WSDC 2023 Vietnam

Speaker Training

This is an adapted version of the 'Speaker and Judge Briefing' document from WSDC 2023 Vietnam collated by the WSDC Board, for the purposes of Speaker Training. All credit should be given to the WSDC 2023 CAP for content.

Structure

Debater's Briefing

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2. WSDC Format
3. In-Person WSDC Rules
4. Notes on Setting Up Debates

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Tournament Format: General Notes

8 Preliminary Rounds:
- Rounds 1 and 2 are seeded and side-locked (see Tab Briefing for explanation)
- Rounds 3-8 are power paired

- Rounds 1, 2, 5, and 7 are Prepared Rounds
- Rounds 3, 4, 6, and 8 are Impromptu Rounds
- All outrounds are Impromptu Rounds

All announcements will be made in-person at the General Auditorium. Important points will also be shared via Discord.

Tournament Format: Tabbing Matters

Team Ranking (for Power Pairing in R3-8):

1. Number of wins
2. Average total speaker score
3. Number of ballots
4. Average win margin (if needed)

Team Ranking (for Break Generation)

1. Number of wins
2. Number of ballots
3. Average total speaker score
4. Average win margin (if needed)

Individual Speaker Awards*:

1. Average speaker points
2. Standard deviation

*Only speakers who speak a minimum of 4 rounds are eligible to be ranked.

Electronics Policy: General Prohibitions

NO use of laptops, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches at any time during the preparation time for impromptu rounds, and during the debate (both prepared and impromptu)

Two exemptions:

a. If a debate is taking place online due to one or more debaters/judges being in isolation.
b. If the speaker is physically unable to take notes by hand otherwise (e.g. due to a physical disability or debilitating condition such as blindness or visual impairment, or if the speaker's dominant/writing hand is injured).

For (a) approach CAP, for (b) approach Complaints Officers.

Electronics Policy

For timing, please use a basic stopwatch – either a physical one, or one that is part of a basic watch.

For Impromptu Rounds: Hand all devices to coach(es)/team manager(s) before prep time begins, when instructed to do so.

For Prepared Rounds: Hand all devices to coach(es)/team manager(s) before sitting at the table to debate.

Failure to adhere to policy may result in automatic loss(es) and/or disqualification.
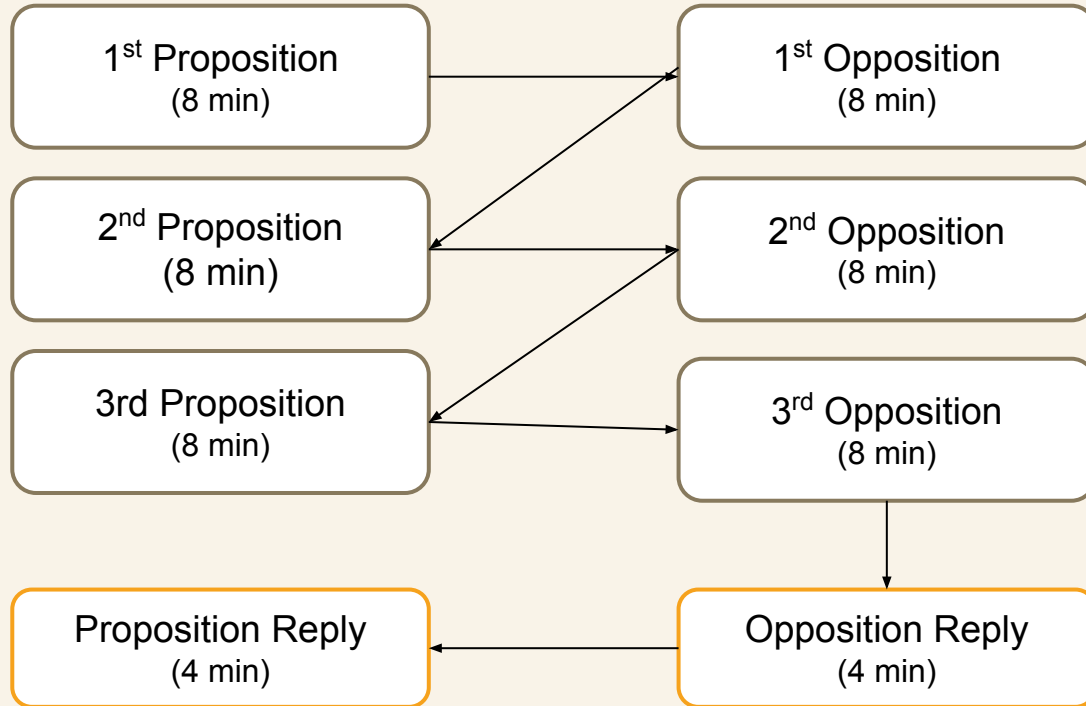
Structure

