

# CONSTITUTION OF THE WESTERN STATES PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE ASSOCIATION

## ARTICLE I: THE ORGANIZATION

Section 1. This organization shall be known as the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association (WSPDA).

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. The purpose of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association is to provide collegiate and other student debaters with opportunities to debate various topics using the parliamentary format. The Association will promote competitive practices which ensure the long-term growth and survival of intercollegiate, academic, and public debate by promoting a form of limited preparation debate which combines an emphasis on both content (analysis, refutation, context) and delivery (style, wit, humor, audience adaption, vocal attributes and body movement), and which remains consistent with international styles of parliamentary debate.

Section 2. Each year the Association will provide sweepstakes trophies and other awards to recognize outstanding participants in the intercollegiate series of debate tournaments authorized by the Association.

## ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP IN THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. Institutional membership in the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association is open to any college, university, community college, secondary school, or other academic institution that, acting through its Director of Forensics, association President, or other appropriate authority wishes to join.

Section 2. Individual membership is designed to allow individuals without an institutional affiliation the opportunity to be a part of the organization. Individual membership is open to any interested person, without regard to sex, race, creed, age, or other consideration, who is willing to support the goals of the organization.

Section 3. Although encouraged to do so, members of the Association are not required to host or participate in Association tournaments.

Section 4. The annual membership fee shall be determined by the annual Business Meeting of the Association.

Section 5. The period of membership covered by an annual dues payment shall be September 1 through August 31.

## ARTICLE IV: OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. The officers of this Association shall be a President, an Executive

Secretary, a Treasurer, and a National Student (intercollegiate level) Representative. If warranted regional members also may be appointed to the Executive Council. These officers shall constitute the Organizational Council.

Section 2. Nominations for offices shall be submitted to the Organizational Council for presentation at the first of the two annual Business Meetings of the Association, at which time additional nominations for any office may be submitted by any members present.

## ARTICLE V: OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

Section 1. The Executive Council shall lead the Association between annual Business Meetings; shall provide interpretation of any article of the Constitution or its By-Laws; shall serve as a nominating committee as specified in Article IV, Section 2; shall, by majority vote, approve the applications to host WSPA approved tournaments; shall perform the functions outlined for them in the By-Laws and shall be consulted when any action not clearly specified in this Constitution or in the By-Laws is to be taken.

Section 2. The President's duties are:

- a. To chair the annual Business Meetings of the Association;
- b. To be responsible for upholding this Constitution and its By-Laws and all other decisions of the annual Business Meetings of the Association;
- c. To chair and be a voting member of the Organizational Council;
- d. To serve as representative of the Association to other organizational meetings (if he/she is unable to attend, the Executive Secretary or the Treasurer, in that order, shall fulfill that obligation, or if neither of them can attend, then the President shall appoint a member of the Association as his/her representative);
- e. To appoint from time to time, such committees as he/she deems suitable or are requested by the annual Business Meetings;
- f. To fill, by appointment, such vacancies as occur among officers and members of the Organizational Council that are occasioned by death, resignation or other reason, such appointment to be for the unexpired term of the individual who has been replaced.

Section 3. The Executive Secretary's duties are:

- a. To conduct elections for officers of the Association and on such other matters as the Organizational Council may direct.
- b. To accept membership applications to the Association.
- c. To prepare, and give, a report on Western States Parliamentary Debate Association membership to the second annual Business Meetings of the Society each year;
- d. To maintain official records of the current standings of schools in Western States Parliamentary Debate Association sweepstakes competition and periodically to communicate this information to the membership of the Association;
- e. To correspond, in the name of the Association, with prospective tournament hosts and/or members of the Association;
- f. To record and disseminate to the membership the minutes of the annual Business Meetings;
- g. To serve as a voting member of the Association;
- h. To establish an agenda for the annual Business Meetings of the Association with the assistance of the President;
- i. To maintain an updated version of the Constitution and By-Laws and to disseminate these to the membership periodically.

Section 4. The Treasurer's duties are:

- a) To receive all membership dues and other payments to the Association, and to pay all expenses of the Association that are authorized by the Organizational Council;
- b) To prepare, and give, an accounting of the financial state of the Association to the second annual Business Meetings of the Society each year;

Section 5: The National Student Representative's duties are:

- a) To interface with the students competing on the WSPDA intercollegiate level and to bring their concerns to the attention of the officers of organization.

