

Connecticut Debate Association Judge's Instructions

Tournament Day Schedule

Time	Activity	Location
8-9AM	Registration and coffee	Cafeteria
9AM	Resolution and packet distributed	Cafeteria
9-10AM	Preparation for debaters Workshop for judges	Cafeteria As directed
10-11:30AM	Round 1 (random pairings)	Room listed on round schedule
11:30AM-1PM	Round 2 (random pairings)	Room listed on round schedule
1-2PM	Lunch	Cafeteria
2-3:30PM	Round 3 (power matched, flip for side)	Room listed on round schedule
3:30-5PM	Varsity Final Round	Auditorium or cafeteria
5-5:30PM	Awards	Auditorium or cafeteria
5:30PM	Departure	

What you will need for each round:

- Ballot (bring 2, in case you need to re-write the first one)
- Pen or pencil and paper to take notes
- Stopwatch, kitchen timer or smartphone w/app to keep time

Structure of the Round:

Speech	Duration	Primary Purpose
1 st Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes	Defines terms, sets context, presents Affirmative case
Cross-examination	3 minutes	Negative team questions 1 st Affirmative
1 st Negative Constructive	6 minutes	May challenge definitions, presents Negative case, should also present rebuttal to Affirmative case
Cross-examination	3 minutes	Affirmative team questions 1 st Negative
2 nd Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes	Replies to Negative arguments, extends Affirmative case
Cross-examination	3 minutes	Negative team questions 2 nd Affirmative
2 nd Negative Constructive	6 minutes	Replies to Affirmative arguments, extends Negative case
Cross-examination	3 minutes	Affirmative team questions 2 nd Negative
1 st Negative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Replies to Affirmative, begins to summarize debate
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Replies to Negative, begins to summarize debate
2 nd Negative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Summarizes debate for Negative team
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Summarizes debate for Affirmative team
<i>Affirmative Prep Time</i>	<i>6 minutes</i>	<i>Prep time is taken in one minute increments, may be taken only prior to a speech, and need not be used.</i>
<i>Negative Prep Time</i>	<i>6 minutes</i>	
Total	64 minutes	

Skill Categories

The ballot has six skill categories. We ask you to indicate, for each speaker, whether you thought their performance was **Excellent**, **Satisfactory** or **Needs Improvement**. Each skill is described below, along with features that distinguish one debater from another. The descriptions should also help you to understand the discussion of speaker points that follows. *If you feel a skill **Needs Improvement**, you should explain why on the ballot.*

Case refers to the quality of the argument the team presents to support its side of the resolution, independent of attacks made by their opponents. Each team will present one or more contentions along with supporting arguments. **An Excellent case** will consist of useful definitions and contentions that are clear, well-worded, easy to understand and remember, and not repetitive. The contentions will be convincing, in that you should feel that if one agreed with them, you would support their side. The supporting arguments should relate to the contention they support, and should include facts, reasoning and an explanation as to why they do so. **A Satisfactory case** will be deficient on some points. The definition offered or opposed may be unimportant to the debate. The contentions may be unclear, poorly worded or repetitive, or may not be convincing. Supporting arguments may not be relevant, or may not include one or more of facts, reasoning or explanation. **A case that Needs Improvement** will be weak on many or most of these factors. It may leave you confused as to exactly what the team wants to say, or it may leave you unconvinced even without a response by their opponents.

Organization refers to the structure of the speeches and case. An **Excellent** speaker outlines the speech before presenting it. You know what is being discussed and why at all times. Issues are presented in order, respecting the speaker's own contentions and those of their opponents. A summary is provided. It is easy to take notes outlining the main points. The speaker's constructive speech and rebuttal will be well structured. A **Satisfactory** speaker will be deficient on some points. An outline or summary may be missing. The speaker may jump around among contentions or arguments. It will be more difficult to follow the speaker's arguments. The constructive may be well organized, but the rebuttal may not be. A speaker who **Needs Improvement** will sound disorganized. Speeches will lack good outlines and summaries, or these may not agree with what is said. Their own case may be structured, but their responses to their opponents may not be. Their arguments will be hard to follow or seem to miss the point. It will be hard to take notes that reflect what was said.

Clash occurs when debaters listen to their opponents and reply directly to their arguments. Clash is the essence of debate. **Excellent** clash occurs when a debater covers all of the arguments his opponents have made, refers specifically to what they said, describes it fairly and accurately, and replies to it effectively with new facts, reasoning or explanations, not simply by repeating previous arguments. **Satisfactory** clash occurs when a debater addresses some of their opponents' arguments but ignore others. They may inaccurately represent them, or fail to provide an effective or new reply. Clash **Needs Improvement** when a debater dwells on his own case, repeating arguments and failing to acknowledge or to reply to his opponents.