Speaking Order

Roles	Proposition	Opposition
Teams	● Define the motion clearly in a way that is fair to both teams ● May present their characterisation of the status quo ● Advance constructive arguments in favour of their case ● Where appropriate, identify what the problem is and present a solution to the identified problems	● Must oppose the motion ● May set up their case purely on rebuttal of Proposition, though this is strategically risky ● May have substantive arguments of its own, including proposing a counter-model
1st speakers	● Define the motion, relevant burden(s) and the metric(s) by which to evaluate the debate ● Introduce an action plan (model), if the team chooses to tackle the motion with one ● Advance and develop constructive arguments ● Flag the case division between the 3 Proposition speakers	● Challenge the definition, if necessary ● Clarify relevant burden(s)/metric(s) for the debate, if necessary ● Provide rebuttals to the 1st Proposition ● Introduce their own stance (detailed under "Team Roles") ● Bring their own constructive arguments (advisable) ● Flag the case division division between the 3 Opp speakers
2nd Speakers	● Deal with definitional challenges, if necessary ● Provide rebuttals to the 1st Opposition ● Extend and further develop constructive arguments	● Provide rebuttals to the 2nd Proposition's extension ● Extend and further develop the constructive arguments, if the Opposition has any
3rd Speakers	● Small substantive arguments, if flagged in the 1st Proposition ● Provide rebuttals to the Opposition's case	● Small substantive arguments, if flagged in the 1st Opposition ● Provide rebuttals to the Proposition's case
Reply Speeches	● Bring a holistic overview of the debate ● Compare both teams' contributions to the debate ● Explain why they think their side won the debate, without adding non-derivative arguments for their side	

Second Speaker Clarification: Extension v. New Substantive

- Traditionally, the norm was for Second Speakers to have 1-2 new, unique, independent, and explicit argument(s).
- More recently, there is trend at WSDC that sees Second Speakers not having 1-2 new, unique, independent, and explicit argument(s). Instead, Second Speakers engage in extensive weighing, framing, rebuttal action, and advanced stakeholder analysis.

CAP Clarification: No approach, in itself, is better than the other.
- **However, teams may consider the following strategic contexts:**
  - E.g. if the speech adds a new argument without addressing the most important rebuttals from the other side, it may be new, but it would not be strategic.
  - E.g. if the speech adds new layers of analysis to an already-proven argument that is not contested, it may be new, but it would not be strategic.
  - E.g. if the speech adds no new arguments, but engages in the important issues in the debate, it may not be new, but it would be strategic.
  - E.g. if it is necessary to pivot after the first response from the opposing side, it might be strategic to add entirely new, unique, independent, and explicit argument(s)
- **If the decision is made to forward a new argument, that argument should be given enough time to be properly and fully analysed.**

CAP Position: Second Speakers should introduce new material (e.g. new examples, advanced stakeholder analysis, additional logical links, more impacts, more/new weighing or framing, etc.), even if it is not a new argument. **The Second Speaker Speech should not be a mere repetition of the First Speaker.**

Third Speaker Clarification: New Material v. Late Material v. Evolution

What do the Rules say?
- The role of the Third Speaker is to respond to the other team's case.
- The Third Speeches from either team may provide an entirely new, unique, independent, and explicit argument, **if and only if it was flagged in the First Proposition/Opposition speech**.
- However, it is **not strategic** to leave the strongest material to the Third Speaker as it shows poor prioritisation by the team.

New Material: Anything that has not been mentioned in the debate, and cannot be traced to analyses already provided in the debate. E.g. an entirely new, independent, argument.

Third Speaker Clarification: New Material v. Late Material v. Evolution

Responding can come in a variety of forms, such as:

- **Direct rebuttal** to an argument that the other team has made, which means providing a critique of the logic in the argument or providing new explanations for why the conclusion reached in the other side's argument s wrong
- **Weighing** of arguments by providing analysis of the relative importance of arguments or impacts
- **Indirect comments or analysis** about an existing clash point: providing new conclusions or impacts which can be weighed against the conclusions reached by the other team
- **New contextual or characterisation analysis** which broaden the understanding of conclusions reached by either team
- **New examples** which provide deeper understanding of the arguments being made or existing rebuttal

So long as the idea being developed can be clearly traced to a development in the debate (e.g. picking up on an earlier response, deepening a given substantive, following on from what First/Second speakers are doing, similar analytical direction of existing material), **it is not considered as new material**.