- b) To represent WSPDA at annual meetings of other parliamentary debate organizations (national and international) which are solely student run, and to serve on such committees as he or she shall be elected or appointed to.
  - 1). Funding for the student representative's travel to such meetings will normally be in conjunction with the student's travel to compete at the championship competitions held at the same time. Such costs will normally be covered by the institution which the student attends.
  - 2) The student representative may petition the Organizational Council for travel funding for the purposes of attending these meetings. The Organizational Council has the option of approving funding for all or part of this travel, but is not obligated to do so.
- c) To prepare and give a report concerning his or her area of responsibility for presentation at the annual business meetings.
- d) To serve as a voting member of the Organizational Council.

#### ARTICLE VI ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETINGS OF THE ASSOCIATION

Section 1. The annual Business Meetings of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association constitute the governing body of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association at the times they are meeting, and are the only bodies that can institute changes in this Constitution or its By-Laws. Between Business Meetings, actions of the Organizational Council will have the force of By-Laws. These decisions must be reported to the next Business Meeting and are automatically placed on the agenda for consideration. To continue this practice, it must be approved as indicated in Article VIII, Section 2.

Section 2. Business Meetings shall be held annually at the Fall and the Spring Championships or at a time and place agreed to by the Executive Council. At least sixty days notice will be given before the meeting.

Section 3. Each member institution may be represented by one voting representative (who need not be the Director of Forensics but may be a substitute from the same school or a proxy given to the representative of another school) at a Business Meeting. No member institution represented at a Business Meeting may vote more than 10 proxies in addition to its own vote. At least 5% of member institutions must be personally represented (proxies do not suffice for this purpose) for the meeting to conduct any business other than hearing reports and discussing them.

Section 4. If sufficiently attended, as defined in the preceding section, the Business Meetings may adopt new

By-Laws or change existing ones by majority vote of schools present (personally or by proxy). It may propose constitutional changes by a two-thirds vote of the schools represented (personally or by proxy).

Section 5. The presiding officer of a Business Meeting will be entitled to vote as the representative of his/her institution.

Section 6. Any vote that results in a tie will be considered to have failed.

## ARTICLE VII: SWEEPSTAKES AWARDS

Section 1. One aspect of the work of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association will be the conferring of sweepstakes awards on schools that have participated in Western States Parliamentary Debate Association intercollegiate tournaments during the year.

Section 2. Points will be accumulated for sweepstakes according to the following formula:

- a. One point for each debate win (including a win by a "bye" and a win for a "forfeit") by a team in up to 6 preliminary rounds of a Western States Parliamentary Debate Association approved division of a tournament and two points for each win by a team in an elimination round.
- b. Each of the four teams for which a school receives credit toward sweepstakes at a Western States Parliamentary Debate tournament will receive at least one point toward Association sweepstakes, even if they win no debates at all.

Section 3. Final sweepstakes awards will be based on the point totals accumulated at the 4 sweepstakes gaining tournaments designated annually at which each school has gained the most points.

Section 4. In case of ties in the standings, these will be resolved by tie-breaker points based on places won at the tournaments at which the school has won the most points, at the rate of five points for a first place, three points for a second place, and one point for a third place (or a tie for third).

Section 5. Where students from two different schools combine to form a Western States Parliamentary Debate Association team at a tournament, the total points earned by such a split team will be divided between their two schools.

Section 6. Should a school enter more than four teams in a

Western States Parliamentary Debate Association tournament, then the rounds of only the four best teams in Western States Parliamentary Debate Association competition in the tournament will be counted toward sweepstakes.

Section 7. Should two teams from the same school reach a final round in a Western States Parliamentary Debate Association division of an tournament, their school will receive two points for winning the round, even if the debate was not held. The same rule shall hold true whenever two teams from the same school meet in elimination rounds (or preliminary rounds), even if no actual debate occurs.

Section 8 Teams from a host school may enter competition in their own tournament, and if that tournament is also a designated Western States Parliamentary Debate Association sweepstakes gaining tournament those teams may also count wins toward WSPDA sweepstakes and compete for whatever trophies are awarded in that tournament.

Section 9 At tournaments in which teams in elimination rounds are given "byes" (as opposed to instances where two teams from the same school are paired against each other, as covered in Article VII, of the Constitution) a team receiving a bye shall be awarded the win.

