The Parliamentary Debate Format

The Order of Speeches and Time Requirements

1\textsuperscript{st} Affirmative Constructive (6-8 Minutes)

1\textsuperscript{st} Negative Constructive (6-8 Minutes)

2\textsuperscript{nd} Affirmative Constructive (6-8 Minutes)

2\textsuperscript{nd} Negative Constructive (6-8 Minutes)

Cross-Examination occurs during these speeches. Your opponents may ask you questions after the 1\textsuperscript{st} minute, but may not ask questions after the 7\textsuperscript{th} minute.

Negative Rebuttal (2-4 Minutes)

Affirmative Rebuttal (2-4 Minutes)

Things to notice…

If you are 1\textsuperscript{st} speaker for either side, you will be required to speak twice (you will also give the rebuttal speech).

The Negative Team gets a 12-minute block of time at the end of the debate that the Affirmative team has to handle in their remaining 4 minutes.

Things I should note…

No new arguments are allowed in rebuttal speeches. You may introduce new examples and summarize your argument. Rebuttals are where you give us the big picture and tell us why you are winning. As the Affirmative you may give responses to points made by the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Negative Speaker.

The Affirmative must present their case/plan, definitions, and criteria in the 1\textsuperscript{st} Affirmative Constructive.

The Negative must voice any objections to the Affirmative in the 1\textsuperscript{st} Negative Constructive (See “The Negative Case” handout).

The timekeeper will pound on his/her desk after the 1\textsuperscript{st} minute of all constructive speeches. This signals that the cross-examination period has begun for that speech.

The timekeeper again will pound once on his/her at the start of the 7\textsuperscript{th} minute of all constructive speeches. This signals that the cross-examination period has ended for that speech.
QUICK TIPS…

1. Work with Your Partner
   a. Decide which one of you will be first speaker (remember, the first speaker also gives the rebuttal), and which one will give the second speech.
   b. Find time outside of class to work with each other.
      I. Face-to-face meetings are the best. HINT: Meeting at the library and doing research together is a really good idea.
      II. Stay in touch via email. Send drafts of your case, definitions, etc. back and forth as email attachments.
   c. Set individual goals for the time you spend away from each other. One person might work on the plan while the other person researches flaws in the current system.
   d. Make sure that the two of you are on the same page before the debate begins.
      I. Make sure you know what your partner has done without you.
      II. Meet 15-30 minutes before class to handle last minute details.
   e. Exchange contact information with your partner (i.e., email, phone #, time and place when you will meet).

10% of your grade will be assigned to you by your debate partner, so it will not pay to slack off and make one person do all the work. After the debate you will hand in a one-page (typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 1” margins) assessment of your debate partner’s performance. Try to stick to constructive criticism and make sure to praise those things that your partner did well. After critiquing your partner’s performance, your page should end with your assignment of a grade. Assign your partner a grade ranging from 0% to 100%. Handing in this critique ON TIME (Due Dec. 7th) will count as 5% of your grade on this assignment.

2. Use the outlines as a guide (i.e., The Affirmative Case, The Negative Case, and the Cross-Examination handout).

3. If you have questions email me (ryan.clark@bhsu.edu).

4. If you are absent on the day you are assigned to debate, you will take a ZERO for 20% of your final grade. If you are absent, you had better present documented evidence in triplicate that something the equivalent of getting hit by a MACK truck kept you out of class. Otherwise there shall be NO making up this grade. It is entirely at my discretion to decide upon the conditions that warrant making up this grade (HINT: there will be very few reasons that I will deem valid, and those reasons would require documentation on your part). Your partner’s and your opponents’ grades depend on you cooperation, so I will not be forgiving with class absences on these dates.
5. Do not go over or under time in your speeches (constructives or rebuttals).

   a. Going overtime (*more than 8 minutes during a constructive speech; more than four minutes for a rebuttal speech*) abuses the time allotted to your opponents and makes it difficult for us to get everything done within the time we have in class.