Third Speaker Clarification: New Material v. Late Material v. Evolution

However, even if a material is not new, it could be *late*
- E.g. if Prop 1 brings up a piece of substantive analysis, but it is only engaged with in Opp 3, who defeats the material. While this material may not be new, the engagement is late since there were at least two prior speeches that could have responded.

Late material could be marked in the following ways:
- If successful in responding, upwards pressure on content
- However, poor prioritisation across the team, means downward pressure on strategy.

Guide: *EPIPHANIES ARE GREAT, BUT YOU SHOULD HAVE THEM EARLIER*

Third Speaker Clarification: New Material v. Late Material v. Evolution

Evolution of material refers to the progressive development of a piece of material down the bench, with the material changing to respond to new aspects of the debate.

E.g. P1 makes argument X, P2 extends from argument X to respond to Opp's argument Y, P3 builds on P2's discussion of X and extends it with even-if analysis.

Distinct from *late* material as the material has been consistently engaged with throughout the debate.

A TL;DR on New Material v. Late Material v. Evolution

New Material	Brought up in prep, not discussed in 1st/2nd, not flagged as an argument in 1st, brought up for first time in 3rd
Late Material	Brought up in 1st, dropped in 2nd, brought back in 3rd
Evolution (of material)	Brought up in 1st, extended in 2nd to respond to other side, extended in 3rd to respond to other side

Third Speaker Clarification: Winning from Third

What happens if a critical portion of the Opposition rebuttal to Proposition's case is delivered by the Third Speaker, without any engagement from the First and Second Speaker? Can the Opposition still win?

- Theoretically possible **IF** responses are thorough.
- However, this is arguably bad strategy given that Proposition (a) had ample opportunity to build their case, and (b) has very little opportunity to respond.
- Moreover, given that Opposition only has 1 speech, it is unlikely that Third Opposition would have the time to be thorough.

Reply Speaker Clarification: New Material at Reply

- The Reply Speech is a biased summary of the debate from the team's viewpoint, including a response to the other side's case.
  - Good reply speeches do not just report on the debate that happened, but contribute to the team's overall strategy and approach in the debate, in order to shape how the debate has evolved and panned out
- The Reply Speaker must be either the First or Second Speaker.
- A reply speaker may respond to an existing argument by raising a new example that illustrates that argument but may not otherwise introduce a new argument.
- **NO NEW MATERIAL IN THE DEBATE**
  - New weighing, new framing, new contextual observations, new examples are permitted. **<u>HOWEVER</u>** they have to be clearly derivative, and, even then, if late, could be considered as poor strategy,
- Possible to win debates through Reply Speeches.

The Tripartite Marking Scheme at WSDC

Debaters at WSDC are marked according to the tripartite standards of Content, Style, and Strategy.

- Content (40%) → **WHAT** you say in the debate (e.g. as if ChatGPT is judging)
- Style (40%) → **HOW** you say something in the debate (N.B. **NOT** accent, use of cue cards, immutable characteristics e.g. pitch, tone; about word choice, pace, volume, speed, etc.);
- Strategy (20%) → **WHY** you say something in the debate (e.g. motion interpretation, time allocation, consistency, POIs, dealing with the issues in the debate, etc.)

The three marking schemes are not discrete categories that are marked independently. The Average Intelligent Voter is not independently convinced by Content, Style, or Strategy. **Rather, the three categories work together to form a cohesive speech**.

Content: *What* you say in the debate

- Covers the content of the material provided, whether that be substantive arguments, rebuttals, content of POIs, responses to POIs, and so on.
  - **Even if material is not flagged as a response, it can be responsive and should be credited as such**.

- Evaluates quality of the material being presented in terms of: analytical rigour, and the use of examples/illustrations. This includes the following:
  a. Does the content skip logical steps (i.e. mechanised), does the conclusion follow from the premises and development of the material?
  b. Is the content well supported by a range of good quality examples or illustrations? Or was it supported by personal anecdotes or hypothetical fiction?
  c. Is the rebuttal given responding to the claim given, as opposed to a strawman?
  d. Does the rebuttal respond to evolutions of material in the debate, or is it responding to a snapshot of an argument as it was developed early in the debate?

- **Good content is independent of good style and good strategy, but can be enhanced by both**.

