Additional Insight for all Debate Formats

A great resource for judge training: <https://sites.google.com/view/judge-training/home>

A video explaining how to use tabroom.com: <https://youtu.be/lEHBHm5itGY>

A set of event explainers and sample rounds with commentary: [PCFL Resources and Videos](https://sites.google.com/view/pcfl/training-videos-and-faq?authuser=0)

**Calling for and sharing evidence**

Any evidence read/cited in the round must be made available to the opponent upon request. LD norms suggest that evidence should be shared before the speech is given. Time spent sharing evidence should be a) brief and b) not used as prep time by the other debater. Teams ought to be able to find and electronically share their evidence very, very rapidly - if sharing evidence takes excessive time, it may be deducted from prep time - however, the lack of prep time CANNOT be a reason to deny a team the chance to see their opponent’s evidence.

Time spent reading the opponent’s evidence must be timed in some way, either as prep time or while another speech/crossfire is underway.

**Evidence challenges**

The quality of evidence may be a part of the debate. In fact, good debaters make evidence comparisons. Here is a way to consider the escalation of evidence issues:

1. A team claims evidence is of low quality, from a disreputable source, uses a flawed methodology, etc. - decide this issue in the course of the debate based on the arguments made by the teams. Read the evidence after the debate if you’d like.
2. A team cannot produce evidence they read - disregard the evidence in your decision and pretend it was never mentioned
3. A team alleges that their opponent’s evidence is fabricated - this claim would, under NSDA rules, stop the round for the judge to determine win/loss in the debate based solely on the evidence challenge. Please confirm that this is a team’s intent before stopping the debate.

You can consult tab for help resolving these issues, but we cannot make the decision for you.

### Debate Speaker Point Scale

Speaker points are used to give a holistic measurement of the effectiveness of the debater’s participation in the round - speaking, strategy, decorum, etc. Judges must follow the speaker point scale, regardless of what they are used to or may prefer, so that there is a fair standard across all rounds. Plus, if we have a standard, points provide meaningful feedback instead of being arbitrary and useless!

**29.5-30**: I wish I could frame your speeches – hard to imagine a better speaker

**29.1-29.4**: you were consistently excellent

**28.8-29.0**: you were effective and strategic, and made only minor mistakes

**28.3-28.7**: you hit all the right notes, but could improve (e.g. depth or efficiency)

**27.8-28.2**: you mainly did the right thing, but left something to be desired

**27.3-27.7**: you missed major things and were hard to follow

**27.0-27.2**: you advanced little in the debate or cost your team the round

**26.0-26.9**: you are not ready for this division/tournament

**Below 26**: you were offensive, ignorant, rude, or tried to cheat (MUST come to tab)

Low-point wins (where the winning team has fewer points than the losing team) are allowed.

**Content Warnings**

Speech: Speakers performing sensitive content ought to offer a content warning before their performance so anyone uncomfortable with the subject matter can withdraw from the audience.

Debate: In the spirit of creating a safe, respectful and inclusive space in every debate round, teams reading sensitive content ought to offer content warnings before a debate begins. **If you are unsure of whether a content warning is appropriate, offer one.** Debaters or judges who believe they will be psychologically harmed by hearing the content as described should be given an opportunity to indicate so in time to allow the debaters offering the warning to remove the triggering content.

Content warnings can be offered via Google Forms, text messaging, or verbally asking before a round. Please ensure that you have received a response from all parties.

**Implicit Bias Reminders**

We live in a world that is filled with bias. While it may be impossible to completely separate ourselves from our worldview and the many factors that influence us on a daily basis, we can make a concerted effort to minimize the way our personal biases impact the way that we interact with students within this activity. The vast majority of adults within this activity do a phenomenal job of this throughout the season but we wanted to put out a few  reminders for everyone to take note of:

* Accents do not reflect intelligence.
* Race does not indicate socioeconomic status.
* Gender is fluid.
* There is no uniform in Speech and Debate. Your personal opinions about what a student chose to wear should not be indicated on your ballot.
* Pitch is not a personal choice.
* Positions that students take while competing don’t necessarily equate to their personal beliefs.
* Your beliefs on a topic should have no bearing on how you judge a speech or performance.
* Recognize that words do not exist in a vacuum.  Avoid using charged language on your ballots.
* You are the adult in the room. As such, please be mindful of how students will interpret what they see and hear you do. Please demonstrate respect in every aspect of the word.

Please remember that the video quality of a student’s performance may be impacted by lighting, internet, access to equipment, or other family members’ presence in the home.  To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation itself.