

**DEBATING ASSOCIATION OF NEW ENGLAND INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
RULES FOR OREGON STYLE PREPARED POLICY DEBATE**

1. An Oregon Style debate is a debate on an issue of policy between two, two-person teams, one representing the affirmative and arguing for the adoption of the resolution, the other, the negative, contending against the issue. Cross examination is a feature of the debate style, and the debate is presided over by a judge, who is responsible for determining the winning team and assigning speaker points, rank in room and delivery of a brief oral critique (if the judge wishes), filling out the ballot, to include written comments and, most importantly, the reason for the decision. The judge may also be responsible for keeping time. The typical salutation by each debater would be “Honorable Judge, worthy opponents, esteemed colleague” or some variant thereof. There are no “points of information” or any other reason to interrupt an opponent’s constructive speech.
2. The word “should” in the phrasing of the debate resolution means “ought to be done”. Consequently, constitutionality or un-constitutionality is never an issue in the debate.
3. The affirmative team defines the terms of the debate resolution at the beginning of the first affirmative speech. The definition must be reasonable in order that there may be a fair contest. If the negative team desires to contest the affirmative definition, the reason(s) for the challenge must be stated at the beginning of the first negative speech.
4. The affirmative team has the “burden of proof” and sustains that with a case that demonstrates a “justification” (or “reason(s)”) for a change in the status quo, introduces a “plan” to effect a change, and, finally, demonstrates “solvency”, that is to say that their “plan” will address their “reason(s)” for the proposed change. The “justification” takes one of three forms: that there is a clear need to change the status quo, or that a modification to the status quo would be “comparatively advantageous” or that there is an inherent feature in the status quo that prevents the attainment of a broadly held and desirable goal.
5. The speaking order and times of speeches shall be as follows:

First Affirmative (1Aff) Constructive: 7 or 8 minutes (discretion of the host school)

Cross examination (Cx) of the 1Aff by the Second Negative (2Neg): 3 minutes

First Negative (1Neg) Constructive: 7 or 8 minutes

Cx of 1Neg by 1Aff: 3 minutes

Second Affirmative (2Aff) Constructive: 7 or 8 minutes

Cx of 2Aff by 1Neg: 3 minutes

2Neg Constructive speech: 7 or 8 minutes

Cx of 2Neg by 2Aff: 3 minutes

Preparation time for rebuttals: 3 minutes

1Neg rebuttal: 3 or 4 minutes (at the discretion of the host school)

1Aff rebuttal: 3 or 4 minutes

2Neg rebuttal: 3 or 4 minutes

2Aff rebuttal: 3 or 4 minutes

A 30 second grace period is allowed in each of the constructive speeches. When time expires in a rebuttal, the debater is allowed to complete the sentence he or she is speaking.

6. In a “harms/needs” case or in a “goals” case the 1Aff will state the “justification” (or “reason(s)”) at the beginning of their case and the plan will be presented either toward the end of the first affirmative speech or the beginning of the second affirmative speech. Typically it is the job of the second affirmative to show that the plan does meet the need. In a “comparative advantage” case the affirmative plan should be presented in the first affirmative speech because the reason/rationale for change is simply that the plan offers a comparative advantage over the status quo so the plan must be laid out at the beginning in order to argue that it does, indeed, offer the proposed advantages. The negative side must respond to the case put forward by the affirmative team and can argue either that the proposed harms are not significant and don’t demand change, and/or that the plan proposed by the affirmative will not adequately solve the harm/need and/or that the affirmative plan itself will bring about harms too great to accept, or finally, that some mechanism (a counter plan) other than the affirmative plan would be preferable to the affirmative approach to the problem. If the negative, among their several choices, decides to argue either a “minor repairs” case or presents a “counter plan”, such arguments should be made in the 1Neg speech, and a counter plan, if used, must be substantially different from, and not a mere modification of the status quo.
7. Cross-examination should be conducted in a courteous manner. “Requiring “yes” of “no” answers is prohibited. Questions should be brief and to the point. It is not appropriate to use a lengthy question to make a constructive point. The cross examiner should not interrupt an answer unless there is obvious “stonewalling” or wasting time with a convoluted answer. A simple “Thank you, I understand the affirmative (or negative) position” will suffice in such circumstances. If time expires while a question is being asked, the responder has the option of answering or not.
8. Rebuttals are for the purposes of refuting the opponent’s arguments and summarizing the debate to demonstrate that your side has prevailed on the decisive issues. Therefore, no new lines of argument may be advanced in rebuttals, and the use of evidence should be avoided, except when the 1Aff refutes the 2Neg constructive speech or when proof of a particular point has been requested.
9. Props (drawings, models, etc.) may not be used, and the use of electronic devices for other than timekeeping is strictly prohibited.
10. In the interests of anonymity and fairness, judges will refrain from inquiring of debaters their school or the extent of their experience.

