



Online Debate Rules

Team Policy and Lincoln-Douglas Value

Modifications for online competition are noted in italics.

1. **General Online Rules:**

- a. **Internet access and a device with a microphone and a webcam** are required. *The camera and microphone may be integrated or external.*
- b. **A single, stationary camera** must be used (e.g., no zooming or panning is permitted).
- c. **Green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text** may not be used.
- d. **Competitors may choose to stand or sit** at a desk or table while presenting.
- e. **A minimum of the competitor's head and shoulders** must be visible whenever the competitor is on camera.
- f. **Other individuals may be present** during a round but may not be visible on screen. Audience interaction (laughing, applause, prompting, etc.) is prohibited.

2. **Delivery** should be civil and comprehensible. Conversational-style debate is valued.

3. **Content** for all debates must be in keeping with the NCFCA mission statement. Discretion should be exercised when determining material for competition.

- **Content** should enhance the judge's understanding of the topic.
- **Opinions contrary to those of the judge** may be expressed.
- **Explicit material** should not be included for shock value.
- **Vulgarity** is never acceptable.

4. **Argumentation should be supported** with what a general listener would consider logical reasoning. Analysis, explanation, and appeals to common sense are considered acceptable strategy.

5. **Use of evidence** adds validity to the debater's arguments in both styles of debate. Evidence consists of facts, documentation, or testimony of others whether directly quoted or summarized.

- a. **Evidence presented in the round must have been researched, cut, and formatted prior to the round** and be available for examination by the judge or other team, if requested. Sources for evidence must be verifiable via public means.

- b. **Evidence presented in the round must be properly cited.** Sample citation formatting is available in the Debate Rules Appendix.
- **Evidence** must contain a full citation including source and date.
 - o **The source** should include each of the following items that apply: website name, URL, article title, author, title of publication, publisher, volume number, issue number, page number.
 - o **The date** should include each of the following items that apply: date first published, date updated, date accessed.
 - **Sources for evidence presented in the round** must be verbally mentioned in the delivery of the speech.
 - **Common knowledge** that is known to most people does not need to be cited in any way.
- c. **Evidence must be presented in a manner consistent with its use and context in the original source material.** If evidence presented verbally includes strikeouts, then the complete and easily readable form of that evidence should also be available for examination, if requested.
- d. **Distorting evidence** is prohibited. Distorting evidence is representing evidence in a way that alters the author's meaning and includes, but is not limited to:
- **Using only a portion** of the entire quote in such a way that it is no longer consistent with the author's position throughout the entire article without making that clear to the listener.
 - **Changing words** within the quote. This includes changing words like "might" to "will," or "could" to "is."
 - **Summarizing a quote** but presenting it as a direct quote from the author.
- e. **Fabricating evidence** is prohibited and includes, but is not limited to:
- **Asserting as fact** information that cannot be found in a published source.
 - **Manufacturing** articles, quotes, or dates.
- f. **A debater may request evidence presented in the round** from the opposing team, but only during his own speech, cross-examination time, or prep time.
- **A copy of the evidence**, in context, must be promptly provided.
 - **Debaters may not interact with the opposing team** while a speaker is *presenting* except for evidence exchange initiated by the speaker.
- g. **A judge may request to review one or more specific pieces of evidence** presented in the round for clarification or accuracy by speaking with a Compliance Staff member at the end of the round.

- h. **Discussion outside of the round** is not permitted between the debaters and the judge regarding evidence or the round.
- i. **Debate is primarily a verbal activity.** Exhibits or visual aids are not permitted.

6. Timekeeping is the responsibility of each team.

- **A timepiece** must be provided by each *speaker*.
- **The speaker *presenting*** will time his own speeches.
- **The speaker asking questions** will time cross-examination.
- **The timepiece** must count down and have an audible alarm during speeches and cross-examination.
- **The speaker** must adhere to prescribed speaking times and may not turn off the alarm and continue speaking.
- **Each team will track their own prep time** and must report their remaining prep time to the judge(s) and opposing team at the conclusion of each prep time.