Cross-ex (Cross examination) considers three things: quality of questions asked, quality of answers given, and effective use of what is said in cross-ex later speeches. **Excellent** cross-ex questions focus on what the speaker has just finished saying. Questions try to expose weaknesses in the facts, reasoning or explanations, or to bring up possibilities the speaker failed to consider. They may seek clarification of what the speaker has said in order to fix the speaker to a particular argument or interpretation. The questioner will be persistent but not badgering, giving the speaker fair time to answer but not permitting him excessive time. Excellent cross-ex does not ask about arguments or evidence that have not been introduced. Excellent answers advance the speaker's side and blunt the purpose of the questions by clarifying and strengthening the speaker's argument. The speaker will answer fairly and concisely, not abusing the questioner's time but not permitting the questioner to bully him into overly brief answers. Excellent cross-ex is referred to in subsequent speeches in support of argument. **Satisfactory** cross-ex will be deficient on one or more aspects. Question may not have clear relevance to what the speaker has just finished saying, or may refer to arguments or evidence not yet introduced. The questioning may not uncover any responses worth referring to, or fail to refer to a useful response in later speeches. Answers may be evasive or obviously seek to waste the questioner's time. Cross-ex **Needs Improvement** when the team fails to ask many questions, the questions asked are not relevant to what the speaker has said or to the arguments presented. Answers may fail to answer or actually weaken the speaker's case. Little or no use is made of cross-ex in subsequent speeches.

Presentation refers to the oratorical aspects of debate. An **Excellent** presentation is clear, with good diction, loud enough but not too loud, varying tone to match what is being said. The speaker is interesting and enthusiastic. The speaker addresses the audience, and moves his gaze about the room. He chooses words carefully and speaks in complete sentences and paragraphs. There is little filler like "uh" or "um." He makes effective but moderate use of hand gestures. Humor or emotion is used tastefully and respectfully. He fills the time available and stops without having to be prompted. A **Satisfactory** presentation will be deficient in one or more aspects. The speaker may not always present complete thoughts or lose his place, stumble occasionally over words or use fillers, ignore the audience, be too loud or too quiet, or say things that seem out of place or inappropriate. He may not use the full time or have to be told to stop. A presentation that **Needs Improvement** will have many weaknesses with respect to voice, composition, appropriateness or use of time.

Civility covers politeness and courtesy before, during and after the debate. We expect most debaters will be **Excellent**. **Satisfactory** may indicate a brief lapse, such as some commotion while the other team is speaking, overly aggressive behavior during cross-ex or an inappropriate remark during a speech. **Needs Improvement** indicates a significant breach of decorum that caused the judge to intervene in the debate or comment on verbally or in writing.

Assigning Point Totals

Debaters receive up to 30 points in each round. The points are the primary determinant of who receives speaker trophies, and act as a tie breaker for determining team trophies. In order to achieve a reasonable degree of comparability among judges please follow these guidelines.

Point Range	Considerations
29-30	Extraordinary performance in all phases of the debate: constructive and rebuttal speeches, asking and answering question, presenting arguments and responding to opponents. Debater demonstrates a sophisticated grasp of debate technique and a superior understanding of the issue under discussion. Debater fairly and accurately compares the positions of the two sides and explains why his position is superior. Debater rated Excellent in all skill categories. Judge considers this is one of the best speech performances he has ever witnessed, in CDA or elsewhere. <i>The Tab Director may ask judges with less experience to explain and justify a point score this high.</i>
27-28	Strong, consistent performance in all aspects of the debate. Debater is rated at least Satisfactory in all skill categories, and Excellent in multiple categories, particularly Clash or Cross-ex. Debater is well-organized, easily understood and persuasive, demonstrates understanding of the issues and uses time effectively. Judge considers the debater's performance to be among the best he has seen in the CDA.
25-26	Solid average performance in all aspects of the debate. Debater is rated Satisfactory in all skill categories, possibly Excellent in one or two. Debater is organized, speaks well, presents a workman-like case and defense, and uses all of the time available. Judge considers debater's performance to be average among CDA debaters
23-24	Performance is significantly lacking in one or more aspects. Debater rated Needs Improvement in one or more categories. Debater may miss important issues in debate, largely focus on his own case and ignore his opponents' case, and may not use all the time available. Judge considers debater's performance to be below average among CDA debaters.
22 or less	Scores this low should not be assigned unless the debater done something—foul language, bad behavior—that the judge feels should be brought to the attention of the debater's coach. <i>Judge should be prepared to explain the situation to the Tab Director, and the Tab Director will decide whether further action should be taken.</i>

Novice as Compared to Varsity

The Novice division consists of Freshmen and Sophomores. Judges should make the same allowances for their performance as compared to Juniors and Seniors as they would in any other activity. In general, Novices can receive the same scores as Varsity debaters with slightly less polished performances.