DANEIS Cross-ex Debate Ballot:
(100 pts.)

Round (Circle):	1	2	3	Level (Circle)	Novice	Advanced
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For each speaker assign a qualitative assessment in each of the six categories, as well as a summary score between 70 and 100 and a rank in room from 1st - 4th.

The available qualitative assessments are:

W: weak NI: needs improvement, F: fair, G: good, VG: very good, E: excellent

Affirmative Team Code: _____

First Affirmative: _____

Second Affirmative: _____

	Organization	Analysis	Logic	Evidence	Refutation	Delivery	Summary Score (70-100)	Rank in Room (1 st -4 th)
First Affirmative								
Second Affirmative								

TEAM TOTAL(Sum of Speaker Points):

Comments for First Affirmative Speaker:	Comments for Second Affirmative Speaker:
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Negative Team Code: _____

First Negative: _____

Second Negative: _____

	Organization	Analysis	Logic	Evidence	Refutation	Delivery	Summary Score (70-100)	Rank in Room (1 st -4 th)
First Negative								
Second Negative								

TEAM TOTAL (Sum of Speaker Points):

Comments for First Negative Speaker:	Comments for Second Negative Speaker:
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I award this debate to the (circle): Affirmative Negative

Judge's Name:
Judge's Code:

Reason(s) for Decision:

BALLOT INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES (including a description of each of the 6 categories):

When filling in the ballot please be sure to indicate the round (1st, 2nd, 3rd) and the division (Adv. or Nov.). Use the team code (e.g. 5A) for the team and be sure to fill in the names of the debaters so that we are scoring accurately in the tabulation room. Judges should not ask debaters what school they are from.

Judges will give a qualitative assessment for each speaker in each of the six categories: Organization, Analysis, Logic, Evidence, Refutation and Delivery. The qualitative assessments (Weak, Needs Improvement, Fair, Good, Very Good, Excellent) are designed to help the debater identify his or her strengths or weaknesses in the round. An overall score from 70 to 100 is assigned to each debater that should loosely correspond to the qualitative assessments given in the round. The team with the higher combined overall score in the round must win the debate (a tie point total would go to the negative). Most judges in our league first determine in their mind which team won the debate and then make sure that the point totals correspond to their overall impression of the debate. The winning team will have the higher point total, except in the case of a point total tie where the win goes to the negative (reflecting the piece of debate theory which states that the affirmative has the "burden of proof").

While it is important to give honest feedback we don't want to be too discouraging to those who are just starting out. An average score would range somewhere from 80 to 84. Scores in the low 70's should be rare for exceptionally weak performances. Scores in the mid to high 90's would similarly be very rare for exceptionally strong performances. Please note that the performance expectations in the novice division will be lower, but the scoring should be adjusted to reflect that so that an average novice debater is also scoring between 80 and 84 points (though the performance may not be as polished as the advanced debater in that range).