Style: *How* you say something in the debate

What is **NOT** Style

- **NOT** accents, immutable characteristics one's voice (e.g. if one's pitch is 'shrill' and cannot be changed, if one's voice is low and cannot be changed).
- **NOT** whether one uses cue/index cards, A4 paper, and so on.
- **NOT** the use of jargon (e.g. "structural reason", "epistemic access", "state power principle", "free rider problem", or "historiographical orientation").

Style: *How* you say something in the debate

What Style **IS**
- An **appropriate word choice** (is a serious matter being treated trivially with a joke? Is a light-hearted issue being given an overly-serious treatment?)
- **Eye contact** (Is the speaker giving the audience adequate eye contact? Is the speaker speaking to their notes?)
- **Body movement and hand gestures** (is the speaker's movement distracting you from their speech?)
- **Voice projection and control** (is the speaker speaking at an appropriate volume)
- **Articulation and Enunciation** (Is the speaker able to enunciate the words clearly? Are the words spoken clearly enough to be heard and not mumbled?)
- **Speed of delivery** (Is the speaker speaking too quickly to follow? Is the speaker speaking too slowly and thus boring the audience?)
- **Variation in delivery** (Is the speaker constantly speaking at the same pace and tone? Does the speaker vary their voice to show emphasis to stress certain points?)
- **Effective use of humor to make a point** (Does the speaker tell a joke to get a point across? Does the speaker make an offensive joke that is rude or demeaning of other speakers/individuals/groups?)

Style: EFL/ESL Biases

- Everyone has a unique accent, even you.
  - Don't make fun of/ridicule people's accents, and/or say that you can't understand a speech because of a speaker's accent.
  - Don't demean or make faces at speakers who are struggling to find the words they want to use to express themselves.
  - Don't laugh or make faces when words are mispronounced or if grammatical structures are wrong/sound wrong.
- Note: Accents ≠ Articulation and Enunciation or Speed. You might say that you could not clearly follow a given speech because of poor enunciation (e.g. dropping of end-consonants) or a fast pace.

Exercise kindness, compassion, and empathy wherever possible. If you do so, you will be fine.

Check your biases! (We all have biases)

Style: When is Style Credited?

- **Style is credited to the extent that it value-adds or value-diminishes to the persuasiveness of the speech given.**
- What might this look like?
  - If a piece of substantive analysis is in itself well analysed and persuasive, and the speaker's style did not increase its persuasiveness, then style would be average, while content would be above average.
  - If a piece of substantive analysis is itself not well-analysed and unpersuasive, but the speaker's style in rhetorically weighing the importance of the claim was successful in making the argument stick in the round, then style would be above average, while content would be below average.
  - If a piece of substantive analysis it in itself well analysed and persuasive, and the speaker's style added to its persuasiveness by using emotive rhetoric, then style and content would both be above average.

Strategy: *Why* you say something in the debate

Is the sum total of all the choices that are made in the context of a debate, dealing with:

a. Motion interpretation (Definition, Approach/Direction)
b. Time allocation, Prioritization, and Structuring of materials in a speech
c. Correct identification of issues in the debate
d. Consistency within and between speeches
e. POI Action
    i. Whether one takes 1-2 POIs, if an adequate amount were offered
    ii. **NOT** response to POI (this is marked in Content)
    iii. **NOT** quality of POIs vis-a-vis the speech that was delivered (this is marked under POI adjustment column); or whether one gives an adequate amount of POIs throughout the debate.
f. Weighing (Explicit preferably, but also implicit) and use of comparisons
g. Framing
h. Is the content relevant and germane to the debate? (N.B. this is not about the quality of the analysis but whether the analysis is relevant to the debate, i.e. is it 'off-clash'?)

On Points of Information

- POIs are allowed between the 1st and 7th minute of the speech. This means that speakers on the other side may choose to offer a POI at any time during that time so long as they do not badger the speaker holding the floor. **The CAP <u>highly discourages </u>speakers from declaring that they will only take a POI at a specific point in the speech before starting their speeches (e.g. "I will only take a POI at 6 minutes and 50 seconds").**
- As a matter of etiquette, **speakers should stand up when offering POIs.** POIs should not be offered sitting down, unless the speaker is physically unable to stand up, e.g. because of a lower body injury**.**
- Unlike in online debating, there are no "preferences for how POIs are given". **POIs should be announced verbally with either "point", "point of information", "on that point" or other words that do not announce the point before it is delivered (e.g. "on the point of freedom", "on the model", etc).**
- **As a rule, speakers offering POIs must complete their POIs within 15 seconds.** If a speaker takes longer than 15 seconds to do so, the chair-adjudicator or the speaker holding the floor has the discretion to ask the speaker to sit down.
- **We would like to remind speakers to not heckle or barrack speakers when offering POIs**, e.g. having another speaker standing up immediately after a POI was rejected. As a guide, POIs should be spaced out, with at least a 15-30 seconds gap between the offering of each POI.