Section 10. To be counted for sweepstakes points, the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association division of a tournament must contain at least six teams from a minimum of three schools.

Section 11. At the end of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association season, overall sweepstakes trophies for first through tenth places will be presented.

Section 12. Any errors or omissions in the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association Reports of Tournament Results and Sweepstakes Point Totals must be brought to the attention of the Executive Secretary no later than fourteen days prior to the commencement of the final tournament of the season. Any mistakes made on tournaments held within two weeks of the final tournament must be corrected during the first day of the final tournament.

Section 13. Tournaments may advertise as many elimination rounds as is desired, but only elimination rounds meeting the following specifications will be counted toward Western States Parliamentary Debate Association Sweepstakes:

For Semi-finals, there must be a field of 8 teams in the division;

For Quarter-finals, there must be a field of 15 teams in the division; For Octa-finals, there must be a field of 29 teams in the division; For Double Octa-finals, there must be a field of 58 teams in the division; For Double-double octas, there must be a field of 115 teams in the division.

Section 14. A team must be present and debate in more than half the rounds as a team to count for the purposes of determining the number of teams in a division as part of the determination of the appropriate number of elimination rounds that earn Western States Parliamentary Debate Association points.

## ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

### Section 1. Amendment to the Constitution

- a. An amendment to the Constitution may be initiated by any member school;
- b. Amendments to the Constitution must be submitted to the Executive Secretary thirty days prior to a Business Meeting to be considered at that meeting. The Executive Secretary will communicate proposed Amendments to the membership no later than fifteen days prior to the Business Meeting;
- c. A two-thirds vote of the schools represented at the Business Meeting will be necessary for a proposed constitutional amendment to be sent to the membership;
- d. Within 10 days following the Business Meeting, the Executive Secretary will distribute by mail a ballot containing all proposed constitutional amendments. Balloting on these will cease at midnight thirty days after the date of the Business Meeting;
- e. A two-thirds vote of the schools voting by mail on the proposed amendment will be necessary for its enactment.

### Section 2. Amendment to the By-Laws

- a. An amendment to the By-Laws may be initiated by any member school;
- b. Amendments to the By-Laws must be submitted to the Executive Secretary no later than 30 days prior

to a Business Meeting to be considered at that meeting. The Executive Secretary will communicate proposed amendments: to the membership no later than fifteen days prior to the Business Meeting;

c. A majority of the schools represented and voting at the Business Meeting will be necessary for enactment of the Amendment to the By-Laws.

### Section 3. Further Amendment Procedures for the Constitution and By-Laws

a. An amendment may be proposed by a two-thirds vote of the Organizational Council or by a petition of 5% of the current Western States Parliamentary Debate Association membership to the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association Executive Secretary and the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association President.

b. The proposed amendment shall be distributed to the membership. Members shall have 45 days to send comments on the proposed amendment to the Executive Secretary.

c. Within sixty-five days of the publication of the proposed amendment, the Executive Secretary shall mail a ballot to the membership containing a copy of the proposed amendment, along with a statement of the arguments for and against the amendment. The author of the amendment shall have the opportunity to include a statement of reasons for the amendment. The President may designate an individual to outline potential objections to the amendment. Both of these individuals shall have access to the comments received by the Executive Secretary. Ballots shall be due no later than three weeks after the mailing.

d. A three-fourths vote of all members voting will be required to enact an amendment initiated under this section.

e. A majority of the Executive Council may vote to exclude the time period from June 1 until September 1 from the time period in items b and c of this section.

## ARTICLE IX: TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES AND ADMINISTRATION:

Section 1. Local rules for Western States Parliamentary Debate Association tournaments are left strictly to individual tournament directors who may determine the forensic level of the Western States

Parliamentary Debate Association division (s) and may allow as many teams per school to enter their Western States Parliamentary Debate Association divisions as they wish. The tournament is obligated to use the appropriate Western States Parliamentary Debate Association format.

Section 2. At tournaments offering individual events and multiple forms of debate it is recommended that parliamentary debate be scheduled so as not to conflict with individual events.

