient means of finding government publications on the desired search. To access Google’s advanced search engine, simply place the words “advanced search” in the Google search box.

How can one search for a particular URL (you know part but not all of the URL)? Many of the advanced search engines provide the capability to enter a search term and then to indicate whether you wish to make this search apply to “title only,” “full-text,” or URL. You would, of course, select the URL option.

How does the search engine rank the web pages it reports? This is a somewhat controversial issue. Some search engines receive payment from internet advertisers for the privilege of having their pages reported early in the search list. Most search engines, though, report the web pages in order of the greater number of occurrences of the term. Google’s patented PageRank system factors in not only the proximity of the terms but the number of times other users have accessed the web pages.

## Quality of Evidence on the Internet

Setting rigid standards will be essential: The Internet makes available web pages from fourth grade students right alongside those from world-class experts. Just as in the print medium, one must make a distinction between the *New York Times* and the *Weekly World News*. Since most debate research is squad-based, meaning it is shared by many students, it is essential that there be agreement on minimum standards for the types of web pages which may be used for debate research. Following are some recommended standards:

NO use of web pages which come from discussion groups or chat rooms.

NO use of evidence from comments posted on blogs.

NO use of web pages where the author’s qualifications are unknown.

NO use of web pages where the author is a student in grade school, high school, or college.

NO use of web pages from hate groups or from unidentified organizations.

NO use of web pages which are undated or for which a “last revision date” is unavailable.

Prefer web pages sponsored by one of the following groups:

A government institution

A major educational institution

A recognized “think tank” (RAND, Brookings Institution, Heritage Foundation, CATO Institute, Hudson Institute, etc.)

A reputable journalistic organization (CNN, New York Times, Christian Science Monitor, etc.)

Using the URL to sort out author qualifications: Consider the following example. You enter “John Rawls” and “social safety net” in a Google search. You have a web page returned to you entitled “Notes on ‘A Theory of Justice.’” The web page contains some information which you find useful, but you have no information about the author other than just the name Chilton. You notice from the URL that the web page comes from an “edu” domain associated with something called d.umn, but you don’t know what school this is, and you don’t know whether the author is a professor or an undergraduate student. The URL is <http://www.d.umn.edu/~schilton/3652/Readings/3652.Rawls.ATheoryOfJustice.html>. Take apart the URL to discover more about the author. Click with your mouse up in the URL line and eliminate all of the end of the URL back to schilton, then return. See if you can find more information about the author. If the URL comes from an educational institution with which you are unfamiliar, eliminate all of the end of the URL back to the part which ends in “edu” then hit return. By clicking the button on his web page for “Vita” you can discover information about his background. You find that the author of the web page is Stephen Chilton, Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, Duluth, who earned his Ph.D. from MIT — a good source. But some additional work was needed to determine the qualification. IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT YOU FIND THE PERSON OR GROUP RESPONSIBLE FOR AUTHORIZING THE WEB PAGE. It is NEVER a sufficient qualification that you found it on the Internet.

How to find the date. Some web pages will have the date prominently displayed at the top of the web page. Whenever you have this type of date listed, it should be used rather than the last revision date of the web page. Often, however, there is no date on the web page. In most cases you can find the date by pasting the URL into the Wayback Machine at <https://web.archive.org/>. The Wayback Machine will report the date that the web page was created and the date of its last revision.

How to prepare debate citations from the Internet. Example:

Melissa Kearney & Magne Mogstad, (Professor of Economics at the U. Maryland & Professor of Economics at the U. of Chicago), Universal Basic Income as a Policy Response to Current Challenges, Aug. 23, 2019. Retrieved Jan. 21, 2023 from <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/UBI-ESG-Memo-082319.pdf>

This is the citation standard required by the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA), which follows a modified version of the Style Manual of the Modern Language Association (MLA). Authors must be listed if present. Qualifications must be given. The date of the web page must be given. The name of the web page should be presented. At the end of the citation, indicate that it was gathered online and that the online source was an Internet URL (as opposed to Lexis/Nexis, Dialogue, etc.). The final date is the date that you accessed the Internet material.

## Carding Evidence

### ADVANTAGES OF ON-DISK EVIDENCE AND BRIEF PREPARATION

**Minimize Printing:** In the age of the information explosion, it is simply not feasible for debaters to print out a hard copy of everything they think they might need to read. The two major impediments are expense and time. It is expensive (in printer cartridges) for a debate squad to print out all of the materials that active researchers need. It is also time consuming to print big chunks of material; computer labs typically have many computers but a single printer. The printer becomes the bottle neck. The overuse of printing is also environmentally irresponsible. Debaters chunk huge volumes of paper, often printing out a two-hundred page law review article in order to extract two or three cards. This means that hundreds of pages per day of printed or photocopied materials are simply discarded.

**More Usable Briefs:** Word processed briefs are easier to read (no illegible hand-written tags, no red or

blue ink which refuses to photocopy), and they contain much more evidence per page. This ends up saving a squad large amounts of money in photocopy cost. In fact, members of a large squad can simply distribute new positions via disk and have each squad member print out their briefs on their own printer. This dramatically reduces squad photocopy costs. If briefs are to be word processed, it simply makes sense to collect the evidence on-disk. Otherwise, the debater has to re-type the evidence which exists in hard copy.

**Sorting is Easy:** The old way for debaters to construct arguments (a hegemony disadvantage, for example) is to create piles on a table-top of evidence which is sorted into different parts of the argument. Inevitably, as the argument is being constructed, there are numerous times when the debater thinks, "I know I have that piece of evidence that says . . . but WHERE IS IT?" When evidence is collected, sorted, and filed on-disk, that doesn't happen. If the evidence isn't found in the right category, the debater simply uses the word processor's "find" function to search for the word or phrase. The card is located in seconds. When evidence is prepared on-disk, the debater can simply use the sorting function of the word processor to put the evidence in order.

