

THE NCFCA COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE TO POLICY DEBATE

Competitor's Handbook

National Christian Forensics and Communications Association

By Christy Shipe

First Edition, August 2017

Institute for Excellence in Writing, L.L.C.

The purchaser of this book receives access to *The NCFCA Comprehensive Guide to Policy Debate: Parent's Guide*.

(See the blue page for complete download instructions.)

Copyright Policy

*The NCFCA Comprehensive Guide to Policy Debate
Competitor's Handbook*

First Edition, August 2017

Copyright © 2017 National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA)

ISBN 978-1-62341-288-3

Our duplicating/copying policy for this **Competitor's Handbook**:

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the author, except as provided by U.S.A. copyright law. Please note the specific policy below:

Home use: Because this Competitor's Handbook may not be reproduced, each coach must purchase his or her own copy.

Club or co-op classes: Because this Competitor's Handbook may not be reproduced, each coach must purchase his or her own copy.

Club or classroom teachers: Because this Competitor's Handbook may not be reproduced, each teacher must purchase his or her own copy.

Library use: This Competitor's Handbook may be checked out of a lending library provided patrons agree not to make copies.

Additional copies of this Competitor's Handbook may be purchased from IEW.com/NC-GPD-M.

Institute for Excellence in Writing

8799 N. 387 Rd.

Locust Grove, OK 74352

800.856.5815

info@IEW.com

IEW.com

Printed in the United States of America

IEW® is a registered trademark of the Institute for Excellence in Writing, L.L.C.

CONTENTS

Preface.....	1
Lesson 1.....	4
Lesson 2.....	15
Toulmin Model Worksheet.....	27
Lesson 3.....	30
How to Cite Evidence from Different Sources.....	49
Lesson 4.....	52
Stock Issues Worksheet.....	65
Lesson 5.....	68
Lesson 6.....	74
Create-a-Case Worksheet.....	96
Lesson 7.....	99
Four-point Refutation Worksheet.....	110
Lesson 8.....	112
Constructing a Disadvantage Worksheet.....	127
Lesson 9.....	129
Speaker Responsibility Quiz.....	144
Student Cross-X Response Worksheet.....	147
Lesson 10.....	150
Speech Quality Student Worksheet.....	161
Lesson 11.....	164
Audience Analysis Worksheet.....	177
Agree or Disagree? Worksheet.....	178
Lesson 12.....	181
Appendix.....	189
Team Debate Partnership Questionnaire.....	190
Sample Affirmative Case.....	191
Speech Quality Exercises.....	197
Student Assignments.....	199
NCFCA Debate Ethics and Guidelines.....	205
NCFCA Debate Evidence Appendix.....	207
Glossary.....	208

PREFACE

Twenty years ago, homeschool debate got its start under the leadership of the Home School Legal Defense Association. I was privileged to run that program for HSLDA and write a policy debate textbook to help beginners get started in the activity. That textbook has since gone through several editions, and the book you are now holding in your hands is the latest reworking of what used to be called *An Introduction to Policy Debate*. With the blessing of HSLDA, I am pleased to now be writing this new edition for the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association, the league that developed out of the original HSLDA debate program. I currently serve on the Board of Directors of the NCFCA and am proud to be an advocate for and educator in the league. I'm also excited about partnering with a new publisher, the Institute for Excellence in Writing. IEW has been a strong supporter of the NCFCA and is a natural partner in helping spread the important activity of debate to Christian students.

Whether you are a student, educator, or parent, I want to preface this book with a few very important principles that I hope will strongly guide your understanding of debate. First, it is of the utmost importance that the Christian's goal in learning debate should be to gain life skills in order to glorify God. Competition is an excellent training ground for enhancing those skills, but winning competitions is not the ultimate goal of learning debate. God must get the glory, not us. Do your utmost to focus on serving God and bringing Him glory as you engage with the activity of debate.

