

# Connecticut Debate Association

## Judge's Instructions

### Tournament Day Schedule

Time	Activity	Comment
8-9AM	Arrival and registration	Register, buy lunch tickets, gather in the cafeteria
9-10AM	Case Preparation	Packet distributed; teams prepare for debate
10-11:15AM	Round 1	Classrooms or online
11:15AM-12:30PM	Round 2	Classrooms or online
12:30-1:15PM	Lunch	Cafeteria
1:15-2:30PM	Round 3	Classrooms or online
2:30-3:45PM	Round 4	Classrooms or online
4-5PM	Final Round	Auditorium
5-5:30PM	Awards	Trophies, ballots and departure

#### **What you need for each round:**

- Ballot, either the printed ballot with your name, or a device to access the electronic ballot
- Paper, pen and/or pencil to take notes
- Smartphone, stopwatch, or kitchen timer to keep time
- Water bottle to stay hydrated

### Round Format

Prime Minister Constructive (PMC)	7 minutes	Provides an interpretation of the resolution and lays out the Government's case
Leader of Opposition Constructive (LOC)	8 minutes	Lays out the Opposition case and replies to the Government case.
Member of Government Constructive (MGC)	8 minutes	Responds to previous arguments, and may introduce new points while doing so
Member of Opposition Constructive (MOC)	8 minutes	
Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (LOR)	4 minutes	Summarizes the debate from the Opposition perspective, while responding to arguments.
Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR)	5 minutes	Summarizes the debate from the Government perspective, while responding to arguments.

The Prime Minister may offer, or the Opposition may ask, a Point of Clarification after the PM presents their interpretation of the motion. Time stops. Questions and answers must be explanatory, not argumentative.

Debaters have 30 seconds grace at the end of each speech to finish their point. This is not an extra 30 seconds of speaking time and Judges should ignore new material presented.

The opposing team may offer Points of Information (POIs) to a speaker during any constructive speech, excepting the first and last minute (protected time) allowing an uninterrupted start and finish. The speaker may accept, delay or wave off a POI.

There is no preparation time between speeches. The next speaker should rise to speak after the current speaker leaves the podium and is seated, with no more than a reasonable delay to collect their notes, etc.

## Evaluating Performance

The ballot asks judges to decide which team won the round, rank the speakers from 1 (best) to 4, and assign points as summarized in the rubric at the end of this handout. Below we provide more details on the factors a Judge should consider when ranking speakers and assigning points.

**Case** refers to the overall quality of the arguments the team presents to advance its side of the motion, independent of attacks made by their opponents. Each team typically identifies the key issues to be decided and present one or more contentions or reasons to agree with their side. **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 if one agreed with them, one would vote for their side. The supporting facts and reasoning should convincingly explain why the claim made in the contention is true, and why, if true, it is important to deciding whether to accept or reject the motion. **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 how well the structure of the speeches presents the case. An **Excellent** speaker outlines the speech before moving into the details. You know what is being discussed and why at all times. Arguments are presented in order, respecting the speaker's own contentions and those of their opponents. The speaker groups together similar or directly clashing arguments made by the other speakers to accurately highlight the important issues. The speech ends with a summary highlighting its impact. It is easy to take notes outlining the main points. 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, or present them in an order that differs unnecessarily from that used by the other speakers. 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 accurately reflect what others have said. The speaker's own case may be well-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 their 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 may ignore some arguments, 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.

**Points of Information** considers both raising and answering questions. Speakers may choose whether and when to accept questions, but depend on their opponents to ask them. There is not requirement, but it is considered good form for a speaker to accept 2 or more Points of Information (POI) during a constructive speech, and for their opponents to offer at least twice that many so the speaker has the opportunity to accept them. **Excellent** POIs are posed expose deficiencies in the speaker's arguments. They are timely, asked about the point being made not after the speaker has moved on. Multiple POIs are offered, even if all are not accepted, but no many as to badger the speaker. Question and answer are used

effectively to support arguments in later speeches. Excellent answers turn the question to the speaker's advantage and blend into the overall flow of the speaker's presentation. The speaker accepts POIs judiciously to demonstrate mastery but not so many as to disrupt their speech. **Satisfactory** POIs may not be entirely on relevant or timely, any only one or two may be offered, or offered too frequently. Answers may not fully deflect the question or may noticeably impact the speaker's flow of argument. The speaker may accept too many, too few or no POIs. **Needs Improvement** is when a speaker offers or accepts no POIs, or so many as to be disruptive. Questions may lack relevance; answers may be incomplete or ineffective.