How does the Tripartite Marking Scheme Work?

Speeches are marked holistically, with a consideration of these three categories. Debaters should use these three categories to consider how their speech could be improved in future debates.

In the next three slides, we will provide three examples of how the three categories work together.

Example 1

A speaker identifies the correct issues, but is not able to prove why their team wins the issues due to their rebuttals being mostly strawman attacks. However, they provide emotive characterisation that makes the issues seem more important to the average reasonable person.

- Upward pressure on Strategy – good issue identification
- Downward pressure on Content – poor analysis
- Upward pressure on Style – emotive characterisation that adds to the persuasiveness of a given material

Overall: Likely average to slightly above average

Example 2

A speaker provides average responses to the material from the other side, and engages in very limited weighing up of claims from both sides in the debate. However, their speech flowed effortlessly, showing variation in tone and pace, to highlight certain arguments.

- Downward pressure on Strategy – limited weighing
- Neutral pressure on Content – average responses
- Upward pressure on Style – Variation in tone and pace highlighted the need to consider certain arguments.

Overall: Below average to average

Example 3

The First Proposition speech was able to correctly identify the debate winning issues in the debate, and devotes their entire speech to providing analytically rigorous substantiation in support of the motion, including dealing with Opposition arguments preemptively. While doing so, they used body movement and hand gestures effectively, and was able to use emotive rhetoric as a means of rhetorically weighing the importance of their material.

- Upward pressure on Strategy – Correct issue identification and Preemptive Engagement
- Upward pressure on Content – Analytically rigorous substantiation
- Upward pressure on Style – Emotive rhetoric for rhetorically weighing importance of claims

Overall: Above average to Very above average

Structure

Draw and Preparation Time Procedure: Prepared Round

Draw for Rounds 1 and 2 will be released on 4 July 2023.

Draw for Rounds 5 and 7 will be released at the latest 1 hour after confirmation of the final ballot for Rounds 4 and 6 respectively.

Rules

- Allowed to use all research materials the team has prepared for the round **as long as they are printed out and/or written down on paper**.

Draw and Preparation Time Procedure: Impromptu Round

Impromptu Rounds: Rounds 3, 4, 6, 8, and all Outrounds

1. Upon release of the draw
   a. Volunteers will pass a sealed envelope. **<u>DO NOT OPEN THE ENVELOPE UNLESS/UNTIL TOLD TO DO SO</u>**.
   b. Debaters to pass all your electronic devices and prohibited materials to their coach(es)/team manager(s).
2. CAP gives a 5-minute warning for motion release
   a. Debaters to move to the front of the auditorium
   b. Non-Debaters to move to the back of the auditorium
3. Motion Release
   a. CAP will announce to open the sealed envelope.
   b. Motion will be read out
   c. Leave in an orderly fashion.

Impromptu Round Materials Rules: Allowed Reference Materials

What material is allowed in the preparation room?

1. An English language dictionary
2. A bilingual dictionary
3. EITHER a single-volume encyclopaedia OR an almanac*

*Not almanac: CIA World Fact Book, Debbie Newman and Ben Woolgar ed., *Pros and Cons: A Debaters' Handbook*

Impromptu Round Materials Rules: Other Allowed Materials

What else can you bring into the preparation room?

1. Writing materials (pens, pencils, sharpeners, erasers, correction fluid/tape, stapler, highlighters)
2. Writing paper with nothing written/printed on them (no notes from previous debates)
3. A basic stopwatch
4. A water bottle to stay hydrated
5. Some small snacks (please remember to clean up after yourself)

Our suggestion: Put personal belongings in the tournament tote bag, and hand your big bag to your coach(es) and/or team manager(s)

Impromptu Round Materials Rules: Prohibited Materials

What is **NOT** allowed in the preparation room

1. Case files or matter files
2. Laptops, tablets, computers, mobile phones, smartphones, smartwatches
3. Paper with things written on them (e.g. notes from previous debates, meeting minutes, prep sheets, etc.)

Impromptu Round: Motion Clarifications

All questions are directed to the Motions Committee via CAP. Approach either Ben or Theo, who will relay your question.

