

# De La Salle World Affairs Debate and Public Speaking Competition

## Friday, December 7, 2017

### Rules of Cross-Examination Debate

1. There are two, two person teams, designated respectively as the "Affirmative" and "Negative" teams.
2. Teams will select one of three resolutions on a slip of paper (based on municipal issues or themes) 30 minutes before the start of the debate.
3. **The team in column 2 of the draw will choose the topic; the team in column 1 will choose the affirmative or negative side of the resolution to debate.**
4. Affirmative teams will prepare in the rooms allocated for each debate.
5. Negative teams will prepare outside of the room 10 minutes prior to the start of the debate; the Affirmative will provide definitions of the resolution.
6. If the Negative team feels that the Affirmative definitions are undebatable or have been "squirreled", it must appeal to the tournament director, whose decision is final.
7. Definitions may not be changed or challenged during the debate **but the negative team can identify what it feels are inadequacies in the manner in which they have been defined.**
8. The Moderator will open the debate and call upon each speaker in turn. The Moderator should be addressed as "Mr. or Madame Moderator or Mr. or Madame Speaker" in an opening salutation, but need not be addressed otherwise. No salutation is required, but it is customary for each speaker to begin with some polite form of address such as "Mr. Speaker, honourable judges, worthy opponents, ladies and gentlemen." etc.
9. Speeches are addressed to an audience consisting of the judges and all other persons in the room. Other debaters are customarily referred to in the third person during speeches, in the second person during cross-examinations.
10. **Each speaker delivers a constructive speech, cross examines one member of the opposing team, and delivers a rebuttal.**
11. Following a constructive speech, each speaker will submit to cross-examination ("I now stand open for cross-examination.") by a member of the opposing team who is NOT speaking next.
12. All speakers are allotted equal times for their constructive, cross-examinations, and rebuttals. (See #13)
13. **Constructive Speeches:** Each team must present its main lines of argument (its "case") and the principle evidence supporting the case in the course of its two constructive speeches. The members of each team may divide between them the task of presenting the case in any way they see fit. Any constructive speech

(except that delivered by first affirmative) may also include explicit attacks upon the case of the opposing team and explicit replies to attacks made by their opponents.

14. **Cross-examination:** The purpose of cross-examination is to allow each team the opportunity to elicit damaging admissions from its opponents regarding their case. The admissions may then be used against **opponents** in subsequent speeches. Each speaker seeks to elicit these admissions by asking questions of the opposing speaker whom he/she is assigned to cross-examine. The respondent is required to respond to these questions in some way. Both **cross-examiner** and **witness** should avoid speech-making. Questions may be based on statements made earlier in the debate, on arguments, which the **cross-examiner** expects his/her partner to present, or on any topic, which may bring his/her side advantage, regardless of its apparent relevance to the debate. Questions, however, may NOT be personal (e.g., "Have you ever taken drugs?"). The **cross-examiner** may not demand simple "yes/no" answers. The **witness** has the right to explain any answer briefly, but is forbidden to stall or filibuster. If the witness's answer at inordinately length, the **cross-examiner** may interrupt (as courteously as possible) **only after 30 seconds** in order to continue the line of questioning.
15. **Rebuttal:** The purpose of rebuttal speeches is to give both teams the opportunity to summarize their case, defend them from attacks by opponents, and press attacks upon their opponents. New lines of argument **or new evidence** may not be introduced in rebuttals. Exception: in the first affirmative rebuttal, which follows two negative speeches, the **speaker may identify for the judges any inadmissible information raised in either of these negative speeches, even if we view this as a new argument.** In general, the introduction of substantial, new evidence should be avoided in rebuttals.
16. **Evidence:** Both teams are expected to support the lines of argument with sufficient evidence to make them logically persuasive. Evidence may consist of facts, statistics and/or authoritative opinions drawn from published or publicly accessible sources (NOT private conversations, personal letters, or similar sources.) Debaters may assert that some facts are "general knowledge", but judges must decide for themselves what value, if any, to attribute to such assertions. Debaters should always be prepared to document the source of any evidence. It is customary, but not mandatory, to cite the source of most evidence when it is introduced in a speech. Evidence may never be fabricated or deliberately misrepresented. A debater who is shown to have done so may be disqualified from further competition.
17. **Definitions:** It is the duty of the affirmative team to make clear at the beginning of the debate as precisely as possible how it construes the resolution. This may be done by defining each key term individually, by paraphrasing the resolution as a whole, and/or by presenting the plan, which the affirmative proposes to implement the resolution. In prepared cross-examination debates, definitions should embody the standard meanings of the terms of the resolution in contemporary public discourse. Creative, novel, or whimsical definitions are not appropriate. The affirmative must construe the resolution in such a way as to make it debatable. They may not construe it as a tautology or a truism. The negative may challenge the definitions offered by the affirmative only at the beginning of the first negative speech and only on the grounds that the definition does not meet the requirements set out in the previous rule. The judges must decide at the end of the debate whether such a challenge is warranted.