**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 with respect. 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. They 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, word choice, 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.

### 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.

### Speaking Time Differences

In Parli, the PM and LO have 4 minutes more speaking time than the MG and the MO. However, the PM and LO have the advantage of presenting prepared arguments in their constructive speeches, and the entire debate to prepare their rebuttal. The MGC and MOC are entirely extemporaneous, and depending on the round may be more important. Speaker ranks and points should reflect a speaker's contribution to the debate, not simply minutes presenting.

## 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. A more detailed rubric appears on the last page.

Point Range	Considerations
30 29 ½ 29	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>
28 ½ 28 27 ½ 27	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.
26 ½ 26 25 ½ 25	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
24 ½ 24 23 ½ 23	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	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>

A more detailed rubric appears on the last page.

## How to Judge Well

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

Your ballot—paper or electronic—will have your name and room number. You should go to the room immediately unless you are holding a previous round ballot you need to bring to Tab. Once all four debaters have arrived you should start the round immediately.

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

The ballot will have the names of the teams and speakers, but not the speaking order. Ask the debaters to confirm their names, the side they are debating on, and, for each team, who will speak first and who will speak second.

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

**Keep the debate moving:** The debaters should be ready when they arrive in the room. Once you have the speaker information, ask the first speaker to begin. When one speaker finishes, the next should rise to speak promptly, with only a reasonable delay to collect notes and arrange the podium\.

**Keep time:** Most debaters will time themselves and each other, but you should also track the time so no one greatly exceeds the limit. When time is up, after a 30 second grace, if a debate is still speaking, you should gently ask them to stop.

**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. The only exception is a Point of Order for a new argument in rebuttal.

**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 their opponent’s arguments. You should note particularly good questions and answers in Points of Information, and whether these points are used later in the speeches. Finally, you should note each team’s summary.

### 4. **Paper Ballots**

**Give the debaters balanced, verbal comments.** The debaters will usually shake hands and offer to shake yours. You may provide a brief (5 minutes or less) oral critique. Try to find something praiseworthy, and something they can do to improve. *Do not disclose who won!*

### **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. See below for how to decide.

**Provide a Reason for Decision.** Write the reason you voted for the winning team on the ballot. You may also provide additional comments to each team or speaker. Your constructive feedback is extremely important to the debaters and their coaches.

**Return your ballot to tab.** Bring your ballot back to the tab room in person. Do not go to lunch or to the next round without turning in your ballot.

### 5. **Electronic Ballots**

**When the debate ends, enter the decision and submit it before providing any comments to the debaters,** either verbally or written. You do not go to Tab unless you need assistance.

**Give the debaters balanced comments.** Your oral critique should include something complementary and also some suggestion for improvement.

**Provide a Reason for Decision.** You may edit your electronic ballot on Tabroom until 8PM the evening of the tournament.

### 6. **Making Your Decision**

**Decide who won.** This is the key decision. Enter or select the name of the winning team and also select which side of the motion they supported, Government or Opposition.

**Rank the speakers from 1 to 4,** with 1 being the best. There can be no ties. The winning team’s speaker ranks should total 5 or less.

**Assign speaker points** according to the rubrics provided. Points assigned should agree with the speaker ranks, that is a lower ranked speaker can have points equal to but not higher than those ranked above.