Two opportunities to ask questions:

1. As debaters leave the auditorium, to Ben or Theo – **Identify which nation you are.**
2. Before the end of the first 15 minutes of preparation time, via a volunteer – **Identify which nation you are.**

The Motions Committee may only provide clarification of the words used in the motion, and will not comment on questions of strategy.

Clarification will be provided to the team that requested it and their opposing team. No tournament-wide clarification will be given unless members of the Motions Committee wish to issue one.

Team Composition and Behaviour

Each team comprises a minimum of **<u>3</u>** debaters and a maximum of **<u>5</u>** debaters.

- During Preparation Time, all 5 debaters may prepare together.

During the debate, only 3 speakers are allowed to speak. Remaining speakers who do not speak are **treated as part of the audience**.

- **ALLOWED** to speak to coach(es), team manager(s), and other audience members.
- **ALLOWED** to give basic time signals, but should not be used to signal things like "conclude now" or "move on from this".
- **NOT** allowed to speak to the three debaters who are speaking that round.
- **NOT** allowed to send signals to the team (e.g. nodding, tipping of head, etc.)

Team Composition and Behaviour

- The name of the speakers announced to be debating in the round will be written on the whiteboard (if/where available) and on the ballot for the round.
- If a team does not have **<u>3</u>** speakers, it cannot start the round, **walkover rules will apply in this situation.**
    - Team with at least 3 members will receive 1 win, 3 ballots, and the average total speaker points of the speaker points they accumulate over the course of the tournament.
    - Team without at least 3 members will receive 0 win, 0 ballots, and the average total speaker points of the speaker points they accumulate over the course of the tournament.

Substitution Rule

WSDC has no ironperson provision. You **<u>MUST</u>** have at least 3 debaters to start a debate.

Substitution Rule only applies if the team already has **<u>3</u>** people who are announced to be debating, but one speaker is unable to deliver a substantive speech in the middle of the round for any reason.
  i.   If used, the speech that is substituted is given a **<u>60</u>**
     1.   E.g. if P2 is unable to speak, and P1 spoke on behalf, the P2 speech is given an automatic 60. P1 keeps their scores.
  ii. Technically possible still to win, but **<u>no low-point wins</u>**

<u>NB: Substitute speech does not mean an automatic loss!</u>

In the event a Substitute Reply Speech is given (e.g. P2 was supposed to deliver the Reply Speech but was unable to, and P1 gave the speech on behalf, no penalties will apply)

BYE Rounds and Walkover rules

- Bye rounds are given when a team is given a 'bye' due to an uneven number of teams and the absence of a swing team.
- Walkovers are given when one team (of at least 3) is present while another team (of at least 3) is not.
- How this affects wins and ballots (see next slide):

	Bye Round	Walkover Win / Loss
When do we have this?	When all members of the judging panel drops out and due to logistical reasons, we are unable to reschedule / postpone the match.	When one team fails to show up for a round; including if the team is incomplete (i.e. less than 3 debaters)
How are wins determined?	Depending on whether you win a majority of your other rounds	If you were present, you get a win. If you were absent, you get a loss.
How are ballots calculated?	Average is more than 2.5 judges per round: 3 ballots Average is more than 1.5 judges but less than/equal to 2.5 judges per round: 2 ballots Average is more than 0.5 judges but less than/equal to 1.5 judges per round: 1 ballot Average is less than/equal to 0.5 judges: 0 ballots	If you were present, you get 3 ballots. If you were absent, you get 0 ballots.
How are teams scored?	Average of all scores obtained in other rounds	Average of all scores obtained in other rounds

Structure

Interpreting the Motion

A motion is a topic to be debated in the round. It can be phrased in several ways, usually starting with "This House".

Who "This House" is changes based on the motion

- Usually it is the state or a group of neutral actors ("we" as a collective)
- Other times it is a specific actor that is defined in the motion (e.g. This House, as a school teacher, This House believes that the US should ban fracking).

Information Slides are sometimes provided to provide clarity and necessary knowledge for the purpose of the debate. **Any information on this slide is assumed to be true for the debate**, and should be treated as part of the motion by teams and judges.

Interpreting the Motion

Broadly two types of debates:

- Value Judgement / Analysis / Principle debates
  - Is a given statement true in the majority of cases?
  - Likely requires a metric / evaluative criteria / benchmark / yardstick
  - Can have discussions over practical impacts or principle(d) considerations.
- Policy / Action debates
  - Should action X be implemented as a matter of law?
  - Assume that whatever the motion is proposing is **NOT** the status quo (no global status quo)
  - Proposition fiat exists

All debates are a variation of these two types, but may be worded in different ways. Each wording carries with it a specific nuance e.g. Actor motion v. Non-actor motion.

