



# ***GUIDE TO IPDA DEBATE***

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## INTRODUCTION

The power of advocacy is harnessed and refined through effective argumentation. The ability to overcome objections through delivery of reasoned advocacy and debating the merits/rationale of another's point of view empowers an individual to change the world around them. This skill can often make words more powerful than weapons. As Malcolm X reflected in his *Autobiography*:

“Standing up there, the faces looking up at me, the things in my head coming out of my mouth, while my brain searched for the next best thing to follow what I was saying, and if I could sway them to my side by handling it right, then I had won the debate--once my feet got wet, I was gone on debating.”<sup>1</sup>

Public debate is designed to mirror debates which often occur in our modern society; accordingly, public debates range from intricate policy advocacy (like one may hear in the halls of Congress) to more light hearted metaphorical argument. The debaters speak extemporaneously in public debate, using only the notes they have made during the debate and preparation period.

One aspect which makes Public Debate unique among other forms of intercollegiate competition is the general requirement for eligibility: simply put, Public Debate is open to everyone. Unlike most almost all other formats which are only open to undergraduate and sometimes to graduate students, Public Debate is open to all comers. This includes undergraduate and graduate students; high school students; alumni; retired individuals; attorneys, businessmen, politicians, & other professionals; coaches and assistant coaches at all levels; etc. Everyone! However, individuals with limited experience are offered the opportunity to compete in “novice” or “varsity” divisions, based upon their experience level, which group them against other competitors of similar experience.

Who judges the debates? Anyone of reasonable intelligence can be used as a judge. In fact, it is actively recommended that judging pools be made up of as wide a range of backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives as possible. Tournament directors are encouraged to use class or volunteer undergraduate students as judges, as well as members of the community. Because of the high percentage of lay-person judges that are used in this event, contestants will be expected to always seat themselves such that, from the judge's point of view, the Affirmative is on the left and the Negative on the right.

Public Debating is rapidly gaining in strength in the United States. The first official IPDA tournament was held in February 1997 at St. Mary's University. In the fall of 1997, the first full IPDA season began at Kansas City Kansas Community College, with a tournament featuring only 25 competitors in two divisions. By 1999, the national championship tournament featured 85 debaters from 18 different colleges and universities. In 2003, more than 40 American programs were active members of the IPDA.

## FORMAT

In competitive public debating, each round of debate has a different topic announced just before the debate begins. The amount of preparation time is typically thirty minutes between the announcement of the topic and the beginning of debate.

During preparation time, the participants analyze the proposition and outline their major arguments. They ask themselves: What does this proposition mean? What important issues are raised by it? How may it be affirmed or denied? What examples and events are relevant to its discussion? The answers to these and other questions will serve as the foundation for the Affirmative case and prepare the Negative for its refutation. The use of dictionaries and reference materials are permitted during preparation time.

The first thing the affirmative must do in preparation time is to organize the main issues of the case into a logically complete and persuasive form to convey the best possible impression of their case. The affirmative speaker therefore uses preparation time to arrange the essential elements of the case into a brief outline. The argument outline should clearly bring the major elements of the case into relation with each other and constitute a complete case on behalf of the resolution.

Format: A Public Debate includes five speeches and two periods of cross examination, structured via the following format (speech times may vary from tournament to tournament, however these are the most commonly used times; the speech order will not change.):

IPDA Debate Format		
Speech	Time	Contents
Affirmative Constructive (AC)	5 Minutes	Defines the resolution and presents the case for the Affirmative
Negative Cross Examination	2 Minutes	Negative questions the affirmative about their advocacy.
Negative Constructive (NC)	6 Minutes	Accepts or rejects the Affirmative's definition of the resolution; refutes the Affirmative's case and offers the Negative's case against the resolution.
Affirmative Cross Examination	2 Minutes	Affirmative questions the negative about their advocacy.
First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	3 Minutes	Reestablishes and expands the Affirmative's case in light of the Negative's arguments
Negative Rebuttal (NR)	5 Minutes	Summarizes the main issues opposing the resolution & the affirmative case, offers analysis for why the negative's interpretation is superior.
Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	3 Minutes	Summarizes the main issues supporting the resolution; offers analysis for why the affirmative's interpretation is superior.

Note: there is no preparation time between speeches.

## Topics

Contestants meet in an extemporaneous preparation room before the scheduled start of the debate to select a topic. The preparation time before each round is 30 minutes. When the contestants meet to select a resolution to debate they will be offered five (5) topic alternatives. Ideally, these resolutions will vary considerably in tone and style. One might be a serious policy topic, one a humorous value topic, another a semi-serious factual topic.

Once the set of resolutions is announced, each pair of opponents will independently select the topic they wish to debate. Starting with the Negative speaker, each contestant will alternatively strike one of the five alternatives until only one remains. That will be the debate resolution for the round. In the event one of the debaters is late for the topic draw, the debater who shows up on time (or if both are late, the first one there) will have the choice of topic. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, this rule must be applied with some flexibility if the tournament is running late. For example, if a debater is late for the draw but has a legitimate excuse the Tournament Director may call for a reselection of a topic if the on-time debater has already selected one. For this reason, debaters who have been allowed to have their choice of topic, should refrain

from wandering out of earshot of the extemporaneous preparation room until it is close to the time for the round to start.

It is important to note that the interpretation of the resolution and the “tone” of the debate will be set by the debaters and not by the topic. I.E., there is really no such thing as a “serious” topic as opposed to a “humorous” topic. It is up to the debaters to define the nature of the debate in their treatment of the topic. And obviously the Affirmative, by speaking first, will have a much greater voice in setting the tone of the debate. Since topics are not themselves necessarily serious or humorous, debaters can and should try to twist them to their own strategic advantage. That decision is part of the strategic choices they have to make during their prep time. For example, if a strong rhetorical debater is going affirmative against a strong evidence debater, it might be advantageous to treat a serious sounding topic in a humorous way to negate the opponent's research advantage.

During the preparation time, it's important to remember that only notes are permitted for use in round, so any references relating to the topic (which were consulted during preparation) must be written into one's notes.

Two types of topics are commonly used in public debating: *straight* topics and *linkable* topics. *Straight* topics are meant to be debated literally. They may be drawn from current events (e.g., “Resolved: that the United States should lift its economic sanctions against Cuba”; or “Resolved: that the United States should support the admission of Russia to N.A.T.O.”), or they may be broader statements of historical judgment or philosophy (“Resolved: that the American dream has become an American nightmare”; “Resolved: that the United States has been more sinned against than sinning”). Some topics require *value comparison* (“Resolved: that the local is preferable to the global”; “Resolved: that flattery is more despicable than slander”). Such debates rely upon examples to prove or disprove the resolution, but the resolution itself is still the focus of the debate. *Linkable* resolutions need not be debated literally, but may instead be linked to specific policy proposals selected by the Affirmative and not known by the Negative until the first constructive speech is heard. A linkable resolution may be drawn from a pithy quotation (“Resolved: that it is better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees”) or a song lyric (“Resolved: that freedom's just another word for nothin' left to lose”). The Affirmative may define the terms of the resolution in most any way they choose, generally linking the abstract resolution to some specific controversy through the use of metaphors. For example, the last topic (“freedom's just another word) might be linked to a case statement in favor of restoring the eligibility of legal immigrants (who came here seeking “freedom”) for welfare benefits (without which, they have “nothin' left to lose”). The topic “it is better to die on one's feet” might be linked to the case statement that “the United States should not extend Most Favored Nation status to China,” arguing that America should “stand up” for its principles rather than remaining on its knees to placate China.

### **Focus on Extemporaneous Debate**

The extemporaneous feature of public debate is one of the primary differences between it and cross-examination debate as practiced in U.S. secondary and post-secondary institutions. Cross-examination debate organizations select one or two topics for debate during an academic season. Students research those topics and carefully prepare arguments on both sides of those topics. The research and preparation is so extensive that the debates are not ordinarily extemporaneous events. In fact, major arguments on both sides are usually written in manuscript form and read to the judge. In public debate, topics vary with each new competition and preparation is limited to thirty minutes. The focus of public debate is on informed, reasoned argument more than on volume of research; however, research is an effective way to prepare oneself for the subject matters upon which they will be crafting arguments (the research must, however, be broad based as virtually anything can become a subject of a debate).

### **Published information?**

Evidence: Debaters are permitted to use reference materials during their preparation time. They may compile and use extemporaneous speaking type files, dictionaries, reference books, libraries, or anything else for that matter. They may also consult with teammates and/or coaches for ideas and advice. But contestants may not bring written reference materials into the round with them. No “reading” of evidence will be permitted. Contestants may not even copy evidence verbatim on to their flow sheets to be read during a speech. They may only bring the case outlines and limited notes which are written during their prep time into the round with them. Evidence must be memorized or paraphrased for use during debates. In this sense, a Public Debater may only use evidence the way a good Extemporaneous Speaking Contestant uses evidence. This is a

required and not an optional rule of public debate. And this is another case where judges should be made aware of this rule and instructed to count off for abuses. Serious violations of this rule should cause the judge to automatically award the decision to the opponent.

While no rules prohibit consultation of published materials during the thirty minutes of preparation time between the announcement of the topic and the beginning of the debate, the small amount of time allowed for preparation means that the most effective use of time is spent on argument construction instead of consultation of published materials. From a practical point of view, public debaters might have time to consult a dictionary or a recent news magazine, but little more. Thus, public debate places a premium on what debaters can do with information they have rather than on how much information they can amass. One outcome is that the quantity of information in a public debate is ordinarily less than in a collegiate NDA/CEDA debate or high school policy debate. Additionally, the rules of the IPDA disallow debaters' use of published materials during the actual debate.

Debaters must be willing to share the source of specific information with the audience for reasons that are similar to those requiring a writer to cite sources of information. Debaters as well as writers cite sources in order to give their listeners and readers the opportunity to check the information in more detail at a later date. Citing sources also is used by debaters and writers to make a statement about their own personal integrity. By inviting the audience to check the authenticity of their information, writers and debaters are staking their personal integrity on the fact that the information is as represented. Debaters who earn the reputation of representing information inaccurately will lose their credibility quickly. Being well informed is essential to being an effective debater. By being well informed, one is able to command a greater quantity and quality of factual and value premises. But commanding these premises is not sufficient to being an effective debater. An effective debater also understands the connections between data and claims. These connections are the primary focus of the topic of reason.

### **Focus on Reasoned Debate**

While the focus of argumentation in all forms of debate ought to be on reason, anyone who has listened to political debates is aware that elements such as rant and humor are just as likely to take center stage. Even though rant and humor can be persuasive elements, debate simply cannot occur without reasoned argument.

Saying that argument is an essential feature of debate is ambiguous because argument takes so many forms. Argument can focus on evidence, reason, or both. Although all forms of argument must contain, at minimum, evidence and reason, some forms of argument focus more on one of these elements than the other. At times, an arguer will focus on evidence when patterns of reason are less necessary. At other times when evidence is uncontroversial or consists of values or evidence that the audience and arguer already share, arguers may focus more on reason and less on evidence.

## **SPEAKER STYLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Because adjudicators of public debates come from all fields (from experienced debate coaches to individuals who have never attended a debate tournament and have no formal training) speaking skills generally receive more attention in public debate than in most other forms of debate competition. Good public debaters speak at a rate of speech comprehensible to the layperson untrained in debate. Physical and vocal delivery, humor, passion and persuasiveness are important elements of public debating. A public debater should maintain eye contact with the audience (especially the judge) and develop a speaking style that is fluent and expressive.

Public debaters do not read written speeches, briefs, or evidence. Instead, public debaters speak from a few notes that record the arguments that other speakers have made in the debate and outline their own main points. Each of these points should be signposted, explained, supported by relevant facts and examples, and given impact. Because there is no preparation time between speeches, public debaters must learn to think on their feet, adding and elaborating upon arguments while speaking.

