

Policy Debate

Policy debate is the grandfather of all debate; it is the oldest form of speech competition, in which teams of two advocate for and against a resolution, that typically calls for policy change by the United States federal government. It is also referred to as cross-examination debate, Cross-X or team debate.

Preparation Time before the round: The topic/resolution is released in June prior to the fall of the upcoming year; which allows for the teams to prep the topic during the course of the summer and throughout the competitive year. The topic is used for an entire year.

Length and order of speeches:

1st Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes
Cross Examination of 1st Affirmative	3 minutes
1st Negative Constructive	8 minutes
Cross Examination of 1st Negative	3 minutes
2nd Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes
Cross Examination of 2nd Affirmative	3 minutes
2nd Negative Constructive	8 minutes
Cross Examination of 2nd Negative	3 minutes
1st Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
1st Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
2nd Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes

Preparation time: Eight minutes for each team.

Cross-examination: Both members of a debate team must participate as a questioner and respondent during cross-examination, but only one member of each team may do so within any given cross-examination period. The questions must be directed to the speaker who has just completed his/her constructive speech and must be answered by that speaker alone.

Some terms you may hear in the debate:

- 1) TOPICALITY:** The Negative will attempt to argue that the Affirmative team does not fall under the rubric of the resolution and should be rejected immediately regardless of the merits or advantages of the plan. This is a type of 'meta-debate' argument, as both sides then spend time defining various words or phrases in the resolution, laying down standards for why their definition(s) or interpretation(s) is superior
 - a. Does the affirmative plan reasonably adhere to the limitations of the topic?
- 2) SIGNIFICANCE:** How big is the problem?
 - a. Is there a justification to change from the present system?
- 3) INHERENCY:** This is what is stopping the problem from being solved.
 - a. Is there a clear barrier, which prevents the present system from solving the problems, presented by the affirmative?
- 4) SOLVENCY:** How will the problem will be solved.
 - a. Can the proposed plan solve the problems better than the present system?
- 5) Advantages:** This is when the affirmative claims good effects from the implementation of their plan.
- 6) DISADVANTAGES:** this is when the negative team contends that the affirmative plan causes undesirable consequences. Do the advantages of the affirmative proposal outweigh the disadvantages presented by the negative?
- 7) Plan:** The action taken that the affirmative team believes will best support the resolution.

- 8) **Counter-plan:** The negative can present a counter solution to the affirmative case's problem which still goes against the resolution.
- 9) **Kritik:** The negative can claim that the affirmative is guilty of a certain mindset or assumption that should be grounds for rejection. Kritiks are sometimes a reason to reject the entire affirmative advocacy without evaluating its policy.
- 10) **Flow:** A style of note taking for the round.