MODELS/POLICIES ARE NOT MANDATORY – Up to teams to decide if strategically helpful for them.

Proposition Fiat

Proposition Fiat: The action specified in the motion is assumed to be possible. This cannot be contested. **This does not mean perfect implementation of the action specified in the motion**.

E.g. THW reserve 30% of seats in Parliament for LGBTQ+ candidates

- Motion assumes that reservation of seats is a policy that would pass Parliament.
- Motion does not assume that the seats will be allocated in a way that would benefit the LGBTQ+ community.
- Motion does not assume that there will be no backlash from conservative sections of society.

A Comment on Opposition Strategy

It is **<u>NOT</u>** mandatory for Opposition to have a countermodel / counterprop in the debate. However, it might be strategic for them to have one, depending on the motion.

- If Opposition chooses to have a countermodel, they have as much fiat as the Proposition. Their countermodel must therefore be:
  a. mutually exclusive from the Proposition model, and
  b. does not use more resources than the Proposition.
- Opposition can also choose to defend the status quo (or some variation of it)

Some motion may be explicit on whether Opposition has to set a model (and what kind)

- THBT X should do Y instead of Z → Opposition must defend Z

What Burdens Do Teams Have

When the motion is not worded as an absolute (e.g. THW ban cosmetic surgery)

- Proposition: Prove why it should be done generally, not beyond reasonable doubt.
- Opposition: Prove why it should not be done generally.

When the motion is worded as an absolute (e.g. THBT democracy is the best form of governance for all countries in the world)

- Proposition: Prove in the significant majority of cases, though not all conceivable cases.
- Opposition: Prove in the significant minority of cases, cannot win on one instance.

Motion Wordings at a Glance

1. This House believes that (THBT)
2. This House would (THW)
3. This House supports (THS) / This House opposes (THO)
4. This House regrets (THR)
5. This House prefers (THP)
6. This House, as X, would do Y

Motion Wording: This House believes that (THBT)

Variant 1: Value Judgement / Analysis / Principle debate (usually)

Does not usually require a policy set-up, but may be useful if teams wish to use one to illustrate what they envision the new world would look like.

- E.g. THBT parents should have access to their children's social media accounts

Not about changing the world, but about evaluating the validity of a certain view

- E.g. THBT the war on drugs has failed

May sometimes require a metric / criteria (e.g. what is "more harm than good"?)

- THBT single sex schools do more harm than good

Motion Wording: This House believes that (THBT)

Variant 2: May sometimes be a 'policy' debate when worded as THBT X should do Y

- E.g. THBT the Singapore government should abolish the mandatory death penalty for drug trafficking
  - The motion is calling for the Singapore government to do something
  - Modelling is not mandatory, but could be useful. Up to the strategic choice of teams.

Motion Wording: This House would (THW)

Policy / Action Debate

- **<u>NOT MANDATORY</u>** to have a policy/model, but could be useful to help explain/illustrate how the team envisions the new world to look like.
- Proposition Fiat exists; Opposition has same amount of fiat as Proposition does.
  - Does not mean perfect implementation; just that teams have the capacity to assume that the action required by the motion is possible.
- Assume that whatever the motion is proposing is **<u>NOT</u>** the status quo (no global status quo)

E.g. THW legalise all recreational drugs

Motion Wording: This House, as X, would do Y

Actor Motion

- Debate happens from the specific perspective of the actor specified in the motion. **All arguments must be linked to why actor X cares/would care about doing action Y**.
- Does not mean that Actor X is always self-interested or that principle arguments cannot be made. Just means that **teams must show why Actor X cares about that principle / perspective**.

E.g. TH, as a parent, would encourage their child not to attend Oxbridge

Should v. Would (THBT X should do Y v. TH, as X, would do Y)

	THBT X should do Y	**TH, as X, would do Y**
Type of Motion	Value Judgement	Actor Motion
Whose Perspective is the debate from?	Neutral third party observer, although the interests of the actor can be prioritised from the perspective of a neutral third party observer	X's perspective
Need a Model?	If teams assess that it is strategic to do so	If teams assess that it is strategic to do so

Motion Wording: This House supports (THS) / This House opposes (THO)

Value Judgement / Analysis / Principle Debate

- Debate takes place in the status quo. Teams do not re-imagine a world, but supports/opposes X in the context of the status quo.
- Requires teams to explain why having more (if support) / less (if oppose) of X is good for the world
- Might require a metric (e.g. at what point do we support / oppose something)
- No mandatory model, only if teams think it is strategic to do so.

