

ONLINE

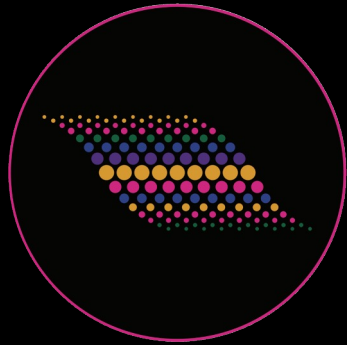
Online WSDC 2020 Speaker Training

These slides have been adapted by the WSDC Board, but all credit should be given to the Online WSDC 2020 CAP

Acknowledgements

This guide draws largely from the training materials developed by CAP of previous WSDCs (especially those of Thailand 2019 and Stuttgart 2016), building on their accumulated work. It also attempts to provide additional clarification on issues raised by judges and coaches in recent years.

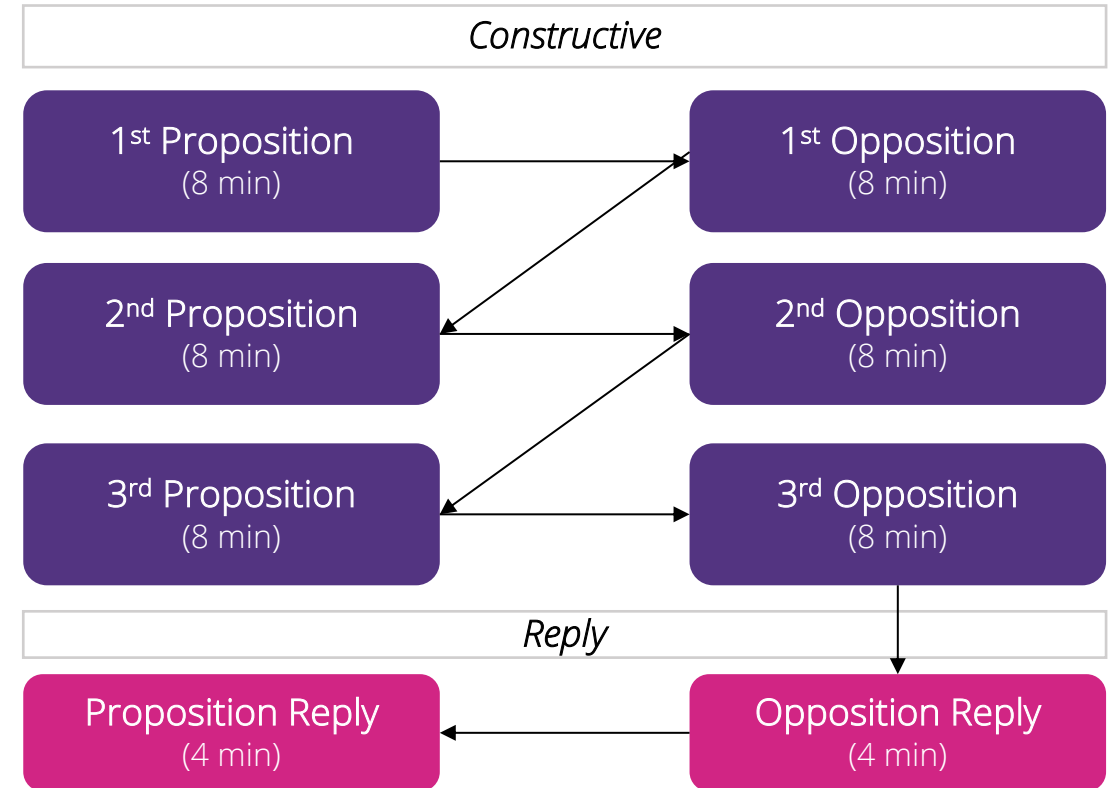
We thank the organizing committee of Mexico 2020, the Board of Directors, and members of the WSDC community for their support.



