

From WUDC Manual

Policy	<p>Policy - Motions of the form “This House Would [do X]” involve Government arguing that they should be enacting policy X. A policy is a concrete course of action that Government teams wish to convince the judges should be implemented. Such motions are about whether the House should do X – with Government teams arguing that they should and Opposition teams arguing that they should not.</p> <p>These debates are purely normative. They do not require teams to discuss whether or not policy X is likely to be enacted in the real world, or whether or not policy X is currently status quo. For the purposes of the debate, the Government teams are the government and the politicians that make it up, and the debate is about whether they should or should not do a policy, not whether their real-world counterparts will or will not. It should be assumed that the policy will be implemented in the manner that the Government teams set up (also known as Government fiat). As such, it is never a valid line of opposition to such motions to state that “but the government would never do this” or, more subtly, “but politicians would never pass this law”.</p>
Analysis	<p>Motions that begin with “This House believes that [X]” are value judgment debates. They require Government teams to argue for the truth of the statement represented by X, whilst Opposition teams argue that X is false. There is no need for Government teams to implement a model.</p> <p>Motions that begin with “THBT [X] should...” are about whether or not the statement is true from the perspective of a neutral observer. Even though these motions are phrased as true or false statements, Government teams are encouraged to implement a model.</p> <p>Motions that begin with “This House supports/opposes [X]” also usually need not involve Government proposing a model. Instead, the Government teams need to argue that they would either symbolically, politically, materially or in some other manner support the person, group, institution, cause, idea, value, or statement expressed by X. Opposition need to argue that X should not be supported in that way.</p> <p>Motions that begin with “This House prefers” function in the same way as other analytical debates, with one important difference: Opposition teams are bound to defend the specific comparison provided by the motion. They must either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In motions phrased THP X to Y: defend Y or ● In motions phrased THP X: defend status quo.

Actor	<p>Actor - Motions that begin with “This House, as [A], would do [X]” are somewhat special. These motions are more specific about the entity (A) doing (X) and so invite a closer examination of the perspective of the entity about what they should do, with all teams arguing from actor A’s perspective. Teams debating these motions should therefore consider what actor A’s knowledge, values and interests are, and explain why the motion is or is not in actor A’s best interest. Unlike previously discussed debates, actor debates are not about whether or not X action is necessarily best for the world.</p>
Regrets	<p>Regrets - Motions that begin with “This House Regrets [X]” ask whether the world would have been a better place without the existence of X. In this debate, all teams are debating with the benefit of hindsight - the harms or benefits that teams are attributing to X have already occurred (i.e. status quo). Teams must also describe how an alternative world that developed without X occurring would look like. This is also known as a “counterfactual”. For example, with the motion “This House Regrets the selection of Joe Biden as the Democratic nominee”, teams cannot just debate the merits or downsides of Biden as a Democratic nominee. Instead, they should consider who alternative Democratic nominees might have been, and whether those nominees would have led to better or worse political outcomes than in the status quo.</p>