## HOW DOES ONE CARD EVIDENCE ONLINE?

**Have Your Word Processor and Internet Browser Both Open at the Same Time:** There was a time when computers simply didn't have enough RAM (current memory) to have two large programs open at once. Almost all current generation computers have plenty of memory to make this possible. Simply open the first program, then minimize the window (minimize button is in the top right corner) and start up the other program. If you are on a PC, switch back and forth between the two programs by clicking the desired program on the start-bar. On the Macintosh, you can switch between programs by using the icon in the top right hand corner of your screen. An alternative method for switching is to overlap the window just a bit so that a corner of both can be seen. When you desire to switch, just click with the mouse on the other window to make that program active.

**Steps for On-Disk Carding of Evidence:**

**Text-Saving Method:**

1. Locate the Internet site from which the evidence will come.
2. Construct the evidence citation on the word processor in accordance with NSDA rules.
3. Highlight the portion of the text from the web page which will makeup the text of the card. Copy the text into memory (on the PC, this is Cntrl-C; on the Macintosh it is Apple-C).
4. Switch to the word processor and paste in the text just below the evidence citation. (On the PC, this is Cntrl-V; on the Macintosh it is Apple-V)
5. Eliminate unwanted carrier returns in one of two ways: (a) click at the beginning of each line and backspace, or (b) use the word processor's search and replace function to eliminate all paragraph breaks.
6. Continue pasting cards into the word processor until you have taken all of the desired cards from the web page. Then copy and paste as many evidence citation tops as needed to match each of the cards.

## SORTING EVIDENCE ON THE COMPUTER

Design a filing scheme which will allow addition of categories.

Once filed and sorted, your on-disk evidence file functions just like the "piles of cards" on the table. You use the index to see where the cards are which will support the part of the argument you are putting together, then use the search function on the word processor to find the cards, by searching for R301, for example. Read the cards which are filed there, and select the card or cards you want to insert in the brief. Then cut and paste them.

## Research Think Tanks:

American Enterprise Institute: “The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research is dedicated to preserving and strengthening the foundations of freedom—limited government, private enterprise, vital cultural and political institutions, and a strong foreign policy and national defense—through scholarly research, open debate, and publications. Founded in 1943 and located in Washington, D.C., AEI is one of America’s largest and most respected think tanks.” <http://www.aei.org>

Brookings Institution: “In its research, The Brookings Institution functions as an independent analyst and critic, committed to publishing its findings for the information of the public. In its conferences and activities, it serves as a bridge between scholarship and public policy, bringing new knowledge to the attention of decisionmakers and affording scholars a better insight into public policy issues. The Institution traces its beginnings to 1916 with the founding of the Institute for Government Research, the first private organization devoted to public policy issues at the national level. In 1922 and 1924, the Institute was joined by two supporting sister organizations, the Institute of Economics and the Robert Brookings Graduate School. In 1927, these three groups were consolidated into one institution, named in honor of Robert Somers Brookings (1850-1932), a St. Louis businessman whose leadership shaped the earlier organizations.” <https://www.brookings.edu/>

CATO Institute: “The Cato Institute was founded in 1977 by Edward H. Crane. It is a non-profit public policy research foundation headquartered in Washington, D.C. The Institute is named for Cato’s Letters, a series of libertarian pamphlets that helped lay the philosophical foundation for the American Revolution. The Cato Institute seeks to broaden the parameters of public policy debate to allow consideration of the traditional American principles of limited government, individual liberty, free markets and peace. Toward that goal, the Institute strives to achieve greater involvement of the intelligent, concerned lay public in questions of policy and the proper role of government.” [www.cato.org](http://www.cato.org)

Heritage Foundation. “Founded in 1973, The Heritage Foundation is a research and educational institute — a think tank — whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense.” <http://www.heritage.org/>

Hudson Institute: “In Hudson Institute’s policy recommendations, articles, books, conferences, and contributions to the electronic media, we share optimism about the future and a willingness to question conventional wisdom. We demonstrate commitment to free markets and individual responsibility, confidence in the power of technology to assist progress, respect for the importance of culture and religion in human affairs, and determination to preserve America’s national security.” <http://www.hudson.org/>

RAND Corporation: “RAND (a contraction of the term research and development) is the first organization to be called a “think tank.” We earned this distinction soon after we were created in 1946 by our original client, the U.S. Air Force (then the Army Air Forces). Some of our early work involved aircraft, rockets, and satellites. In the 1960s we even helped develop the technology you’re using to view this web site. Today, RAND’s work is exceptionally diverse. We now assist all branches of the U.S. military community, and we apply our expertise to social and international issues as well.” <http://www.rand.org/>

## Law Reviews:

University Law Review Project. <http://www.lawreview.org/>

LawTechnologyToday.org. This site provides links to hundreds of law reviews many of which make their archives available online. <http://www.lawtechnologytoday.org/free-full-text-online-law-review-journal-search/>

## Suggestions for Online Lincoln Douglas Research

### Dictionary of Western Philosophy:

Philosophy professor, Garth Kemerling, maintains this site, offering the following description: “This is a concise guide to technical terms and personal names often encountered in the study of philosophy. What you will find here naturally reflects my own philosophical interests and convictions, but everything is meant to be clear, accurate, and fair, a reliable source of information on Western philosophy for a broad audience”:  
<http://www.philosophypages.com/dy/index.htm>