   b. Going undertime (*less than 6 minutes during a constructive speech; less than 2 minutes for a rebuttal*) shows a lack of preparation and negatively impacts the ability of your fellow students to have a worthwhile educational experience.

   c. **Your final overall debate grade will be penalized 3% for every twenty seconds that you go over or under the allotted time limits.** If, for example, you were to speak for 8 minutes and nineteen seconds during a constructive speech, there would not be penalty. However, if you spoke for 8 minutes and 36 seconds, there would be an overtime penalty.

   d. If you only have 3 minutes worth of material, but you ramble on for 3 minutes just to meet the time constraints, a penalty (of my choosing) will apply. Talking for the sake of talking will be penalized, as this constitutes a failure to provide substantive content.

   e. *Practice. Practice. Practice.* Read your evidence, your case, your off-case, your arguments and so on. Make sure that you have enough material to meet the bare minimum no matter what arguments are presented by your classmates.

6. **You will be required to hand in a team bibliography** that details the sources you intend cite during your debate. It should have a minimum of six independent scholarly sources. (5% of your final grade). This bibliography is to be typed. Half of your bibliography grade will depend on whether or not your bibliography is typed out. If you hand in a handwritten bibliography, the highest grade you could receive would be 50% or 2.5% of your overall debate grade. The bibliography (one per team with both names printed at the top) is to be handed in at the beginning of the debate.

7. Grade Breakdown.

   a. Analysis (20%)
   b. Bibliography (5%)
   c. Delivery and Style (15%)
   d. Refutation (20%)
   e. Time Management (10%)
   f. Clarity (10%)
   g. Win/Loss (5%)
   h. Your Grade Assessment of your Partner (5%)*
   i. Your Partner’s Grade Assessment of Your Contribution (10%)

*Item “h.” is a pass/fail assignment. If you hand in the assignment (meeting the requirements described above) you pass this part of the assignment with 100%. If not, you fail this part of the assignment with a zero.
The Affirmative Case (page 1)

1. What you learned in the basic speech course applies to debate “speeches.”
   a. Your presentation should have an attention getter, thesis (i.e., statement of the resolution), points which support your thesis, and a summary that helps us remember what we just heard.
   b. Eye-contact, voice, and gestures are important.
   c. Source citations enhance your ethos on topics about which you are not an expert.
      I. For the upcoming debate you are required give a minimum of 6 total scholarly source citations over the course of both the 1st and 2nd Affirmative Constructive speeches.
      II. Source citations must be complete.
         ➢ Who said it? (Author)
         ➢ When did they say it? (Date)
         ➢ Where did they say it? (Source)
      III. Citations must be independent. You are not allowed to cite the same source six times in a row in fulfillment of this requirement.

2. You should tell us what both sides need to do in order to win the debate.
   a. State the criterion for determining winner.
   b. Apply your case argumentation to your criterion and tell us how you satisfy your decision rule.
   c. State how the negative can satisfy the criterion and disprove the resolution.

   a. If you go over or under time (i.e., less than six minutes or more than eight) your grade will be penalized.
   b. Be prepared to spend 1-2 minutes answering questions. Also, be prepared to speak for at least six minutes if your opponent does not ask any questions.
   c. If you cannot get through your whole case in 8 minutes, leave the rest for your partner in the Second Affirmative Constructive speech.
   d. Practice your First Affirmative Constructive speech with the above considerations in mind. Practice until you are confident that you will not go over or under the time limit.

4. You MUST take care of the BIG Stuff in the first three minutes.
   a. Definition of terms
   b. Statement of criterion
   c. Judging Paradigm/Discursive Sphere (if applicable)

5. The “meat” of your case needs to be presented in your first speech.
   a. The plan/case needs to be read in the first speech (you can save advantages and other plan-related concerns for the second speech.
   b. We should be able to see what your plan/case is after your first speech. We should not be hearing your plan/case for the first time in the second speech.
The Affirmative Case (page 2)

6. When will you have to answer questions?
   a. After the first minute and before the last minute.
   b. You should answer at least 2, but no more than 3.
   c. You control if and when you answer questions.

