

DANEIS Beginning of the Round

When the debaters, Judge, and Speaker are all in the room, the Judge or the Speaker should flip a coin, asking one of the debaters chosen at random to "call" it. The team that wins the coin flip may choose either the resolution or the side, whichever it prefers. Before it is required to pick one of these options, the winning team is entitled to hear and see the resolutions offered for the round. Therefore, as soon as the coin flip is completed, the Judge or the Speaker opens the envelope containing the resolutions for the round, reads them aloud to everyone, and then shows them to the side that won the coin flip. The team that won the coin flip now declares whether it will choose side or resolution. The team that lost the coin toss receives whichever of these items the winning team does not choose. Whichever team has the privilege of choosing side may wait until the other team has selected the resolution for the debate before declaring their preferred side. Thus, the team choosing the resolution does so first. The other team then chooses either side "Government" or side "Opposition," whichever side it prefers.

The Government team now has two minutes in which to propose its definitions for a key term or two in the resolution. Both teams remain in the room during this two-minute period with the Judge and the Speaker. The Government is not required to outline its case in this two-minute definitions period. Since the resolutions for the debate are straight resolutions, the resolutions have been written to make them debatable as worded. Any proposed definition for a term, therefore, should only be for clarification on the meaning of the term in the context of the debate, NOT for redefining the resolution as a whole. The purpose of having straight resolutions is to avoid situations where the Government tries to "squirrel" the debate by redefining the resolution broadly to argue about something that they have prepared as a "canned" case.

Proposing a proper clarification for a key term would be merely to propose, for example, that the word government refers to the federal government, or (alternatively) that the word government refers not to the federal government but rather to all state governments, or to governments wherever you find them.

If the Opposition and the Judge find that the definitions constitute a debatable resolution, i.e. one which is not tautological, truistic, or overly narrow, both teams begin their ten minute preparation period. If either the Opposition or the Judge questions the debatability of the definitions, the Judge should first attempt to negotiate a mutually acceptable compromise. If this effort fails, the Judge should dispatch the Speaker immediately to find the Tournament Director, who will adjudicate.

Once there is agreement on definitions, the Government prepares outside the room for ten minutes. When preparation time has expired, the Government returns to the room and the Speaker calls the House to order so that the debate can begin.