### Glossary of Philosophy:

This lengthy set of philosophical terms primarily comes from Student Resources for Introduction to Philosophy, written by John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer. It now appears in the following Wikipedia page: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary\\_of\\_philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glossary_of_philosophy)

### Guide to Philosophy on the Internet:

Operated by Peter Suber of the philosophy department at Earlham College. <http://legacy.earlham.edu/~peters/philinks.htm>

### Immanuel Kant: An Introduction to the Work of Kant:

This is an excellent site – part of the “Great Thinker” series – providing an overview of the moral philosophy of Kant: <https://thegreatthinkers.org/kant/introduction/>

### Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

This is a one-stop-shop for finding the meaning of key terms in philosophy as well as a brief overview of the biography and teachings of major and minor philosophers. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

### Introduction to Philosophy:

This is an Online philosophy textbook (in seventeen chapters) written by Dallas M. Roark, professor at Emporia State University : [http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Social\\_Sciences/ppecorino/roark-textbook/default.htm](http://www.qcc.cuny.edu/Social_Sciences/ppecorino/roark-textbook/default.htm)

### Project Gutenberg:

The description offered by this site: “Project Gutenberg offers over 54,000 free eBooks: Choose among free epub books, free kindle books, download them or read them online. You will find the world’s great literature here, especially older works for which copyright has expired” <http://www.gutenberg.org/>

### Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy:

This site describes itself as follows: “The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy organizes scholars from around the world in philosophy and related disciplines to create and maintain an up-to-date reference work.” The site allows a simple search box as well as a clickable Table of Contents: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>

### The Basics of Philosophy:

This site offers the following selectable tabs dealing with all aspects of philosophy: General, By Branch/Doctrine, By Historical Period, By Movement/School, By Individual Philosopher: <http://www.philosophy-basics.com/>

## Resources for Lincoln Douglas Debate

The resources listed below should prove helpful to beginning and experienced Lincoln Douglas debaters alike. Research should definitely not be limited to these resources, however, but be a continuing process that will result in your own extensive list of material for use in competition.

### Dictionaries and Encyclopedias

Angeles, Peter A. *HarperCollins Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. New York: Collins, 1992. Print.

(This book includes much more than just mere definitions, it also includes explanations of challenging philosophical terms, multiple interpretations of common terms and an excellent description of numerous logical fallacies.)

Robert, Audi, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. 2nd ed. Cambridge UP, 1999. Print.

Garner, Bryan A. *Black's Law Dictionary, Deluxe 9th Edition*. Belmont: Thomson West, 2009. Print.

Garner, Bryan A., ed. *Black's Law Dictionary (Pocket), 3rd Edition*. Belmont: Thomson West, 2006. Print.

Soukhanov, Anne. *Encarta Webster's Dictionary of the English Language Second Edition*. New York: Bloomsbury USA, 2004. Print

Flew, Antony G. *A Dictionary of Philosophy Revised Second Edition*. Boston: St. Martin's Griffin, 1984. Print.

Honderich, Ted, ed. *Oxford Companion to philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. Print.

Lacey, Alan. *Dictionary Of Philosophy*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Magill, Frank N., ed. *Masterpieces of World Philosophy*. New York: Harper Collins, 1990. Print.

McGreal, Ian P. *Great Thinkers of the Western World The Major Ideas and Classic Works of More Than 100 Outstanding Western Philosophers, Physical and Social Scientists, Psychologists, Religious Writers and Theologians*. New York: Collins, 1992. Print.

Popkin, R. H., and Avrum Stroll. *Philosophy (Made Simple Books)*. Chicago: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1993. Print.

Shafritz, Jay M. *Harper Collins Dictionary American Government and Politics*. New York: Collins, 1993. Print.

Zalta, Edward N., ed. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford: The Metaphysics Research Lab. Web.

## Contemporary Readings

Bellah, Robert N., Richard Madsen, William M. Sullivan, Ann Swidler, and Steven M. Tipton. *Habits of the Heart Individualism and Commitment in American Life*. New York: University of California, 2007. Print.

Shlomo, Avineri, and Avner De-Shalit, eds. *Communitarianism and Individualism*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999. Print.

Simon, Norman E., and Robert L. Bowie. *The Individual and the Political Order; An Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy*. 4th Ed. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 2007. Print.

(This is a relatively small book that provides a wealth of useful information. Topics including justice, liberty, natural rights, utilitarianism, democracy, ethics, civil disobedience, and more are covered in a simple, yet direct manner. Each chapter features a helpful bibliography to guide further research.)

Etzioni, Amitai. *The Common Good*. New York: Polity, 2004. Print.

Etzioni, Amitai. *Spirit of Community: The Reinvention of American Society*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1994. Print.

Nozick, Robert. *Anarchy, State and Utopia*. Grand Rapids: Blackwell Limited, 2001. Print.

(The focus of this book is justice, with a strong emphasis on the state of nature, natural rights, basic liberty, and the rights of the state. This work is also frequently viewed as a response to *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls. This is a complex yet helpful resource.)

Rand, Ayn. *Philosophy Who Needs It*. New York: Signet, 1984. Print.

Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice Original Edition*. New York: Belknap, 2005. Print.

(This book is considered a landmark work on the concept of justice, in particular, distributive justice. Rawls claims that justice must be considered in terms of fairness to the individual. It is not uncommon to find this book cited in contemporary articles and books related to justice.)

Amartya, Sen, and Williams Bernard, eds. *Utilitarianism and Beyond*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990. Print.

(This book is a collection of essays related to both utilitarianism and contemporary issues.)

Wellman, Carl. *Morals and ethics*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice Hall, 1988. Print.