Each speaker position in public debate also involves specific responsibilities for the discussion of the topic. The following two sections will address the constructive and rebuttal speeches; cross-examination strategies are discussed independently. The constructive period of the debate consists of two speeches, one from each side. The objective in constructive speeches is to construct arguments either proposing or opposing the resolution. Speeches after the Affirmative Constructive also may contain refutation of opposing arguments (the Affirmative may attempt preemptive refutation, through argument construction designed to head-off potential objections).

The first speech, called the Affirmative Constructive, establishes the issues and direction for the debate. Following an introduction, the Affirmative defines the resolution as he or she believes it should be debated, and then presents the case for the resolution. The case for the resolution includes a series of interrelated arguments which, taken together, present compelling reasons to support the resolution.

### **The Right To Define?**

Debaters will, as much as possible, be left to their own devices. Affirmatives are allowed to define resolutions pretty much as they see fit. However, Affirmative definitions must leave the Negative fair ground for the debate. If an Affirmative's case is too lopsided and/or used to define the Affirmative position as winning, this opens the door for the Negative to provide an alternate set of definitions. But the Negative can only redefine terms if the Affirmative has abused its prerogative. If the Affirmative can demonstrate adequate ground for the Negative when challenged, then the Affirmative definitions will have presumption. Here again, the judge is the final arbiter of definitional squabbles. Accusing the Affirmative of unfair definitions when this is clearly not the case should count heavily against the Negative.

The second speech is called the Negative Constructive. During this speech, the Negative either accepts or rejects the definition of the resolution as offered by the Affirmative. If the Negative accepts the definitions (either explicitly or implicitly), the debate is set and the Negative is then bound to accept the definitions for the remainder of the debate. Having accepted or rejected the definition of terms, the speaker then begins the arguments against the resolution. These arguments can involve constructive arguments against the resolution, direct attacks on the arguments offered by the Affirmative, or a combination of the two.

### **First Speaker = Affirmative Constructive**

The opening speaker establishes the framework for the debate and establishes a logically complete case for the proposition. This involves an expository presentation in which the speaker may define any ambiguous terms of the resolution, interpret the resolution through a clear case statement, offer a history of the issue in controversy, and disclose any limitations for the discussion. After such preliminaries, the first speaker should state and support the main arguments of the case.

### ***Interpretation of the Topic***

The topic should mean the same thing to all participants in the debate. To that end, the Affirmative has the responsibility to clarify the ground for debate by defining any distinguishing, technical or ambiguous terms of the resolution. Debates in which ambiguous terms are not clearly defined in the opening speech often go

astray, lacking clash and clarity. A debate on welfare reform, for example, in which the opening speaker failed to explain what the affirmative meant by “welfare” (food stamps or farm subsidies?) and “reform” (abolish, reduce or expand?), for example, would probably be a waste of time. Clear definitions permit clear debate.

In addition to defining any unclear terms of the resolution, the first speaker should offer a concise *case statement* (or plan of action). The case statement should plainly express the affirmative’s interpretation of the resolution in one sentence, such as “federal income tax should be set at a flat rate” or “high schools should not conduct warrantless searches of student lockers.” The wording of the case statement is very important; it will frame the discussion and determine the relevance of arguments. It should be carefully transcribed by all participants in the debate. Once presented, the case statement may not be changed.

The case statement should clearly advance a controversial claim, capable of affirmation and denial, susceptible to proof and disproof. The case statement can be based on a narrow construction of the resolution or an understanding that is creative, unusual or enterprising. Any narrow construction should have a link to the resolution or serve as an appropriate analogy for the resolution. In support of the resolution, “The government should expand N.A.F.T.A.,” for example, the affirmative might define “This government” as the government of Chile and “expand N.A.F.T.A.” as the adoption of internal economic reforms likely to secure Chile’s admission in the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Here is an example of how the Affirmative might provide definitions and case statement for the resolution, “The U.S. should further restrict free speech”:

I support the resolution, “The U.S. should further restrict free speech.” By “free speech.” I mean currently legal expressions that vilify groups of involuntary association (that is, race, gender, and ethnicity). I believe that public high schools in the United States should adopt hate speech codes prohibiting speech that vilifies groups or individuals on the basis of their race, gender or ethnicity.

The affirmative must, at the beginning of the debate, define the resolution and provide a clear and debatable statement of their position.

### ***Providing Negative Ground***

The duty of the Affirmative is to provide the basis for a good debate. The first speaker must accordingly present a case that is highly debatable.

*The Affirmative must provide a case against which there are strong and principled arguments.* Some interpretations of a resolution do not provide for effective debate. The affirmative’s interpretation must not constitute a *truism*, a claim (e.g., “Murder is reprehensible”) that no reasonable person would oppose. In public debate, the Negative may argue that a given case is not sufficiently debatable. The Affirmative is then expected to demonstrate that strong Negative arguments do exist.

### ***Burden of Proof***

In most debates, the Affirmative Constructive supports the topic by advocating something new, challenging established ideas, or attempting to settle an issue in public controversy. It is the obligation of the person who affirms the resolution to prove the case. In a criminal court case, the defense may file a resolution for dismissal if the prosecutor has failed to provide a well-substantiated case for conviction. Similarly, the Affirmative’s first speech has the burden of establishing a case for the resolution. As Raymond Alden explained in his 1900 treatise on *The Art of Debate*, there is an “obligation resting upon one or other parties to a controversy to establish by proofs a given proposition, before being entitled to receive an answer from the other side.” This responsibility rests, he concluded, “upon the side that would be assumed to be defeated if no progress at all were made in the consideration of the case.” The affirmative’s burden of proof is met through the presentation and support of its major arguments, or case.

### ***The Case***

The Affirmative should establish interest in the resolution and case through an introduction. The introduction should demonstrate the timeliness of the case, perhaps by recounting a recent story or contemporary context for the controversy. A case for the abolition of capital punishment might be introduced by recounting the story of a recent or pending execution, for example. The introduction should persuade the



judge and audience that the issue is of importance and interest to them.

After providing necessary definitions and a clear case statement, the first Affirmative speaker should outline from two to four major points in support of the case statement. Each of these points should be signposted as clearly and concisely as possible. Each point should be fully explained and supported by examples, complete in itself and distinct from the other main issues. In support of the resolution, “Resolved: that good things come to those who wait,” for example, the affirmative might argue that the “good thing” is the burial, after eight decades of waiting, of the body of Vladimir Lenin. Lenin’s preserved corpse has been on public display in Moscow since his death in 1924. In order to make this case debatable, the first speaker would be expected to provide sufficient background information.

To support the case statement that Russia should bury Lenin, the affirmative might offer three main points. By burying Lenin, Russia will:

- I. Bury an obsolete symbol of the communist past;
- II. Save the enormous expense of storing the body; and
- III. Fulfill Lenin’s own wishes for the disposal of his remains.

Each of these points would be supported with reasoning, facts, stories and illustrations. The first Affirmative speaker should also explain why each of these arguments is significant; why, for example, it is important that one should have control over the disposition of one’s own body after death.

In support of the resolution, “The U.S. Federal Government should abolish capital punishment,” the affirmative might offer the following major points:

- I. The death penalty fails to deter crime;
- II. Innocent people are executed; and
- III. Capital punishment is discriminatory by race and class.

The Affirmative Constructive should offer a complete and compelling case for the resolution. The opening speech should be concluded by a restatement or summary of the main points of the case.

### **Second Speaker = Negative Constructive**

The duty of the Negative is to provide clash, promoting a choice between the proposal advanced by the Affirmative and some other course of action or position. The Negative should make clear why the resolution should be rejected.

The job of the Negative in extemporaneous debate is very challenging. When a linkable resolution is used, the Negative will often have no idea of what the Affirmative case will be until the first speech begins. But the Negative’s job is made easier by the requirement that the Affirmative advance a case that provides strong and principled ground for the Negative. If the Affirmative has met its burden, the Negative should be able to discover good arguments on first hearing the case. Furthermore, general principles of argument can be developed during the preparation time.

The Negative Constructive may choose to contest the definitions or case statement that the affirmative has established for the debate. If these are not disputed in the first Negative speech, they are presumed to be tacitly accepted for the remainder of the debate. Definitions should only be disputed when the fairness and debatability of the proposition are at stake. Debates that center on definitional disputes are almost always less enjoyable than those that center on the issues of the case.

The Negative Constructive attempts to weaken or nullify the case for the proposition, usually by refuting the main points of the case. This is called *direct refutation*. The Negative analyzes the Affirmative’s arguments, pointing out logical fallacies, factual inaccuracies or inconsistencies in the main lines of proof. The Negative speaker should also identify any of the common errors of case construction that the Affirmative has

committed, including ignored exceptions to case examples, the improper combination of arguments, and overdrawn conclusions.

The Negative is not obliged to dispute or disagree with every argument, or even every main point, of the Affirmative's case. In fact, many debaters miss important opportunities for winning arguments because they feel compelled to negate each of the ideas their opponent introduces. It may be to the advantage of the Negative to agree with or concede one or more elements of the Affirmative's case. A Negative speaker may choose to agree with an argument in order to simplify or focus the discussion on more salient issues, to reveal a contradiction or inconsistency, or to use an argument from the Affirmative side to support the Negative's position. A speaker should, however, address the vital issues of the other side, whether by strategically agreeing with them or contesting them.

Although the Negative often defends existing policies against the Affirmative's proposal for change, the Negative speaker may choose to present a *countercase*, defending a new course of action mutually exclusive with that presented by the Affirmative. The countercase is often designed to address a problem area identified in the case. For example, on the topic, "Resolved: We should support pacifism," the Affirmative might support a position of complete military nonintervention. Rather than defending current patterns of military intervention, the Negative might instead defend a position of limited or conditional intervention -- supporting intervention only against overt acts of territorial aggression or only in cooperation with multilateral organizations, for example. The countercase is not a defense of current national security policy, nor is it compatible with the Affirmative's complete prohibition of military intervention. The Affirmative's case maintains a universal principle of nonintervention, while the Negative case allows selected use of military intervention. The countercase is designed to resolve many of the examples of bad military intervention cited in the Affirmative case and to provide the Negative's own worthy exceptions to the resolution.

### **Rebuttals**

Following the constructive speeches are three rebuttals. These speeches are intended to give each side the opportunity to compare and contrast the major arguments of each side with an emphasis on showing why their own arguments are the best. The point of these speeches is to wrap up the debate according to the arguments that have already been offered.

One seeming anomaly in the debate concerns the order of rebuttal speeches. Whereas the Affirmative gave the first constructive speech, they also get the last rebuttal. Thereby, the Affirmative will begin and end the debate. The reason for this is that the Affirmative has the burden of proof (absent a compelling argument from the affirmative that overcomes presumption, the judge should vote for the negative), and thereby must introduce the issue for debate, and is given the final opportunity to encourage a change.

The first Affirmative rebuttal is sometimes referred to as the "second affirmative constructive," because it is not the final say that the affirmative has in the round. To that extent, the speech is somewhat of a quasi-rebuttal speech: The affirmative can introduce new arguments to refute those articulated in the Negative Constructive, however a primary focus should be the rebuilding of the Affirmative case.

The Negative rebuttal speech should offer an effective summation of the main issues of the debate, demonstrating how important points for the Negative undermine support for the resolution. The Negative rebuttalist should carry through important issues from the constructive speeches, illustrating the significant dimension of each issue in qualitative or quantitative terms. The Negative should generally avoid "putting all its eggs in one basket" by offering several independent reasons to reject the resolution. In almost every case, the Negative should consider this rebuttal an opportunity to summarize, in as persuasive a manner as possible, the strongest arguments raised by the Negative against the resolution. This speech should be organized around those arguments that give the Negative the greatest chance to convince the audience to oppose the resolution. The Negative should prioritize the decision-making criterion for the round and thereby clearly articulate "the \_\_\_ clear reasons why you're voting for UL-Monroe."

