

Closer to Oxford meets Diwanieh

General rules for the online debate

1. The format:

1.1 A debate round comprises 2 teams - an “Affirmative” team and a “Negative” team

1.2 Each team has 2 members who will be active in the online debate - so each team will create 2 speeches

2. The debate motion

2.1 The debate motion is the topic that is being discussed in the debate. It is written as an affirmation that is controversial - meaning it allows for both for and against arguments to support or reject it

2.2 The motion has to be clear.

2.3 The motion should not be formulated in a way that is advantageous for one team or another

3. The preparation for the debate

3.1 The debate motion will be announced 2 weeks prior to the start of the debate (the debate starts with the 1st affirmative speech (A1))

3.2 Also, the first negative speech (N1), the second affirmative speech (A2) and the second negative speech (N2) are preceded by one preparation day (see section 4.2)

3.3 The participants in the online debate can ask questions about the debate round, the format or the registration at office@closer2oxford.ro

4. The debate round

4.1 The debate motion is announced 2 weeks prior to the start of the debate

4.2 The debate round unfolds as follows:

Week 1:

Note that Romania and Jordan are on the same time zone, so the same deadline will apply.

Day 1: Posting the first affirmative speech A1, deadline at 23.59;

Day 2: Preparation and research time for N1;

Day 3: Posting the first negative speech N1, deadline at 23.59;

Day 4: Preparation and research time for A2;

Day 5: Posting the second affirmative speech A2, deadline at 23.59;

Day 6: Preparation and research time for N2;

Day 7: Posting the second negative speech N2, deadline at 23.59;

4.3 In case the members of the opposite team do not post in due time their first speech, you will be allocated a volunteer opposing team, so that you can continue the debate;

4.4 If the second speakers, be them from the affirmative team or the negative team, do not post their speech, their team is being disqualified for abandoning the debate and the opposing team wins automatically

Week 2

4.5 The judges will start evaluating the speeches the day after the last speech (second negative speech N2) was posted;

4.6 The debates are being allocated randomly to the judges, without them knowing the names of the participants involved in that debate;

4.7 The feedback and verdicts (announcing which team won the round) will be posted within a week after the debate ended;

4.8 The judges' evaluation consists of - individual points for each of the four debaters in the round, feedback on each speech and a rationale for the verdict;

4.8 The victories and individual scores will be used to create a ranking of all debaters involved in the competition.

5. The debate case

For a more extensive explanation of the debate concepts read the tutorials we made available for you.

For a short explanation of the structure of your debate case, read below:

5.1. The debate case represents the position of the team - the affirmative team supports the

motion and the negative team rejects the emotion. The debate case consists of a number of arguments that respect a certain structure. In this competition, the case of each team is developed through their 2 speeches. Each speech should be no longer than 800 words.

5.2 The debate case consists of the following elements, in this order:

5.2.1 The introduction of your debate case

a) Defining the key terms;

Give clear definitions of the key terms of the motion and also of other concepts you intend to use. The definitions should be reasonable and balanced - meaning they allow for a fair debate for both teams.

b) The interpretation of the motion in the view of your team. How does the world become a better place if we accept your team's vision? Make the interpretation clear and fair to both teams.

c) The context of the debate - in what country/region is this debate relevant? Who is affected by it? Why should we care about this topic, what is the impact?

5.2.2 The body of your debate case

a) The body of your case consists of the arguments. There is no strongly recommended number of arguments, but they should be fully developed in the space limit of 800 words. Arguments should have a short, catchy title (a tag), should be explained in one paragraph and should have an impact on your case - as in contribute to accepting or rejecting the motion

b) If you use statistics, case studies, interviews or any other sources, you need to reference them in the footnotes section of your speech

5.2.3 The conclusion of your debate speech

The conclusion is where you show why your arguments were successful in proving/rejecting the motion. Here is the place where you should remind the judge why the world will be a better place if they adopt your team's vision.

6. The role of each speech in the debate

6.1 The first affirmative speech A1

- This speech has the role to define the key terms of the motion, to interpret the motion in the view of the affirmative team and to explain the affirmative arguments

- This speech should be no longer than 800 words
- If you use statistics, case studies, interviews or any other sources, you need to reference them in the footnotes section of your speech

6.2 The first negative speech N1

- This speech has the role to contest the affirmative vision - the main responsibility of the negative team is to disprove the arguments of the affirmative team
- The first negative speech N1 should contest the definitions of the affirmative team if and only if they are not reasonable or they are not connected to the motion or they are evidently biased towards the affirmative team. It is not recommended to contest definitions just for the sake of arguing - it will take up valuable space of your speech!
- The first negative speech should present the negative vision on the motion
- The first negative speech N1 has the main obligation to give counter arguments, in a structured and logical manner, to the affirmative arguments
- The first negative speech N1 can, but is not obliged to introduce independent negative arguments
- This speech should be no longer than 800 words
- If you use statistics, case studies, interviews or any other sources, you need to reference them in the footnotes section of your speech

6.3 The second affirmative speech A2

- This speech has the role to rebuild the affirmative case, after it was criticised and attacked by the negative team. It should address the counter arguments brought by the N1 - be them at definition level, the overall interpretation of the motion or the arguments themselves
- No new arguments can be presented in this speech. The arguments brought by the A1 can be strengthened - with new explanation, evidence etc.
- This speech is the last speech of the affirmative team - so it should weigh the positions of the two teams and explain why the affirmative side wins. The A2 will present the clashes of the debate - meaning the points where their arguments engaged directly with the arguments of their

opponents - and show why the clash was argued better by the Affirmative team

- This speech should be no longer than 800 words
- If you use statistics, case studies, interviews or any other sources, you need to reference them in the footnotes section of your speech

6.4. The second negative speech N2

- This speech mirrors the A2, trying to win the debate for the negative team
- This speech should be no longer than 800 words
- If you use statistics, case studies, interviews or any other sources, you need to reference them in the footnotes section of your speech

7. The debate code of conduct

7.1 The debaters should be fair towards each other, respect the cultural and personal differences between each other. The general rule is that debaters criticize ideas, not persons, so no personal attacks are allowed

7.2 The debaters have to be intellectually honest - plagiarism is not allowed and any external source for the ideas used in the debate need to be referenced in the speeches

7.3 Debaters should not falsify documents/materials in their favor

7.4 Debaters need to post their speeches in the time slot allocated for this activity

8. Reasons for disqualification from the online competition

8.1 Not respecting the code of conduct present above can lead to being disqualified by the organizing team

8.2 Debaters declare on their own responsibility that the personal information they offered is accurate (name, age, university attended etc). If the information is found to be untrue, debaters can be disqualified from the competition

8.3 In the case one of the second speakers (A2 or N2) does not post their speech, their team is automatically disqualified and the opposing team wins the debate.