(Although this book might be difficult to locate, it includes information related to a host of topics commonly addressed by Lincoln Douglas debate resolutions. It is a very useful research resource and will provide an abundance of helpful information.)



## Collections of Primary Sources

Baron, Robert C. *Soul of America: Documenting Our Past 1492-1974 (Fulcrum Series in American History)*. Golden: Fulcrum Pub, 1989. Print.

(This book is a collection of more than 100 documents that have influenced the United States.)

Heffner, Richard D. *Documentary history of the United States*. New York: Signet Classic, 2009. Print.

(Multiple essays, speeches, and documents that reflect various aspects of U.S. political history are included in this useful book.)

Ravitch, Diane. *The American Reader Words That Moved a Nation*. New York: Harper Paperbacks, 2000. Print.

(This book included numerous documents that deal with both political and social issues.)

Ravitch, Diane. *The Democracy Reader Classic and Modern Speeches, Essays, Poems, Declarations, and Documents on Freedom and Human Rights Worldwide*. New York: HarperResource, 1993. Print.

(Included in this collection of resources are items that reflect issues from various time periods from the ancient to the modern era.)

Seldes, George. *Great Thoughts, Revised and Updated*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1996. Print.

(A collection of numerous quotations related to a host of philosophical and political concepts, this work is quite useful and arranged in a very user friendly manner.)

## General Philosophy

Adler, Mortimer J. *Six Great Ideas*. New York: Touchstone, 1997. Print.

(This is but one of several books by Mortimer Adler that address various facets of philosophy. Some of his other works such as *Ten Philosophical Mistakes* and *We Hold These Truths* are also beneficial for Lincoln Douglas debaters.)

S., Engel. *The Study of Philosophy*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, Inc., 2007. Print.

(This is a basic philosophy textbook that includes an extensive amount of information, not all of which will be relevant to Lincoln Douglas debate. It does, nevertheless, provide an excellent introduction to the study of basic Philosophical concepts.)

L., Heilbroner, Robert. *The Worldly Philosophers The Lives, Times And Ideas Of The Great Economic Thinkers*. New York: Touchstone, 1999. Print.

Lavine, T. Z. *From Socrates to Sartre The Philosophic Quest*. New York: Bantam, 1985. Print.

## JUDGING UIL LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE

### I. Purpose:

Lincoln Douglas debate, one-on-one debate of value resolutions, is excellent training for developing skills in argumentation, persuasion, research, and audience analysis. In this contest students are encouraged to develop a direct and communicative style of delivery. The debater's goal is to orally persuade the judge to accept or reject an interpretation of the resolution on the basis of analytical, argumentative, and presentational criteria.

#### A. Case and Analysis

1. **Defining the Values:** Did the arguments presented focus on the values implicit in the resolution?
2. **Establishing Criteria for Evaluating the Resolution:** On what basis (universal, moral, social, political, historical, legal, etc.) is one value proven by the debater to be more important than another?
3. **Weighing Importance:** Are the values advocated in support of the resolution more important than the values diminished by the resolution, or are alternative values supported by the negative enhanced by the resolution?
4. **Application of Values and Criteria:** Did the debaters apply their cases by filtering appropriate arguments through the value and criteria?

#### B. Argumentation

1. **Proof:** Did the evidence orally presented pragmatically justify the affirmative or negative stance? Did the reasoning orally presented philosophically justify the affirmative or negative stance?
2. **Organization:** Are the ideas presented clearly, in a logical sequence, and with appropriate emphasis?
3. **Extension, Clash, and Rebuttal:** Did the debaters fulfill their obligation to extend their own arguments? Did they appropriately refute the contentions of their opponents by exposing weaknesses or inconsistencies?

#### C. Presentation

1. **Expression:** Were language, tone, and emphasis appropriate to persuasive communication?
2. **Delivery:** Were gestures, movement, and eye contact audience oriented and natural components of persuasive communication?
3. **Rate:** Was rate of delivery conducive to audience understanding?

### II. Time Limits:

A. Preparation: Each debater has a maximum of **four minutes preparation** time to be used during the course of the debate.

|            |                                  |           |
|------------|----------------------------------|-----------|
| B. Debate: | Affirmative                      | 6 minutes |
|            | Cross-examination by Negative    | 3 minutes |
|            | Negative                         | 7 minutes |
|            | Cross-examination by Affirmative | 3 minutes |
|            | Affirmative Rebuttal             | 4 minutes |
|            | Negative Rebuttal                | 6 minutes |
|            | Affirmative Rebuttal             | 3 minutes |

III. Selecting the Winner: Putting aside personal biases and based on the analysis, argumentation, and oral presentation of the debaters, which debater was the most persuasive?

**Lincoln Douglas Debate Ballot**  
**University Interscholastic League**

Conference: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Judge: \_\_\_\_\_ Room: \_\_\_\_\_ Round: \_\_\_\_\_

Affirmative #: \_\_\_\_\_ Negative #: \_\_\_\_\_

**Circle the one number representing your evaluation of each speaker:**

|             |          |          |          |               |
|-------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------|
|             | Superior | Good     | Average  | Below Average |
| Affirmative | 30 29    | 28 27 26 | 25 24 23 | 22 21 20      |
| Negative    | 30 29    | 28 27 26 | 25 24 23 | 22 21 20      |

**AFFIRMATIVE**

**NEGATIVE**

The best ballots teach and encourage the student. Please offer areas of improvement and positive attributes in the areas of *Analysis, Argumentation, and Presentation.*

| Analysis   Argumentation   Presentation | Analysis   Argumentation   Presentation |
|---|---|
|   |   |

