

CCofSE Policy Debate Rules and Standards

PHILOSOPHY

Academic policy debate is not a pursuit of the “truth” or of the “perfect policy” in an ideal sense, but rather a forum useful to train minds in the art of argumentation. Debaters must learn to address both sides of an issue, requiring them to come to an understanding of an opponent’s perspective. To succeed in competition, they will need to learn to explain, interpret, apply, analyze, synthesize, solve problems, and communicate information effectively to a judge. Good clash over contrasting viewpoints on policy issues is encouraged. Direct refutation is expected and necessary. However, as Christian communicators, we are first and foremost to glorify God. Accordingly, in CCofSE, emphasis is placed on humility, courtesy, and Christ-like behavior.

GENERAL STANDARDS

Ethics

Conduct and attire should reflect respect for other participants, the debate activity itself, and the mission of CCofSE. Participants are encouraged to err on the side of caution, to do everything decently and in order (1 Corinthians 14:40, 1 Corinthians 16:14), and to avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Violations

Concerns about violations of the Policy Debate Rules and Standards should be handled according to the guidelines specified in the CCofSE Code of Conduct. The tournament director will have the final say in determining any action that may be required.

THE ROUND

Team Structure

A team consists of two people who are between the ages of **14 and 18** as of January 1 of the competition year. At the request of a coach, and with the approval of the Steering committee, age requirement exceptions may be made.

Round structure

A round of team policy debate consists of eight speeches. In the first four constructive speeches debaters will lay out their most important arguments and build their cases. In the last four rebuttal speeches, debaters are expected to extend and rebut arguments that have already been made in the constructive speeches, but may not make new arguments.

In a Policy Debate, the order and timing of speeches is as follows:

- First Affirmative Constructive (1AC) - 8 minutes
- Cross-Examination (C/X or Cross-Ex) - 3 minutes
- First Negative Constructive (1NC) - 8 minutes
- Cross-Examination - 3 minutes

Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC) - 8 minutes
Cross-Examination- 3 minutes
Second Negative Constructive (2NC) - 8 minutes
Cross-Examination- 3 minutes
First Negative Rebuttal (1NR) - 5 minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR) - 5 minutes
Second Negative Rebuttal (2NR) - 5 minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR) - 5 minutes

Each team is given 5 minutes of preparation time (also known as prep time), which they may use before any of their speeches.

Affirmative Case Structure

The following are the allowable case structures for all CCoFSE Policy cases:

- Needs Analysis Affirmative
- Comparative Advantage Affirmative
- Goals Criteria Affirmative

At the request of a coach, and with the approval of the Steering committee, other case structures may be allowed.

Teams should clearly identify the case structure they are using in the 1AC, or be prepared to do so upon cross-examination.

All Affirmative cases must be prima facia.

Negative Case Structure

- A Topicality challenge, if any, must be presented in the first Negative Constructive speech.
- The Emory Switch is prohibited.
- Counterplans are allowed, but must be non-topical. In other words, a Counterplan must not fulfill the resolution (as defined by the Affirmative). A Counterplan should demonstrate that a reasonable alternative plan would be better policy than either the status quo or the Affirmative plan. Counterplans must be presented in the first Negative Constructive speech.
- Minor Repairs are allowed. Minor Repairs, by definition, cannot be topical, because they require the use of structures and/or precedents already within the status quo. A Minor Repair is not the same as a Counterplan, so there should be no policy changes, or changes of agency, etc..
- Critics are prohibited.
- Splitting the Negative Block is allowed, but no new arguments are allowed in the rebuttals.

ARGUMENTATION

Arguments are to be supported by evidence or logic, not simply a debater's opinion, no matter how eloquently and persuasively the point is argued.

Tag-teaming with a partner or audience member is prohibited.

Evidence

The following general standards apply to the use of evidence:

- All evidence must be from a published source available to the public, and verifiable at the tournament.
- Evidence should be accurately and directly quoted with proper respect to the context of the original source.
- Evidence shall be provided with a citation of source, author's name and credentials, and date of publication. Additional evidence from the same source may be referred to "as previously cited."
- Participants take full responsibility for the accuracy of the evidence they cite.
- The use of the Bible quoted as evidence is prohibited in the round.
- Students may ask for, and should receive upon request, a copy of the evidence used in the round by the opposing team. Evidence should be reviewed by the requesting team during that team's prep time, and immediately returned to its owner.
- A judge may ask to review any piece of evidence that was presented in the round, but must wait until after the round to do so.
- Once the round is over, debaters may not offer evidence to the judge, or initiate a discussion with the judge about anything that occurred in the round.
- Deliberately misusing, misquoting, or falsifying evidence is a serious offense. If found to be true it will result in loss of the round.

Rebuttals

Rebuttals are to be used to respond to the opponent's lines of argument and to extend arguments made in constructive speeches. No new lines of argument may be presented in rebuttals. New lines of argument are those that are not clarifications or responses made to arguments presented in the constructive speeches, but those that are completely new and unrelated to previous argumentation. New evidence to extend or clarify constructive arguments is permitted in rebuttals.

Dropped arguments

An argument is considered dropped if opponents do not respond to it in their next speech. There is no penalty for dropped arguments, but once dropped an argument should not be picked up later in the debate unless the opposing team continues the discussion.

Timing

All timing shall be done by the competitors. Each team should provide two countdown timepieces, one of which is to be used to keep track of prep time.

Speech times for Team Policy Debate are as follows:

8-3-8-3-8-3-8-3-5-5-5-5

Each team receives five (5) minutes prep time.

Prep time may not be used immediately before a cross-examination.

Electronics

Debaters may not use electronic devices other than timepieces in a round.

Recording or videotaping of any or all of a round is allowed only with the permission of all debaters involved.

JUDGING PARADIGM

Criteria

Competitors will be evaluated on their analysis, use of evidence, and ability to effectively and persuasively organize, deliver, and refute arguments. All speeches should be pleasant, comprehensible, and persuasive in tone. Rapid-fire delivery, commonly called "speed and spread delivery," is considered antithetical to the purpose and intent of this event and is not allowed.

Voting Issues

The stock issues, or voting issues – topicality, significance, inherency, and solvency – shall be the basis of the voting decision for policy debate rounds. The affirmative team must win all four stock issues in order to win the round. The negative team need win only one stock issue to win the round.

Disadvantages are also a voting issue, and will fall under either solvency or significance at the discretion of the judge.

A win shall be given to either the affirmative or the negative team, except in the event a winning team is given a loss for committing an ethical violation. In such cases, a double loss shall be given. Only in this instance is the round given a double loss.

Speaker Points

Speakers shall be given speaker points in each of the following areas - one (1) being weak, and five (5) being strong.

- Argumentation/refutation
- Cross-examination
- Delivery
- Evidence/logic
- Organization
- Persuasiveness

The points given for each of the categories shall be totaled, and the speakers ranked based upon these totals. The speaker with the highest total points shall be ranked first; the speaker with the second highest total shall be ranked second, and so on. Ties in speaker ranks are prohibited and shall be broken at the judge's discretion.

Oral Judging Critique

CCofSE sees tremendous educational value in an oral critique by the judge immediately following the round.

- Critiques should be no longer than five minutes in length.
- The judge must not reveal the decision to the debaters.