7. The first versus the second speech.
   a. The first affirmative speech is the only speech in the debate round that should be fully scripted.
   b. The Second Affirmative speech needs to fulfill three functions
      I. Review the content of the 1st Affirmative Speech.
      II. Refute the content of the 1st Negative Speech.
      III. Extend the analysis with new lines of argument.

*Since it is impossible to know what the Negative is going to say beforehand, you cannot completely prepare your remarks for the Second Affirmative Constructive speech in advance. You must respond to your opponents arguments, so you should be prepared to spend a good deal (at least half) of your time making responses to Negative attacks on your case.

8. Prepare your flow ahead of time. Don’t just read your first speech off a manuscript. Your opponents are going to be making arguments against your case and it is going to be important for you to be able to keep track of them. Since you have the benefit of knowing what you are going to say in your first speech, make a “preflowed” column that lists the relevant aspect of your case in shorthand form. Both you and your partner should have identical “preflowed” sheets to take notes on when the debate begins. This way, you will not only start off on the same page, but you will be on the same part of the same page which aid your ability to coordinate during the round.
The Negative Case (page 1)

1. Goals of Negative Argumentation

I. Focus on arguments that will win the round
   A. Topicality – Is the Affirmative actually debating the resolution?
   B. Solvency – Does the Affirmative plan eliminate or significantly decrease the problem?
   C. Harms – Is this a significant problem? Is there even a problem to be solved?
   D. Inherency – How is this different from the status quo?

II. Concede arguments that give you links to more important arguments
   A. If the AFF’s definitions are acceptable, accept them
   B. If the AFF’s criteria is acceptable, accept it
   C. Do not automatically reject everything the AFF says

III. Defend the status quo (the current system).
   A. The Affirmative has the burden of proof
   B. Change involves risk
   C. Change usually costs money
   D. Change almost always has disadvantages

*If you offer a counter-plan, do NOT defend the status quo – if you do, this strips the reason for having a counter-plan in the first place. Again, I recommend that you DO NOT counter-plan as this is likely to confuse matters that are already complicated. If you counter-plan, we need to hear your plan in the 1st Negative Speech. Please contact me if you plan to offer a counterproposal so that we can discuss the appropriateness of your idea. Again, if you counter-plan, you are on even ground with the Affirmative.

2. Preparation - Research your topic with your partner. Your side will also be required to present a minimum of 6 source citations. As you research you will notice trends in argumentation about the topic. Consider the natural advantages and disadvantages of your position. Use these observations to write a Negative position in favor of the resolution.

I. Prepare a position that argues against ANY change in the status quo on the topic.
   A. Make sure that you have enough material to cover six minutes \textit{for each speaker} (twelve minutes total). Why? If the affirmative team gets up and only gives a one minute case, you are still required to speak for at least six minutes.

   B. Prepare counter-definitions and counter-criteria \textit{just in case}
      1. Any significant term that the Affirmative fails to define is up for grabs.
      2. If you object to the Affirmative’s definitions or criteria, you will need to provide us with an alternative and justification for it.

II. Prepare generic arguments against the plan. You may not use these arguments, but it helps to think of what you might say ahead of time. Suppose you are given the resolution: “The United States federal government should enact a plan to significantly decrease the number of U.S. families living in poverty.” What if the Affirmative team decided increase
The Negative Case (page 2)

welfare benefits as their plan? If they did, what arguments could you prepare ahead of time against welfare? **Don’t spend too much time doing this**, but it will help to cover the most obvious possibilities.

3. Presentation – Remember, we need clash. Do not offer arguments that have nothing to do with the plan that the Affirmative team *actually* presents. Focus on what the Affirmative says in the First Affirmative Constructive, and use this to guide on how to use what you have used ahead of time.