Section 3. Tournament Directors are responsible for choosing a suitable mix of topics which gives all teams an equitable chance for success:

- a) Topics can be policy based similar to topics chosen for extemporaneous speaking or philosophical in nature, similar to topics chosen for impromptu speaking.
- b) Topics should be written to challenge students to use their creative and critical thinking skills, forcing them to draw upon their educational and research backgrounds. During switch sides preliminary rounds, if at all possible, policy based questions should be given in back-to-back rounds to give all teams the opportunity to debate policy or the government side of the motion.

Section 4. Since parliamentary debate is an extemporaneous activity, no prepared materials or resources for the debater's use in the round may be brought into the debating chambers.

Section 5. The composition of the judging pool is considered critical to parliamentary debate to train students to speak before audiences and to discourage negative practices such as very rapid delivery and excessive reliance on evidence. Therefore:

- a) Odd-numbered, multiple-judge panels should be used for all the rounds unless enough judges are not available to hear a debate.
- b) Although flexibility is left with the tournament director, the recommended guidelines for the composition of the judging pool shall be one third non-student lay judges, one third undergraduates (or student peers of the debaters), and one third forensics faculty or such personnel.
- c) In order to provide a fair and educational

tournament, judge assignment insofar as possible should be random. Debaters should have equal opportunity to be heard by a range of judges. There are no problems however, with a team's being heard by the same judge in several rounds at a tournament.

Section 6. There will be no "preparation time." Once the house has been called to order the debaters will remain in their places, unless called to speak, until the debate is concluded.

Section 7. In order to give all participants equal information, tournament invitations should include clear definitions of events and divisions, clear explanations of matching and judge assignment systems, clear explanations of criteria for advancement to elimination rounds and for awards, clear announcements of fees and schedules, and a clear statement of tournament rules.

Section 8. In order to provide a fair and educational tournament, administrators matching debate rounds should attempt to allow students an equal number of rounds on each side of the resolution and should maximize insofar as possible the range of opponents encountered by each team.

Section 9. In order to maximize the educational function of tournaments, administrators should make results and ballots available to all participants as soon as possible at the end of competition.

## BY-LAWS

### I. Membership Dues:

Annual dues in the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association for the year September 1 to August 31 will be \$30 for regular membership, \$20 for affiliate membership (affiliate membership applies to schools that did not enter teams in Western States Parliamentary Debate Association competition during the preceding year), and \$10 for individual membership. It is understood that as much money as is necessary be used by the Executive Secretary to pay telephone and mailing expenses connected with doing Western States Parliamentary Debate Association business.

### II. The Western States Parliamentary Debate Association Season:

The Western States Parliamentary Debate Association season begins September 1 and ends May 15. The Organizational Council will designate 4 tournaments to be held throughout the academic year which will be sweepstakes gaining tournaments. Two of those tournaments will be the Spring and the Fall Championships.

### III. Executive Secretary's Office:

The Office of the Executive Secretary shall receive an annual budget to defray its expenses.

### IV. Direction of the Fall and the Spring Championships.

The Western States Parliamentary Debate Association shall be responsible for holding a Fall and a Spring Western States Parliamentary Debate Association Championship Tournament/Convention usually in November/December and April/May. These tournaments should have 6 preliminary rounds, and offer the appropriate number of elimination rounds.

- a. Members schools may bid to host one of the tournaments. The Executive Council of Western States Parliamentary Debate Association shall receive bids for the subsequent academic year at its fall semester national meeting and shall award the tournament on the basis of bids received. The tournaments should rotate geographically.
- b. The Western States Parliamentary Debate Association organization shall be responsible for such tournament operation as invitations, awards, schematics, etc.
- c. The Championships should be scheduled to avoid conflicting with significant religious holidays, such as Easter and Passover.
- d. In accepting bids from tournament hosts the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association National Council shall obtain appropriate assurances from prospective hosts that religious observances for interested parties can be secured at or near the host site. Religious observance

may include a place of worship and special dietary requirements.

X. Tournament Conflicts:

Members of the National Council should coordinate the scheduling of Western States Parliamentary Debate Association tournaments in their respective regions to avoid conflicts among those tournaments insofar as possible.

V. Code of Ethics:

Western States Parliamentary Debate Association as an organization and as a body of forensic educators endorses the Preface of the AFA Code of Forensic Program and Forensic Tournament Standards for Colleges and Universities and endorses those parts of the AFA Code applicable to the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association organization: Competitor standards, Competitor practices (excluding the individual events section), and Tournament practices (excluding the individual events section).

