# 1AC – Harvard/Amherst

### Contention 1

#### Top Level: Rishi –

#### The time has come for the debate community to make a change surrounding participation – adversity is opportunity, the era of online debate after the onset of the pandemic demonstrates the communities’ adaptability, this must be extended to expand participation in the activity

#### Hybrid debating lacks institutional support– debate about debate needs to coupled with broader push for change – each strategy in isolation will fail to garner traction

#### This affirmative pairs institutional change of the debate community with in round practice: Our demand is that the debate community adapt to accommodate hybrid debaters.

#### Chris –

#### Understanding the dilemma surrounding anticompetitive practices imposed against hybrid debaters in policy debate is a prerequisite to discussions around the resolution. Our arguments filter how we approach the debate space.

#### Our first piece of offense is Fungibility –

#### Hybrid debaters exist at the margins of the debate community and paradoxically are only allowed to participate in the name of participation in debate – the hybrid debater is only allowed on a team when there’s an odd number of people and they can partner with whoever – Rishi & I were tossed in and out of tournaments based on whether or not there was an odd number of teams at the NDT committee’s whim – last year we got phone called the night before districts that we had to compete because of an odd number and then after debating 2 rounds we were pulled out because another team had dropped and there was an odd number including us. The NDT is the height of this – the morning of the tournament we were called because even though we were illegal in the tournament and we were at the bottom of the waitlist, we were literally the last team in the entire country who could fill in to fix the schedule.

#### This demonstrates hybrid fungibility – our competition is commodified to the level of what we produce but we are limited in what we receive from this production. Rishi & I prepare, practice, and research for debate always doing the work that debate necessitates, but we are only evaluated by the production of competition not by our competitive skills or who we are as people – this means that we are fungibilized as a tool in order to facilitate debate rounds, as demonstrated by tournament directors pushing us to compete in only circumstances where It facilitates overall debates. Despite being needed to fuel and drive competition we are not able to access the fruits of said competition.

#### Hybrid fungibility proves that our participation a prerequisite to having debates which motivate research and actualize clash.

#### You can treat an aff ballot like a Marxist reclamation of this production because voting aff allows us to reclaim the means of production for participation in debate which means that the symbol of voting aff and sending us to other rounds is more important the substance of this debate

#### An aff ballot does the opposite of the NDT committee’s action: it legitimizes hybrid debaters and the labor that Rishi has to put in – the ballot and a 30 are critical to garnering legitimacy and to reconcile the labor that the hybrid debaters face. The outcome legitimizes hybrid participation

#### The ballot disentangles this notion of fungibility because it means that the struggles of hybrid debaters can be overcome – it simultaneously decouples the burdens of our labor and also aligns with our demands for the debate community to adapt.

#### Squo disproves and non-uniques any of their offense and turns: the NDT committee went against its own rules and paradoxically was okay with hybrid teams under certain conditions but we are not given the same privilege as other debaters and have to jump through many hurdles and hoops only to get to a position of less privilege

#### The next independent piece of offense is Futility – Hybrid debater’s ceiling of competitive success is fundamentally capped – regardless of success during the year the spectacle of the NDT is structurally inaccessible – no matter how well we do at regular season tournaments there is a limit to how much our participation in the activity can realize our potential.

#### Vote aff prior to any discussions of ballot framing – us winning doesn’t destroy the nature of competition BUT giving the neg a ballot weaponizes futility because it disavows the additional labor that is forced on hybrid debaters – like funding, outreach, recruiting, and regulations – hybrid teams should be compensated by winning at pre-national tournament rounds because that is the only way to actualize our maximum potential – voting affirmative is the only way to resolve this because an aff ballot serves as a structural readjustment to the impacts that we’ve isolated face hybrid debaters

#### If the negative cannot prove that a neg ballot matters more externally than an aff ballot they should lose

#### Our Futility claim is a prerequisite to evaluating competition – Futility should be the argument you resolve prior to evaluating any ROJ or ROB analysis because it filters what it means to win a ballot in the first place

#### The debate community says fairness and clash are also procedural arguments – but the offense is a procedural to each of those procedural arguments

#### We will isolate an endpoint process distinction in debates – the process of debating and the endpoint of debate are related but distinctly resolved. A ballot is typically seen as a referendum on the quality of debating – however the endpoint of the ballot has consequences as well. Wins are recorded on tabroom and amass to external effects that have consequences on how the game is played.