E.g. This House supports the rise of hashtag activism, This House opposes the rise of hashtag activism

Motion Wording: This House regrets (THR)

Value Judgement / Principle / Analysis Debate

- Debate is retrospective. You hit a stop on the flow of time and ask if X is something that was good/bad for the world.
- Proposition needs to re-imagine what a world without X would look like – this re-imagined world is called the **counterfactual**. They must then show why this counterfactual world is preferable to the status quo.
  - Counterfactuals can be contested; Oppositions may claim that the Proposition's counterfactual is not likely/possible.
- Opposition must defend the status quo or the trends in the status quo.

E.g. This House regrets the rise of Twitter journalism

Motion Wording: This House prefers (THP)

Variant 1: This House prefers X to Y

Value Judgement / Analysis / Principle Debate

- Debate is a comparison between X and Y.
- Proposition must defend X, Opposition must defend Y. Opposition cannot defend Y+Z.
- Teams can be dynamic in their analysis i.e. they can show how X and/or Y can/has change(d) over time.

E.g. This House prefers benevolent dictatorships to weak democracies

Motion Wording: This House prefers (THP)

Variant 2 This House prefers a world where X

Value Judgement / Analysis / Principle Debate

- Effectively a THR motion in that the Proposition needs to establish a counterfactual of what the world would have looked like if X had happened.
- Opposition defends the status quo.

E.g. This House prefers a world where all countries were benevolent dictatorships.

Defining the Motion: Avoid the Following

Squirelling: Distorting the topic and defining it in a way that violates the spirit of the motion.	E.g. *"THW ban gambling"* cannot be defined as banning risky behaviors such as taking hard drugs, as a way of "gambling with one's life". Gambling has an obvious meaning.
Disallowing opposition room for debate	E.g. *"TH supports cosmetic surgery"* cannot be defined as supporting it only for burn victims. This would make it impossible for Opposition to do the debate.
Refusing to debate the motion at the level of specificity / abstraction the motion requires	E.g. In "*THW restrict civil liberties in the name of national security"*, a definition that defends exclusively compulsory ID cards is too narrow. Compulsory ID cards may be an example of a national security policy that is defended by the Proposition team, but the debate extends beyond this example to a more general principle.
Place-setting: Narrowing the debate arbitrarily to specific places not specified by the motion	E.g. In "*THW ban commercial surrogacy",* it is not legitimate to set the debate "only in low-income nations". Examples from these countries may be used, but the debate has a global context. However, in *THW ban non-democratic countries from hosting international sporting events*, Proposition can identify reasonable criteria for what constitutes a democracy.
Time-setting: Narrowing the debate arbitrarily to a time that is not the present when unspecified	E.g. *THBT citizens should engage in civil disobedience to protest unjust laws:* Proposition cannot define the policy in the context of apartheid in South Africa from 1948 until the 1990s, even though they may use this as an example However, in *THBT NATO should not have withdrawn combat troops from Afghanistan:* Proposition can set the context of the debate to the period when they contemplated the withdrawal of troops (2011-2014) as it's implicit in the motion

Options Available When Encountering Unreasonable Definitions

1. Accept the unreasonable definition and debate with the Proposition's definition.
   a. Quibble that the definition is unreasonable, but accept the definition and continue to debate with the Proposition's definition.
2. Broaden the debate back to the words in the motion (level of abstraction/specificity, general meanings).
3. Challenge the definition
   a. Argue that the definition is unreasonable, and present an alternative, reasonable definition, and debate based on the alternative definition, i.e. no 'even-if' responses.
   b. Argue that the definition is unreasonable, and present an alternative, reasonable definition, debate based on the alternative definition, **and also argue that 'even if' Proposition's definition is reasonable, the Proposition's case is still flawed**.

Options 1 and 2 can be done in any speaker.

Option 3 **MUST** be done in the First Opposition Speech.

Some Notes on Definitional Challenges

There is no obligation to challenge unreasonable definitions: If teams deem that it is strategic to proceed with a unreasonable / faulty definition, they may do so.

Assessments of definition(s) and definitional challenges are marked under strategy: If the Opposition's challenge is successful, this will impact Proposition's strategy score. Conversely, if the Opposition's challenge is unsuccessful, this will impact Opposition's strategy score.

Debates are not automatically won or lost by definitional challenges: Definitions merely provide a framework for analysis of the round.