**Reasons for Decision: The significant issues used as the basis for my decision were**

In my judgment, \_\_\_\_\_ debater # \_\_\_\_\_ won the debate.  
 (affirmative or negative)

**Low point win?**   Yes   No

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Judge's Signature*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Affiliation*

## JUDGES REQUIRED FOR THE STATE MEET

All schools qualifying debaters in Lincoln Douglas debate to the State Meet are instructed:

— from the UIL *Constitution & Contest Rules*:

*“any school that qualifies for the State Meet must provide an experienced judge for each debater who qualifies for the state competition...”* The C&CR also indicates that, *“schools which advance to elimination rounds must provide an experienced judge for each advancing debater who will be available until dismissed by the contest director. Failure to provide a judge could constitute grounds for forfeiture of the round.”* (Section 1002, E (iii))

- Coaches are encouraged to serve as the judge for their school so students will have educators as adjudicators.
- The judge you submit should have judged numerous rounds on this year’s UIL LD spring resolution and be qualified to judge in elimination rounds. Expertise and maturity of the judging pool is critical to the quality of the State Meet. No college freshmen, please!

### STATE LD JUDGE SUMMARY REPORT - SCHOOL JUDGES

|   |   |   |  |  |
|---|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Judge Name</b><br><input type="text"/>               | <b>Work Phone</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Home Phone</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Status</b><br><input type="radio"/> School Obligation<br><input type="radio"/> UIL Hired<br><input type="radio"/> Not Judging | <b>Date &amp; Time Submitted</b><br><input type="text"/> |
| <b>Preferred E-mail Address</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Cell Phone</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Fax</b><br><input type="text"/>        |  |  |

|   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>School Judge Info</b>  | <b>Conf Dist</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Coach name &amp; Contact Info (if different)</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Work Phone</b><br><input type="text"/> |
| <input type="radio"/> Coach <input type="radio"/> Fulfilling Obligation |  |   |   |
| <b>School</b><br><input type="text"/>                                   |  | <b>Preferred E-mail</b><br><input type="text"/>                             | <b>Fax</b><br><input type="text"/>        |
| <b>Debater</b><br><input type="text"/>                                  |  | <b>Alternate E-mail</b><br><input type="text"/>                             | <b>Home Phone</b><br><input type="text"/> |
|   |  |   | <b>Cell</b><br><input type="text"/>       |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>LD Debater in HS</b><br><input type="text"/>      | <b>Policy Debater in HS</b><br><input type="text"/>      | <b>CEDA Debater in College</b><br><input type="text"/> |
| <b>Coach LD Debate in HS</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Policy Debater in College</b><br><input type="text"/> | <b>Coach CEDA in College</b><br><input type="text"/>   |

**Judge Value Debate Often?**  Yes  No **# Rds. This Year**  **# Rounds on Topic**   
**Tournaments on Topic**

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Comm. Skills vs. Res. of Issues</b><br><input type="radio"/> Communication Skills <input type="radio"/> Resolution of Issues <input type="radio"/> Equal | <b>Experience Description (school judges)</b><br><input type="text"/> |
|---|---|

**Rate of delivery**  
Slower  1  2  3  4  5 **Faster**

**Amount of evidence**  
Little  1  2  3  4  5 **Lots**

**Appeals**  
Emotional  1  2  3  4  5 **Factual**

**Criteria**  
Unnecessary  1  2  3  4  5 **Essential**

**Approach to topic**  
Philosophical  1  2  3  4  5 **Pragmatic**

**Should Not Judge**

**Philosophy Statement**

## Texas UIL Lincoln Douglas Debate Topics

- 2022-23 Resolved: Amateur status ought to be valued above commodification of Name Image Likeness. (Sept - Dec)
- Resolved: Term limits for members of the United States Congress are justified. (Jan – May)
- 2021-22 Resolved: When in conflict, environmental protection ought to take precedence over natural resource extraction. (Sept - Dec)
- Resolved: In matters of foreign policy, the United States ought to value universal human rights over economic interests. (Jan – May)
- 2020-21 Resolved: When in conflict, public health ought to be prioritized over individual liberty. (Sept - Dec)
- Resolved: When in conflict, digital privacy ought to be valued above public security. (Jan – May)
- 2019-20 Resolved: The benefits of genetically modified food outweigh the risks. (Sept - Dec)
- Resolved: On balance, gentrification is unjust. (Jan – May)
- 2018-19 Resolved: In matters of immigration, freedom of movement ought to be valued over national sovereignty. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: On balance, artificial intelligence improves humanity. (Jan – May)
- 2017-18 Resolved: The United States federal government has a moral obligation to provide universal health care for its citizens. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: The use of social media as a news source undermines the marketplace of ideas. (Jan – May)
- 2016-17 Resolved: The dominance of two major political parties in the U.S. presidential elections undermines democracy. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: In matters of international trade, globalization ought to be valued above protectionism. (Jan – May)
- 2015-16 Resolved: When in conflict, an individual's right of self-determination ought to be valued above public health concerns. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: In the United States, wealth inequality is detrimental to democratic ideals. (Jan – May)
- 2014-15 Resolved: On balance, government restrictions on threatening speech are desirable. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: When in conflict, human rights protection ought to supersede state sovereignty in the conduct of United States foreign policy. (Jan-May)
- 2013-14 Resolved: United States efforts to promote democracy in the Middle East are desirable. (Sept-Dec)
- Resolved: The influence of the media is detrimental to the American political process. (Jan-May)
- 2012-13 Resolved: The *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, 558 U.S. 50 (2010) ruling undermines democracy in the United States. (Sept-Dec)