Meanwhile the negative may either attempt under protest to make its case under the definitions offered by the affirmative, or make its case under the challenged and revised definitions. However, a prolonged wrangle over definitions is not advisable, as it leads to avoiding the intent of the debate. The negative is better advised to challenge, if need be, but to proceed with an attempt to argue under the original definitions. The affirmative should make every effort to define in a manner that will be acceptable by both sides. A non-challenge by the negative in the first negative speech is deemed explicit acceptance of the affirmative's definitions.

18. **Other Duties and Privileges of the Affirmative and Negative.** The affirmative has the burden of proof and the compensating privileges of presenting the opening and closing speeches. The affirmative is not required to offer a plan, but, since it is required to show that the resolution is feasible and does not entail significant disadvantages, the affirmative usually chooses to offer a plan (a reasonably detailed description of the way in which the resolution should be implemented) as the most efficient and persuasive way to accomplish these tasks. The negative enjoys the benefit of presumption. Therefore, debates in which the speaker scores produce a tie are awarded to the negative. Strictly speaking, the negative is not required to "make a case" in order to win, but may confine itself merely to attacks upon the affirmative case. In theory, the negative wins if it mounts a completely successful attack on one major element of the affirmative case. In practice, completely successful attacks are extremely rare. The negative may introduce a counter plan, an alternative proposal. A counterplan must solve the same problem, attain the same goals, or bring about the same advantages as the affirmative claims will be done by its solution, but by means entirely different from those stated or implied in the resolution. If a counter plan is introduced, it **MUST** be in the first negative speech. If the negative introduces a counter plan, it assumes the burden of proof comparable to that borne by the affirmative.

19. **Speaking times**

- **Constructive Speeches.** 6 minutes each. Each constructive speaker is granted a 30 second grace period to finish his/her speech after the allotted time has expired. Judges will disregard anything said after the expiration of the grace period.
- **Cross-examinations.** 3 minutes each. The cross-examiner must stop speaking as soon as the time expires. If a question has been asked, but the time allotted expires before the respondent is able to answer it, or to complete an answer, the respondent may choose whether to answer it. If an answer is attempted, it may continue briefly beyond the time.
- **Rebuttals.** 3 minutes each. These speeches must end when times expires. There is no grace period. Judges will disregard anything said after time expires.

**Order of speaking and times:**

|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>Constructive speeches and cross-examinations</b> |                |
| 1st Affirmative constructive                        | <b>5 mins.</b> |
| Cross-ex by 2nd Negative                            | 3 mins.        |
| 1st Negative constructive                           | <b>5 mins.</b> |

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|------------------------------|---------|
| Cross-ex by 1st Affirmative  | 3 mins. |
| 2nd Affirmative constructive | 5 mins. |
| Cross-ex by 1st Negative     | 3 mins. |
| 2nd Negative constructive    | 5 mins. |
| Cross-ex by 2nd Affirmative  | 3 mins. |

|                          |         |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Intermission (3 minutes) |         |
| 1st Negative rebuttal    | 3 mins. |
| 1st Affirmative rebuttal | 3 mins. |
| 2nd Negative rebuttal    | 3 mins. |
| 2nd Affirmative rebuttal | 3 mins. |

20. Other matters: Speeches in cross-examination debates may not be interrupted. There are no points of order, personal privilege, or information. Heckling is prohibited. Courtesy is expected. Violations of rules, misquotations of opponents, and similar matters **should be noted by judges. They will not interrupt the flow of the debate but will rule on these matters on the ballot at the end of the debate and should consider them as they decide the outcome of the debate.** The moderator has no role in such rulings. **If there is no moderator, the time-keeper** will begin the debate by recognizing the 1st Affirmative speaker. Thereafter, debaters should speak in turn without formal recognition. The team with the highest total number of speaker points must always be the team which wins the debate. **If the two teams' total speaker points are tied, judges should award the win to the negative team.**
  
21. **Rogue scores will include any scores awarded by judges that are 15% higher or lower than the next closest score in the room. These scores will not be included in final tabulations for the tournament.**