

## TEAM POLICY DEBATE EXAMPLE: “Two versus two” Debate.

Each debate will have four constructives, four rebuttals, and four cross-examination periods. In a single debate, each student will deliver two speeches—a constructive and a rebuttal.

- 1AC:**  
5 minutes     **First Affirmative Constructive:** This speech is almost fully prepared before the debate starts. The First Affirmative constructive speech is expected to defend the resolution in the most compelling way possible. This means at least 3 (and probably 4) components should be part of the 1ac: The existence of a problem, the consequences (impact of significance) of that problem, the need for a solution provided by the proposition, and (optional) arguments against what the negative side might say. In other words, the task of the 1A is to explain the resolution and provide arguments defending the resolution. The format is flexible, but most good 1As will defend an interpretation of the resolution and then establish 3-5 arguments in favor of the resolution. Each argument should have a claim, data, and warrants. Each argument should independently prove that the resolution is valid or true. Each argument should be given weight (significance)—why does that argument matter? Each argument should also link itself directly to the wording of the resolution. Most importantly, each argument should have evidence to back it up—quotations from experts, statistics, narratives, other reasoning, etc.
- CX of 1AC:**  
3 minutes     The negative team cross-examines the affirmative speaker. These 3 minutes can be used to clarify information, set up future arguments, expose weaknesses in the speech, etc. The 2NC asks questions of the 1AC in order to obtain information to be used in the next speech. The cross examination is not typically recorded on the flow. The CX only becomes important to the debate if information from the CX is brought out in one of the speeches.
- 1NC**  
5 minutes     **First Negative Constructive:** The task of the 1N is to refute all the arguments presented by the first affirmative AND to provide 2-3 additional reasons why the resolution is flawed and should be rejected. This speech is expected to respond to all of the arguments made in the 1AC. In addition to responding to the affirmative's arguments, this speech is also expected to provide some additional objections to the proposition that are directly responsive to the 1AC. For example, the 1NC might argue that the affirmative's solution might solve the problem outlined in the 1AC, but the cost will be so high that other important actions will not be taken and those other actions are worth pursuing before we should commit to the resolution. Another way to do this is to set up an interpretation of the wording of the resolution, explain why that interpretation is fair and reasonable, and then show why that interpretation warrants a rejection of the topic. In general, the need for a rejection of the resolution can be demonstrated in two ways: by refuting the affirmative's arguments in defense of the topic; and, secondly, by introducing additional arguments against the resolution itself.
- CX of 1NC**  
3 minutes     The affirmative cross-examines the negative speaker. (see above)
- 2AC**  
5 minutes     **Second Affirmative.** This speech requires the affirmative speaker to extend the initial defenses of the resolution (by refuting the negative's arguments and re-explaining the original positions) AND to refute the new arguments that the negative has raised concerning the resolution. The affirmative speaker may decide at this point that ALL of the aff arguments cannot be defended. In that case, the affirmative speaker can “pick-and-choose” certain aff arguments to go for, proving that those arguments outweigh the positions that the negative has advanced.
- CX of 2AC:**  
3 minutes     The negative team cross-examines the affirmative speaker. These 3 minutes can be used to clarify information, set up future arguments, expose weaknesses in the speech, etc.
- Note**----at this point, the negative will have two speeches in a row. These two speeches are called the negative block. This is designed to give the affirmative the first and the last speeches. The team with the burden of advocating change (the

affirmative) is arguing against the presumption of the present system (the negative represents a position of no change or the status quo). In order to advocate the resolution as a necessary change, the aff. is given the first and last speeches. In exchange, the negative gets two speeches in a row—the 2NC and the 1NR. Thus, to maximize the fact that the negative will have two speeches in a row, it is a good idea for the two negative speakers to split up the burdens of the 2NC and the 1NR. The 2NC will extend about 2/3rds of the arguments advanced in the 1NC (by responding to the 2AC arguments against that portion of the 1NC). The other 1/3rd of the 1NC arguments should be extended by the 1NR (by responding to the 2AC arguments that were not taken on in the 2NC). Here's another short example: The 1NC says "X, Y, W, and Z." The 2AC responds by saying "not X, not Y, not W, and not Z." Then, the 2NC says "yes X and yes Y." The 1NR, filling in the holes, says "yes W and yes Z."

