

THE HUMAN RIGHTS DEBATE COMPETITION

17 March 2007

Lund, Sweden

PARTICIPANT GUIDE – 22 January 2007

Debating Vocabulary

Team – consisting of two students

Resolution – the topic of the debate, will begin with “Be it resolved that ...”

Round – lasting about 60 minutes, where teams will debate the given resolution

Pairing(s) – whom a team will debate against in a round, e.g. Team 1 vs. Team 2

Judge – a Professor or expert in the given field who evaluates the round of debate

Timekeeper – a student who keeps track of speaking times during the round

Affirmative – the team that argues in support of the resolution

Opposition – the team that argues against the resolution

First Speaker – the team member who speaks first, e.g. 1st Affirmative or 1st

Opposition

Second Speaker – the team member who speaks second, e.g. 2nd Affirmative or 2nd

Opposition

Constructive – the speech in which a speaker presents his/her arguments in support of, or in opposition to, the resolution

Rebuttal – the speech in which a speaker defends his/her position from attack and rebuilds his/her arguments

Structure of the Competition

In this competition there will be two preliminary rounds of debate where teams will debate each side of the resolution once. For example, if Team 1 debates against the resolution in Round 1, they will debate in support of the resolution in Round 2.

Pairings for the first two preliminary rounds will be random. Based on the number of wins and overall score from the preliminary rounds four teams will advance to the semifinals. The winners of the semifinals will then compete in the final round of debate. Teams in the semifinal and final rounds will randomly be assigned the side that they will debate.

Structure of Each Round

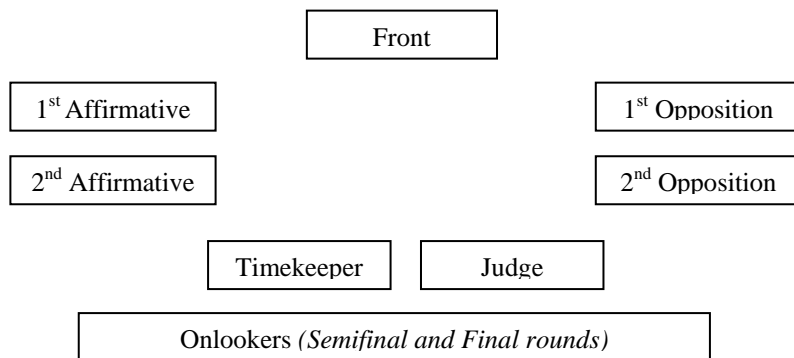
The speaking order for each round is as follows:

1st Affirmative constructive speech	5 minutes
1st Affirmative questioned by 2nd Opposition	3 minutes
1st Opposition constructive speech	5 minutes
1st Opposition questioned by 1st Affirmative	3 minutes
2nd Affirmative constructive speech	5 minutes
2nd Affirmative questioned by 1st Opposition	3 minutes
2nd Opposition constructive speech	5 minutes
2nd Opposition questioned by 2nd Affirmative	3 minutes
Preparation for Rebuttals	5 minutes

1st Opposition rebuttal	3 minutes
1st Affirmative rebuttal	3 minutes
2nd Opposition rebuttal	3 minutes
2nd Affirmative rebuttal	3 minutes

The two preliminary rounds are closed rounds, i.e. it will only be the judge, time keeper, and two teams. The semifinal and final rounds are open rounds and can be watched by anyone. After your round has finished you will be given verbal comments from the judges. In addition you will also receive all score sheets at the end of the competition.

The room setup will be as follows:



Researching the Topic

Once you have been given the resolution you should begin researching. For example if the resolution was, “Be it resolved that Sweden should implement tuition fees for university students”, you might want to start by looking at what exactly the policies are on tuition fees. Then you and your teammate might want to compare the pros and cons of tuition fees by looking at other countries. What are the economic, social, cultural, and political implications? How would this affect individuals? Would it change the education system? What affect would it have on the state? Would it be a competitive advantage for Sweden? Would universities benefit? These are just a few questions that you could ask yourself. Try and approach the topic from different or unconventional angles. Think outside the box! Remember to work together with your teammate!

Things to avoid...

- Too many statistics or over reliance on external sources
- Information from unreliable sources, as a general rule if you wouldn't use a source in an academic paper then you wouldn't use it in a debate either

Writing Your Speeches

Once you have sufficient information you can begin to prepare your constructive speech. Teams should decide in advance which speaker they would like to be. Each team member should have 2-3 main points to present. Any less or more than this and you may have difficulty meeting, or staying within, the 5 minutes. A good speech will include an introduction in the form of a “road map” (an overview of the arguments that you will bring forth), the main arguments, and a conclusion. **All speeches should follow this prescribed format** with the exception of the **1st Affirmative, who must**

also define or explain the resolution briefly at the very beginning of his/her speech. This is so that all debaters are clear on terminology and references. Lastly, speakers should also make some reference to their partner's points, e.g. the 1st Affirmative/Opposition should mention what points his/her partner will present, while the 2nd Affirmative/Opposition would mention some of the points that his/her partner has already stated.