Second, as you focus on serving and glorifying God, you will naturally begin to love the other people who are also involved in debate, because God is love. Anyone who loves God must love his brother as the Scriptures tell us (1 John 4:21). Part of loving others in debate means showing them common courtesy during competition and refusing to engage in practices that are rude or insensitive. Some of these practices include presenting new arguments in rebuttals when the other team won't have a chance to answer, bullying opponents during cross-examination, and mishandling evidence. This one question should guide everything said and done in the debate round: Is it loving?

Third, understand that the theory of debate is debatable! While competitors have great freedom in the round to debate what is acceptable theory and practice, please understand that the best way to keep that freedom is by being responsible. If competitors will keep love as their guide, then a robust and diverse practice of debate will flourish. If instead competitors begin to adopt a style of tactics designed to gain an unfair advantage in the round, they may find those freedoms will not last long.

Finally, please keep the activity of debate in perspective. Once again, competition serves the greater goal of gaining life skills. Some families are tempted to make attending competitions and winning debates the primary goal of their high school years. It is easy to allow any kind of competition to become an identity rather than a skill. When things go well, everyone feels good about themselves. When things don't go well, everyone is upset. It is easy to become angry and place blame on others. Please keep this activity in its right place—it is an educational process designed to teach students communication skills. Whether competitors win or lose, they are still gaining the life skills that God can use for His glory.

More than ever, we need Christian young people who can communicate God's love and truth to a confused world. My prayer is that every student who learns debate will use those skills to further the kingdom of Christ.

Happy debating!

Christy Shipe

June 21, 2017

POLICY DEBATE CLASS

LESSON 1

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO DEBATE

Give me the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties.

– John Milton, *Areopagitica*

SUMMARY

This short lesson explains what academic debate is and why the skills it teaches are important for Christian students to learn.

OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to define academic debate.
 - Students will learn the cross-examination debate team format (order of speeches).
 - Students will identify the skills developed by studying debate.
 - Students will understand what the Bible says about speech and debate.
 - Students will be able to explain how they can love God and love others by developing the skills that debate teaches.
-

The right to argue freely is a right that has been prized throughout history. From the time of the ancient Greeks, the art of debate has been instrumental in shaping the philosophy, politics, and culture of mankind. America's founding fathers highly prized the right to argue freely, enshrining that principle in the First Amendment to our Constitution. Political rulers will become tyrants, the founders argued, unless the people are guaranteed the right to speak and debate freely about the issues that affect their lives.

Yet it is not only leaders and rulers who practice the art of debate. Chances are that you have probably been arguing with your parents, siblings, and friends on a variety of issues since you were quite young. *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* provides this helpful definition of the word argue: "To persuade by reasons." Debate is simply the art of persuading by reasons, which is a common part of our experience as human beings. Academic debate is an educational way to learn the skills you need to speak persuasively in real life.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DEBATE

There are many important reasons to learn the art of academic debate. First and foremost, academic debate is a tool that you can use to fulfill the two greatest commands of Scripture: to love the Lord with all of your heart, soul, strength, and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself (*English Standard Version*, Matthew 22:26-40). The study of debate is one way that you can greatly develop your critical thinking skills and thus improve the ability of your mind to love the Lord. Although God has granted us the ability to reason, he does not wave a wand over our minds to magically make them think logically, learn how to properly analyze arguments, study important issues, form conclusions, and think through the best way to communicate our beliefs to others. Instead, he expects us to be good stewards of the minds he has given us by actively disciplining and training our minds to think rightly (Romans 12:2, Ephesians 4:22-24, Philippians 4:8, Colossians 3:2, 1 Peter 1:3).

By studying academic debate, you will develop important mental skills that God can greatly use if you choose to let Him. It is very important to remember that debate itself is only a tool. That tool can be used for good or for evil. In order to learn debate in a way that will allow you to love the Lord with all of your mind, you must constantly submit yourself (and your mind) to His lordship. Submitting your mind to the lordship of Christ means that you will base all of your thinking, reasoning, and conclusions upon the highest truth that exists, which is the Word of God.