Understanding the structure of a WSDC debate

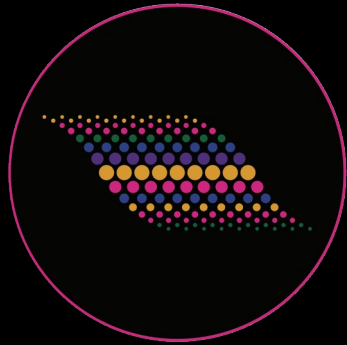
Each WSDC-style debate happens between two teams, and is structured to maximize engagement

- 2 teams: Proposition (Government) and Opposition
 - 3-5 members on a team
 - 3 speakers per team in a debate
- 3 judges per round; each judge has one vote and arrives at their decision independently
- Rounds 1, 3, and 5 are prepared rounds (teams know the motion in advance);
- Rounds 2, 4, and 6 are impromptu rounds (teams have one hour to prepare before the round starts). During these rounds, no communication with coach (or anyone who is not part of the team) during prep for impromptu rounds and actual debates is allowed



Only 1st or 2nd speakers can deliver the reply speech

Points of Information (POIs) can be offered by the other team during these speeches. Points of information are offered between the first minute and the last minute



Interpreting a motion and setting up a debate

A 'motion' refers to the topic to be debated in the round, and can be phrased in several ways starting with "This House".

In some cases, unclear terms in the motion might be defined on an 'Information-slide' by the CA team to provide clarity and knowledge necessary for a functional debate. Any information on this slide is assumed to be true for the debate.

If there is a word (or words) in the motion that is unclear to you, you may ask the members of the CAP for a clarification within the first 15 minutes of preparation time.

Who is this 'House'?

- This House would ban smoking
- This House believes that judges should be elected rather than appointed
- This House supports child activists in social justice movements

Usually the state or a collective group of neutral actors (we as a collective):

- This House believes that parents should have access to their children's social media accounts
- This House believes that schools should permanently expel bullies
- This House believes that democratic nations should refuse to sell arms to non-democratic nations

Sometimes a specific actor is defined in the motion, in which case the action is being done by this actor, not an abstract state or society in general

Once you read a motion, the debate rests on the assumption that the action specified in the motion can be taken – this is ‘Proposition fiat’

THW reserve a third of the seats for women in parliament

- x ‘Male parliamentarians will not let this bill in parliament pass’ - This is a criticism that explains why this will be a hard policy to pass, but does not make a comment on the policy’s merits or demerits. It is not a legitimate opposition line.

The criticisms around the harms and legitimacy of the policy itself are legitimate opposition responses:

The policy is unfair and illegitimate

The women who are elected will not represent women’s causes adequately

The women elected will not be seen as credible. However, they must assume that the motion will happen

A fair 'definition' of the motion should be offered by the first proposition speaker debate so that teams have a common understanding of the debate

Which organs?

As an example, This House would allow people to **sell their organs** for money

Unreasonable for Opp

Reasonable

Unreasonable for prop



Incentives for blood donation

Allowing people receive compensation for a kidney, a portion of liver/lungs, bone marrow, etc.

Paying to take away your heart, brain

In the spirit of debating at a global competition, and of setting fair definitions, teams cannot squirrel, unfairly narrow, and/or place or time-set debates

Squirreling: Distorting the topic and defining it in a way that violates the spirit of the motion

"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, which is the betting or staking of money or something of value, on the outcome of a game, a or an uncertain event whose result is determined by chance.

Disallowing opposition room for debate

"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 or abstraction the motion requires

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

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

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
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

If proposition sets up an unfair debate, opposition has a range of options they can activate right at their first speech

Accept definition and proceed with the debate

Broaden the debate back to the motion

Explicitly challenge the definition, but still provide 'even-if' arguments and engage proposition

Explicitly challenge the definition, explain the grounds for challenging, and supply an alternative reasonable definition, and **debate only those grounds**

Notes:

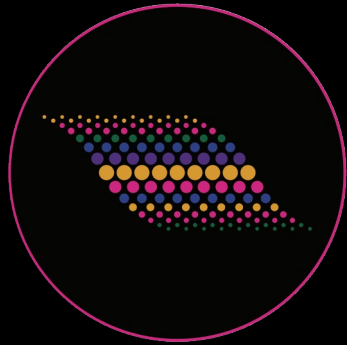
- If Opp explicitly challenges the definition, they have to do so in their first speech, and explain why the definition is illegitimate
- Even in cases of bad definitions, there is no obligation on Opposition to challenge - they are allowed to choose to proceed with the faulty definition.
- If you are persuaded that a definitional challenge is valid, this should reflect on your assessment of Proposition's strategy (their understanding of the debate);
- Debates are not automatically won or lost by definitional challenges