- Resolved: In matters of justice, John Rawls' Difference Principle ought to be preferred over Robert Nozick's Entitlement Theory. (Jan-May)
- 2011-12 Resolved: Capital punishment in Texas is unjust (Sept-Dec)  
Resolved: Access to drinking water ought to be valued as a human right instead of as a commodity. (Jan-May)
- 2010-11 Resolved: U.S. foreign policy ought to be guided by American exceptionalism. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: Free trade should be valued above protectionism. (Jan-May)
- 2009-10 Resolved: Standards of professional behavior ought to be valued above freedom of expression on social networking websites. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: Anthropocentrism ought to be valued above biocentrism. (Jan-May)
- 2008-09 Resolved: The two-party system undermines democracy in U.S. presidential elections. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: Federal government bailouts of major corporations are just. (Jan-May)
- 2007-08 Resolved: In a criminal interrogation, the end justifies the means. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: Sanctuary cities are morally justified. (Jan-May)
- 2006-07 Resolved: When in conflict, freedom of expression ought to be valued above political correctness. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: An individual's obligation to society ought to outweigh society's obligation to the individual. (Jan-May)
- 2005-06 Resolved: Continued space exploration is vital for the advancement of civilization. (Sept – Dec)  
Resolved: Drug testing of high school extracurricular activity participants is justified. (Jan-May)
- 2004-05 Resolved: The popular vote ought to supercede the Electoral College in U.S. presidential elections. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Equalization of funding is desirable for Texas public schools. (Jan-May)
- 2003-04 Resolved: Television is detrimental to civility in the United States. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Nation-building is a desirable U.S. foreign policy objective. (Jan-May)
- 2002-03 Resolved: Government has a moral obligation to ensure access to mental health care services. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: In the United States, due process rights ought to be valued above homeland security. (Jan-May)
- 2001-02 Resolved: Environmental protection ought to be valued above private business interests. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: When in conflict, the spirit of the law should supersede the letter of the law. (Jan-May)
- 2000-01 Resolved: A candidate's personal character ought to be valued more than his public performance. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Increased reliance on technology undermines the quality of life in America. (Jan-May)

- 1999-00 Resolved: When in conflict, Native American sovereignty ought to take precedence over state sovereignty. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Multinational intervention is preferable to United States unilateral intervention in promoting American foreign policy objectives. (Jan-May)
- 1998-99 Resolved: The protection of American society ought to be valued above the right to bear arms. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Freedom of expression via the Internet ought to be valued above government regulation of that medium. (Jan-May)
- 1997-98 Resolved: That US immigration policies contradict American ideals. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: Influence of the media undermines justice in American criminal proceedings. (Jan - May)
- 1996-97 Resolved: That the dominance of two major political parties in presidential elections undermines American democratic ideals. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That gender equity is essential to legitimate democracy. (Jan - May)
- 1995-96 Resolved: That financial influence by lobbyists undermines the American democratic process. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That affirmative action programs are justified in American society. (Jan - May)
- 1994-95 Resolved: That restriction of civil liberties for the sake of combating juvenile crime is justified. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That rehabilitation ought to be a higher priority than retribution in the American criminal justice system. (Jan - May)
- 1993-94 Resolved: That when in conflict, the preservation of endangered species is more important than the pursuit of economic growth. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That the United States ought to place greater emphasis on humanitarian considerations in the conduct of its foreign policy. (Jan-May)
- 1992-93 Resolved: That freedom of choice among public schools would better serve the interests of American society. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That mandatory term limitations for federal legislators would be desirable. (Jan - May)
- 1991-92 Resolved: That affirmative action programs are justified in American society. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That the right to die should be valued as highly as the right to live. (Jan - May)
- 1990-91 Resolved: That the federal judiciary exerts excessive influence on American society. (Sept - Dec)  
Resolved: That the United States government has a moral responsibility to ensure access to quality health care for all citizens. (Jan - May)
- 1989-90 Resolved: That ability grouping in educational institutions is justified. (Sept, Oct)  
Resolved: That all United States citizens ought to perform a period of national service. (Nov - Dec)  
Resolved: That the democratization of Warsaw Pact nations is in the best interests of the United States. (Jan - May)

- 1988-89 Resolved: That the adoption of an official language in the United States better serves the interests of society. (Sept, Oct, Nov)
- Resolved: The best government is that which governs least. (Dec, Jan, Feb)
- Resolved: Americans have overemphasized convenience at the expense of the natural environment. (DR/S)
- 1987-88 Resolved: That Lt. Col. Oliver North is an American hero. (Sept, Oct, Nov)
- Resolved: That scientific manipulation of the genetic code to improve human beings would be morally justifiable. (Dec, Jan, Feb)
- Resolved: That television has had an adverse impact on the American political process. (D/R/S)
- 1986-87 Resolved: That the benefits to society of testing citizens for illegal drug use are more important than the individual's right to privacy. (Sept, Oct, Nov)
- Resolved: That the U.S. government is justified in intervening in other nations' internal affairs in defense of human rights. (Dec, Jan, Feb)
- Resolved: That the American judicial process protects the accused in criminal proceedings to the detriment of society. (D/R/S)
- 1985-86 Resolved: That unions are detrimental to the American way of life. (Fall)
- Resolved: That the American democratic ideal is undermined by financial influence in the political process. (S/D/R/S)
- 1984-85 Resolved: That the influence of the media is detrimental to the American political process. (Fall and Winter)
- Resolved: That experimental medical attempts to extend life are unethical. (D/R)
- Resolved: That United States immigration policies contradict American ideals. (S)



# Virtual Meets

With the advent of the unprecedented global pandemic, it was speech and debate coaches that problem-solved by designing a way for speech tournaments to continue on in spite of the health crisis. With schools, cities, even countries under lockdown, the virtual world became the method of competing. Speech and debate contests are designed and at their optimum value as in-person competition with judges face-to-face with competitors, and rooms filled with audience members. But, the virtual world through computers and the Internet provided a way to continue the critical world of forensics for students during the crisis.