Questioning should be based on **the previous speaker's speech only**. Debaters must therefore be attentive while other speakers are speaking. See rule #4 in **Official Rules of the Debate** (below).

In the rebuttal speakers should attempt to summarize the **key themes or ideas that have taken place in the current round of debate**. This speech tries to put the debate in context and should focus on the major areas of contention (the "crux") that evolved during the round. This is the final opportunity for a team to convince the judge why his/her team has won the round. No new information is to be presented in this speech.

Things to avoid...

- When delivering your speech, you should not read your material, nor should you have it memorized word-for-word
- Don't refute your opponent's arguments in your constructive speech – that is what the rebuttal is for ☺
- Avoid bringing up religion
- Do not place the other team, or your team, in an indefensible position, e.g. defending genocide

Judging Criteria

Judges will use the following criteria when evaluating debates:

- **Delivery (10 marks)** – tone, style, deportment, persuasiveness, eye contact, mannerism, and ability to speak without dependence on notes.
- **Content (20 marks)** – organization, reasoning, creativity, logical conclusion, and evidence.
- **Questioning (6 marks)** – questions should be logical, relevant, and concise.
- **Answering (6 marks)** – should be logical, consistent, and not evasive.
- **Rebuttal (8 marks)** – refutation of opponents' arguments as well as summation of own arguments, followed by concluding remarks.

Each debater will be assessed using the above criteria. Individual scores will then be combined for a score out of 100. The team with the greatest score wins the round.

Official Rules of the Debate:

All debaters are responsible for being familiar with the following rules:

1. Defining the Resolution. It is the responsibility of the 1st Affirmative to define the resolution, or outline the terms of the debate. It must be defined in a reasonable and straightforward manner. You are not allowed to "squirrel" the resolution (i.e. propose a different topic) or define it in an outrageous or ridiculous manner. You are also not allowed to define it in such a way that it becomes undebatable, or unfair to your opponents. The Opposition, however, must accept the definition and debate on those terms. If they strongly disagree they are allowed to state their displeasure during their speeches. The judge will take this into consideration when scoring.

2. Speeches. Each constructive speech will be 5 minutes in length. In this speech, you are expected to introduce arguments in support of, or in opposition to, the resolution. Speeches must raise different points and not overlap in content. For example, if your arguments in support of the resolution are economic, social, political, and cultural, then each team member should discuss 2 out of the 4 points. You are not allowed to introduce new information in your rebuttal.

3. Speaking Times. You are allowed **15 seconds grace** at the end of your speech to finish your concluding remarks. After this grace period, the timekeeper will stand and you must stop talking. Should you continue to speak beyond the grace period, you will be penalized. The same holds true for when being questioned and during the rebuttal.

4. Questioning and Responding:

- a) You must ask direct questions. You are not allowed to make statements in the hope that it will strengthen your argument. If you wish to comment on what the respondent has said during his/her answering, then you must wait until your rebuttal.
- b) You are **not allowed to simply demand a “yes or no” answer**. The respondent is allowed to justify his/her answer.
- c) You must answer all questions as asked. If you evade a question, you will be penalized. However, you are not required to answer questions of a personal nature.
- d) You are allowed a maximum of approximately **30 seconds to answer a question**. Should you exceed this and not allow the next question to be asked, then you will be penalized. However, if you answer the question appropriately before 30 seconds, and proceed to babble and not allow the next question to be asked, then you will also be penalized.
- e) The questioner is not allowed to cut off the respondent before he/she has had time to appropriately answer the question. However, after the question has been answered, or after 30 seconds, you are allowed to stop the respondent with a “thank you” and continue with the next question.
- f) The respondent is **not allowed to answer a question with a question**. However, the respondent is allowed to ask for clarification if the question posed by the questioner is unclear.
- g) The questioner should ask only relevant questions and must not be discourteous in any way.

5. Props. You are not allowed to use visual aids such as pictures, diagrams, audio or video devices. You are allowed to quote from newspapers and books, but are not allowed to bring in the actual newspaper or book for effect.

6. Etiquette. All debaters must act in a courteous and polite manner. You must not attempt to belittle or insult an opponent. Remember: *attack the point, not the person*. You are not allowed to heckle, or speak when someone else has the floor. If a debater lowers the tone of the debate, he/she will be penalized. Be diplomatic.

RELAX, TAKE A DEEP BREATH AND HAVE FUN!!!