The final speech in the debate is the Second Affirmative Rebuttal. Most good debates should, at this time, be leaning toward the Negative. A good rebuttal is needed to turn the debate back toward the Affirmative's position. This speech should summarize the entire debate from the perspective of the Affirmative, focusing the discussion on a group of powerfully unified ideas. The second Affirmative Rebuttal should extend the important arguments from the constructive and first Affirmative Rebuttal, offer multiple, independent proofs of the resolution, and contrast the main arguments of the Negative with those in favor of the resolution.

The Second Affirmative Rebuttal should accomplish at least two things. First, it should refute the strongest arguments offered by the Negative. Selectivity is important. In general, judges and audiences will not expect the Affirmative to refute every word uttered by the Negative speaker, but they will expect the most convincing Negative arguments to be dealt with in a substantial manner. Second, the Affirmative should summarize the arguments that are the strongest for the Affirmative. Judges and audiences will not expect the Affirmative to win every argument in the debate, but they should expect the Affirmative to win arguments sufficient to prove the proposition. Showing how this goal has been accomplished ought to be a primary goal of the Second Affirmative Rebuttal. Finally, the Second Affirmative Rebuttal is crystallized through articulation of “the \_\_\_ clear reasons why you’re voting for UL-Monroe.”

Most good debates are won or lost in the rebuttals. The rebuttals are the summary speeches for each side of the debate, the last opportunity each side will have to explain why they should win. Rebuttals are a final opportunity to contrast the major positions and philosophies of the Affirmative and Negative. Skilled rebuttalists in public debate do not attempt to cover every minute issue that has been discussed in the debate, but rather to deal in depth with those issues that will have a substantial bearing on the decision to uphold or defeat the resolution. The shorter time of rebuttal speeches necessitates selectivity. Rebuttalists should paint the “big picture” of the round, sorting out the decisive issues from those that are less important.

## CROSS EXAMINATION IN PUBLIC DEBATE

The description offered thus far would indicate that public debate is a series of dueling monologues with very little interaction. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Public debate is an extremely active and interactive enterprise. In public debate, each debater has the opportunity to cross-examine their opponent, immediately following their opponent's constructive speech. This cross examination is a dynamic and enjoyable part of public debate. Cross examination is an important to public debate because they show debaters' skills at quickly responding to arguments. Debates literally can be won or lost on these exchanges.

When engaging in cross examination, the first thing to remember is that the focus of the debate is earning the support of the judge, and, to that extent, your visual focus should be toward the judge throughout. While your natural tendency may be to look at the person you are questioning (or is questioning you), however, from the perspective of the judge you are visually disengaging when you turn away. In other words, think of it as if you were watching a debate on television, when the speaker is looking into the camera – they're speaking to you. We should do the same throughout the debate – ALWAYS LOOK AT THE JUDGE(S), NOT YOUR OPPONENT.

There are some other tips that are important to consider for cross-examination. A debate round is inherently adversarial, and therefore you and your opponent should have differing opinions. It's a relatively simple concept, however, many novice debaters get frustrated at their opponent's disagreement. Learn to expect this disagreement, and even thrive upon it (after all, if your opponent's first response is to counter everything you say, rather than evaluate and answer, then they're acting through reflex rather than engaging in a well thought-out debate – and your job will be much easier). The primary concern here is that you remain calm and confident at all time (even if you're uncertain of your position, the appearance of confidence can go a long way). To that extent there are a few recommendations. When asking questions: (1) maintain a pleasant tone (this can relax the opponent and lead to a false sense of security), (2) don't answer questions without having yours answered (if your opponent needs clarification, after offering that clarification finish your statement with a restatement of your question), (3) used closed ended questions (yes or no) to trap your opponent + use open-ended questions to bleed (after you trap, ask "why/how is that?"; note – you should only ask an open-ended question when you are sure of how your opponent will answer, or you're sure your opponent will not know how to answer), (4) pursue contradictions (asking "which is more important"). In general, when asking questions, don't act like a TV lawyer trying to get your opponent to completely flip sides; while this may work on *Law and Order* or *The Practice*, in real life people typically are not that gullible. Use your cross-examination time instead to establish a foundation for the arguments you will make during your next speech. Similarly, when you are the one being cross examined there are some basic tips to remember: (1) remember the three "c's": be calm, confident and quick in your responses (these illustrate your confidence), (2) don't show your hand (don't give away the case and allow them to answer your arguments before you get the chance to fully develop them – stick with what has already been said), (3) take away their cross-examination time if you can (you can finish their statement, ex: "I know where you're going with this...." and then answer the question that you are essentially asking yourself; another way of stealing cross-examination time is through asking your opponent questions during their cross-examination of you – NOTE, use this in moderation + remain cordial – if they call you on it, back off, you don't want to appear like you're hiding something), (4) if they're asking a leading question, you can always attempt to psyche-out the opponent by agreeing with them ("I couldn't agree more..." and then adapt your next speech to make it seem as if your opponent agrees with your advocacy – of course, be careful not to do this if it undermines your advocacy), (5) point out flawed questions (for example, if they're trying to put you into a false dilemma you can answer "this isn't as simple as a yes or no, because...."), (6) finally, if you make a mistake, correct it ("I misspoke, what I meant to say was...."). Some additional tips for responding to difficult questions are included in the figure below:

### Ways of Responding to Difficult Questions

<i>Type</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Major Options</i>
1. Hostile	“How can you advocate increasing tobacco taxes. I saw you smoking earlier. You’re just a hypocrite.”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Point out hostility.</li> <li>2. Show cool, non-defensive disagreement, taking exception to the terms chosen.</li> <li>3. Project righteous indignation, short of losing composure.</li> </ol>
2. Speculative	“What do you expect union membership to be in this state in four years?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Label question as speculative.</li> <li>2. Generally, don’t predict with any attempt to be precise; stick with optimistic generalities (if, of course, they apply).</li> </ol>
3. Hypothetical	“If interest rates drop to 3 or 4 percent within the next year, would you still propose raising the state sales tax?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Point out hypothetical nature of question.</li> <li>2. Refuse to answer because of phrasing.</li> <li>3. Answer directly.</li> </ol>
4. Overspecific	“What has been the percentage of growth of the Department of Transportation budget since 1998?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Label question as overspecific.</li> <li>2. If you don’t know, say so. (Sometimes you may need to explain in a nondefensive manner why you don’t know).</li> </ol>
5. Leading	<p>“Why can’t this state attract more industry with one of the best labor forces in the nation?”</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">This question carries three assumptions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The state is not already attracting new industry as it should.</li> <li>2. The state has one of the best labor forces in the nation.</li> <li>3. The labor force should attract more industry.</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If you agree or disagree with any of these assumptions, let it be known.</li> </ol>
6. Value	“Which is a better choice for energy conservation, carpools or public transportation?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Apply your definition of “better” without drawing attention to this term.</li> <li>2. Point out the value term, define it and then answer the question.</li> <li>3. Ask questioner to define it and then respond.</li> </ol>
7. Tautology (arguing in a circle)	“Isn’t the main reason why we have so little available energy because there are significant shortages of the types of energy we normally rely on?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Point out politely that the question in essence argues in a circle—it answers itself without probing further.</li> </ol>

**Ways of Responding to Difficult Questions (continued)**

<i>Type</i>	<i>Example</i>	<i>Major Options</i>
8. Multifaceted	“How many workers are unemployed in this state? How has this level changed over the past four years? How does this state’s unemployment compare with that of neighboring states? What do you plan to do about the unemployment problem?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If each facet can be remembered and answering all won’t cause harm (assuming there is ample time), then answer fully.</li> <li>2. If harm can be caused by answering a remembered facet. It is probably best to “forget” it.</li> <li>3. Don’t hesitate to ask for a facet to be repeated if you are reasonably certain you forgot a “safe” one.</li> <li>4. You may want to refer humorously to the number of questions asked.</li> <li>5. If the questions cannot be realistically answered within the time allotted, say so, e.g. “perhaps it takes only a minute to ask all those questions, but it will take a lot more than that to answer them.”</li> </ol>
9. Vague, Unfocussed	“How can your plan help us?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Define the question the way you wish—consistent with your persuasive goals.</li> <li>2. Ask the questioner to clarify his focus.</li> </ol>
10. “Yes/No”	“Would your plan be supported by the federal government? Yes or no?”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If “yes” or “no” is safe by itself, answer accordingly.</li> <li>2. If risky, point out how the forced alternatives can interfere with a presentation of “the full truth.” Then answer the question.</li> </ol>
11. Non-question	“Unemployment is climbing; inflation is still spiraling; we are in a depression and ought to admit it.”	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask for a question, noting the non-question.</li> <li>2. Respond to the non-question in whole or in part.</li> </ol>

## **CONSTRUCTING THE CASE - AFFIRMATIVE (“FOR”)**

Resolutions in public debate can roughly be divided into two categories: literal resolutions where the debate is about the precise substance of the resolution and metaphorical resolutions where the resolution is a metaphor for a substantive issue. Debaters need to be able to construct a case for both types of resolutions. Constructing a case involves both defining the resolution and creating the arguments that support it.

### ***Defining the Resolution***

Defining the resolution means something different for literal resolutions than for metaphorical ones. In the case of literal resolutions, defining the resolution involves more and less than defining the terms of the resolution. A debater need not define every term in a literal resolution in order to explain its meaning; the debater need only define the most important and abstract terms. The terms that need defining vary with the clarity of the resolution. When debating the topic, “Resolved: that a progressive tax would be desirable,” the Affirmative might choose not to define terms at all or only to define “progressive tax.” Other topics may contain terms which may be less clear and need to be defined. In all cases, the terms of the resolution should become clear in the presentation of the Affirmative Constructive.

Defining the individual terms of a literal resolution may not be sufficient to defining the resolution in its entirety. Defining “progressive tax” as one in which the tax rate increases as a person’s income increases may not be sufficient to define the resolution mentioned above. One way of further defining a literal resolution is to present a more specific proposal. The Affirmative might, for instance, complete the definition of the resolution by presenting a proposal which calls for zero tax on incomes below ten thousand dollars, five percent on incomes over twenty thousand dollars, and seventy percent on income over one hundred thousand dollars.

Depending on the nature of a literal resolution, one might define it by example. Take, for instance, the resolution “Resolved: that professional athletes are inappropriate role models for America’s youth.” The Affirmative might choose to define this resolution to say that professional boxers send improper messages to young people. By so doing, the Affirmative is focusing the debate on one class of professional athletes. Of course, the Negative may object to the limitation of “professional athletes” to “professional boxers.” Nevertheless, the Affirmative has the right and responsibility initially to define and clarify the resolution. Defining by example is one of several ways they may initiate this responsibility.

Defining a resolution phrased in metaphorical language differs from defining a literal resolution. Whereas with the literal resolutions, the terms usually are defined either by standard definitions or by example, a metaphorical resolution is generally defined by analogy. To define a metaphorical resolution, the Affirmative will ordinarily choose to link the resolution to a more specific issue. In so doing, the Affirmative is creating an analogy which says the idea expressed in the resolution is analogous to this specific issue. For instance, the resolution “Resolved: that Congress should be as quiet as a mouse” might be linked to issues such as the being silent about the private sex lives of political officials or the need for Congress to maintain silence about its disagreement with the President’s foreign policy actions.

Defining a metaphorical resolution by linking it to a more concrete issue does not relieve the Affirmative of the burden of defending the resolution. The question becomes, having defended the concrete issue, has the Affirmative also defended the resolution? In other words, by proving that Congress should be silent about disagreement with the President’s foreign policy, has the Affirmative proven that “Congress should be as quiet as a mouse?” The surest way to meet this criterion is to create a clear link between being “as quiet as a mouse” and being silent about our disagreements over foreign policy. The link should show that the key element or issue in the metaphor is transferred to the concrete issue. In the metaphor about the quiet mouse, the key element might be said to be a mouse being quiet to protect itself from a cat. The question becomes whether or not that key element is also present in the issues that the Affirmative wants to debate (maintaining silence about the private sex lives of political officials; secrecy in foreign policy, etc.).

Defining the resolution is a necessary but insufficient part of building a case for the proposition. Debaters must also construct arguments that support the resolution.