Teams may set up different motions differently – in motions that call for the implementation of an action/policy/change, teams may use ‘models’

- These motions require Proposition to carry out an action, with the most common formulation being ‘This House would...’
- Proposition teams may therefore use a ‘model’ or ‘policy’ or ‘implementation plan’ to explain how they want to carry out that action.
 - **This House would ban smoking:** In this debate, Proposition must ban smoking. They may do this through a phased-out policy, after which point they will levy fines on smokers. During the phase out, they will retrain workers in the tobacco industry. That is Proposition’s model.
 - If Proposition teams do so, the debate is then between the action in the way Proposition implements it and Opposition’s stance. Here, that would translate into banning smoking with the punishment Proposition suggests, rather than any punishment Opposition would prefer to oppose.
- Opposition can propose a **counter-model** too, and if they do, the motion becomes Proposition model v. Opposition model. Opposition is NOT required to have a counter-model.
 - **This House would ban smoking:** In this debate, Opposition can regulate access to smoking, tax cigarettes and even restrict it to smoking zones. In this case, the debate is between this particular model, and Proposition’s model.
- Some motions make what opposition has to implement clear in the motion itself:
 - **THW require non-violent criminals to perform community service rather than go to prison.** Here opposition cannot choose to model it only as house arrest, or fines.
- A motion being phrased in a different way to “This House would...” can also be an action motion. For example:
 - **TH supports the ‘right to secede’:** It is useful for Proposition to identify the manner by which secession will happen (what criteria makes a territory eligible, and the process that will be followed, such as conducting a referendum)
 - **THBT the US should increase its military presence in Asia:** It is useful for Proposition to explain what they mean by military presence and in which specific locations

Judgment debates

- **Type 1: This House believes that X does more harm than good – This House believes that the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has done more harm than good:** In this debate, the BRI is not being scrapped; debaters are expected to recognize that it has both benefits and harms, and then argue about whether it is more beneficial or harmful on balance, which will often require a comparison to a world without the BRI.
- **Type 2: This House supports/opposes X - This House opposes the Belt & Road Initiative:** In this debate, the BRI is not being scrapped; the debate is about whether we have reasons to support or oppose the BRI. Teams should define and characterise the subject that is being supported or opposed.
- **Type 3: This House prefers X to Y – This House prefers benevolent dictatorships to weak democracies:** In this debate, the teams are comparing two political systems. No one is proposing an action. It is an assessment debate that evaluates which system is better overall.
- **Type 4: This House regrets X – This House regrets the Belt and Road Initiative:** This is a retrospective debate. Basically, Proposition must say that the world without this X will have been better off. Both teams need to provide a realistic depiction of what a world without X might look like. They may or may not agree on this counter-factual world. What would have existed instead of the BRI? Why is that better than the BRI? Proposition may say without the BRI, alternatives to Western financial institutions would still have arisen, but they would not have been solely controlled by China and explain why those were better. Opposition may accept this and argue that China is a more sustainable lender, or they may suggest a different 'counter-factual', which is that the only option would have been Western lending institutions, which would have been more predatory.
- **Type 5: This House prefers a world where X (or prefers a world where X happens rather than Y) – THP a world where all sports clubs were owned by their communities through non-profit trusts**
 - In this debate, Proposition should describe and define what this world looks like, but they do not need to defend how we arrive at this world.
 - If it were worded as THW turn all sports clubs into non-profits, proposition teams may propose a model for how they'd compensate existing owners, and how the non-profits would make decisions.
 - The comparative is the **broad status quo/or one with some plausible changes, not another imaginary world**. Opposition cannot say that they too, prefer a world in which communities own sports clubs, but that these communities have an equal capacity to fund them. In *TH prefers a world in which people have superpowers*, **Opposition has to defend a world where no people have superpowers, not a 'world where only good people have superpowers**.