VI. Institutional Agreement:

Institutional members of the Western States Parliamentary Debate Association agree, by joining the Association and paying the membership fee, to follow the Constitution and By-Laws of Western States Parliamentary Debate Association in their participation in Western States Parliamentary Debate Association sanctioned activities.

## APPENDIX A: TOURNAMENT ADMINISTRATION

Although the Association leaves tournament administration procedures to local hosts, in order to assist students and coaches who seek information about tournament procedures, this appendix sets forth some guidelines which typify the operations of a parliamentary debate tournament.

1. Guidelines for debate tournament matching which protect equality of competition include:
  - a. A debate team should not meet the same team during preliminary rounds of a tournament unless:
    - 1) There are so few teams entered that it would be impossible for the tournament to proceed, in which case the two teams should switch sides the second time they meet, or
    - 2) The schools entering the tournament have agreed to suspend the provision that teams not debate each other twice in preliminary rounds.
  - b. So far as possible, debate teams should debate an equal number of preliminary rounds on both the government and the opposition sides. Rounds should generally alternate. In tournaments with an odd number of preliminary rounds, efforts should be made to balance a team's total of government and opposition contests when matching even numbered rounds.
2. Guidelines for judge assignment which protect equality of competition include:
  - a. Whenever possible a judge should not be assigned to judge his/her own team.
  - b. As long as multi-judge panels are being used, there is little concern about a judge being assigned to judge a team twice or more during preliminary or elimination rounds.
  - c. A judge should not judge debaters when there is conflict of interest possible, such as:
    - 1). The judge has previously coached in college a debater s/he is to hear.
    - 2). The judge was, within the last two years, the coach of the school whose team s/he is about to hear.

- 3). The judge was, within the last two years, an undergraduate forensics competitor at the school whose team s/he is about to hear.
  - d. Prior to the start of the tournament, all judges should have the opportunity to declare themselves ineligible to hear specific debate teams due to conflict of interest.
3. Guidelines for tournament invitations which promote fair competition should include:
- a. Specification of the level of competition expected (i.e., "Open," "Novice," etc.).
  - b. Clear definitions of all divisions of competition.
  - c. Explanation of the basis of advancing competitors to the elimination rounds and for determining awards:
    - 1) For advancing teams to elimination rounds it is assumed the win-loss record is the first criterion. Beyond win-loss criterion, tournaments should specify the order of subordinate criteria (i.e., team points, adjusted team points, opposition record, etc.).
    - 2) For determining speaker awards, invitations should specify the criteria for determining awards (i.e., speaker points, adjusted speaker points, ranks, etc.).
  - d. Explanation of the basis for assigning sweepstakes points if awarded.
  - e. Explanation of judge assignment procedures and the composition of the judging pool.
  - f. Announcement of tab room staff and personnel if not from the host school. Invitations should note if a computer package is used to administer a tournament.
  - g. Specification of the number of rounds pre-set with the principles guiding pre-set assignment (i.e., "random geographic distribution," "approximate strength of schedule," etc.).
  - h. Specification of the number of power matched rounds and principles guiding power-matching (i.e., "high-low," "high-high," "lag-power," etc.).
  - i. Indication of whether results are to be kept secret.

- j. Indication of whether the host school is eligible to receive awards or participate in elimination rounds.
4. Guidelines for general tournament administration practices include:
- a. Tournament directors should ensure that results and ballots are made available to all contestants as soon as possible at the end of the competition.
  - b. Tournaments should not be designed to operate at a personal profit to any individual.
  - c. Tournaments should run smoothly and efficiently with schedules realistically allowing:
    - 1) Time for judges to complete their ballots;
    - 2) Meal breaks at appropriate hours;
    - 3) Power-matching (It is recommended that, whenever possible, power-matching occur at the end of the day or during meal breaks.); and
    - 4) Beginning and ending times which allow competitors and judges to rest.
    - 5) The maximum number of students to compete in parliamentary debate and other events such as individual events.