Although in-person competition is definitely preferred, our experiences in the virtual world convince us that some things we experienced were actually good and should be retained once we do find normalcy again. Some schools will continue to sponsor virtual tournaments, providing Texas students with limited travel opportunities the ability to compete against schools hundreds of miles on the other side of the state from them or even out of state, and diversity of competition is a good thing. Judges don't have to travel to a central site so recruiting a variety of judges from a wide array of geographical areas enhances the pool and provides different perspectives and feedback to competitors.

In addition, tournament hosts have new and innovative methods of administering tournaments efficiently. Electronic tournament management systems were designed out of necessity to provide electronic ballots. These make sense to continue even as tournaments revert to in-person because of their expediency, efficiency and the reduction in cost, in addition to their contribution to promoting ecology. So, in an effort to continue to embrace the virtual tournament world, in this chapter, you will find information on best practices when your students compete virtually.

# BEST PRACTICES FOR VIRTUAL CX or LD DEBATE

## **Preparation**

Prepare before the start of actual competition rounds by using test rooms provided by the specific video platform a tournament is using. You must practice with your technology before you enter a competitive tournament so that you will be prepared to understand when you are having issues and how to diagnose those problems before they interfere with your actual competition.

## **Technology Set-Up**

Technical set-up is critical to consider in advance. Your computer should be fully charged or, preferably, plugged in. The battery is drained rapidly when using video conferencing software.

Laptop is the best option since most have a built-in microphone and web cam. Tilting the laptop screen can easily adjust the position of the webcam. Purchasing an ethernet cable to hardwire to the router is recommended to improve connectivity. This is far more stable than wi-fi.

A desktop with microphone and webcam can also work. Tablets and phones are the least preferred options for a few reasons: positioning the camera can be tricky; a cell phone hotspot is not likely to have a fast enough connection to provide stable videoconferencing; it requires a few more steps when using Video Meeting apps; moving these devices creates a lot of movement on the screen.

If you do not have the latest and greatest technology, do not worry. Judges will not be judging you on your technical set-up but on the quality of your performance.

Competitors should enter the virtual contest early to test technology in advance. If using wi-fi, check the connection. Turn off unnecessary devices. Test the microphone. Try to minimize simultaneous connections to the router to improve video quality.

## **Location**

Try to secure a separate room away from noise and other people and one that has good lighting. If using a wireless connection is necessary, be as close as possible to the router. Inform others of the tournament schedule and required privacy to compete. Be aware of when to be online and show up early.

## **Cameras**

Adjust the web camera taking into consideration what can be seen in the “virtual box”, and adjust the side lighting so as not to be a dark shadow on the screen. Adjust the room. These adjustments might include: a visual background free from distractions, turning on a desk lamp for back lighting, turning off a ceiling fan to eliminate distraction,

removing pets that might make noise and making sure what shows in the background is organized and uncluttered.

You want your camera to be at eye level. That may mean placing your laptop on boxes. If you choose to stand when debating, avoid standing in front of a window or directly under a light fixture.

## **Audio**

Be certain you have silenced notifications for texts, emails, social media and silence your cell phone.

## **Microphones**

Debaters should mute their microphones when not speaking. Double-check it is muted before beginning prep time.

## **Technical Problems**

Technology issues should be reported immediately through a tournament help line or email. The specific “help” procedure should be communicated by tournament officials in advance of the meet.

To Improve Connectivity:

- Wired Internet Connection
  - Plug your computer into the router (the network device that provides Internet connection) with a network cable. The computer may need an adapter to make this possible.
- Move closer to the router.
  - If wired is not an option, the next best option is to place your computer in the same room as the router. The closer the device is to the router, the better the signal quality. The video/audio could freeze if the device is too far away.
- Reboot the router.
  - If the device has repeated connection issues, reboot the router to reset all connectivity.
- Minimize interference.
  - Remove any solid objects between the wi-fi antenna and the router. Avoid using appliances while online, if possible.
- Don't crowd the router.
  - Reduce additional Internet usage while online. (Netflix, etc. should not be streaming in the other room)

# Coach Notifications

## **Online Procedures**

Familiarize yourself and your students with the tournament management software. Get any necessary accounts or registration set up ahead of time.

Be sure online registration includes your current cell phone number and an email address that is accurately entered. If you have more than one email address, make a note of which one you have entered in the tournament management software. Cell or email is how each person will receive postings and ballots.

Carefully make sure student names registered on the team roster in the tournament management system match the student account name entered. Example: if you entered the student as “Johnny Smith”, they should not enter themselves as “Jonathan Smith.” Take the time to proof email addresses and phone numbers (if used) to confirm they were entered not only correctly but consistently.

Plan in advance how to keep in contact with your students. There are apps available that do not require sharing cell phone numbers, a practice some school districts prohibit. Discuss protocols with the team regarding pre-round meetings, check-in and during the tournament.

Know how to access the specific tournament online video conference being used. Be available at all times that your students are competing. Make sure you are aware of your judging obligations. Have contact information for tournament personnel.

# Judge Notifications

## **Preparation**

Judges should prepare to enter the world of online judging before the start of actual competition rounds. Access adjudication training presented digitally or via video.

## **Technology**

Technology set-up is important to consider. Become familiar with the tournament management system and platform. Review all instructions provided by the tournament host and ask questions well in advance of the competition.

