

Policy Debate

Policy Debate 2011-2012 Topic

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

I. Time Limits

All debate rounds must be timed by the judge, a spectator, or another competitor.

First Affirmative Constructive:	8 Minutes
Negative Cross Examination:	3 Minutes
First Negative Constructive:	8 Minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination:	3 Minutes
Second Affirmative Constructive:	8 Minutes
Negative Cross Examination:	3 Minutes
Second Negative Constructive:	8 Minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination:	3 Minutes
First Negative Rebuttal:	5 Minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal:	5 Minutes
Second Negative Rebuttal:	5 Minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal:	5 Minutes

Each debate team is allowed five minutes of preparation time which they may use at their discretion.

During the questioning periods, the time belongs to the debater asking the questions. The questions should be brief and the answers short and specific. The person answering the questions should not be permitted to refute, but should be limited to simply answering the questions. The questioner should not be permitted to comment on the answers.

II. Policy Debate Guidelines

A. A decision is not to be based upon:

- The merits of the question. The judge should not be influenced by the prejudices in favor of or against the proposition.
- Partiality. The judge should not be influenced by the reputation of, or partiality force against, either of the competing teams, their school, or coaches.
- Preconceived notions on arguments. The judge should not allow his idea of what the best affirmative or negative arguments or case may be to influence the decision. Ideally, the judge should enter the round as 'a blank slate' and vote only on what has been said in the round.
- Personal preferences on debating style. A judge should not penalize a team if its style, either in case construction or delivery, differs from that which s/he personally prefers; but should evaluate all styles on the basis of effectiveness in winning conviction.

B. A decision should be based upon:

- Skill in analysis. This includes not only the analysis of the proposition, but also analysis of the debate as it progresses.
- Use of evidence. This includes the use of sufficient evidence and proper reference to source.
- Validity of argument. This includes reasoning and conclusions drawn from the evidence presented.
- Clarity of organization. This includes clear outlining of constructive arguments and easily followed handling of refutation.
- Effectiveness of delivery. This includes all matter pertaining to oral presentation with special emphasis upon extempore abilities.

C. A team should be penalized for:

- An unfair interpretation. If the interpretation is disputed by the negative, it shall rest with the judge whether or not the affirmative is supporting a tenable position.
- Discourtesy toward opponents. Discourtesy should be penalized according to the seriousness of the offense.
- Falsification of evidence. If a team falsifies evidence in support of a point, it shall lose the point, and if the falsification is obviously deliberate, the judge shall impose an additional penalty according to the seriousness of the falsification.

- Misconstruing an opponent's arguments. A speaker who misconstrues an argument unintentional should not be penalized more than the time wasted. If it IS intentional, s/he should in addition, forfeit the argument.
- Introducing new arguments into rebuttal The judges shall disregard new arguments introduced in rebuttal. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the refutation of arguments introduced by opponents.
- Speaking overtime. When a speaker's time is up, the judge shall disregard anything beyond a closing statement.

III. Policy Debate Ballots

Speaker Points: The judge is to rate each debater's effectiveness on a scale from 8 - 40. In arriving at your decision take into consideration the following aspects of good debating:

- Analysis: Getting to the heart of the question.
- Proof: Supporting contentions with sufficient and convincing evidence.
- Argument: Sound reasoning; logical conclusions.
- Adaptation: Clashing with the opposition.
- Refutation: Destroying opponent's contentions; reinforcing your own.
- Organization: Clear, logical presentations of material.
- Speaking: Effective delivery; favorable impact on audience.
- Cross Examination: Clarity, insightfulness, effective in both questioning and responding to opponents questions.
- Courtesy: Common courtesy and appropriate behavior is expected at all times.