### ***Constructing Arguments for the Proposition***

Constructing arguments for the proposition is a process that varies depending on the type of proposition being debated. We have already discussed the division of propositions into the categories of literal and metaphorical. Within each of those divisions, one can say propositions are either of fact, value, or policy. A few words about each of these kinds of propositions necessarily precede a discussion of argument construction.

*Propositions of fact* are of two types: those that assert a factual claim and those that assert a statement of relationship. Propositions asserting a factual truth might include resolutions about history or science such as “Resolved: that Lee Harvey Oswald was the sole assassin of President Kennedy” or “Be it resolved that intelligent life exists on places other than the Earth.” A second kind of proposition of fact asserts a relationship based on causality or similarity between two objects. For instance, the resolution “Resolved: that capital punishment deters murder” asserts a causal relationship between capital punishment and the rate of murder. The resolution “Resolved that : George W. Bush is beginning to look a lot like Reagan” asserts a relationship of similarity between George W. Bush and Ronald Reagan.

*Propositions of value*, like propositions of fact, can be divided into two categories: those that assert the connection between an object and a value and those that assert a comparison between two objects with respect to some value. Resolutions that assert a connection between an object and a value include statements like “Be it resolved that affirmative action is praiseworthy” or “Resolved that George W. Bush is an effective President.” These two resolutions claim that an object is valuable but do not claim that the object is more or less valuable than another object. The second category of value propositions does just that--compares two objects with respect to some value. Building on the earlier examples, resolutions of this category might include “Be it resolved that affirmative action is superior to the unfettered right to hire” or “Resolved: that George W. Bush is a more effective President than Bill Clinton.” These latter examples go beyond the simple evaluation of an object to an evaluative comparison between two objects.

*Propositions of policy*, unlike propositions of value, make an explicit call for action. For instance, “The U.S. Federal Government should support capital punishment for all persons convicted of first-degree murder” evaluates capital punishment and suggests an action based on that evaluation. Similarly, the resolution “Be it resolved that Kathleen Blanco should be impeached” evaluates Blanco’s gubernatorial actions and calls for a policy-driven response.

*Metaphor Resolutions*, are resolutions that use vague or figurative language. For example: Resolved: that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. This type of resolution allows the affirmative to do anything you want on the affirmative so long as you can explain how the affirmative case fits the idea behind the affirmative. For example, you could argue that preventive medicine should be promoted more. Explanation: Preventive medicine is like “an apple a day” that prevents a need for curative medical care from doctors. The negative generally has to argue against whatever case the affirmative presents (unless it is an unreasonable interpretation of the metaphor). For example, you could argue that preventive medicine should be promoted more. Explanation: Preventive medicine is like “an apple a day” that prevents a need for curative medical care from doctors.

The types of propositions are summarized in the following table:

<b>Types of Propositions</b>	
Propositions of Fact:	Propositions which assert a factual claim.
	Propositions which assert a relationship between two objects or concepts.
Proposition of Value:	Propositions which evaluate a single object.
	Propositions which compare two objects with respect to some value.
Proposition of Policy:	Propositions which suggest some action based on an evaluation.
Metaphor Resolution:	Resolutions which use vague or figurative language.

In public debate, the kind of proposition should, in part, guide the method of constructing a case. In audience-centered debate, the debater should consider the logical and persuasive requirements dictated by the type of proposition. Rather than focusing on certain prescribed organizational patterns (value and criteria,



comparative advantage, need and plan, etc.), public debaters should begin with the concepts necessary for presentation of a logical case and organize the case in a manner appropriate for the audience and the situation.

The concepts necessary for construction of a logical case vary according to the kinds of propositions being debated. However, all of the kinds of propositions discussed here can be argued by using three types of arguments in relation to one another. The three kinds of arguments are based on three conceptual elements: description, relationship, and evaluation.

The types of arguments needed to prove different kinds of propositions are summarized in Table Three. Analysis of sample propositions of fact, value, and policy will illustrate how these three conceptual elements can be used in presentation of a case for the proposition.

<b>Arguments Required to Prove Different Kinds of Propositions</b>		
Propositions of Fact	Propositions which assert a factual claim	Requires descriptive argument
	Propositions which assert a relationship between two objects or concepts	Requires descriptive and relational arguments
Propositions of Value	Propositions which evaluate a single object	Requires descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments
	Propositions which compare two objects with respect to some value	Requires descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments
Propositions of Policy	Propositions which suggest some action based on an evaluation	Requires descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments

### ***Constructing a Case for a Proposition of Fact***

Propositions of fact are of two kinds: those that assert a factual claim and those that assert a relationship. The former requires only a descriptive argument while the latter requires both descriptive and relational arguments. An example of a proposition which asserts a factual claim is “Resolved that Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated President John F. Kennedy.” The kinds of arguments needed to prove this proposition are descriptive: Oswald was known to have purchased a 6mm Italian rifle; the bullet that killed Kennedy was fired from that rifle; Oswald was seen carrying a package the size of the rifle into the Texas School Book Depository on the morning of the assassination; the trajectory of the bullet that killed Kennedy points directly to Oswald’s nest on the sixth floor of the depository. Descriptive arguments frequently are sufficient to prove a proposition of historical or scientific fact.

A proposition of fact that asserts a relationship, however, requires a relational as well as a descriptive argument. When constructing a case for this kind of resolution, a debater ordinarily describes some object or concept and then relates that object or concept to another. The relationship is usually one of causation or of similarity. Take for example, the resolution “Resolved: that capital punishment deters murder.” This resolution implies a causal relationship between capital punishment and murder. To construct a case for such a resolution, a debater might begin by describing some feature of capital punishment: for instance, that it is a very severe punishment. Then the debater would relate that feature (the severity of punishment) to the other concept (murder). The relational argument might be something like the more severe the punishment, the more likely a criminal will reconsider committing the act of murder. Thus, the case for the resolution is constructed by building two arguments: a descriptive one (capital punishment is a very severe punishment) and a relational one (severe punishments decrease the likelihood of murder).

A different example of a proposition that asserts a relationship between two objects or concepts is “Resolved: that George W. Bush is beginning to look a lot like Reagan.” Like the capital punishment resolution, this proposition asserts a relationship between two objects (Bush and Reagan). Unlike the other resolution, the asserted relationship in this proposition is one of similarity rather than one of cause. Still, a debater needs to make only two kinds of arguments: descriptive and relational. The case might begin by describing a feature of Bush (his push for defeating monolithic international regimes) and then relating that feature to Reagan by showing similarity in the foreign policies of the two persons. In all of these examples, a debater need go no

further than descriptive and relational arguments to construct a case for a proposition of fact. Other kinds of propositions require additional kinds of arguments.

### ***Constructing a Case for Proposition of Value***

When called upon to construct a case for a value proposition, debaters need to employ a new kind of argument--an evaluative argument. The case for a proposition of value still uses the descriptive and relational arguments; it simply adds an argument of evaluation. In some of the previous examples, a case was built by describing an object and relating that object to some effect. Constructing a case for a proposition of value requires doing just that plus evaluating the effect. So, when building such a case, debaters need to describe a feature of an object or concept, relate that feature to an effect, and then evaluate the effect.

For example, consider a resolution designed to evaluate an object or concept: "Resolved: that affirmative action is negative." This resolution requires the Affirmative to describe a feature of affirmative action, link that feature to some effect, and evaluate that effect as "negative." When building a case for this resolution, the Affirmative should include a clear description of the key element or elements to be evaluated by the resolution, in this case, affirmative action. Describing in this example--and in many others--goes beyond defining. While one might define affirmative action as policies designed to create diversity the workplace, this definition does not describe those policies. In order to adequately describe those policies, the Affirmative needs to portray the major characteristic of affirmative action policies. The Affirmative might say, for instance, that affirmative action is characterized by a demand for quotas in the hiring process. Having described this essential feature of affirmative action, the Affirmative then needs to relate this feature to something "negative." They might choose to say, for instance, that quotas cause employers to pass over more qualified workers for less qualified minorities thus reducing the quality of the work force. Or they might choose to demonstrate that quotas lead to the perception of tokenism among minority workers and others. In this way, the Affirmative is relating the essential feature of quotas to the evaluative term in the resolution-- "negative."

The only thing remaining is the evaluative argument. Since they have linked quotas to a reduced quality of the workforce and to tokenism, the Affirmative then needs to evaluate those effects. They need to show how these effects are truly negative. They might argue that a quality workforce is essential to the production of quality goods and services and that tokenism is destructive to relationships among workers as well as to the self-confidence of minority workers.

Thus, the case for a proposition of value is made by describing, relating, and evaluating. The case has described an essential feature of affirmative action, related that feature to an effect, and has evaluated that effect as negative.

#### **EXAMPLE CASE OUTLINE FOR THE RESOLUTION:**

**Resolved:** The law should be blind.

##### I. EVALUATION OBSERVATION

###### A. Definitions

1. The law is the affirmative action laws
2. "blind" means to treat everyone equally regardless of their ethnicity, gender, or any other characteristic not relevant to the performance of a job

B. Value: Racial harmony is critical. Racial harmony is needed so that people get along; so that there are not riots; so that people are treated fairly and equally.

C. Burdens: The affirmative must show affirmative action harms racial harmony; The negative must show affirmative action helps racial harmony.

##### CONTENTION I: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION HARMS RACIAL HARMONY

- A. Affirmative action causes conflict
- B. White males feel attacked
- C. Minorities are stigmatized by affirmative action
- D. The law no longer is considered a fair mechanism to resolve disputes because people perceive it to be biased toward one group
- E. Affirmative action treats individuals as groups and then pits these groups against each other
- F. Affirmative action creates false hopes
- G. Affirmative action undermines efforts within minority communities to build up minority businesses and empowerment

#### TWO TIPS WITH AFFIRMATIVE VALUE/FACT CASES

1. A broad general topic may be confusing and lead to an example debate (we have three examples versus their two of this situation)
2. Try to be specific -this narrows the ground you have to defend while providing your judge with a concrete event/action/idea to examine.

Example: Resolved: that the law should be blind.

Define law = the right to assisted suicide

blind = unable to see, not look at by the Federal Gov't.

Therefore, the right to assisted suicide should not be addressed by the Federal Gov't.

#### ***Constructing a Case for a Proposition of Policy***

In reality, a proposition of policy is simply a proposition of value that makes an explicit call for action. Take, for example, the policy proposition "The United States should end the embargo of Cuba." As with the earlier value proposition, this resolution requires that debaters construct descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments. However, in practice, many debaters mistake propositions of fact & value as propositions of policy, and thereby, this has become the most popular form for rounds in recent years.

The debaters might begin by describing the Cuban embargo. Specifically, they might note that the embargo was created in the 1960s in an attempt to bring down the Castro regime. The embargo prohibits any U.S. company from exporting products to Cuba and it prohibits import of any Cuban products to the U.S. After describing the key elements of the resolution the Affirmative is in a stronger position to prove a proposition which ultimately involves the evaluation of those elements. The next logical aspect of constructing a case for the Affirmative is to demonstrate a relationship between the described elements and some other condition.

In this example, the Affirmative might relate these features to effects of the embargo the policy has had. The Affirmative might note that the embargo not only has failed to bring down Castro; they might say that in fact, Castro has become a much stronger and a much more popular leader over the years. The restrictions on exports, the Affirmative might argue, have reduced the prosperity of Cuban businesses by not allowing them to compete in a successful market. The Affirmative might also relate the import restrictions to a reduced availability of goods to the Cuban people. These arguments are designed to demonstrate a relationship between the embargo and Cuba's economic health both in terms of business prosperity and goods available to Cuba's people. The implication is that lifting the embargo would improve Cuba's economic health both in terms

of its businesses and its citizens. Again, these arguments are designed to create a relationship between a key element in the resolution (Cuban embargo) and another condition (Cuba's economic health).

