



## EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA CONFERENCE

### ORGANIZATION AND GENERAL PROCEDURE

The following order of debate will be followed:

(1)	First Affirmative Speaker	5 minutes
(2)	Cross Examination of First Affirmative	2 ½ minutes
(3)	First Negative Speaker	5 minutes
(4)	Cross Examination of First Negative	2 ½ minutes
(5)	Second Affirmative Speaker	5 minutes
(6)	Cross Examination of Second Affirmative	2 ½ minutes
(7)	Second Negative Speaker	5 minutes
(8)	Cross Examination of Second Negative	2 ½ minutes
(9)	Preparation for Rebuttal	5 minutes
(10)	Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
(11)	Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes

### COMPOSITION OF TEAMS

Teams must consist of 2, 3 or 4 individuals. The two constructive speeches may not be given by the same person, nor may the cross-examination and rebuttal be done by one individual. A speaker is allowed to finish his sentence after his time expires. However, anything said by him beyond this should not count in the debate.

Any additional students may sit in the audience separated from any team member during the course of the debate, including the break for rebuttal preparation. A violating team must forfeit the debate.

### PRINCIPLES OF DEBATING

The better debating will be done by the affirmative if it does more to establish the proposition than the negative does to prevent its being established. Conversely, the negative to be superior must do more to negate the contentions of the affirmative than the latter does to establish or affirm them.

“Unsupported assertions and purely emotional appeals must not be considered. He who asserts must prove.” (GF) The affirmative should attempt to establish the proposition and the negative should make an effort to refute contentions presented in the debate.

Since debating is not merely an oratorical contest, content should be given as much consideration as excellence in presentation. Verbatim dependence on notes is not encouraged.

Their opponents may not interrupt speakers during the debate. During their allocated time, the opposition has the burden of revealing mistakes and errors. The judge is responsible for penalizing the affirmative rebuttallist who misquotes.

A debater shall be penalized for making a point of order.

A tie vote may NOT be given.

## **CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES**

The constructive speakers should present a correct analysis of the proposition and sound, clearly organized cases based upon such analysis. In order to establish an assertion, the speaker must support it with enough evidence and logic to convince an intelligent but previously uninformed person that it is more reasonable to believe the assertion than to disbelieve it.

The affirmative first speaker shall define in a manner he considers reasonable all terms of the question which needs an explanation. The first negative speaker should either accept or disagree with the definition as given by the affirmative. Failure of the negative to object to the definitions in the first constructive speech is equivalent to acceptance of them by the negative. "Trick" definitions are not encouraged since they only lead to bickering and quibbling.

To prevent the affirmative's proposition from being established, the negative may show all that the contentions of the affirmative are not valid – either that the problems as described by the affirmative do not exist or that the affirmative proposals do not solve any existing problems or both – or, if it wishes, also may present a counter proposal. That is, it may admit some deficiencies in the status quo but have what it feels is a better solution to the problem. If the negative presents a counter proposal, they must do so in the first constructive speech. In the event the negative presents a counter proposal, the burden of proof falls equally on both sides. Facetious and irrelevant counter plans are clearly out of order. No revision in the position of a team is permitted during the debate.

In affirmative constructive speeches, the speaker may use a portion of his time in running refutation – that is refuting contentions brought in by his opposition thus far in debate. However, it should not exceed 1/3 or 2 minutes of any constructive speech. In negative speeches, if the negative presents a counter proposal, the speaker may use 1/3 of the time in running refutation. If, however, the negative uses the method of showing that the affirmative arguments are not valid, then there is NO limit on the proportion of time speakers may use in refuting affirmative contentions brought up thus far in debate.

Visual aids are permissible. Once introduced, they become available for the opponent's use if desired. They should be left in plain view of the opposition.

A speaker may not be interrupted by his opponents during the debate.

## **QUESTIONING**

The cross-examination should attempt to destroy the contentions of the opponents and to support and advance one's own case. To many, this is the most crucial part of any debate! It must be based on material previously introduced by any of the constructive speakers.