The following descriptors may be helpful in scoring the individual debaters.

70-74: A weak performance. Probably significantly under time, with little development of the case, poor evidence and little effort to have direct clash;

75-79: A flawed performance with poor organization and lots of repetitions. The links between evidence and arguments are not well established and the delivery may not be particularly smooth.

80-84: An average performance. The debater shows reasonably good analysis of the topic and makes an effort to support his or her claims with appropriate evidence. The organization may break down a bit and while there is some effective clash, the debater may not have properly identified the crux of the debate and to give emphasis to the issues that deserved greatest emphasis in the round. The speaking style is reasonably smooth even if not exceptionally moving or persuasive.

85-89 An accomplished debater. The debater exhibited fine form in virtually all facets of debate, including sign-posting the arguments, responding appropriately to the key arguments of his or her opponent, effectively integrating evidence into the argument and identifying and giving special emphasis to the key points of clash in the round. The delivery is smooth and easy to follow.

90-94 An outstanding performance on every level. Likely to be in the running for an award. The debater shows excellent command of subtleties involved in the resolution (outstanding analysis), very effective organization, keeps track of all the key arguments and brings helpful clarity to the crux of the debate in the particular round. The speaking style is not only smooth, but persuasive with some rhetorical flourish.

Above 94: An exceptionally rare performance that manifests the highest levels of debate skill in all key categories and delivered with great clarity and persuasiveness.

RANKS: We also ask that the judge rank each speaker in the round from 1st (for the top speaker in the room) through 4th. Ranks are used to break possible ties in speaker points when assigning awards at the end of day.

Judges should write some helpful comments for each of the debaters and finally should give a very brief "Reason for Decision" in the appropriate spot toward the bottom of the ballot.

Descriptions of the Judging Categories (weak through excellent in each)

Analysis: Does the debater define terms and interpret the resolution in a sound and reasonable way? Has the debater perceived the crucial issues that have emerged in the debate? Does the debater follow through with those key issues? Does the debater's analysis successfully distinguish an argument from the evidence used to support the argument?

Organization: Is the structure of their argument made clear? Is there a clear outline of constructive arguments (and if a team uses a numbering system for their arguments do they stick with it)? Do members of the same team cooperate to present a unified case? Is the rebuttal well organized and easy to follow? Does the debater give an effective and clear introduction and conclusion to his or her speech?

Refutation: Is the refutation clear-cut in its attack on significant points of disagreement between the two teams? Did the team manage to address all the major constructive points of their opponents or did they let certain arguments slip past them? Do the arguments involve some of the traditional informal fallacies of relevance, evidence or ambiguity (examples: ad hominem or genetic fallacies, post hoc or cause and effect fallacies, equivocation or syntactical ambiguity)? Does the refutation "nit-pick" on rather minor points? Does either side raise a new line of argument in their rebuttal speeches?

Evidence: Does the debater show convincing knowledge of the issues involved in the resolution? Are contentions supported with sufficient, well-documented evidence? Does the debater make effective use of whatever evidence he/she uses by tying it strictly to the case structure? Does the debater avoid unsupported assertions? Is there an overuse of evidence that merely reports the opinions (often conflicting) of "experts"?

Logic: Is the debater's reasoning correct? Is the debater's reasoning quick and agile (particularly apparent in cross-ex situations)? Are common logical fallacies avoided on the debater's part and detected in their opponent's arguments? Does the evidence given actually support the argument it purports to support? Is there evidence of original thinking?

Delivery: Does the debater give the impression of genuineness and sincerity? Does the debater establish and maintain eye contact with the judge? Does the debater use good diction? Does the debater introduce humor and variety effectively? Does he/she establish different, yet appropriate, tones and paces for different parts and purposes in the speech? Is the debater pleasant and easy to listen to? Does the debater convey a sense of importance and excitement to the topic? Is the debater at home in his/her manner while speaking? Is the debater overly tied to a written text?