

# Judging Policy Debate



4 Rules

5 Recommendations

# Rule #1: Judge Ethically

## ✓ Make a decision based upon the debate you hear

- o NOT their coach
- o NOT whether you like the debaters
- o NOT what happened last time this team met your team
- o NOT whether it might help your team

## ✓ Treat students with respect

- o Don't misuse your authority to berate students
- o Don't use profanity or abusive language

# Rule #2: Judge Conscientiously

- ✓ You have a responsibility to listen to the speeches
  - o NOT reading the newspaper
  - o NOT talking with a friend
  - o NOT engaging in distracting nonverbal signals
- ✓ Base your decision on arguments presented
  - o Make an effort to check personal biases
  - o Reason for decision should select among arguments presented, not what you thought about the students' appearance or mannerisms

# Rule #3: Judge Consistently

## ✓ Have a standard which you will apply

- o Stock Issues
- o Policymaking
- o Tabula Rasa

## ✓ Communicate your standards

- o Judge philosophies
- o Ballot

# Rule #4: Communicate Your Decision Fully

- ✓ Know the expectations as to oral comments in your league
  - o Are oral comments allowed?
  - o Can decisions be revealed?
- ✓ Fill out ballots completely
  - o Assist the tab room
  - o Always provide a reason for decision on the ballot

# Don't Do the Debaters' Work For Them

- ✓ Don't debate the debaters
- ✓ Let the rebuttals decide the round
- ✓ What about dropped arguments?

# Keep Each Argument on a Separate Sheet

- ✓ Label each sheet at the top
- ✓ Each sheet contains a full record of that argument

DA: Increase Terrorism				
Real threat	WH	DA: A sub	DA: A sub	DA: A sub
A. US Htg prevents now	Un	Topicality: Substantially		
Real threat	His pro	STANDARD	Why true?	Pull A sub
A. US Htg prevents now	Ne	Legal Moral	A. Unjust	Unclear
Real threat	Ne	History proves	We disagree	Untrue most of the time in our recent history
A. US Htg prevents now	had bel	Never happened before		
Real threat	Jud	B. Untrue this time		Pull A sub
A. US Htg prevents now		Evidence proves our point		
Real threat	The true	C. Upsets history	Judgment	Clinton proves
A. US Htg prevents now	Gre dis but bel			
Real threat		D. A voting issue	This was true in the Great depression but not before	Pull A sub
A. US Htg prevents now				
		E. Standard is workability	False hope	

# Don't Take Out Your Frustrations With the Activity on Students

- ✓ It may well be that debate needs fixing
- ✓ Find the appropriate forum
- ✓ Remember you are an educator; find a basis for motivation/encouragement



# Take Ethical Violations Seriously But Don't Make Everything an Ethical Issue

- ✓ Fabrication is a serious charge requiring clear proof
- ✓ Context Issues: Was the evidence out of context? Again, a high proof standard should be applied.
- ✓ Debaters are required to provide a complete source upon request
- ✓ What is meant by “card-clipping:” While debaters are not required to read all of the words in a piece of evidence, they sometimes claim that they read more than they actually did. This practice is called “card-clipping” and is regarded as an unethical practice.

# Use Judging as a Tool to Strengthen Your Coaching

- ✓ You hear interesting arguments
- ✓ You have an opportunity to see which techniques work and which ones do not

# What is your judging philosophy?

Example: Debate can most usefully be seen as an exercise in public policy making: The affirmative team is advocating a policy change and the negative team is opposing it.

# What do you think about speed?

Example: I believe debate should provide training for good public communication. It is essential that I be able to understand your arguments and your supporting evidence. I will make a commitment to listen carefully, but I expect you to make a commitment to speak clearly.

# What do you think about counterplans?

Example: Counterplans can provide a reason to vote negative so long as they are competitive (meaning they give a reason to reject the affirmative policy).

# How often do you vote on topicality?

Example: Topicality is an independent voting issue. I will vote on topicality whenever the negative team can show that the affirmative plan fails to follow the terms of the resolution.

# What do you think about kritiks?

Example: I will try to keep an open mind about any argument which makes sense, but my predisposition is to arguments which have relevance in the world of public policy making. I often have the reaction that kritik arguments have little relevance for determining public policy.