## **Equipment**

Judges should use laptops or desktops when adjudicating rounds, not a tablet or a mobile device.

Keep your video on at all times but your microphone off while students are performing. Some judges wish to open one Chrome tab to watch the speaker and another to fill out the e-Ballot. Alternatively, you may wish to write notes on paper while observing the round and then transcribing the notes to the e-Ballot at the end of the round. Others use 2 devices. Experiment in advance to discover what works best for you.

Note: Some tournament software allows you to submit your results and add the comments afterward submitting your ranks, which allows the tab staff to access your rankings to keep the tournament on schedule.

### **Procedure to Start the Round**

Verify the student's name or code and have the contestant reply "Here". This is a quick and easy way to test the audio for each student.

### **Environment and Disruptions**

Judges are encouraged to remember that participants come from diverse backgrounds and we celebrate that we have economic diversity in our community. A student should not be penalized for things beyond their control. This may include unanticipated interruptions, technical issues or streaming quality and the visual background students have available to them. A student who cannot afford expensive equipment should be judged the same as one who can.

### **Technology Problems**

Common tech issues, if a student needs help: (avoid interrupting a debate unless the issue is so bad you can't overlook it)

- Lagging audio – participant can turn off video briefly to improve bandwidth
- Noise in the audio – participant can mute themselves if they are not speaking
- Video quality – participant can readjust light or screen angle
- Disconnection – wait a reasonable amount of time for participant to reconnect  
The Contest Director should use discretion in determining the length of time that is reasonable.

### **Contact Info**

Each tournament will have a Help Desk system that will be clearly explained before the tournament begins. Be certain the tournament officials have your current cell phone number and that you know how to reach them, should problems arise.

**Be aware of Temporary Rule Waivers and Contest Procedures when this contest is administered virtually.**

# Academics - Request for Accommodation Process

## Submitting a Request

The University Interscholastic League will consider requests to accommodate a student with physical or mental impairments. The school should submit the Request for Accommodation form located at the link below with the appropriate signatures **a minimum of two weeks before** the contest in which the accommodation is sought. Requests submitted after that time, absent extenuating circumstances, will not be granted.

Request for Accommodation Form: <http://www.uilTEXAS.org/academics/resources/forms>

The request shall adhere to the accommodations provided by the student's Sec. 504 Committee and/or A.R.D. Committee. No student records are to be submitted to UIL. The only required submission is the signed request with rationale for the accommodation. The completed form should be submitted to the UIL office, Music, Athletics or Academics, that administers the game or contest in question.

## Approval Letter

A response letter from UIL granting or denying the requested accommodation will be provided to the school. A UIL letter approving the accommodation can be submitted at any level of the competition. It is the coach's or sponsor's responsibility to notify and provide a copy of the UIL approval letter to the meet director well in advance of the competition. If the student advances to the next higher meet, it is the responsibility of the student's school to notify the region and/or state meet director immediately.

Additional costs or equipment required for accommodations are the responsibility of the school district. It is the responsibility of the host school, contest director and contestant to follow any applicable UIL ethics code or other applicable UIL rule to ensure the honesty of the competitors and the integrity of the competition.

## Approval Process

Requests are handled on a case-by-case basis. The facts matter in each case. Just as an example, accommodations have been approved for visual impairments, dyslexia, motor skill impairments and special circumstances to take the test in a separate room. Such accommodations have included the use of an enlarged test copy, a magnifying glass, colored overlay, converting a test to Braille format or use of a computer and printer. UIL, however, will not alter a contest's judging criteria as an accommodation or make other accommodations that would fundamentally alter the game or contest.

## TILF Scholarship Opportunities

**From 1959 to 2023, TILF has awarded more than 22,000 scholarships valued at over \$38 million.** Amounts of scholarships range from \$500 for one year to \$24,000 over four years. Some scholarships have special requirements or restrictions such as requiring a student to select certain majors, attend specific colleges or universities, or compete in specific contests. Details of all scholarships and their requirements are listed at the TILF website.

**Applications for 2024 may be submitted in March through May of that year (specific deadlines can be found online at [www.tilfoundation.org](http://www.tilfoundation.org)).**

**All TILF applicants must meet the following requirements:**

- Must have competed at the UIL Academic State Meet, Congressional Debate State Meet, One-Act Play State Meet, or Theatrical Design State Meet **OR** must have advanced to the **octofinal round** (second day) of the Cross Examination Debate State Meet, **OR** must be a **state finalist** in the Barbara Jordan Historical Essay Competition, the Latino History Essay Competition, or the Young Filmmakers Festival **OR** must have been a member of one of the **top 10 teams** per competition group at the BEST or FIRST state robotics contests
- Must plan to attend an accredited college or university in the state of Texas, enroll full-time in college, and maintain a 2.5 college GPA (some scholarships require a higher GPA)
- Must be graduating from high school during the current academic year

**Advancing to the state level in academic pilot contests that are not yet officially sanctioned by the UIL does not qualify a student to apply for TILF scholarships.**

Applicants who are graduating under the state of Texas three-year graduation schedule should inform TILF of that fact. Students who are entering the Texas Academy of Math and Science at the University of North Texas in Denton will apply the year they complete their high school requirements at the TAMS.

The awards committee typically meets in June and all applicants will be notified of their status by mid-July of the application year.

If you have any questions, please visit the TILF website at [www.tilfoundation.org](http://www.tilfoundation.org) or contact:

**Trudy Richards, Executive Director**  
**PO Box 151027, Austin, TX 78715**  
**512-382-0916**  
**[trichards@tilfoundation.org](mailto:trichards@tilfoundation.org)**