Having described the key element in the resolution and related that element to another condition, the final logical requirement is to evaluate the condition. In this case, the condition to be evaluated is the economic health of Cuba. The Affirmative might do this by showing that the current state of the economy in Cuba creates an unusually high incidence of poverty and that improving the Cuban economy would help the Cuban poor.

In summary, to construct a case for the proposition, one needs to carefully define the resolution and construct arguments for it. Constructing arguments that logically and persuasively support the resolution requires that debaters are able to identify the kind of proposition (fact, value, policy) and are able to construct the kinds of descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments required by the resolution.

Policy - proposing a plan of action

If you have a policy resolution or if you interpret a value/fact resolution as a policy resolution, then you advocate a plan of action to solve a problem. To construct your case for this, you do the following:

For the following discussion, the examples are from the Resolution: The US should revoke the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement.

1. Show there are problems in the Status Quo (keep in mind that your proposal must solve any problem you present)

Be sure to show that the problems are widespread/many people confront it and that these problems are harmful (e.g cause deaths, injuries, discrimination, damage the environment, increase poverty, etc.)

Example: Free Trade is killing jobs, lowering wages, increasing poverty and causing abusive working conditions.

2. Show the current policy is not solving

Be sure to attack parts of the current policy that your plan will change.

Example: NAFTA is failing to protect jobs and working conditions.

3. State your specific plan to solve the problem.

Avoid vague statements like "this house would regulate cloning" What does regulate mean? Be specific like, "the US Affirmative will ban cloning."

Example: The United States will negotiate with Canada and Mexico to revoke NAFTA and replace it with one that regulates job transfers, wages, and working conditions.

4. Present Solvency (how you plan will solve) & Advantages (benefits from enacting your policy).

Be sure to explain how you solve each of the problems/harms you cited in the first part of your case.

Example: US shift on NAFTA will gain the support of Canada and Mexico and it will improve employment, wages, and abusive working conditions thus lowering poverty.

### ***Constructing the Case to Oppose the Resolution***

Just as the primary task of the Affirmative is to construct a case to support the resolution, the primary job of the Negative is to refute or disprove that case. Refutation of the Affirmative case, construction of a Negative case, or a combination of the two, are the basic strategies available to the Negative. As with case construction, refutation is not to be learned as a step-by-step process. Instead, debaters should begin by

mastering a series of concepts with which they learn a variety of means to attack different cases. In this section, discussion centers on refutation as well as designs for building a case for the negative.

You are negative and you've just been given your topic. The affirmative is already furiously working on their case. What are you going to?

1. Start brainstorming

What cases and arguments could the affirmative present?

2. Start listing out arguments

Take each of the main cases and arguments and write out lists of arguments. Your lists should include both responses to arguments you expect the affirmative to make in their case AND arguments that will develop your position against the affirmative.

If you expect the affirmative to develop a policy case, think about the following:

1. Do you want to support the current policy or a counterplan?
2. List out arguments showing the problems aren't that significant; that the current system is working to resolve the problems; that the suggested policy will not solve the problem
3. Prepare disadvantages against the affirmative proposals you expect. Be sure to explain how the disadvantage applies to the affirmative plan and the impact to this disadvantage (how it will hurt people and outweigh the affirmative advantage). Make sure you have disadvantages that apply only to the plan and not to the counterplan/current policy.
4. Think about any other arguments that will work: link/topicality arguments showing that affirmative proposals don't support the resolution.
5. If you have stock issues judges, be ready to argue that the affirmative burden is to prove each stock issue (significance--showing a problem; inherency--showing the current policy cannot solve the problem; solvency--showing the plan will solve the problem; disadvantages--showing that the plan will cause harmful consequences; and topicality/link--showing that their case supports the resolution).

If you expect the affirmative to develop a value/fact case, think about the following:

1. List out your value and counter-criteria/burdens for the debate. Strong suggestion: pick a value that the affirmative case is unlikely to meet.
2. List out arguments you will make showing your side of the resolution meets your value/counter-criteria/burdens.
3. List out responses you expect to need to make against the affirmative case contentions.
4. List out additional arguments against the affirmative position showing why it is bad.

### ***Direct Refutation***

The direct refutation of a case involves rejection of the arguments that were used to build it. To do this, the Negative shows how the descriptive, relational, and evaluative dimensions of the Affirmative's case are logically or substantively flawed.

*Descriptive arguments* can be refuted by showing that the Affirmative's description of a feature is flawed or by showing that the Affirmative has failed to describe other essential features of the object or

concept. Recall in the example of the affirmative action topic, the Affirmative described the essential feature of affirmative action as a demand for hiring quotas. The Negative might object that quotas are required only in cases where a company has been shown to discriminate in the past. They might also argue that not only has the Affirmative inaccurately portrayed affirmative action as demanding quotas, but the Affirmative also failed to mention other essential features, such as requiring that jobs be advertised in places that reach minority audiences and requiring that minorities be adequately represented in hiring pools. By attacking the Affirmative's description of these policies, the Negative has placed there self in a better place to relate these policies to effects that will support the Negative's side of the resolution.

*Relational arguments* are particularly subject to logical attack. One example of a logical attack involves a debater charging that a relational argument is based on inadequate causal reasoning. As I have already said, creating a relationship between a condition and an effect is frequently necessary in constructing a logically valid case for the resolution. To refute that case, a Negative debater might clearly define and challenge the relationship by applying a concept called the absence test. The absence test probes the validity of a causal relationship by asking the question: "Absent the supposed cause, does the effect remain?" If the effect does not remain, we have reason to suspect that the supposed cause was not the real cause.

Using the Cuban embargo resolution as an example, suppose the Affirmative argued that the embargo has increased poverty in Cuba. The Negative might ask, "Absent the embargo, would Cuban poverty disappear?" Poverty existed in Cuba long before the embargo. Cuba, like most other nations in that geographic area, was a poor nation long before President Kennedy decided to halt trade with Cuba. Even today, other nations in Latin America are as poor as Cuba. So, the Affirmative's relating the embargo to poverty is suspect. By challenging the cause and effect relationship based on the absence test, the Negative is using a simple tool of logic to refute an important part of a case. In addition to challenging the Affirmative's relational argument, the Negative might present relational arguments of their own.

*Evaluative arguments* can be debated by showing that the values the Affirmative has linked to the features of the policy are not as important as portrayed by the Affirmative or by showing that these values are not values at all. Take, for example, an Affirmative defending the resolution "Resolved: that affirmative action is praiseworthy." The Affirmative's defense of this resolution might include the arguments that affirmative action leads to diversity and that diversity is valuable, for example, in educational institutions. The Negative might respond that diversity is not a universal value for education by pointing to the value of all women's colleges, of traditionally African-American colleges, and to other examples of valuable college experiences which violated the standard call of diversity.

Thus, refutation of the Affirmative's case can involve attacks on their descriptive, relation or evaluative arguments, or a combination of all three. Refutation is, of course, only one option. Another involves building a case for the negative.

## CONSTRUCTING THE CASE – NEGATIVE (“AGAINST”)

Building a case against the resolution is one of many choices open to the Negative. It is not a necessary choice although frequently it is a good one, especially when combined with an effective refutation of the Affirmative's position.

Building an opposing case begins with conceptualizing the argumentative ground available to the Negative. As the statement of the resolution defines the ground that the Affirmative must defend, the direct contradiction of the resolution defines the ground available to the Negative. One earlier example was “The United States should lift the embargo of Cuba.” The direct contradiction of that statement, “The United States should not lift the embargo of Cuba,” defines the ground for the Negative. This example is rather straightforward. The Negative simply would construct a series of disadvantages to lifting the embargo. In some instances, conceptualizing the Negative ground may help debaters develop creative arguments otherwise not evident to them.

If, for example, debaters were asked to articulate positions they find difficult to defend, they could conceptualize the Negative's ground by thinking of positions inconsistent with the Affirmative ground. Conceptualizing Negative ground in this manner is one way to ease the problem. Take, for example, the resolution “The government should support gay marriages.” Suppose debaters draw the Negative on this resolution yet do not feel you can ethically argue that homosexuals should not have rights that other persons have. They might start by conceptualizing their ground as “The government should not support gay marriages.” Looking for ground consistent with the Negative but inconsistent with the Affirmative, fairly creative debaters can move to the notion of “refusing to support marriage of any kind.” By arguing against state support of marriage in general, they could simultaneously defend the Negative ground and oppose the Affirmative's resolution. The Negative might construct a case that argues that marriage ought to be a social and religious institution, not a legal one. Marriage, they might argue, should be supported by churches and families but not by governmental institutions. Adopting the Negative position would solve the discrimination that the Affirmative would most likely defend as a part of their case and would allow the Negative to avoid making the traditional arguments against gay marriage that they may not feel comfortable making.

Conceptualizing the Negative ground in this manner is a good way to discover a starting point for constructing a case against the resolution. Having arrived at that point, the case is built in a manner reminiscent of building a case for the Affirmative--describe, relate, evaluate.

*Descriptive arguments* are just as important for the Negative as for the Affirmative. Building a case for the Negative, like building a case for the Affirmative, involves describing a feature of a concept or an object. Obviously, the Negative may choose to describe different features than the Affirmative. As in the affirmative action example, the Affirmative may choose to focus on quotas as the essential characteristics of affirmative action while the Negative may decide to discuss the feature of advertising and expanded hiring pools. The choices that the Negative makes regarding description are always made with an eye toward their relational arguments.

*Relational arguments* for the Negative may begin with the features described by the Negative or those described by the Affirmative. In the affirmative action example, the Negative might not accept the Affirmative's description but instead relate advertising and expanded hiring pools to the idea of diversity. Using their own descriptive features allows the Negative to create evaluative arguments which oppose the resolution. In the capital punishment example, the Negative might choose to accept the Affirmative's idea that the essential feature of capital punishment is severity. In this case, the Negative might then argue that certainty of punishment--not severity--is the cause of deterrence. In both cases, the Negative is using argumentative techniques that are similar to those used by the Affirmative. They are relating an essential feature to some effect which they will later be prepared to evaluate.

*Evaluative arguments* for the Negative also take two forms. The Negative may evaluate effects which they have described. In the affirmative action example, the Negative would evaluate the effects of affirmative action in positive terms. They might argue that diversity would create workplaces which were more responsive to society and which would be composed in manners that more closely mirrored society.

Alternatively, the Negative may accept the effects advanced by the Affirmative and evaluate them in a different manner. For instance, the Negative might agree that affirmative action produced tokenism, but they

might disagree with the evaluation of tokenism. They might argue, for example, that a certain degree of tokenism is essential to raise the consciousness of the majority as well as to prohibit those few in the majority who would discriminate from doing so.

So, developing a case for the Negative involves choosing from among three options: directly refuting of the Affirmative's case, constructing a Negative case, or both. In all choices, the ability to construct and refute descriptive, relational, and evaluative arguments is the key to good case construction for both the Negative and Affirmative.

### ***How to give a Rebuttal***

#### **PREPARE THE REBUTTAL**

First, **THINK ABOUT YOUR SIDE.** Compare your position to your opponent's position. For example, "We are for single-sex schools; they are opposed to them."

Second, **FIND THE ARGUMENTS THAT SUPPORT YOUR SIDE.** Identify three or four key arguments that support your position. For example, "I am showing single-sex schools help girls learn more; Single sex schools prevent harassment against girls."

Third, **IDENTIFY ANY OPPOSING ARGUMENTS THAT MIGHT DEFEAT YOU.** Look at your flow, think about what the opposition appears to be winning. For example, "Hmm, he/she is showing that single-sex schools reinforce gender segregation in society." **NOW, THINK HOW YOUR ARGUMENTS DEFEAT THIS ARGUMENT.** For example, "I showed single-sex schools help girls and thereby break barriers in society."

#### **PRESENT THE REBUTTAL**

Begin by **IDENTIFYING THE CHOICE FOR THE JUDGE.** "This debate boils down to, do you give students a choice to go to single-sex schools or do you stop that choice."

