

Evaluation Criteria

While there are no individual categories on the ballot, the following all need to be considered when evaluating a debate, and in combination with the scoring range.

Content & Evidence

Has the debater thoroughly researched the topic? Does he or she introduce adequate and relevant facts, humour, examples, statistics, authorities and other such material? Does the debater choose a reasonable means to substantiate his or her assertions and is there sufficient documentation of all important assertions and evidence? Does the debater demonstrate ingenuity and imagination in the selection of materials?

Argument & Reasoning

Does the debater understand the whole question being debated, the essence of his or her opponent's objections to his or her arguments, and how the particular issues that emerge during the debate relate to one another? Is the logic of the debater sound? Does he or she recognize and expose weaknesses in opponent's evidence and reasoning? Does the debater understand the crucial issues in the debate? Does he or she distinguish between substance and rhetoric? Are the definition of terms and the interpretation of the resolution sound and reasonable?

Organization

Does the debater present material in a clear, fluent, logical and coherent manner? Develop his or her ideas and case well? Does the debater enable the listener to understand the relevance of and the transition between arguments? Has the speech an effective introduction and conclusion and sound internal organization? Do all of the speakers for the team present a unified, co-ordinated, consistent case?

Presentation & Delivery

Is the delivery smooth and spontaneous or stilted? Consider pose, posture, ease and effectiveness of gestures, enunciation, quality and use of voice, emphasis, variety, and other mechanics of good speaking. Does the debater display a command of language, use good grammar and employ appropriate vocabulary? Has the debater developed an effective style? Does he or she project intelligence, confidence and sincerity? Penalize for mere reading or memorization of a speech.

Refutation and Rebuttal

Does the debater identify and summarize the important contentions raised by his or her opponents and then answer those contentions directly or by clear implication? Is he or she able by the use of appropriate material able to respond successfully to the important challenges and objections to his or her arguments raised by his or her opponents? Does he or she refute specific points made by opponents as well as their case in general? Does the debater demonstrate the ability to use logic and evidence to defend his or her team's contentions as well as to destroy those of opponents?

Points of Information

As a general rule, debaters should offer at least one POI to each speaker, and each debater should accept two from the opposing team. Debaters should be polite both in terms of how they accept or reject points, and teams should not overuse as a means as a means of intimidation. Questions should be relevant and attempt to expose weakness in the other side's argument, and good answers should be concise and defend their position.