### Contention 2

#### Policy debate participation is declining – specifically it has high barriers to entry which restricts intercollegiate participation and high school retention

**SWG 21** (Sustainability Working Group, [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xkgykCzSPU4Qb4t6q9pvorewZfYy\_0ZofeasAKVDtXk/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1xkgykCzSPU4Qb4t6q9pvorewZfYy_0ZofeasAKVDtXk/edit), Accessed 8/30/21)

Declining Participation

The NDT has been experiencing a steady decline in membership that has accelerated over the previous three years. To identify why those programs no longer participate the SWG contacted directors from the 22 schools departing between 2018-2021. Sixteen of those programs still maintain active speech and debate programs, with most still participating in alternative debate formats. (NFA-LD, NPDA, APDA, IPDA, BP).That data shows that the overall trend is not being driven by programs getting eliminated, with only three departures due to budget elimination. Instead, teams are making the active decision to not participate in the NDT college policy debate community. While there are a number of nuanced factors driving the decision, many are rooted in budget constraints that directors find insurmountable to successfully compete in college policy debate. The following are the reasons provided (in order, with most common to least common)

The lack of regional tournaments. The lack of regional tournaments has greatly driven up the price of tournaments, requiring longer travel, more missed school etc. As noted above many programs are still waiting to see how the pandemic is going to impact their budgets in both the short and long term, with many feeling they are at risk of permanent deep cuts.

The lack of novice and JV opportunities. The average novice division this season averaged 12 entries and in many districts novice divisions have dried up entirely. Reasons cited are both that there simply are not divisions to attend, but also that what is being offered is no the experience their novices are interested in. Most novices are not dreaming of the NDT, they are trying to build their resume and skill set without missing much class or interfering with the ten other clubs and activities they are involved in. The time commitment and contemporary style of college policy debate were deterrents to many “classroom debaters” who are not looking for the fast talking, research and time intensive practices of the NDT.

A smaller pool of policy debaters to draw from. The lack of recruits due to declines in high school policy participation and overall student interest in continuing their debate careers in college is another concern cited. Data suggests declining participation in policy debate is not limited to college programs. Participation in policy debate at the high school level is also seeing substantial decline. The data below come from the NSDA.

\*Chart Omitted\*

The last five years have seen a disastrous decline of high school participation in policy debate. Losing over a third of the students participating will only accelerate the trends of declining NDT programs. Several respondents mentioned a major barrier to policy participation is the lack of policy programs in their traditional recruiting bases. For example, many state regional universities have difficulty recruiting from out of state because out of state tuition makes these options unaffordable. For example, 12 hours at UCO for an instate student costs around $3800. For an out of state student, the same 12 hours would cost $8100. Eight of the 22 schools no longer subscribing to the NDT fall into the regional state university category.

The cost to play is out of reach. Directors cited the exorbitant costs to attempt to successfully compete on the national level. Airfare, hotel, and related travel costs mean 1000s of dollars in scarce resources must be focused on a small number of students, resulting in many fewer opportunities for students who do not attend resource rich programs.

The professionalization of coaching staffs. Directors cited the growth of the hired card cutters and expansive staffs of the resource rich programs as significant obstacles perceived by coaches and students. While there are examples of schools with small coaching staffs doing well those tend to be the exception not the norm. It comes as no surprise that the most resource rich programs with the largest coaching staffs dominate success on the national level and at the NDT.

Lack of student interest in policy debate. Competition can require significant amounts of missed class time, force tradeoffs with other campus interests, and interfere with student’s ability to hold employment.