Then, **LIST OUT EACH OF MAIN REASONS TO SUPPORT YOUR SIDE.** Present your reasons, follow it with an explanation and supporting arguments. After this, respond to any opposing arguments that might undermine your argument. Then, sum up and explain why this reason is a voting issue for you. For example, "The first reason to vote affirmative is that single-sex schools stop harassment. Harassment is a serious problem--the negative has conceded that girls are sexually harassed, touched inappropriately, even raped. Single-sex schools stop this harassment because the environment changes and there isn't the opportunity to harass. That is a fact. Now, the negative wants to argue the harassment would just happen out of school. First, that concedes that I do stop the harassment in the school and that is a worthwhile achievement. Second, as I argued, women speak out and empower themselves in single-sex schools and that encourages change in our society to reduce the attitudes that contribute to harassment. In sum, my proposal puts a dent in harassment especially in schools and that justifies an affirmative ballot."

Conclude the speech, requesting that the judge vote for you.

### ***Tautologies and Truisms***

Imagine yourself encountering a case whose sole contention is that it is wrong to commit genocides, on the resolution that "This house would support human rights." Your devilishly clever opponents (the affirmative) seem within the resolution so a topicality/link argument is not going to work. What should you do? Should you throw your hands in the air, shout a profane exclamation of disgust, and leave the room? While this is indeed tempting, there is another option. You can suggest that the advocacy of the affirmative is a truism that does not present fair ground for a debate.

So, what exactly is a "truism"? Is this different than a "tautology"? How could I run such an argument? This segment will examine the difference between and how to argue tautologies and truisms.

#### ***THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A TRUISM AND A TAUTOLOGY***



What is a tautology? Well, the Oxford English Dictionary defines tautology as “A compound proposition which is unconditionally true for all the truth-possibilities of its elementary propositions and by virtue of its logical form.” For those of you who haven’t taken a course in modal logic lately, a tautology is an argument that is true by how the arguer defined it. For example, if the resolution is “Resolved: we should uphold human rights,” and the affirmative sets a criterion whereby the debater that best upholds human rights wins the debate, they have committed a tautology.

A truism is distinct from a tautology in that it is not true by definition. Instead, a truism is an argument that is considered to be true by the vast majority of people; it is an argument that really is not disputable. For example, the argument that “genocide is bad” is a truism; virtually no one is going to argue that genocide is good. Clearly, the truism argument is trickier than a tautology in that it is rooted in what people believe and not pure logic, as a tautology argument is rooted. This said, let us explore how we might employ these arguments in a debate.

### *ARGUING TAUTOLOGIES*

How do you argue a tautology? You state that the case is a tautology, explain how it is a tautology, and why this means the case should be rejected. For example, on the topic “Resolved: we should uphold human rights,” you might argue:

“The affirmative case is a tautology. The affirmative has said that the winner of the debate is whoever best upholds human rights. But by just supporting the topic, they will have won the debate. You cannot win a debate by defining yourself the winner. That is a tautology and it is a fallacy and it makes it impossible for the negative to win the debate. The affirmative case should be dismissed.”

Follow up your tautology argument with your own definitions and explanations of why these definitions provide a fairer ground for debate.

Note that many judges are skeptical of arguments claiming that a case is a tautology. These judges will see reasons in the affirmative case beyond the definitions. For example, they’ll say to themselves “yes, that isn’t a very strong case but the negative can just show that human rights should not be upheld.” Further, these judges will say “the affirmative gave some reasons for why human rights are good in their case, meaning it was not entirely dependent on the tautology for proof.” So, you should almost always debate the case itself in addition to making the tautology argument.

As an affirmative trying to respond to a tautology, try to point out how your case is not true simply because of how you defined the topic. Show the reasons you gave that do not depend on your definitions of the topic. For example, “I showed human rights are important to saving lives, to prevent torture, and to respect international law. None of these reasons are arguments dependent on our definition of the topic.” Also, try placing a very high standard of proof on the negative for what they must argue to prove your case is a tautology. For example, “The negative must show that I have given no reason whatsoever beyond definitions. They don’t, so their tautology claim falls.” Further, take action to avoid getting into this kind of a situation. In preparation time, ask yourself if you’re needlessly making your definitions too specific in such a way that could make it so your case true by definition. Always, give reasons for your case that do not depend on your definition of the resolution.

### *ARGUING TRUISMS*

How do you argue a truism? Pretty much the same way as a tautology. You state that the case is a truism, explain how it is a truism, and why this means the case should be rejected. For example, to show that “genocide is bad” is a truism, you would argue:

“Saying that genocide is bad is a truism. No one disagrees with this. The affirmative case makes it virtually impossible to argue against their case. You should dismiss the affirmative case as being a truism unworthy of debate.”

Follow up your truism argument with your own definitions and explanations of why these definitions provide a fairer ground for debate.

Be wary of making a “truism” argument. Much of the community does not think that a truism means an affirmative should lose. Usually, if a affirmative runs a fairly common sense case, you can press for details about implementation so you can make arguments about the way in which they address or solve the problem they cite or make topicality arguments based on how their advocacy falls within the words of the resolution.

Responding to a truism is a much easier task. Point to specific people who argue for the ground you have set for the negative. Accuse the negative of failing to debate the merits of the case or even tell them to “Stop whining!” Argue that it is the negative’s job to find and defend their ground creatively. Further, assuming the negative made arguments against your case, point out they made arguments thus showing that it is possible to argue against the case.

### ***General Tips for Being and Effective Debater***

#### *WHEN CROSS-EXAMINING*

1. Look at your judge. You are trying to convince your judge, not your opponent.
2. Ask questions that are difficult to answer. Put your opponents on the spot.
3. Don’t ask questions that allow your opponents to explain the good points of their arguments.

#### *WHEN YOU RESPOND TO ARGUMENTS*

1. Tell your judge what argument you are addressing. Structure adds clarity to the round.
2. Sign Post – Before you address arguments in your speech, tell the judge where you will be going - For example, “First, I will present my off-case positions and then I will directly respond to the affirmative case.”
3. Attack your opponent’s arguments, NOT the person.

#### *STARTING YOUR SPEECH*

1. Always start a speech with an introduction, it helps build credibility with your judge. The best way to do this is to summarize your position (providing a clear thesis for your judge to follow).
2. Start positive with YOUR argument. “We show that a national health insurance program will . . .”
3. Don’t begin with “My opponent has said . . .” That will focus the judge’s attention on your opponent’s arguments.

#### *ABBREVIATIONS YOU MIGHT ENCOUNTER*

1. THB - this house believes
2. THBT - this house believes that
3. IMHO - in my humble opinion

#### *AVOID JARGON IN YOUR DEBATES*

1. NO: "They dropped the B2 argument (with no further explanation)." YES: "They did not address our B2 argument that SUV's are major contributors to carbon emissions."
2. NO: "Turn this disad (with no further explanation)." YES: "My proposal will reduce costs meaning we avoid excessive affirmative spending, a further advantage to my proposal."
3. NO: "Move down the flow." YES: "Turn to the next issue."
4. NO: "On the top of flow." YES: "The first point was . . ."
5. Try to find persuasive, real life terms to explain your arguments. Public debate is designed so your grandmother can walk in and judge.

What to argue if you hit an Example Case - a case with a list of examples to prove the resolution true.

Ex: This house believes all is fair in love and war.

Lists 8 examples.

How to Counter

1. Determine the points behind the examples. Discuss how the examples do not support the resolution.
2. After explaining the theory, disprove their point and provide your own.

What to argue if hit an "Incoherent" Case – a bunch of rambling statements without any rhyme or reason. It just does not make any sense.

How to Counter:

1. Ask leading questions - "and this applies to the resolution how..."
2. In your speech, explain why their points are confused (if you are befuddled, odds are your judge is just as confused as you).
3. Be NICE - do not be a jerk, the other person may be doing their best. The last thing you want to do is to appear overaggressive & alienate the judge.
4. Spend time evaluating the resolution and burdens (what does each side have to prove to win). Be very clear!
5. Explain the Burden of Proof of the Affirmative – the Aff. must provide reasons to uphold the resolution, failure to do so renders a Negative ballot.
6. Present arguments separate from responses to the affirmative case as to why you win the round.

## REASONING FROM ANALOGY

Contrary to the opinions of some, the use of reasoning from analogy to influence the attitudes of others is effective. During our lives we are taught to profit from the experience of others. We have been told that history can teach us much, and we often ask how a course of action worked out in other places. Did it fail or was it a success? These questions and admonitions are based upon the impact of reasoning from analogy. All induction is based on factual examples which are sufficiently analogous to be meaningful. Educators and impartial investigators, as well as advocates, are constantly drawing upon the experiences of others.

### *Propositions with which Reasoning from Analogy is Effective*

You, as an advocate will use reasoning from analogy on a variety of propositions. You may use it to gain the belief that a new proposal of yours will remove the evils or solve the problems of the present system. You may use the experiences of individuals in other places to show that your proposal can work successfully because it worked successfully elsewhere. By comparison with other places you may show that your new proposal can be administered easily. On the other hand, you may try to turn opinion against a proposal by showing the impracticalities revealed by its use in other places. Or again, you may use the experiences of others to show that a new proposal will incur dangerous or harmful objections otherwise unsuspected. Reasoning from analogy is used in the law court in the form of referring to other cases which set a precedent that should be followed in the case on trial. These and many other propositions may be supported with reasoning from analogy.

### *Reasoning from Analogy Defined*

As I have said, reasoning from analogy is that form of reasoning in which it is demonstrated that what occurred in one situation will occur in a similar situation. In its simplest form we merely suggest to an audience that what happened there will happen here. We are assuming, of course, that the two situations are similar.

In using analogy we must compare like things. These things must be of the same class, such as people to people, horses to horses, pine trees to pine trees. Natural laws tend to operate in the same way, or at least in a similar way, among the similar classes of things. We must be careful to observe individual differences not only among people, but among all categories of things; otherwise reasoning from analogy can be weak. So important are these individual differences that some people make the exaggerated claim that reasoning from analogy can never be sound. Because of this, we must make sure that we are comparing like things, keeping always aware of the fact that individual differences may weaken our comparison.

On the other hand, humankind has made vital discoveries in comparing things which seemed to be of differing classes. In the field of medicine we have done much research work with dogs, monkeys, and rats on diseases and have found that since woman/man is an animal, life is comparable enough for that which worked on the dog to work for woman/man. Many of our new discoveries in medicine were tried out on animals first before they were tried on human beings. This is particularly true in the development of many of our vaccines. The psychologist has learned much about human behavior by the study of rats; Pavlov experimented on a dog in order to discover many of the features of the conditioned reflex. In such cases as these, the similarities were so great that significant discoveries were made. Thus, reasoning from analogy can be strong, as witnessed by the fact that it has helped us uncover much knowledge in the past.

In this section I am dealing with reasoning from literal, rather than figurative, analogy. No sound conclusion can be drawn from figurative analogies; on the other hand, literal analogy reasoning has its merits. In literal analogy we are comparing like things such as cities to cities, geographic places to geographic places. In figurative analogy we are comparing unlike things such as the heart of the human body with the heart of a city or the heart of our government. Figurative analogy has the power to explain and the power to arouse emotions; it is hardly logical in its nature. On the other hand, literal analogy, which compares things of a like nature, may have the power of logic behind it.

### *Relationship to Induction*

Reasoning from analogy is so closely related to reasoning from induction that some writers in the field of argumentation have placed the discussion of both forms of reasoning under the same chapter title: “reasoning from examples.” Both forms of reasoning are based upon factual examples. If we cite the case of Long Beach, California as a place where innovative traffic control devices have worked successfully, and then conclude that the same would be the experience of a similar-sized town such as New Orleans, Louisiana, we are using reasoning from analogy. We are reasoning from a factual example. On the other hand, we make a survey of many of the two thousand cities of our land that have similar traffic control devices and from that draw the conclusion that these devices operate successfully; when we do this we will be using factual examples to prove the generalization common to the observation of a sufficient number of examples.

