

## Public Debate Preparation

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Debaters need to follow the debate structure and prepare slides to organize debate flow. Please read general debate guideline and instruction carefully before your preparation. In preparing the slides, refer to the most relevant theory, empirical evidence, and policy outcomes. Evaluation is based on the preparation of slides and performance/response during the debate. **Please divide your work and indicate the section you are responsible for on the slides.**

### I. Debate Flow

1. Opening Statement (Each team 8 minutes. No interruption)
  - 1) State your stance and provide supports
  - 2) Theoretical foundation and principles
  - 3) Central empirical findings
2. Rebuttal (Total 25 minutes. Raise hand and take turns)
  - 1) Repeats opponents' arguments and point out their mistakes/insufficiency
  - 2) Clarifications and further explanation; No new arguments presented
  - 3) Questions and answers
3. Closing Statements (Each team 5 minutes. No interruption)
  - 1) Summary and enhancement of own arguments
  - 2) Key rebuttals and counter-evidence
4. Questions & Answers (From the audience)

### II. Slides Preparation

The slides help team members organize the flow of the debate, list central arguments, and provide empirical evidence. There is no requirement on the length of the slides, just need to make them clear, concise, and concrete. Sources and links must be provided for all data and empirical findings.

1. Opening Statements
  - 1) State at least 2-3 arguments supportive of their position (with references).
  - 2) Each argument should have at least 2-3 statements, each of which is supported by 2-3 citations.
  - 3) For each citation, a one-sentence summary must be provided, along with the source
2. Rebuttal Arguments
  - 1) Literature overview and summary (academic publications and professional reports)
  - 2) Empirical evidence and support (journal articles, institutional data and statistics, real examples)
  - 3) Provide answers to anticipated rebuttal questions (empirical evidence and sources)
3. Closing Statements
  - 1) Summarize and enhance the arguments, do not just repeat
  - 2) Point out the most anticipated weak arguments from the opponent
  - 3) Provide essential empirical support to your most central argument

## Public Debate Format

Michael V. Crapotta

### The Role of the Referee:

- The referee's job is to ensure that all voices in the debate are heard. The referee is impartial, but still holds the power to open (and close) the floor to members of the debating teams.
- Students are to take their seat in the debate promptly as the referee calls the debate to order. All conversation should stop and all students should be seated at this point.
- Students in the debate must be formally recognized by the referee in order to speak.
- Extension of speaking time may be allowed only if the referee deems it appropriate.
- *The Referee will permit all involved students to take notes at any point in the debate.*

### Motions:

- When the referee opens the floor or makes a motion, a secondary voice is needed to move the motion.
  - *Example:*
    - *"I am now opening the floor for debate."*—Referee
    - *"Second."*—A Student
- When a motion is out of order the referee will state: "The motion is out of order" and students will stop the conversation.
  - Out-of-order motions are ones that present a point already rejected during the debate session.
  - Motions that present questions too similar to ones already put forth are also out of order.

### Debate Flow:

#### **I. Opening Argument**

- a. Structure:
  - i. Each position (affirmative or negative) will have the floor open for 8 minutes to present their opening argument ***without interruption.***
    1. Each team can select ***up to 3 speakers*** to present their points.
      - a. These speakers must raise their hands in order to be placed on the list of presenters at the beginning of the debate.
    2. Each opening speaker should be prepared to introduce 2-3 argumentative statements in support of their position
- b. Argumentative Criteria:
  - i. State stance and provide overview of entire argument (affirmative or negative) using the following:
    1. Literature empirical findings

2. Novel economic perspectives/research findings (*i.e.* student-conducted research)
  - ii. Analyze theoretical foundations and economic principles that drive the perspective
  - iii. The argument to build is a *prima facie*, which can be defined as a logical analysis containing sufficient evidence to stand on its own validity until attacked.
- c. Preparation of Slides:
  - i. Each opening speaker (up to 3 total opening speakers per side) could employ slides for their speaking period
  - ii. Slides should contain a brief sentence that describes each argumentative statement that said opening speaker will present
    1. These sentences (one for each argumentative statement) must be supported by:
      - a. Citation
      - b. One-sentence summary of the source (relevant to the argument)
- d. After both parties have presented their opening arguments, the floor will be opened for debate.