#### Hybrid debaters can solve many of these structural issues with debate – hybrids can solve high school retention.

#### Many debate kids would be retained via this process. Every year from college many of the top-level debaters get sought after by the top schools in debate like Emory and Michigan who have the funding to go after these students, but what about all of the other students. Many of these students either don’t have the academic standing to get into some debate schools which are elite, or do not have the financial ability to afford a school that debates. For institutional reasons this means that students are not only unable to debate, but also means that in order to debate students need to aim for the highest-level institutions which can lead to sacrifices of other elements of life.

#### Signaling does matter and ballots are key – specifically for hybrid participation – start this on your flow – other signaling argument w have for the ballot are insulated from this argument – there are empirics for increased hybrid participation. Last year after Rishi and I debated and the NDT there was an influx of debaters asking Tripp and also myself how hybrid debating operated and whether or not it was feasible to go to an affordable school and still continue their debate career. There was a tangible increase in hybrid participation – there are now 4 hybrid teams in the tournament, and newly paired hybrid partnerships at Dartmouth, 2 new debaters at tufts, a debater hybriding at Iowa, and also another at Amherst all in addition to us. This is no accident it is a repercussion of the results of hybrid teams specifically at the NDT. COVID uniquely is also aiding this transition because through use of zoom – debaters who attend different institutions are able to communicate and be supported by the infrastructure of already existing programs. We should not let this momentum go to waste. Positive trends are opportunities we cannot afford to relinquish so we should bandwagon support – only this UQ claim can enable any reversal of trends we’ve outlined.

#### Even a linear risk of these impacts should be sufficient to vote aff – we have impacted out participation this means that every extra debater is worth it –

#### Debate is bigger than this space – we all come to the zoom room to play the game for a reason as illustrated above –

#### Independently we should capitalize on the extension this debate into the broader community – Voting Aff has external implications beyond debate – I’ll explain the Dissemination Offense here

#### There’s a Dissemination Impact – Voting aff spreads the aff discussion around hybrids teams throughout the debate community which is good because a) it brings attention to the issues that hybrid debaters face – b) and independently spreading awareness can pressure the NDT committee to address these rules

#### An aff ballot hijacks competitive networks and incentives – if the aff wins then it forces people to confront the issue of hybrid debaters and the aff becomes an issue that teams and coaches have to reckon with and prepare against – this is critical to cognitive dissonance and confrontation of these issues

#### Treat this argument as uncontainable dissonance – you should theorize this cognitive dissonance as uncontainable with regards to its inevitability in debate – our competitors we debate do not have a choice of but being impacted by our participation because of the lasting competitive questions that they have to grapple with. This matters because it means an aff ballot can actualize our offense.

#### Voting negative entrenches the alternative to this dissonance which is a model of debate where debate is monopolized and debaters are made into robots that fuel the echo chamber of coaches contributing to a rigid conglomerate of thought – only diversity can fracture this ideological conceptualization and dissemination would infiltrate these academic paradigms of debate which are holding back participation to provide a basis for alternative and diverse viewpoints that are necessary to break dogma and a prerequisite to structural change to spillover to other qualms people have with debate like racism, sexism, and elitism.

#### Any of their offense and turns to this dissemination argument are non-UQ – the spread of advocacy happens inevitably because of the proliferation of information in debate – the competitive drives incentivizes people to research the aff.

#### Clash doesn’t turn this:

#### a) the internal link that being topical has to competitive incentives and research CANNOT OUTWEIGH the internal link that a ballot has to changing those incentives – in other words – what influences competitive incentives MOST is ballots for a particular team – nobody preps the affs that lose. You should vote up our aff in order to put it not only on debaters radars but also

#### b) because sending me and Rishi to more rounds is important. As a hybrid team these individual rounds matter more not only because of our Futility argument – but sending us to more rounds also expedites this process of dissemination – having us debate more rounds in elims means that more people hear the aff and that generates more dissemination of our advocacy which is the first step to structural reform

#### The impact to dissemination is linear and compounding. It’s a question of not just putting a couple of the coaches on notice but the whole organization of the NDT and debate on notice – maximizing the reach of our arguments is the best way to maximize the potential for real change in the debate space for hybrid debaters. Every round uniquely contributes to forcing the question of debate’s hostility towards hybrid debaters