## APPENDIX B: THE CONDUCT OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

### GENERAL

1. Parliamentary debate is a formal contest of wit and rhetorical skill which theoretically occurs in a House of Parliament. Participants are the Government and Opposition teams, and the moderator is Madam or Mister Speaker of the House.
2. A resolution is a sentence or phrase which provides the subject of debate. The Government team has ten minutes to prepare a case centered around this topic.
3. Two types of speeches exist in a round: constructives and rebuttals. The order of speakers is as follows:
  - A. Prime Minister 8 min
  - B. Leader of the Opposition 8 min
  - C. Member of the Government 8 min
  - D. Member of the Opposition 8 min
  - E. Leader of the Opposition 4 min (rebuttal)
  - F. Prime Minister 4 min (rebuttal)

or

- A. Prime Minister 8 min
- B. Member of the Opposition 8 min
- C. Member of the Government 8 min
- D. Leader of the Opposition 12 min
- E. Prime Minister 4 min

If the opposition wishes to use the latter form they will inform the Speaker of the House orally or by writing "no split on the board", indicating that they will not split the second speech and rebuttal.

4. The purpose of constructive speeches is to introduce the case and arguments for and against it. The rebuttal will summarize the team's major points and responses, and no new arguments will be permitted. The remaining four minutes of the Leader's speech in the alternate form comprises the Opposition rebuttal.

### RESPONSIBILITIES OF DEBATERS

#### GOVERNMENT

It is the responsibility of the Government to define and defend the resolution in a manner which makes it debatable. The Government has the option to run the resolution "straight" (meaning they argue the theoretical basis of the actual resolution), or they may "link" it to a case (meaning they run a specific topic for the debate which is closely linked to the thesis of the resolution).

1. If the Government chooses to run their own case, it must be closely related to the resolution. This relationship will be established by a "link" which must be reasonable. Thus, the Prime Minister must define a case in terms of the exact wording of the resolution.
2. The topic must be fairly general. The Opposition should know enough from the Prime Minister's speech that they can be expected to debate it.
3. Several types of cases may be run.
  - A. Need/Plan/Benefit: This is the most common approach. The government asserts that a given group must do something to improve the status quo. Cases are usually in the form of political/social problems, but they may also be hypothetical syllogisms (if x, then y).

Examples are:

1. "Seat belts should be installed on school buses."
  2. "Puerto Rico should become a state."
  3. "If the lost city of Atlantis is found, it should be raised."
- B. Value/Comparison: Two related objects or ideas are compared and contrasted, or a moral/practical advantage is placed upon one item. Examples are:
1. "Silk flowers are better than real flowers."
  2. "Capitalism has failed."
- C. Time/Space: Both judges and teams assume the role of a figure in an alternate spatio-temporal setting. Consequently, all facts and judgments must be of this time period. Any information which would be unknown to people of this setting is unacceptable.

## OPPOSITION

It is the responsibility of the Opposition to clash with the Government's case. Clash occurs by both establishing an opposing philosophy and a point by point analysis of the Government's major arguments. The Opposition generally, but not exclusively, accomplishes this task by following one of four formats:

1. Defense of the status quo: The Government's plan is ludicrous; the present system is not in need of repair, and any change will harm it.
2. Minor repairs: The Government's plan is a reasonable one, but it will be, in the end, ineffective. In other

words, the present plan is such that changes suggested by the affirmative side will have no significant impact on the status quo.

3. Counter case: The present system is in need of repair, but the Opposition's suggestion will accomplish this task more effectively than the Government's plan. All counterexamples must deal directly with the subject outlined by the Prime Minister.
4. Reverse comparison: The Government proposes a case in which the Opposition side is inherent in its definition. Therefore, the Opposition seeks to prove the exact negative of the proposal. This approach is common in value/comparison cases, but the government should avoid forcing the opposition to argue a morally repugnant position (such as "Child abuse is good").

#### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF EACH SPEECH

Prime Minister (PM) constructive: Defines the resolution and establishes a link to the case. S/he also outlines major points supporting the Government philosophy.

Leader Opposition (LO) constructive: Outlines the Opposition's major philosophy. If irregularities existed in the proposal, they MUST be mentioned within the first three minutes of the LO's speech, or the Government's case shall be debated throughout the entire round, regardless of further complaints.

Member Government (MG): Supports the Prime Minister and introduces new points.

Member Opposition (MO): Supports the Leader Opposition and introduces new points.

Leader Opposition rebuttal: Summarizes major Opposition points and philosophy. May not introduce new arguments.