**CDA Judge's Rubric**

Point Range	Brief Description	Arguments & Organization	Refutation (Clash)	Points of Information and Order	Presentation & Civility
<b>Exemplary</b> <b>30</b> <b>29 ½</b> <b>29</b>	Debater demonstrates a sophisticated grasp of technique, and a <b>superior understanding</b> of the issue under discussion.  ----- Scores this high should be justified on the ballot and to Tab	Arguments use <b>sophisticated reasoning</b> and <b>substantial, varied evidence</b> showing <b>impact(s)</b> . Clear, well-worded contentions and useful definitions. Excellent signposting.	Addresses <b>ALL</b> opponents' contentions and refutations. No dropped arguments. Uses <b>new</b> analysis and examples to extends own case. <b>Rebuttal:</b> uses sophisticated weighing of both sides and clearly articulates why their side wins.	POIs are timely; POs are well-taken Questions expose weaknesses in facts and/or reasoning. Information gained is used effectively in subsequent speeches. Speaker's answers without losing flow of their speech. Answers strengthen the speaker's case.	Speech is fluent, showing wide range of vocabulary and idiom. Speaker uses rhetorical devices, wit, tone and volume to appropriately emphasize points. Respectful.
<b>Accomplished</b> <b>28 ½</b> <b>28</b> <b>27 ½</b> <b>27</b>	Strong, consistent performance. Uses all speaking time to present a convincing case. Acknowledges and replies to opponents' arguments.	Arguments use effective reasoning and evidence, attempting to show impact(s). Clear, well-worded contentions and useful definitions. Good signposting.	Addresses <b>ALL</b> opponents' contentions and refutations, but not as thoroughly as exemplary debaters. No drops! Sometimes offers new analysis and examples. <b>Rebuttal:</b> uses effective weighing of both sides and clearly articulates why their side wins.	Multiple POIs offered. Questions may expose weaknesses in facts or reasoning. Information gained is used in subsequent speeches but not as effectively as possible. Multiple POIs accepted. Answers usually strengthen the speaker's case.	Speech is clear and fluent showing a range of vocabulary. Effective presentation. Respectful.
<b>Adequate</b> <b>26 ½</b> <b>26</b> <b>25 ½</b> <b>25</b>	Solid, average performance. Uses all or most speaking time. Case and arguments persuasive but may not well-structured or complete.	Arguments use reasoning and evidence, providing a workman-like case. May not effectively show impacts. Contentions are mentioned but may need clarification. Definitions may be offered. Some signposting used.	Addresses most of opponents' contentions and refutations, but sometimes ineffectively. Uses explanations to clash, but may be lacking examples, facts or reasoning. <b>Rebuttal:</b> may only summarize rather than weigh both sides and articulate why their sides win.	Few POIs offered. Questions tend to be more clarifying in nature but may attempt to expose a weakness in facts or reasoning. Might not use information gained in subsequent speeches. Few POIs accepted Answers might not strengthen the speaker's case.	Speech is clear and average vocabulary is used. Effective presentation. Respectful.
<b>Developing</b> <b>24 ½</b> <b>24</b> <b>23 ½</b> <b>23</b>	Debater is learning and still developing technique. May not use all speaking time. Case may not be persuasive or may not be entirely on topic.	Arguments may use reasoning and/or evidence, but not in depth. Reasoning & evidence & impacts may be missing. Contentions are disorganized, not fully developed, or confusing definitions may not be offered. Ineffective or missing signposting.	Addresses some, but not all opponents' contentions and refutations. Clash is usually ineffective. Repeats own arguments rather than clashing with opponents' examples, facts and reasoning. <b>Rebuttal</b> may only summarize rather than weigh both sides and articulate why their sides win.	Few or no POIs offered. Questions may not be timely. Questions are clarifying only, may be irrelevant or confusing. Does not use answers in subsequent speeches Few or no POIs accepted. Answers interrupt the speaker's flow and do not strengthen the speaker's case	Speech and/or vocabulary may be difficult to understand. Ineffective Presentation. May be disrespectful.
<b>22</b>	Scores this low should not be assigned unless the debater has done something - foul language, bad behaviour - that the judge feels should be brought to the attention of the debater's coach. <i>Judge should explain the situation to the Tab Director, and the Tab Director will decide whether further action should be taken.</i>				