Submitting to the lordship of Christ also means that you will use your debate skills to love rather than to hurt others. You cannot fulfill the greatest commandments by using debate skills to disrespect your parents, show off to your friends, or cut someone down. Instead, God wants to use you and the communication skills you will learn in debate to reach others with the truth of the gospel (Romans 10:14), to build up others (Ephesians 4:29), to demolish lies and replace them with truth (2 Corinthians 10:5), and to stand up for those who cannot defend themselves (Proverbs 24:11, Isaiah 1:17). Learning academic debate will greatly increase your ability to communicate effectively for God.

Academic debate is also a practical endeavor. As you learn how to ask penetrating questions, develop the ability to respond graciously and accurately to opponent's attacks, organize information, or communicate complex ideas in simple ways, you are learning the skills that will greatly help you in life. It is important to think of debate as learning a life skill, rather than playing a game. Debate practiced as a game tends to train speakers who can only communicate well with others who understand the rules of the game. Debate practiced as a life skill, on the other hand, tends to train speakers who can communicate with anyone regardless of their knowledge of debate theory.

Keep your eye on the goal of learning a style of real-world communication that will make sense to the average person, rather than adopting sophisticated styles and strategies that only a debate expert could understand. The goal of playing a game is winning that game. The goal of learning a life skill is the practical and effective application of that skill in the real world. The real prize of debate is learning skills that will last a lifetime, not necessarily winning the debate round.

Whether you hope to be a lawyer, an engineer, a plumber, a mother, a doctor, or a teacher, the skills you learn in debate will help you in your career. No matter what you plan to do in life, you will face situations in which you must be able to give an answer for what you believe, often in the face of another's arguments. Whether you are witnessing to someone about the gospel, applying for a job, trying to convince someone to take action on a political issue, or reading the newspaper, the skills developed by debate are invaluable. Simply learning to think analytically and evaluate arguments will tremendously benefit anything you do in life.

Finally, experienced debaters will tell you that the activity is one of the most invigorating and exciting experiences you can have. Academic debate is very challenging—even scary and intimidating—but it can also be a lot of fun.

DEBATE DEFINED

Academic debate is a structured style of argumentation that follows a certain format and rules (such as time limits for speeches), has a judge who decides which team wins the round, and is done for an educational purpose. This book deals with a specific type of academic debate, namely cross-examination debate.

There are two kinds of cross-examination debate: value debate and policy debate. Policy debate usually involves a current policy challenge facing our country—such as health care, taxes, or education—and gives debaters a chance to enter into the national debate and come up with their own plan to solve the problem. Value debate involves a discussion of the values that often underlie policy decisions such as safety, liberty, or life. For example, if we value safety more than liberty, that might justify government policies that support closely monitoring its citizens' private information. Value debate has policy implications, but does not get into questions of workability or a plan to solve a specific problem.

Cross-examination debate includes two different speaker formats: Lincoln-Douglas (LD) debate and team debate. In the National Christian Forensics and Communications Association (NCFCA), the Lincoln-Douglas format always uses a value topic, and the team debate format always uses a policy topic. The other difference between LD and team debate is the number of people on each team. LD debate consists of only one person per side (one affirmative speaker and one negative speaker) while team debate has two people per side (two affirmative speakers and two negative speakers). Since there are more people in the team debate round, it is the longer of the two formats. This text will deal exclusively with team policy debate.

Debate Resolution

Team policy debate involves two teams debating a specific topic chosen by the debate association. Most debate leagues choose only one policy topic for an entire debate season. Here are some examples of policy topics debated in the NCFCA:

Resolved: That the United States Federal Government should significantly change its policy toward India.

Resolved: That medical malpractice law should be significantly reformed in the United States.

Resolved: That the United States should change its energy policy to substantially reduce its dependence on foreign oil.

Resolved: That the 16th Amendment to the United States Constitution should be repealed and replaced with an alternate tax policy.

Note that all of the topics start with the word *resolved* as if these statements are being formally given in front of a legislature or governing body. This style is part of academic debate, and debaters call the topic of the debate the *resolution*.