Judging Caveat

On many topics, the judge will be more informed (or at least more opinionated) than the debaters. Please try to judge the round on the basis of the information presented by the debaters, not on the basis of any prior knowledge you have of the topic. Debates should be decided primarily on the reasoning and explanations presented by the debaters, and secondarily on facts. Dress and appearance should not be considered unless it affects one of the skill categories. Particular weight should be given to fair and accurate comparisons of the positions of the two teams, either with respect to individual arguments or with respect to the main issues in the debate.

How to Judge Well

1. **Make sure you're in the right room at the right time.**

The schedule will have the names of the two teams, the room number and the judge's name, last name first. The round starts immediately when the schedule is distributed. Go to your room and notify Tab if the debaters do not arrive promptly. If you have not been assigned to judge, please wait outside tab for a few minutes until we are sure we do not need you. We occasionally have missing judges or scheduling errors.

2. **Fill out the ballot correctly before the debate begins**

Enter the administrative information before the debate begins: round number, whether it is a Varsity or Novice round, the room number, your name as judge and the school you represent, the school name of each team and the names of the speakers. Make sure you enter the speaker names in the proper order.

3. **Manage the debate.** The judge has four tasks during the debate:

- **Keep the debate moving:** The debaters should be ready when you finish filling out the ballot. Ask the teams if they are ready and give the 1st Affirmative permission to begin. If the debaters are slow to begin cross ex or the next speech, you should nudge them by asking them to start. Offer prep time if debaters do not ask for it.
- **Keep time:** The speech times are in an attached table. You should time each segment, and try to signal when students have 2 minutes, one minute and 30 seconds left. When time is up stop taking notes. If the speaker continues talking, give the speaker some grace to finish his sentence, then say "time." Students may time themselves to stay within the limits, but you should still keep your own time to be sure.
- **Keep order:** Our preference is for judges to intervene as little as possible. Do not interrupt or correct a speaker unless absolutely necessary due to language or behavior. Do not "rule" on issues or arguments during the debate, even if asked. Cross-ex may become heated, but should remain civil.
- **Take Notes:** Try to keep track of the main lines of arguments in the debate. You should note each team's contentions and the primary supporting arguments. You should also note how each team replies to its opponent's arguments. You should note particularly good questions and answers in cross-ex, and whether these points are used later in the speeches. Finally, you should note each team's summary.

4. **When the debate ends, have a useful, balanced word for the debaters**

The debaters will usually shake hands and offer to shake yours. You may provide a brief (5 minutes or less) oral critique. For each time, try to find something praiseworthy, and something they can do to improve. Please DO NOT TELL THEM WHO YOU THINK WON THE DEBATE.

5. **Decide the round and fill out the ballot. Please take no more than 10 minutes!**

Ask the teams to leave and close the door before you start. We suggest you proceed as follows:

- **Decide who won.** This is the key decision, and the easiest. By the end of the debate you will have a subjective impression as to which team did a better job. This is almost always the right choice. Review your notes briefly to see if the arguments back up your impressions. Enter the school name of the winning team at the bottom of the ballot, and circle whether they were AFFirmative or NEGative. Below that give a one or two sentence reason for your choice.

- **Rank order the speakers from 1 to 4**, with 1 being the best, and 4 the worst. There can be no ties on speaker ranks. The winning team should have ranks totaling 5 or less.
- **Assign speaker points**, no lower than 22, no higher than 30, based on the rubric provided. Points should agree with the rank ordering, in that higher ranked speakers should not have lower points. Speaker points may be tied for speakers with adjacent ranks, e.g. 1 and 2 or 2 and 3. The winning team should have at least one more point than the losing team, as ties traditionally go to the Negative. (See discussion of point assignments above.)
- **Fill in the skill categories.** For each debater indicate Excellent, Satisfactory or Needs Improvement (E, S or NI). (See descriptions above.)
- **Provide a brief written critique.** You may provide comments for each speaker, or comments to each team, or explain your decision in more detail. You may use the back of the ballot if needed. Your constructive feedback is extremely important to the debaters. Try to praise where possible, and to offer suggestions for improvement rather than criticism.

6. Get your ballot back to the tab room on time!

Bring your ballot back to the tab room in person. Make sure someone reviews the ballot for accuracy before leaving. Do not go to lunch or to the next round without turning in your ballot. The next round cannot start until all of the ballots are collected.