Prime Minister rebuttal: Challenges points introduced by the Member Opposition, but may not introduce new ones. Summarizes and reinforces the original case.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE JUDGES

1. The Speaker of the House (the primary judge) moderates the debate, and is therefore in charge of running the debate itself. The Speaker should do the following in this order:
  - a. Allow the Government only 10 minutes to prepare the case. Rounds should begin 15 minutes after the announcement of the resolution, and teams should be in the room at that time and ready to debate.
  - b. Call the House to order and recognize each debater before and after he or she speaks.

c. Rule on points of order or points of personal privilege by:

- 1) Recognizing the person wishing to make a point and asking the debater speaking to yield the floor.
- 2) Allowing the person to make the point.
- 3) Deciding QUICKLY, by stating "Point well taken" or "Point not well taken."
- 4) Not allowing debaters to argue or object to the Speaker's decisions.
- 5) Resume the debate.

2. The Sergeant at Arms assumes the responsibility of timing the debate. In single judge panels, the Speaker also assumes this responsibility. The Sergeant at Arms will:

- a. Announce the one minute and seven minute marks at which points of information may be or may no longer be offered.
- b. Announce the point when a speaker's time has elapsed.
- c. Require a debater to cease speaking when the 15 second grace period has expired.
- d. Deduct or not deduct time from a debater's speech as applicable for points of order or points of personal privilege.

## APPENDIX C: THE CONTENT AND CRITERIA OF PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE

1. Debaters must win the hearts and the minds of their audiences. Persuasion is key. Therefore, content and argumentation may be equally as important as style and delivery.
  - a. Debaters should use humor and other aspects of pathos.
  - b. Debaters should emphasize effective delivery, paying attention to vocal variety, gestures and bodily movement as for individual event competition.
  - c. Argumentation should be well developed and analysis should be insightful.
2. Heckles are encouraged by all participants. They should be short and witty and not detract from the debate process.
3. No prepared material may be brought into the round for the debater's use.
4. Irregularities may exist which must be raised within an opposition speech or by a point of order or point of personal privilege.
  - a. Link: If the Government presents a case which is either vaguely related to or counters the resolution, the Leader of the Opposition should object within his or her speech. Judges may count "Link" arguments against the Government, but they should not be the basis of a judge's total decision.
  - b. Specific Knowledge: The case must be comprised of reasonably general knowledge that most highly educated college students should be aware of. Therefore, use of evidence cards and prepared material is not allowed. A specific case may be run if the knowledge is summarized or if it is related to a more general, philosophical value which may be argued outside of the example. However, no extraneous facts may be introduced by the Government, such as wildly unfamiliar dates, very obscure court cases, etc. which leave the Opposition at a disadvantage. The Opposition may use as many specifics as they choose, within the same guidelines. In the case of non-collegiate competitors or public debates, "general knowledge" may be tailored as needed to accommodate the knowledge base of a specific audience or group of competitors. Debaters may bring up objections to the use of specific knowledge either within a constructive speech or by a point of order.
  - c. Tautology: Circular reasoning or defining the resolution in such a way that the case proves itself is not allowed. For example, "Coke is it: Coke is a type of soda. It is a soft drink. Therefore Coke

is it." The opposition should deal with tautology by providing a counter case.

d. Truism: An argument which either describes the status quo or is such that no one can reasonably oppose. Example: "Racism is bad". The Opposition generally deals with a truism by providing a counter case.

5. There are three kinds of points which debaters may raise during a debate.

a. Points of Order are breaches in parliamentary proceedings. They may count against the debaters who breached procedures. They may be raised when:

- 1) A new argument is introduced in a rebuttal. Although new examples are permissible, a new point is not. A member of the other team must rise AT THE TIME THE POINT IS BEING MADE for the objection to be valid. If the judge feels a new argument has been introduced, he or she will respond "Point well taken," and the time it took to make the point is deducted from the speech. If the judge rules that a new argument has not been introduced he or she will respond "point not well taken, no time deducted."
- 2) The debater carries a pen to the lectern or places his or her hands in pockets.
- 3) The debater talks for much longer than the allotted time.
- 4) Prepared material has been brought into the round.

b. Points of Personal Privilege are personal assaults against a participant in the debate or offensive and tasteless assertions. The judge will rule on whether the speaker's comments were acceptable.

c. Points of information are common in British style parliamentary debate and provide a truly interactive debate. Their object is to test the wit, nerve, and rhetorical skill of an opponent.