Debate Tournament

Academic debate is organized into a series of rounds. Each debate round consists of two teams arguing a single topic in front of a judge. A debate tournament is made up of many rounds of debate, usually six preliminary rounds for all teams entered into the tournament and then elimination rounds in which the teams with the best records in the preliminary rounds compete.

The two teams who meet in the debate round will be assigned a side to take in the debate. During a debate tournament, each team will take turns arguing on both sides of the resolution so that debaters thoroughly learn each topic. For example, using the medical malpractice topic above, your team might argue that medical malpractice needs serious reform in the first round and then argue that no reform is needed in the second round. This may seem strange to new debaters, but you will soon realize that the best way to know how to defend what you believe is to thoroughly understand all of your opponent's arguments. By learning to debate both sides of the resolution, you will learn the skills necessary to defend what you truly believe.

The team arguing in support of the resolution is called the affirmative team, and the team that argues against the resolution is called the negative team. For example, using the same medical malpractice topic, the affirmative side would argue that malpractice law should be reformed while the negative side would argue that no reform is needed. The resolution is always worded toward the affirmative side of the debate.

Note that the way the policy topics are worded on page 7 gives the affirmative team the ability to choose what kind of change to current policy it wants to make. The broadness of the resolution means not every affirmative team will make the same kind of change. There will usually be at least twenty possible changes that can be made to affirm a resolution.

When the affirmative team chooses what kind of change it wants to make, it will write a case making that change. So, with the energy policy resolution, an affirmative team could choose a case that opens up oil reserves in national parks. Or perhaps it will write a case to invest in solar power. All of the possibilities for affirming the resolution are called *case areas* by debaters. Debaters will not know ahead of time which teams they will face in the tournament and so must be prepared to argue on the negative against all of the likely case areas as well as defend their own affirmative case.

Team Debate Format

Since there are two speakers for each side in team debate, each speaker is numbered. On the affirmative side, the speakers are named the first affirmative speaker and the second affirmative speaker. On the negative side, the speakers are named the first negative speaker and the second negative speaker. The speeches are named as well. There are constructive speeches (where arguments are first made or constructed), cross-examinations (where questions are asked), and rebuttals (where arguments made in the constructive speeches are refuted and refined).

Here is the format used for a team policy debate round:

First Affirmative Constructive (1AC)	8 minutes
Cross-Examination (by the 2N)	3 minutes
First Negative Constructive (1NC)	8 minutes
Cross-Examination (by the 1A)	3 minutes
Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC)	8 minutes
Cross-Examination (by the 1N)	3 minutes
Second Negative Constructive (2NC)	8 minutes
Cross-Examination (by the 2A)	3 minutes
First Negative Rebuttal (1NR)	5 minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	5 minutes
Second Negative Rebuttal (2NR)	5 minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	5 minutes

LESSON 1

The speeches are commonly referred to by their abbreviations given above. Each speaker has different responsibilities and different requirements which will be discussed in Lesson 9.

Notice the order of the cross-examinations. The 1A is cross-examined by the 2N, the 1N is cross-examined by the 2A, and so on. The reason for this order is simple. After each constructive speech, the member of the opposite team that does not have to speak next must cross-examine the person who just spoke.

Speaker order can be confusing for the beginning debater. Do not worry about forgetting which speech comes next or when you are supposed to speak. More experienced debaters are quick to help those with less experience to keep a debate round running smoothly. After a few rounds of debate, you will easily remember the speaker order.

Time limits are strictly enforced in debate (although you will be allowed to finish your sentence). Many tournaments have timekeepers who keep time for each speech and will let you know when your speech time has run out. Right now, you may be thinking that you won't ever need a timekeeper to stop your speech. In fact, you may be wondering how you will ever be able to speak for eight solid minutes! However, once you are well-prepared for a debate, you will find that eight minutes flies by quickly. You will have to work hard to make your arguments as concise as possible in order to leave enough time for everything you want to say.