## II. Debate

- a. Structure:
  - i. The debate section will last a total of ***roughly 25 minutes***, subject to the referees' discretion.
  - ii. Each side will present its points in ***2 minute*** slots.
  - iii. The flow of the debate will proceed as follows: affirmative, negative, affirmative negative . . . alternating until the 25 minutes has elapsed.
- b. Argumentative Criteria:
  - i. Only one student can be assigned the floor at a given time.
  - ii. Students must raise their hands in order to be considered as the next floor speaker.
    1. This is important to both the maintenance of debate structure, as well as mutual respect between teams.
  - iii. During their two minutes, students may respond directly to statements made by students on the other side.
    1. Responses may include concessions, rejections, or explorations of previously unaddressed points.
      - a. This is also a good time to consider clarification of previously raised points, as well as rebuttals.
    2. Students may not directly question the other side, but they may challenge the other side to directly address their new points at the end of their 2 minutes.

- c. Preparation of slides:
  - i. Each chosen debater could utilize slides to support arguments or raise counter-arguments.
  - ii. Slides will address the following:
    - 1. A brief literature overview of the argument
      - a. Supporting literature should come from academic papers or professional reports
    - 2. Empirical evidence in support of the argument
      - a. This evidence may come from academic publications, institutional reports, or real-world examples
    - 3. Responses to potential rebuttal questions, as well as necessary concessions
  - iii. Clearly, if a team is asked to respond directly to a point raised by the other side, they might not have a slide prepared.
    - 1. This is anticipated and makes the debate interesting. In these cases, draw on relevant literature to address the opponents' concerns.
      - a. Use verbal citations when referring directly to an author's work (e.g. "Fisher's 1930 findings disagree because. . .").
- d. After the debate, a short recess will be taken, during which each party may regroup and formulate their closing arguments, considering rebuttals and previously raised points.

### III. Closing Argument

- a. Structure:
  - i. Each party will have **5 minutes** to close their argument without interruption.
- b. Argumentative Criteria:
  - i. During this time, it is important for each side to consider how best to summarize their arguments.
  - ii. Enhancement of own arguments is necessary. Please do not just repeat previous arguments.
    - 1. Note: the introduction of completely new information must be handled carefully.
      - a. It is easy to obscure your perspective by introducing new information in the final 5 minutes.
  - iii. Students should revisit key rebuttals and restate the most important counter evidence, in an effort to reiterate the extent to which their perspectives have stood up to the debate.
- c. After the closing arguments are completed, the discussion is officially adjourned.

- d. Preparation of slides:
  - i. For this section, the closing speaker(s) on each side may utilize *slides*.
  - ii. Slides will address the following:
    - 1. Summarize and *enhance* own arguments.
    - 2. Expose weakest arguments anticipated from opposing side.
      - a. Empirical support must be provided for the most essential arguments.

**Evaluation: relate to research and debate practices and will be used for evaluation purposes.**

- 1) Appearance of team/seriousness of team
  - 2) Delivery: Team members addressed remarks to the audience in clear, loud voices
  - 3) Opening statements were well organized, complete and included three arguments
  - 4) Team members participated equally throughout the debate
  - 5) Arguments were related to ethical perspectives and principles
  - 6) Rebuttal was specific to arguments made in the opposing team's opening statement
  - 7) Summary provided and opponents' counterpoints addressed
  - 8) Answers to audience questions were well thought out
  - 9) Respect shown throughout the debate for the opposing team (no name calling, interruptions, etc.)
- Ensure that your points are justifiable based on current literature.
  - Slides will be used to organize arguments and maintain the flow of the debate.
    - When preparing slides, please refer to the most relevant theory, empirical evidence, and policy outcomes.
    - Slides will be used in the evaluation of students' debate performance.
  - As always, citations are necessary to avoid plagiarism. Citations should be provided in slides where necessary (see "Debate Flow" above), but students should also be mindful of verbally citing authors when using their points to respond to opponents during the Debate section.
  - Be as specific as possible, while ensuring that your arguments are simple enough to follow.
  - Feel free to use specific jargon while presenting your points, but define any terms that are not assumed to be common knowledge before you proceed with your argument.
  - Be respectful to your peers, especially when presenting conflicting arguments from two different up-to-date papers.
    - Example: If two papers present different findings regarding the same subject matter (*i.e.* two different papers that support both the affirmative and negative arguments), the conversation will be allowed only if there is irrefutable evidence that one paper's findings are more accurate than another's. If not, the conversation will be halted by the referee. The mere presence of a conflicting viewpoint in academic circles is not enough to support a counterargument.