The most prominent fallacy in reasoning from analogy is the attempt to compare dissimilar cases. In the same fashion, induction based upon examples that are not analogous (not comparable) is fallacious. In general, reasoning from induction will be stronger than reasoning from analogy because in induction one is using many examples, while in reasoning from analogy one is reasoning only from one or at most a few examples. Under reasoning from induction using many examples one may make use of the “bell-curve” spread. In other words, under induction one can cite from the many examples of those cities that have had great, moderate, and not so great success with the traffic control devices as a means of substantiating the argument; then, one can show, however, that in all cases there has been significant success.

### ***Relationship to Causal Reasoning***

Most, if not all, of your use of reasoning from analogy will be effect-to-effect reasoning. In the example of traffic control devices cited above we have effect-to-effect reasoning. The cause, innovative devices, had the effect in Long Beach of regulating traffic at a rate with which the people were satisfied. It's argued that the introduction of the same cause in other cities which are sufficiently similar will produce the same effect. The result is that when we use reasoning from analogy we may find ourselves engaged in the causal relationship analysis of both the factual example we are using to prove our case and the causal forces in operation in the new locality. Thus, the lines of argument available on causal reasoning will be applicable to those examples cited in reasoning from analogy. In other words, we will study the effects of the innovative traffic control devices in Long Beach rather thoroughly to find out exactly whether or not the effects are good or bad.

On the other hand, reasoning from analogy may often constitute the factual proof for causal reasoning. Not only do we establish reasoning by showing that the alleged cause has the means, power, facilities, and/or desire to produce the effect, but we may also prove that this is true by citing a single factual example. When we do we are using the essential features of reasoning from analogy.

### ***Lines of Argument for Reasoning from Analogy***

The following are those lines of argument most frequently used in connection with reasoning from analogy:

1. Do the Similarities Outweigh the Differences? In using this line of argument we picture for our audience the great number of similarities between the two examples cited. If our analogy is between countries we cite similarities of government, educational level of the people, population, economic systems, and the like. If we are comparing two periods of history we will cite as many economic, political, social, cultural, and educational similarities as we can. This artistic use of this line of argument will depend upon the ability of the speaker to analyze the significant factors in the two situations which she/he is trying to compare.
2. Do the Differences Outweigh the Similarities? This line of argument is for the individual who wants to refute or evaluate the analogies used by others. The speaker should list all the things that differ in the two situations, differences in forms of government, population, cultures of the people, and economic systems; and she/he should particularly show that the people were facing a distinctly different set of problems. This again is a quantitative type of argument in which great numbers of differences will impress the audience.
3. Are the Similarities or Differences Significant or Insignificant? Your procedure will depend on whether you are arguing for or against the particular analogy. In order to strengthen the argument for the analogy you may suggest that only likenesses that are significant to the argument should be considered. In doing this you will maximize those similarities which are most pertinent to your comparison and minimize those dissimilarities that seem more likely irrelevant. For example, should

you choose to compare the United States with Great Britain, you would maximize the similarities of government, level of education, common cultural heritages, and high standard of industrial development. You would minimize such dissimilarities as size of population, geographical location, and access to raw materials.

In refutation or evaluation the significant dissimilarities are emphasized. The individual evaluating or refuting the comparison between Long Beach and New Orleans, where innovative traffic control devices were concerned, would minimize such similarities as the size of the two towns, that both were homes of commuters and that they had similar forms of government; she/he would maximize the significant difference in geography. The city of Long Beach is close to Los Angeles and thus has a significant amount of thru-traffic and receives much state funding for these devices. This means that the needs and resources in Long Beach ought to be drastically different from those of New Orleans which itself is the largest metro area in the region. Thus, you should become adept when using reasoning from analogy in selecting those particular factors which you may call significant similarities or significant dissimilarities depending upon which side of the proposition you are supporting.

### ***Summary of Lines of Argument on Analogy***

1. The similarities between the two examples compared outweigh the differences.
2. The differences between the two examples cited outweigh the similarities.
3. The significant similarities outweigh the differences, which are significant.
4. The significant differences outweigh the similarities.

**NOTETAKING DURING THE DEBATE (“FLOWSHEETING”)**

Taking notes during a debate, or the process of flowsheeting (commonly called “flowing”), is a very individualized skill. There are some general practices most debaters follow when flowing a debate, yet virtually every debater’s flow has some sort of idiosyncratic notations, shortcuts, or style. This section illustrates the most commonly used approaches to flowing but fully assumes that as you become more experienced you will develop your own flowing techniques. One general approach to flowing is to create separate flows for the major types of arguments in the debate. Thus, debaters separate the arguments about the affirmative contentions from the arguments about the negative contentions. Most debaters refer to this division or separation as case (affirmative contentions) and off-case (arguments about the plan or negative contentions).

The case and off-case flows are then further divided among the various speeches that occur during the debate. Each division in the case and off-case flows creates a space where arguments presented by a debater can be recorded. As you recall from our discussion of speaker responsibilities earlier in this manual, the case arguments in a debate will typically be addressed in five speeches: the first affirmative constructive, the first negative constructive, the first affirmative rebuttal, the negative rebuttal, and the second-affirmative rebuttal. Most debaters use legal pads and set up the case flow horizontally on that paper. Thus, the case flow would generally be set up as in the following figure:

1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive	1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive	2nd Affirmative Constructive	Negative Rebuttal	Affirmative Rebuttal

The off-case flow looks different from the case flow, but it is set up in precisely the same manner. As you recall, most debates have four speeches that deal directly with off-case arguments: the negative constructive, the 2<sup>nd</sup> affirmative constructive, the negative rebuttal and the affirmative rebuttal. Thus, the off case flow would generally be set up as in the following figure:

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive</b>	<b>Negative Rebuttal</b>	<b>Affirmative Rebuttal</b>

There are also some general conventions that debaters follow in recording arguments on their case and off-case flows. Most debaters attempt to record both the major and supporting claims their opponents present. Although it may not be possible or feasible to record those claims word for word, it is important to have an accurate representation of what they are. To satisfy this demand, you will need to develop some shorthand for recording the wording of the claims, and you will need to demarcate accurately and separate the major claims from the supporting claims.

To understand how arguments in a debate might be recorded, assume that the affirmative presents a major claim that says, “Labor-related violence is a significant problem in society.” To support that claim, the affirmative presents a supporting claim that “statistically, the problem is significant.” The negative makes two arguments about that supporting claim: (1) that statistics of incidence of violence are misleading and (2) that there is no consistent definition of what is counted as an act of violence. The 2<sup>nd</sup> affirmative constructive responds to those two arguments by asserting that precise numerical estimates are irrelevant—any degree of violence is unacceptable; also, there is no need to provide precise definitions of the characteristics of acts of



violence to be able to understand generally that there is a problem. Such an exchange might be recorded on a flow as illustrated in the following figure:

1 <sup>st</sup> Affirmative Constructive	1 <sup>st</sup> Negative Constructive	2 <sup>nd</sup> Affirmative Constructive	Negative Rebuttal	Affirmative Rebuttal
Labor vio. Is sig.  A. Stats USNWR '99: "2,375 incidents since '95"	1. Misleading info.  2. No adequate def. of V.	1. Extent is irrelevant, any is bad.  1. No need to separate classes of violence.		

Note in the illustration how shorthand is used to record the claims and evidence. Note further how the source of the evidence, *US News and World Report*, is indicated simply as "USNWR" and the date of the issue is noted. You can also see how the note-taker demarcates the arguments by noting the supporting claim as "A". Similarly, the two arguments given in the negative constructive are separated - "1 and 2" - as are the two arguments presented by the second affirmative constructive. Finally, notice how the arrows begin at the argument being refuted—the reference point—and proceed to the refutation or argument being presented in response to that reference point.

Every debater will develop his or her own preferred techniques for flowing a debate, there is not one "right" or "best" way to flow. Develop the techniques with which you feel most comfortable and capable. As you experiment, however, be certain to keep in mind three major principles of note-taking during a debate: *accuracy, completeness, and usability.*

Regardless of your method, you must be able to take notes accurately. Remember that your notes are a record of what has occurred in the debate and that record provides the context from which you develop and present arguments. If you are not able to record accurately what your opponent says, it will be difficult if not impossible to recall precisely what their case is, which of your arguments have been responded to and which have been ignored, or precisely how to develop the arguments you will present during the debate. Any inaccuracy in your notes can have a multiplier effect during the debate, skewing both the relevance and clarity of our responses and ultimately undermining the effectiveness of your advocacy.

Part of making certain your notes are accurate is to ensure that they are complete. Because arguments in a debate are presented orally, it will be impossible for you to record every utterance your opponents make. You will have to be selective in what you record, but you need to make certain that you record the vital information your opponents present. Major claims, supporting claims, sources of evidence, and at least a paraphrase of key pieces of evidence need to be recorded in most debates. Direct responses to claims, key ideas emphasized by the opponent, and key components of your case that your opponent has ignored also need to be systematically noted. The more information you have available on your flow, the better will be your account of the debate and the better prepared you will be to restate, interpret, and respond to your opponent's case and defend your own.

Finally, you need to ensure that your notes are usable. Your note-taking system is *your* system, but you must make certain that it enables you to produce notes you can use effectively and efficiently during the debate. Most debaters speak from their flow; the flow functions much as an outline does for a public speaker. For it to be useful as an outline, it must be legible, indicate adequately the major divisions of argument (major

claims, supporting claims, evidence), and provide a clear visual map of the debate. Time spent trying to decipher the flow is time wasted.

As you become more experienced in debate, your note-taking skills will improve and they will work hand in hand with improvement in your listening skills. You will, however, need to work on improving your note-taking skills. Do not take note-taking for granted. It is important, and all debaters should consciously continue to improve their note-taking abilities. As you work to develop and refine these skills, you may find it useful to incorporate the following guidelines for effective note-taking:

1. *Use plenty of paper.* Don't attempt to crowd your notes on a single page or two. Dedicate a separate piece of paper for each major component of your opponent's case. Remember that you can never fully anticipate how many arguments will be presented about a particular portion of a case and you need to allow plenty of space to account for uncertainty.
2. *Separate affirmative and negative arguments visually.* One of the most fundamental requirements of a flow is to record so that you can easily distinguish your arguments from those of your opponent. Many debaters use different colored pens to record arguments – one color for their arguments and the other for their opponent's arguments.
3. *Do as much pre-flowing as possible.* By pre-flowing I mean recording specific arguments or blocks of arguments including both claims and evidence before the debate takes place. Certainly you cannot pre-flow the entire encounter, but you can do portions of every debate. For example, affirmative debaters should have their entire case flowed before the debate begins. Similarly, negative debaters can develop pre-flows for major off-case arguments they anticipate using.
4. *Develop a shorthand system and use that system consistently.* Debaters should develop a system of shorthand for their flowing. You will need a way to distinguish major claims from supporting claims, claims from evidence, and sources of evidence. You should also have a shorthand system for key recurring terms in the subject matter of the proposition and develop shorthand for those terms. Once you develop a shorthand system, use it consistently; don't reinvent your system every time you debate.
5. *Develop a system for referent markers for your flow.* You will need to be able to indicate basic points of reference on your flow. For example, you will need to be able to link your opponent's arguments and your responses to those arguments. Many debaters use arrows as I did in the illustrations to establish this reference point. You could use lines or enclose the arguments in a block. Similarly, you should be able to indicate when the chain of advocacy about a particular argument has been broken – when your opponent has failed to respond to or “dropped” an argument that had thus far been carried through the debate. Many debaters simply draw a circle or a box and place an “x” through it to indicate that the evolution of the argument has stopped.
6. *Practice note-taking every chance you get.* Note-taking is a skill that develops with time and practice. Always be serious about your note-taking and use every possible opportunity including scrimmage debates to practice.
7. *Check the accuracy of your notes during the debate.* Clarify your notes during the debate itself. You might need to check the accuracy or completeness of your notes by asking your opponent questions during cross-examination.