Each team also receives five minutes of preparation time during the round in order to prepare before their speeches. You can use your prep time, in whole or in part, between any of the constructive speeches and rebuttals, but you cannot use your prep time before a cross-examination. The prep time is taken from the team that has to speak next. The judge or timekeeper usually keeps track of prep time for each team.

Judging Debate

After the round is over, the judge will fill out a ballot with the following information: 1) which team won or lost the round, 2) speaker points for each individual speaker in the round, and 3) comments about the reason for the decision as well as constructive comments for the debaters. A sample ballot is given on the following page.

Win/Loss

Usually, the judge votes for either the affirmative or negative team. In rare cases, NCFCA allows the judge to give a double loss if the judge cannot in good conscience vote for a team whose behavior was blatantly rude and abusive throughout the round, even if its arguments were sound. In most double-loss situations, one team did an extremely poor job of argumentation and the other team was so rude that the judge could not vote for either team.



Aff Smith T./Jones L.

Neg Miller J./Lewis J.

Regional Qualifier Room F103 Round 2 12:00 PM

Affirmative

Name 1A Laurie Jones Speaker Rank Best Last 1 2 3 4

Speaker Points	Poor.....	Excellent
Persuasiveness	1 2 3 4 5	4
Organization	1 2 3 4 5	3
Delivery/Conduct	1 2 3 4 5	4
Evidence	1 2 3 4 5	4
Cross-Examination	1 2 3 4 5	3
Refutation	1 2 3 4 5	4
Total	22	

Comments Great 1AC! Need to work on organizing 1AR to cover most important issues in the round. Overall, good job!

Name 2A Todd Smith Speaker Rank Best Last 1 2 3 4

Speaker Points	Poor.....	Excellent
Persuasiveness	1 2 3 4 5	4
Organization	1 2 3 4 5	5
Delivery/Conduct	1 2 3 4 5	4
Evidence	1 2 3 4 5	4
Cross-Examination	1 2 3 4 5	4
Refutation	1 2 3 4 5	4
Total	25	

Comments Excellent 2AR. Your summary of the issues won the round for your team. Work on speaking slowly.

Negative

Name 1N Jason Miller Speaker Rank Best Last 1 2 3 4

Speaker Points	Poor.....	Excellent
Persuasiveness	1 2 3 4 5	4
Organization	1 2 3 4 5	3
Delivery/Conduct	1 2 3 4 5	4
Evidence	1 2 3 4 5	3
Cross-Examination	1 2 3 4 5	3
Refutation	1 2 3 4 5	3
Total	20	

Comments Nice 1NC, good response to aff case. Work on keeping control of CX as the questioner.

Name 2N John Lewis Speaker Rank Best Last 1 2 3 4

Speaker Points	Poor.....	Excellent
Persuasiveness	1 2 3 4 5	3
Organization	1 2 3 4 5	3
Delivery/Conduct	1 2 3 4 5	3
Evidence	1 2 3 4 5	3
Cross-Examination	1 2 3 4 5	3
Refutation	1 2 3 4 5	3
Total	18	

Comments Your passion showed in the 2AC but you seemed confused in the 2NR. Relax, smile!

Affirmative



Decision



Double Loss

Negative



Reason for Decision

Aff convinced me that a change is needed in our current system. Although neg proved that there would be some complexity with administration, aff proved that their plan will work better than the status quo.

Judge Name

Judy Barr

Date

Jan 3, 2014

CTaP - TP Ballot

Speaker Rank and Speaker Points

Speaker rank and speaker points are awarded to each debater in the round during the preliminary rounds of a debate tournament. Each speaker is ranked relative to the other debaters in the round. The best speaker in the round is given a rank of one, the second speaker a rank of two, and so on.

Speaker points are determined on a 30-point scale. Judges award up to 5 points for each of the following six categories: persuasiveness, organization, delivery/conduct, evidence, cross-examination, and refutation (see sample ballot). Most speakers do not achieve a perfect score of 30 points. Excellent speakers usually receive 25 points and above. Good speakers usually receive 20 points and above. Speaker rank and speaker points are subjective; they are entirely determined by the individual judge.