Team and speaker roles

Proposition and opposition teams have unique roles

	Proposition	Opposition
Overall roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has to define the motion in a way that is clear and fair to both sides• Should present their characterization of the status quo and present substantive arguments in favour of their case• Where appropriate, should present a solution to the identified problem(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Must oppose the motion• May set up its case purely on rebuttal of Proposition, but this is strategically risky.• May have substantive arguments of its own, including proposing a 'counter-model'

Every speaker also has a unique function

	Proposition	Opposition
1 st speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the motion and establish any relevant frameworks Introduce action plan (“model”) if the team chooses to tackle the motion with one Introduce and develop constructive material (“arguments”) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challenge definition if necessary Bring Rebuttal – this can be both of the plan and proposition’s constructive material Introduce own stance (could be the status quo, or a counter-model) Bring constructive material¹
2 nd speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deal with challenges of the definition, if necessary Bring rebuttal to first opposition speaker Extend and further develop the constructive case of proposition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring rebuttal to extension and extend and further develop the case of the proposition Extend the constructive case of opposition, if they have one
3 rd speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extend and further develop their constructive case Bring rebuttal to Opposition’s constructive case, if they have one 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring rebuttal to Proposition’s constructive case Extend and further develop Opposition’s constructive case, if they have one
Reply speakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a holistic overview of the debate Compare and analyse both teams’ argumentative cases Explain why they think their team won, without adding non-derivative new material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring a holistic overview of the debate Compare and analyse both teams’ argumentative cases Explain why they think their team won, without adding non-derivative new material

(1) While opposition is allowed not to bring constructive material, it is strategically advisable to do so

We wanted to draw particular attention to the role of new material in thirds

Technical WSDC rules

- The role of the 3rd speaker is to respond to the other team's case.
- The third speech (from either team) may include a small part of their teams substantive case, so long as this was flagged in the case split announced by that teams first speaker.
- However it should be noted that third speakers are not required to include new arguments in their case

CAP guide on 'new material at third'

- Both 3rd speakers should respond to what has happened in the debate before their speech. "Responding" is a broad term covering:
 - **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
- The above-mentioned forms of responsiveness often involve new ideas, logic, examples, components of arguments or new lines of rebuttal. It is acceptable for third speakers to bring these new aspects into their speeches
- "Newness" in a third speech is not sufficient justification to discredit material at third. We encourage judges to think more critically about whether material meets the definition of "responsiveness" as outlined above and give credit to the argument when it does.
- However, newness is not permissible if third speakers introduce an independent and entirely new concept or argument in the debate that didn't exist earlier, without having flagged that upfront as mentioned in the rules

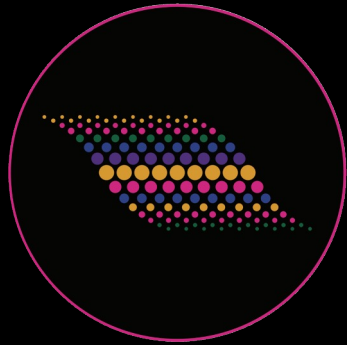
We additionally wanted to clarify the role of reply speeches in a debate

Technical WSDC rules

- The role of the reply speeches is to sum up the debate from the team's viewpoint, including a response to the other team's overall case and a summary of the speaker's own team's case.
- The reply speaker may be either the first or second speaker of the team, but not the third.
- The reply speakers are in reverse order, with the Opposition reply first and the Proposition reply last.
- Neither reply speaker may introduce a new part of the team case.
- 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.

CAP guide on the role of reply speeches

- Reply speeches are a crucial part of the debate - they can definitely swing the result of a debate
- 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
- New weighing of arguments, framing, contextual observations, or examples can all serve this function and are permitted and credited in replies – however, these need to be clearly derivative of the existing events in the debate



Points of information

Points of Information are short interjections during a speaker's speech by a member of the other side that tests dynamism and engagement

- Short comment/question addressed to person currently speaking by a member of the opposing team
- Speaker who has the floor has a right to refuse POIs, but as a general rule, must accept at least 2 (but judges should consider when and how many points were offered by the other side)
- If a speaker accepts a POI, they must ensure that the person offering the POI is given adequate time to express their point (max of 15 seconds)
- Speakers may offer POIs any time between the 1st and 7th minute of the current speech, but do so in a way that doesn't obstruct the speech (wait a bit after being denied before offering POIs again)
- How many should be offered: Enough to demonstrate opposing team's speakers' engagement with the arguments made in the given speech.
- Judges should track how many POIs were accepted and the content of POIs and responses to POIs