One way of facilitating faster, easier, and more comprehensive note-taking is by using simple abbreviations for commonly used words or terms. The chart below provides a list of frequently used phrases and some suggested abbreviations. You may, of course, wish to develop your own system. Whatever abbreviations you use, however, should be simple and easy to remember and comprehend. In addition to a system of abbreviations for general terms, you will also want to use abbreviations for those basic concepts and programs specific to a given topic. For example, if the topic under discussion concerned environmental protection, abbreviations such as the following might be used: HW for hazardous wastes, AR for acid rain, GW for groundwater, and EPA for Environmental Protection Agency.

<b>Symbols</b>	
\$: dollars, money, finance, funding, revenue, etc.	= is/equal
□ increase, increasing, etc.	□ not equal to
□ decrease, decreasing, etc.	> more than
□ causes, causality, leads to, etc.	< less than
	% percent
<b>General Terms</b>	
w/ with	c/ could
w/o without	c/n could not
s/ should	b/c because
s/n should not	w/n will not
<b>Abbreviations: Governmental Terms</b>	
Fed federal	Nat'l National
Gov't Government	Int'l International
ADM administration	USFG United States Federal Government
Comm. Commission, Committee	POTUS President of the United States
Conf. Conference	SCOTUS Supreme Court of the United States
Bd Board	
Exec Executive	
<b>Abbreviations: Debate Terms</b>	
T/A Turnaround	DA Disadvantage
PMN Plan meets need	ADV Advantage
PGA Plan Gain Advantage	⊥ Topicality
<b>Common Periodicals and Papers</b>	
WP Washington Post	CSM Christian Science Monitor
WSJ Wall Street Journal	CR Congressional Record
LAT Los Angeles Times	CQ Congressional Quarterly
NYT New York Times	NW Newsweek

## CONCLUSION

This manual is not intended to be a complete description of concepts related to public debate. A single manual can only begin to introduce students of public debate to a few of the important concepts. Students and teachers interested in pursuing those concepts more fully should investigate other works on argumentation, debate, informal and formal logic, and persuasion.

Even these limited descriptions are only foundational. Creativity, spontaneity, and awareness of issues in the surrounding world are critical to excellence in public debate. Debaters need to take concepts they find valuable from this chapter and from other relevant works and practice until those concepts are second nature to them. Only after mastering the concepts so well that the debater need not consciously think about them will the debater be able to pursue debate at more of a creative and spontaneous level.

Creativity and spontaneity can, however, be stifled if one takes as prescriptive, the concepts in this manual or in other works about argumentation and debate. The concepts provided in this manual are not meant to be prescriptive, but as possible routes for learning about public debate. In fact, prescription runs counter to the philosophy that underlies this work. To grow into a healthy and vibrant activity, public debate needs to be available as a means of creative and diverse expression of beliefs and values. Chairman Mao's metaphor of the garden is appropriate. Public debate needs to "let many flowers bloom and contend."

### References

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## APPENDIX A: OFFICIAL IPDA RULES

### Event Description

The critical principles and elements of Public Debate were listed in the preamble to the Constitution. The following more specific event description is intended to provide a practical set of guidelines for competitors and tournament directors. Public Debate is an academic public speaking exercise which is defined by the following elements, rules, and procedures:

A. Eligibility: There are no eligibility restrictions in public debate. Absolutely everyone is welcome to participate.

B. Judges: Anyone of reasonable intelligence can be used as a judge. It is actively recommended that judging pools be made up of as wide a range of backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives as possible. Tournament directors are encouraged to use lots and lots of class or volunteer undergraduate students as judges.

C. Ballots: An official ballot will be used in judging Public Debates. Copies of this ballot will be made available by the Managing Director. They may be purchased at cost plus 20% from the Association or members are free to have their own versions produced. Any substantial deviation from the official ballot must be approved by the Executive Committee.

D. Seating: Contestants must seat themselves such that, from the audience's point of view, the Affirmative is on the left and the Negative on the right.

E. Topic Areas & Resolutions: The topic areas and specific resolutions for Public Debate are left to the discretion of Tournament Directors. The International Public Debate Association will provide complete formatted master sets of resolutions for Tournament Directors upon request on a cost plus 20% basis. Topics should be fair to all parties attending Public Debate tournaments. Tournament Directors should avoid local issues which are inaccessible to visiting competitors. Resolutions should be as balanced as possible giving equal ground to both the Affirmative and Negative.

F. Topic Draw: Contestants will meet for an extemporaneous topic draw before the scheduled start of the debate. The official recommended draw time is 30 minutes but the exact time is up to the Tournament Director. Contestants will be offered five (5) topics. Each pair of opponents will independently select the topic they wish to debate. Starting with the Negative speaker, each contestant will alternatively strike one of the five until only one remains. That will be the debate resolution for the round. Contestants must complete the topic selection process independently and without outside assistance. Tournament Directors may set their own policies concerning the mechanics of the draw, including what to do about competitors who show up late and topic draw protests.

G. Preparation: Debaters are permitted to use reference materials during their preparation time before debating. They may utilize extemporaneous speaking type files, dictionaries, reference books, libraries, or anything else for that matter. They may also consult with teammates and/or coaches for ideas and advice.

H. Format: Public Debate will use the following Lincoln-Douglas format:

5 Minutes Affirmative Constructive  
 2 minutes Cross Examination  
 7 minutes Negative Constructive  
 2 minutes Cross Examination  
 3 minutes 1st Affirmative Rebuttal  
 4 minutes Negative Rebuttal  
 3 minutes 2nd Affirmative Rebuttal  
 -----  
 26 minutes Total (approximate)

Tournament directors must receive Executive Committee approval to deviate from this format. The IPDA makes no recommendations concerning prep time between speeches. This is a matter of the Tournament Director's discretion and it is recommended that the policy be included in the tournament invitation. In the absence of an announced rule, special prep time between speeches is not allowed. Judges should be made aware of prep time rules and count off for abuses.

I. Use of Evidence During Debates: Contestants may not bring written reference materials into the round with them. No 'reading' of evidence will be permitted. Contestants may not even copy evidence verbatim onto their flow sheets to be read during a speech. They may only bring and reference case outlines and limited notes which they may have worked up during the preparation period before their round. Evidence must be memorized or paraphrased for use during debates. This is another case where judges should be made aware of this rule and instructed to count off for abuses. Serious violations of this rule should cause the judge to automatically award the decision to the opponent.

J. Fairness: Debaters will, as much as possible, be left to their own devices. Affirmatives are allowed to define resolutions pretty much as they see fit. However, Affirmative interpretations and definitions must leave Negatives fair ground for the debate. If an Affirmative's case is too lopsided and/or tautological (used to define itself as winning by definition), this opens the door for the Negative to provide an alternate set of definitions. But the Negative can only redefine terms if the Affirmative has abused its prerogative. If the Affirmative can demonstrate adequate Negative ground when challenged, then Affirmative definitions will have presumption. The judge is the final arbiter of definitional squabbles.

K. Nomenclature & Procedure: The two sides in a Public Debate will be known as the Affirmative and Negative. There will be no "rising" to points of order, standing with one hand on your head, or heckling during speeches. If debaters have questions or problems they should ask about them during cross-examination and/or raise them as points during their next speech. Debaters can always appeal to a judge after a round, but the decision of the judge is final.

L. Style: The goal of the International Public Debate Association is to promote a highly rhetorical and oratorical style of public speaking. For this reason, it is recommended that judges be instructed to award the decision in a close round to the superior speaking style rather than to the negative.

M. Etiquette: Public Debaters are expected to maintain a highly polite, civil, and professional demeanor during rounds. Judges should be instructed to reward appropriate ethos and count off for abusiveness.

## APPENDIX B: HANDY DANDY DEBATE DEFINITIONS

**Advantages:** Arguments made which attempt to prove the desirable effects of a plan.

**Affirmative:** The person designated to support a resolution.

**Alternative Justification:** An affirmative strategy where multiple mini-cases are offered, each one of which meet the stock issues. Each case is designed to independently support the topic (kind of a bird-shot approach = if any one sticks, the judge “should” vote for the affirmative).

**Argument:** A claim supported with reasons.

**Argumentation:** The justification of facts, values, beliefs, or policies through advocacy. Also, the theory used to evaluate such advocacy.

**Assertion:** An unsupported claim.

**Blame:** See Inherency

**A Burden of Proof:** A necessity to prove an assertion. The indefinite article, *A*, indicates that this is a burden that applies to any advocate who presents a claim in a debate.

**The Burden of Proof:** The requirement for the Affirmative to demonstrate the desirability or validity of their proposed fact, value or policy. The definite article, *The*, indicates that this is a specific burden that affects only the Affirmative.

**The Burden of Rebuttal:** (also called “Burden of Rejoinder”) The requirement of advocates to respond to arguments raised by their opponents. In academic debate a failure to respond to an opponent’s argument usually means the granting of that argument.

**Case:** The arguments chosen by an affirmative to support a given resolution. Those arguments are presented in a seven minute speech as the first order of business in a debate round (often referred to as “case,” “case side,” or “affirmative case”).

**Claim:** A declarative statement that may or may not be true.

**Clash:** When affirmative & negative arguments are in direct refutation of each other.

**Contradiction:** The assertion of conflicting claim statements where no reasons are provided.

**Comparative Advantage:** In this strategy, the advocates of change do not necessarily have to prove that the status quo is harmful, but rather prove that their plan would be better than the status quo. In other words, the status quo might be mediocre; but, with the plan, society would be significantly improved.

**Constructives:** The first two speeches of a debate, in which advocates build arguments for and against the resolution and against each other.

**Contention:** An extended argument supporting an advocate’s position. A contention usually contains at least two different pieces of evidence in support of an issue. Debate contentions are delivered in outline form, and each sub-point in the outline is supported by evidence.

**Counterplan:** A strategy in a debate of policy, in which a plan is offered by the negative. The counterplan should be non-topical, competitive, address the affirmative’s motive, and be preferable to the affirmative’s plan.

**Counterwarrants:** General attacks by the negative against the topic, and not the specific case.

**Disadvantages:** Negative arguments which attempt to prove that the affirmative’s plan, if implemented, would have deleterious effects.

**Evidence:** A form of proof used to justify a claim. Includes expert opinion, studies, analogy, example, etc.

**Exacerbate:** To make worse.

**Ground:** The hypothetical division of advocacy area, so that both sides have sufficient basis to argue from.

**Inherency:** A stock issue in policy debate, also called blame, inherency refers to the causes of the problem. Additionally, with the burden of inherency, the Affirmative must show why the problem will not be self-corrected in the status quo.

**Minor Repair:** A strategy by the negative wherein the negative maintains that the harm identified by the affirmative can be solved by small changes in the status quo. The phrase “minor repair” can best be understood as an analogy to car repairs. The affirmative has to prove the resolution, which is analogous to getting a new engine. The negative argues that it’s not a major issue, but that it could simply be fixed by filling the car with gas (one action requires a major action, including outside help, while the minor repair can be done by the existing system).

**Off-Case:** Any argument initiated by the negative which does not directly refute the affirmative’s case.

**On-Case:** Any argument directly for or against the affirmative case.

**Negative:** The person designated to oppose a resolution.

**Parametrics:** The philosophy that an affirmative need only defend a case that is within the parameters of the resolution, and not the entire resolution itself. Once the affirmative case is given, they parametrize the resolution, and the debate now focuses on their case.

**Presumption:** The assumption going into the round is that “absent a reason to change, the judge should vote for the status quo;” this assumption is known as the *presumption* that the status quo is o.k.

**Prima Facie:** “At first face” The initial premise. Typically referred to as “The affirmative’s prima facie responsibility to uphold the resolution,” meaning that the first speech must provide the gist of their advocacy.

**Solvency:** Arguments made by the affirmative as to how their plan could remedy the harms of the status quo

**Status Quo:** The current environment

**Topicality:** A basic stock issue, concerned with whether the Affirmative’s case is within the parameters of the resolution or not.