Cumulative speaker rank and points are used to break ties in determining which teams will advance to the elimination rounds of the tournament. Points and rank are not awarded during the elimination rounds as there is no need to break ties in elimination rounds. At the end of the tournament, special speaker awards are given to the individuals with the highest speaker points and ranking accumulated during the preliminary rounds.

Comments

Judges are not allowed to share their decisions or discuss the round with the debaters during the tournament. Instead, they will write whatever comments they have to share on the ballot. It is up to the judge to decide what to share on the ballot, and sometimes there may not be any comments. Although comments are helpful, they are not necessary in order to know if you were persuasive to the judge. The win or loss will ultimately tell you how persuasive you were.

Debate teams are not given their ballots until the end of the tournament. You will not find out whether you won or lost a round until then. However, you will find out which teams will advance to elimination rounds after the preliminary rounds are complete. At that point in the tournament, you will at least know if you were among the top teams in the tournament, but you will not know your exact record until the tournament is complete.

GETTING STARTED

The first year in debate is extremely confusing. Expect it. The confusion and chaos affects everyone in debate. Contributing to this confusion are differing ideas about debate theory and practice. Even though there are certain ideas about debate which are fairly standard, there are others which are very controversial. Perspectives on these controversial ideas may vary from coach to coach or debater to debater. Part of the fun of debate is figuring out where you stand on some of the more controversial ideas about the activity itself. As you learn more, you might change your mind, then change it back again on any number of different issues (or, of course, you might not). In any case, you will find yourself swept up in the chaos, trying to make some order for yourself and those with whom you come into contact in the activity.

One of the most interesting things about debate is that debaters often argue not only about the issues in a round, but about the way those issues should be presented, discussed, and evaluated. In other words, debaters not only disagree about issues but also about how they should debate.

As you start your journey into the art of debate, be patient with yourself. Many new debaters are overwhelmed by all there is to learn. The new debate terminology alone can be like learning a foreign language. And on top of that, you're trying to learn how to research some of the most complex issues of our day that even our top lawmakers and reporters in the media have trouble understanding and communicating.

Hang in there. Keep the life goals of debate in mind as you go through the learning process. Many, many students have started just where you are and have gone on to successfully learn the communication skills that are helping them make a real difference for Christ in the world around them. Many of those students have been scared of public speaking, have hated doing research, or have wished the ground would open up and swallow them in the middle of a debate round (the author of this book included!). Yet if all of them could speak personally to you today, they would tell you that learning debate is worth it.

The rewards of debate may not come quickly, but when they come, it is definitely worth the wait. Your new-found ability to reason, to understand the issues of our day, and to communicate with others will give you a confidence that you never knew you had to allow God to use you to reach others and literally change lives. Welcome to the journey!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is academic debate?
2. What types of skills does the study of debate develop?
3. What do you personally hope to gain from your study of debate?

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT

Novice students:

- *Research.* Begin reading about the general topic area. Bring one book or article on the topic to the next meeting.
- *Reading.* Read Lesson 2. Be ready for a quiz on logical fallacies and the Toulmin Model.
- *Partner Survey.* Fill out the Team Debate Partnership Questionnaire on page 190 and bring it with you to the next meeting.
- *Activity.* Bring one advertisement and one opinion piece to the next meeting. Opinion pieces can be found in any newspaper in the opinion or editorial section.

Experienced students:

- *Research.* Begin reading about the general topic area. Bring three books or articles on the topic to the next meeting.
- *Reading.* Read Lesson 2. Be ready for a quiz on logical fallacies and the Toulmin Model.
- *Partner Survey.* Fill out the Team Debate Partnership Questionnaire on page 190 and bring it with you to the next meeting.
- *Activity.* Bring one advertisement and one opinion piece to the next meeting. Opinion pieces can be found in any newspaper in the opinion or editorial section.