- 1) Points of information can only be offered after the first minute and before the seventh minute of the four constructive speeches.
- 2) At his or her absolute discretion, the member holding the floor may yield to an opponent for

a point of information.

- 3) Points of information will not exceed 15 seconds.
- 4) To make a point of information, a person rises and places his or her hand atop his or her head and waits to be recognized by the speaker holding the floor (the one delivering the constructive speech). If the debater holding the floor does not wish to take the point of information, he or she usually responds, "No, thank you, Sir/Madam," at which time the person wishing to make the point sits down. If the debater holding the floor wishes to take the point, he or she should recognize his or her opponent by saying, "Yes, Madam/Sir," or some similar phrase to show the opponent that he or she is being recognized.
- 5) The debater making the point of information then has a maximum of 15 seconds to ask a question of his or her opponent. The speaker making the point then yields the floor to the original debater who must answer the question and continue on with his or her speech.
- 6) Judges will evaluate debaters on their ability to propose points of information and to handle answering the questions. Debaters should be careful not to take so many points that the flow and organization of their speeches are impaired. Refusing all points of information is also negatively evaluated. Debaters who are able to skillfully integrate the answers to a point of information within the context of their speech or with suitable humor should be rewarded.

## APPENDIX D: POINT SCALE GUIDELINES

Rate the speech as a whole or fill in the individual categories (eg. content, refutation) remembering that the average speech should receive 23 points

BELOW 15	Very poor or offensive
15-18	Poor speech, noticeably weak in most areas, fails to deal with arguments, ill delivered
19	Fair in a few areas, several glaring deficiencies.
20	Passable, but with one or two major problems
21	Still not a good speech, but not abysmal
22	Below average, but barely
23	No glaring flaws or delivery problems, but no extraordinary characteristics
24	Slightly above average; solid in all areas
25	Very good speech. Solid in all areas, excellent in at least one
26	Very, very good speech. Articulately delivered, solidly argued, with strong analysis
27	Excellent speech. Outstanding in either style or argument, and at least very good in the other.
28	Phenomenal speech; leaves an impression; dominates round
29	Absolutely tremendous, essentially flawless
30	Best speech you have ever heard

## APPENDIX E: EXAMPLE OF CASE DERIVATION FROM RESOLUTION

If the general topic of debate was the phrase "I think, therefore I am", then the debaters have several options as to how they wish to pursue this resolution.

### A. Running the resolution "straight".

1. Construct a case demonstrating how, on a philosophical level, the only thing that we absolutely know to be true is that we think.
2. This case would undoubtedly require some familiarity with the background of the philosopher who made the statement, Rene DesCartes.

### B. Linking a case to the resolution.

1. Need/plan/benefit case: Argue that "I think, therefore I am" is actually asking us about the value of education. An appropriate subject area for debate, given the wording of the resolution, might be for the government to argue that given our current high dropout rates, it should be mandatory for citizens of the United States to complete a high school degree. They could demonstrate how economic productivity would increase, and how an educated citizen is a happy citizen.
2. Value/comparison case: Construct a case demonstrating that "Making decisions from thought is better than making decisions from instinct."
3. Time/space case: Ask the judge to act as the first superintendent of a regional school system in the 1930's. The government team could be two angry parents who wish the school system would make middle school education compulsory, and the opposition team would play the opposite role of two parents who want to allow their children to drop out of school in order to work.

### C. In any case, negative ground is fairly clear.

1. Running the resolution "straight": Argue that we do know more than just the fact that we think, providing the appropriate philosophic support.
2. Need/plan/benefit scenario: Argue that forcing students to go to high school would result in a poor learning atmosphere, and that valuable manual labor and vocational technology potential would be lost. Argue that educated citizens aren't happy.

3. Value/comparison round: Argue that instinct and intuition are often better than reason for making decisions.
4. Time, space round: Demonstrate that it is more valuable to have teenagers as members of the workforce during the Great Depression than as members of a high school.

No matter how the government chooses to define the round, both teams should strive to ensure that they choose topics of argumentation that are interesting, debatable, and fair to both teams.

## EPILOGUE

Resources used in the preparation of this document include the Constitution and By Laws of the Cross Examination Debate Association and information on Parliamentary Debate, Mount Holyoke College.