- 2NC  
5 minutes      **Second Negative Constructive.** This speech responds to a portion of the 2AC arguments. The 2NC should elaborate on the negative's strongest argument/s and refute the statements made by the affirmative in the 2AC. You should read the information about the negative block up above, but the idea is to refute a percentage of the aff's arguments and extend a portion of your own. You can introduce new evidence in this speech. The goal is to really get deep into your argumentation to put more pressure on the 1AR.
- CX of 2NC  
3 minutes      The affirmative cross-examines the negative speaker. (see above)
- 3 minutes  
1NR      **First Negative Rebuttal.** The R stands for rebuttal. The distinction between a rebuttal and a constructive is that the constructives are designed to set up new (construct) arguments for or against the resolution. The rebuttal is designed to respond to those arguments. The distinction is fairly arbitrary, however, and in contemporary debate the only real difference is that the R is a shorter speech. The 1NR is expected to respond to the portion of the 2AC arguments that were not touched by the 2NC. As outlined above, the 2NC and the 1NR make up what is called the "negative block" and the idea is to make the entire block function as a whole to put time pressure on the 1AR. With that in mind, the 1NR should cover the arguments left untouched by the 2NC. In some instances the 2NC will not have enough time to finish all the arguments she has tried to cover and the 1NR will need to step in and finish the end of the 2NR's arguments and then do the 1NR. Depth is the name of the game in this speech.
- 3 minutes  
1AR      **First Affirmative Rebuttal.** This speech should refute all the remaining negative arguments against the resolution, extend the reasons advanced in favor of the resolution, AND sum up the arguments defending the resolution. Perhaps the most difficult speech in the debate, the 1AR is expected to respond to everything said in the 2NC and the 1NR. This burden requires the 1AR to do a lot of "grouping" of arguments on the flow and respond to multiple negative arguments with only one or two points. Word economy is at a premium in the 1AR.
- 3 minutes  
2NR      **Second Negative Rebuttal.** This is the final negative speech. The 2NR needs to respond to all the arguments made in the 1AR by setting up a series of reasons why the resolution should be negated. What are the most compelling and major reasons the negative has won the debate? Why is the resolution false? The best 2NRs make some choices by going through some arguments are "kicking them out" or showing why they no longer matter (this has to be fast and efficient) and then going to the remaining arguments and really digging in to show why the 1AR did not affectively answer them and why they win the debate for the negative. This process—called "issue selection"—is one of the most difficult moments in the debate round because the temptation is to try to win all of the arguments instead of selecting a few. The 2NR also has to close the door on the affirmative and pre-empt things that might come up in the next affirmative speech. A good 2NR will respectfully point out the flaws in the 1AR and make it difficult for the 2AR to overcome those problems.
- 3 minutes  
2AR      **Second Affirmative Rebuttal.** This is the last speech of the debate—designed to give the affirmative the chance to extend arguments in favor of the resolution and respond to any remaining negative arguments against the resolution. This speech must respond to everything from the 2NR and emphasize the reasons why the resolution is a good idea. This speech is about writing the judges ballot in a compelling and persuasive way without dropping arguments on the flow. The 2AR cannot be too fast or too focused on the "line-by-line" of the flow but must be technical enough to block any easy arguments for the negative. The 2AR should emphasize the evidence that supports the resolution

and why the aff's evidence is superior and more on-point. The aff. does not have to win all the arguments made in the debate, but still needs to refute each of the negative's main positions and provide a reason to affirm the resolution.

**RUNNING PREP TIME**---usually 3-5 minutes, this period of time can be used at any time during the debate for preparation. Each speaker should receive the same amount of prep time, it should be determined before the debate, and the judge should keep track of how much is used. If a speaker uses all the prep time before the final speech, the final speech must be delivered without prep time.

**Judging:** The judge looks over the evidence and compares the arguments from the 2NR and the 2AR. S/he then decides whether, on balance, the resolution has been affirmed or negated. A tie goes to the negative.

Judging is not as difficult as it may seem. The primary goal is to determine which side had the prevailing arguments (based on evidence, persuasion, logic, reason, etc.) and which argument demonstrated that the resolution is true or false. The larger question is about the resolution, but the means of deciding whether the resolution has been defended are based on the assessment of the arguments in question.

The goal is to judge the debate based on the arguments presented and not on prior convictions or predispositions. In other words, the best judges avoid "judge intervention" or making decisions on issues not raised in the debate round. To determine the clash of arguments and which arguments prevail, judges use a flow chart and keep notes in sequence such that the last speeches are the most important and arguments have to be answered or at least addressed unless they will be assumed to be completely true. Judges are expected to render a decision and provide feedback for improvement on as many levels as possible.