Questioning should try to gain agreement to general truths involving the arguments in question, to establish specific points from which a line of argument may be built, or to express fallacies in reasoning or errors in evidence. The questioner must confine him/herself to interrogation and not make statements or comments.

The questioner may courteously interrupt the respondent to request shorter or more direct answers or to indicate that an answer is sufficient. The respondent may request that the question be repeated or rephrased if it is not clear.

The questioner should not use more than a few moments of his/her time in explanation or comment. The witness shall confine himself to answers and not question the questioner.

A YES or NO answer is NOT to be demanded.

### **REBUTTAL**

The rebuttal period is a time for refutation and summary. The rebuttalist should show, with the ability to extemporize (offhand remarks; not prepared or “canned”) that the contentions of the opposition are not tenable and that those of his team are.

New points may NOT be introduced in the rebuttal. However, new evidence on points already introduced may be presented.

The affirmative rebuttalist may refute statements made in the negative rebuttal.

The practice of asking questions in the closing rebuttal speech when the opposition has no opportunity to answer them and should be penalized. The affirmative rebuttalist should not ask any questions that he doesn't answer in his rebuttal. The negative has no opportunity to refute them. On the other hand, the affirmative rebuttalist may ask rhetorical questions.

### **COMMUNICATION**

During the course of the debate, including the break for rebuttal preparation, team members and any additional students, are not permitted to use electronic communications of any kind, even for the purpose of doing research. A violating team must forfeit the debate.

Team members only however may use written communications to suggest points of argument. A judge should deduct 1 point if team members speak to one another during the debate. However, team members only are allowed to talk to each other during the 5 minutes rebuttal preparation.

### **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Judges are cautioned to penalize speakers who misquote opponents, use sarcasm, or indicate lack of preparedness.

The better debating will be done by the affirmative if it does more to establish the proposition that the negative does to prevent its being established, the negative, to win, must negate the contentions of the affirmative than the latter does to establish them

Debating is something more than an oratorical contest; therefore, content should be given more weight than excellence in presentation.

Platform delivery that is distinct, communicative, poised, persuasive, and courteous.

### **GENERAL RULES OF THUMB AND PENALTIES**

As coaches we feel a need for quality debating. Since we are unable to observe these debates, we rely on our judges to provide comments. We seek your help in providing these comments.

A tie may not be given, please be sure that one team has earned more points at the end of the debate. Please CIRCLE the winner on the ballot and make sure the circled team has more points.

Points are awarded as follows:

- (1) Speakers may earn a maximum of 5.0 points.
- (2) During Cross-Examination the Questioner may earn a maximum of 2.5 points and the witness may earn a maximum of 2.5 points.
- (3) Breakdown points can be to the nearest 0.1 points.

How to assess penalties:

- (1) Deduct 2 points from team score for interrupting a speaker during delivery of a speech.
- (2) Deduct 2 points for blatant sarcasm or discourtesy during a speech or rebuttal.
- (3) Deduct 1 point for blatant sarcasm or discourtesy during cross-examination.
- (4) Deduct 1 point for verbatim reading.
- (5) Deduct 1 point for questioner who fails several times to ask a question. Give a zero to any questioner who asks NO questions.
- (6) Deduct 1 point for a question answered VERBALLY by any debater other than the one to whom the question was asked.
- (7) Deduct 1 point from questioner demanding a YES or NO answer.
- (8) Deduct 1 point from a questioner who fails to allow a speaker a reasonable time for response and 1 point from a speaker who takes an unreasonable amount of time to respond after questioner has requested shorter more direct answers.
- (9) Deduct 1 point for team members talking to each other during the debate except for during the rebuttal preparation period.
- (10) Deduct 0.25 of a point for every 15 seconds under or over the speech time allowed. (Make sure the timekeeper announces speech length, if not, ask for it).
- (11) Any notes taken by Judge during debate should be submitted and included with the official ballot.

Forfeits:

- (1) Using electronic communications of any kind.
- (2) Additional people sitting with the team.

### **SEMIFINAL AND FINAL COMPETITION**

The team that will compete for the semifinal round must be identified prior to the coin toss of the semifinal competition. The team that will compete for the final round must be identified prior to the coin toss of the final round.