

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?

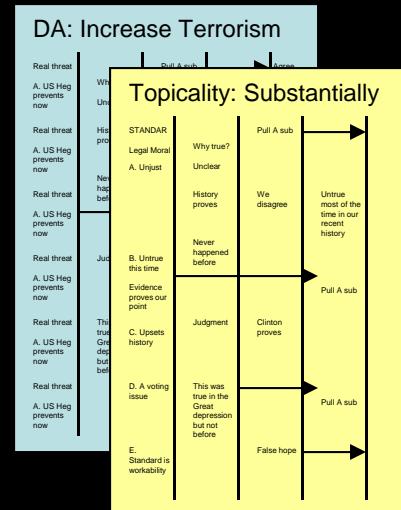
- ✓ Fill out ballots completely
 - o Assist the tab room
 - o Always provide a reason for decision on the ballot

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



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.