   I. Make sure to pay close attention to the affirmative’s definitions, criterion, and plan. Some of the arguments you think of in advance may not be applicable to the case that the Affirmative presents.

   II. Help your audience and Judge(s) stay organized

      A. In most cases offer responses to the Affirmative case first, and do so in the same order in which the Affirmative presented them.

      Anything you have prepared ahead of time that

      1. you have NOT already used to refute the Affirmative plan and
      2. you judge important or relevant to the debate

      should be presented after you deal with the Affirmative case. These independent arguments are your “off-case” material.

   III. In constructive speeches, answer at least two questions from your opponents, but do not answer more than three.

   IV. You must make OBJECTIONS in the first three-minutes of the First Negative Constructive (1 NC). This includes…

      A. Topicality Objections (Big Time voting issue)
      B. Definitional Objections (Not a voting issue)
      C. Criterial Objections (Not a voting issue)

4. Stuff that is on the Affirmative Case class handout that applies here

   Number 1 (a,b, & c)
   Number 3, (a & b)
   Number 6

5. “Preflow” – You will not have the advantage of knowing what the Affirmative is going to say ahead of time, nevertheless, you should prepare your flow in advance. Consider that you will not know what the Affirmative’s definitions will be ahead of time. This should not prevent you, however, from sitting down with your partner to **identify key terms** in the resolution. Write these terms down on your preflowed sheets (one for you and one for you partner). This will save you precious time you would spend writing these terms down when the Affirmative presents their case. Additionally, it will direct your eye to any key terms in the resolution that they miss. Preflow a space for definitions and criteria at the top of you your sheet and an open space below for the Affirmative plan. You might consider creating a row for advantages, and harms as these are issues that Affirmative must not only address but also win.
When Cross-Examining

Look at your judge and your audience

✓ Smile
✓ Look at your audience and especially your judge when you are asking questions
✓ Stand with your body facing your audience

Ask any question that is relevant to your case. Such questions include…

✓ Questions that force your opponent to take a definite stand on a key issue
✓ Questions that clarify aspects of your opponent’s position
✓ Questions that reveal contradictions or inadequacies
✓ Follow up questions

Take control of your opponent

✓ If you are asking a yes/no question, do not allow your opponent to make a speech.

✓ If your opponent turns a question back on you, feel free to answer it. If they are going to let you give a speech during their constructive, feel free to use their time to your advantage. However, do not let your opponent avoid answering a question that you need them to respond to. If need be, reiterate your role as questioner and demand an answer.

✓ If your opponent avoids the question, cut him/her off, and ask the question again. Do not let your opponent avoid answering an important question.
When Being Cross-Examined

Look at your judge and your audience

- Smile
- Look at your audience and especially your judge when you are asking questions
- Stand with your body facing your audience

Do not automatically deny any question that an opponent asks you

- Your opponent may only be asking a clarifying question
- Your opponent could take advantage of this pattern and ask you a question that you should agree to and thus produce a contradiction in your analysis

Do not lose your nerve (don’t freak out) when being asked a question

- Your opponent may very well may not understand your arguments and overall case and mistake a good point for a “damming admission”
- Your opponent may not even understand the question he/she is asking 😐

Take a moment to think if you are asked a tough question

- You are committed to the answer you give so take a moment if you need to think
- Buy yourself time
  - “Could you repeat the question?”
  - “What do you mean by that?”
  - “My opponent asks an interesting question. Let’s consider the alternatives and I think you will see why my answer makes sense”
- Worst case scenario – put it off until the next speech
  - “My partner will answer that question in our next constructive”

Do NOT allow yourself to be forced to quickly answer a question that you should not have to answer with a simple yes/no or an otherwise simple answer

- Some questions are pseudo-questions that assume an objectionable premise
  - “Are you still beating your wife?”
  - “Do your parents know that about your cocaine habit?”
- Some questions need elaboration
  - “In a sentence or less, tell me how your economic policies are going to turn around the American economy?”
  - “Why are you going to college?”