7. Prescribed speaking order and times must be observed.

Team Policy Speeches	Time
1st Affirmative Constructive (1AC)	8 minutes
Negative cross-examines Affirmative	3 minutes
1st Negative Constructive (1NC)	8 minutes
Affirmative cross-examines Negative	3 minutes
2nd Affirmative Constructive (2AC)	8 minutes
Negative cross-examines Affirmative	3 minutes
2nd Negative Constructive (2NC)	8 minutes
Affirmative cross-examines Negative	3 minutes
1st Negative Rebuttal (1NR)	5 minutes
1st Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	5 minutes
2nd Negative Rebuttal (2NR)	5 minutes
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	5 minutes

- The 1AC is cross-examined by the 2nd Negative speaker
- The 1NC is cross-examined by the 1st Affirmative speaker
- The 2AC is cross-examined by the 1st Negative speaker
- The 2NC is cross-examined by the 2nd Affirmative speaker

Lincoln-Douglas Value Speeches	Time
Affirmative Constructive (AC)	6 minutes
Negative cross-examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive (NC)	7 minutes
Affirmative cross-examines Negative	3 minutes
1st Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal (NR)	6 minutes
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	3 minutes

8. Up to five minutes of **preparation time** for Team Policy and up to three minutes of preparation time for Lincoln-Douglas Value may be used by each team throughout the round prior to their constructive and rebuttal speeches. Prep time may not be used immediately before cross-examination.
9. **Switching the speaking order between partners** (in-and-out speaking) is not permitted during a Team Policy Debate round. The 1AC speaker will deliver the 1AR; the 2AC will deliver the 2AR; the 1NC will deliver the 1NR, and the 2NC will deliver the 2NR. Each speaker will participate in his respective cross-examination role, both asking and answering questions.
10. **Tag Teaming** is not permitted. A debater should rely upon his own reasoning while speaking in the round. In Team Policy Debate, communicating with one's partner in any way while *the partner is presenting* is not allowed.
11. **Debaters may not use electronic devices** to research or to request, send, or receive information during the debate round with the exception of evidence exchange and communication between partners as permitted by the rules.
12. **An observer** may not attempt to influence the outcome of a round in any way.

Online Debate Protocols

Team Policy and Lincoln-Douglas Value

1. **All rounds will be held live. Competitors must be present** and ready to begin within three minutes of the start time or risk forfeiture of the round.
2. **Debaters should each introduce themselves** once all participants are present. Debaters are also permitted to briefly ask judges for their judging background or philosophy.
3. **Debaters are permitted to turn off their cameras** unless actively speaking.
4. **Judges may use discretion to extend any portions of the round** for up to a total of five minutes per Lincoln-Douglas Value round or a total of ten minutes per Team Policy round in the case of technical difficulties only.
5. **Judges may give permission for a speaker to turn off his camera** if the speaker is experiencing technical difficulties.
6. **Evidence will be exchanged within the competition room** via an evidence exchange chat and/or a file upload function.
 - a. **The evidence exchange chat** may be used to copy and paste evidence.
 - b. **File upload** is recommended for lengthy pieces of evidence including, but not limited to, an AC or IAC.
 - c. **The recommended file types** are .pdf or .jpg. Other acceptable formats include .doc, .docx, or .png. Debaters are responsible to ensure that they can download and open all of these file types on their device. Links to evidence are not permitted.
 - d. **Evidence exchange functions** are visible only to the debaters and tournament administration.
7. **Partners may share a device and/or camera** in Team Policy. Teams should consider the advantages and disadvantages of sharing a device versus using separate devices (e.g., the logistics of evidence exchange, internet bandwidth, etc.).
8. **Each team has a private chat function** available in the competition room for use when neither partner is presenting in Team Policy.
9. **Questions regarding potential rule violations** should be submitted to the Compliance Staff immediately following the debate round.