



Dear LAMD L Community,

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Debate League (LAMD L) Staff is excited to invite you to our annual **Season Opener Tournament**. This is a closed tournament for LAMD L Schools only. This virtual tournament will take place **Friday, October 9** and **Saturday, October 10, 2020**.

Platform

We will tabulate this tournament on **Tabroom.com** and debates will take place on the **NSDA Campus** platform. Please make sure your debaters have all necessary equipment to compete. If you or any of your debaters are in need of any equipment in order to compete, please contact Tournament Director, Joseph Flores joseph@lamdl.org so that we may find a solution that allows your students to access the activity.

Adult Supervision

Each school must be accompanied by a qualified adult supervisor. No unaffiliated or unaccompanied entries will be permitted.

Divisions

We will offer 4 divisions: *Rooke*, *Novice*, *Junior Varsity*, and *Varsity*.

- **Rookie Eligibility:** This division is for any new debater with no prior competitive policy debate experience wanting to try out debate. In order to ensure competitive equity, only students with no prior competitive experience should enter this division.
- **Novice Eligibility:** The novice division is designed for beginning debaters. In order to ensure competitive equity, each student has 1 semester of novice eligibility. After competing in novice for 1 semester, students must move to a higher division.
- **Junior Varsity:** All students who have exhausted their novice eligibility should move up to the JV division. After competing in JV for 1 semester, students must move to the open division.
- **Varsity:** Any student may compete in the Varsity division. However, students who have completed for more than 2 semesters are required to debate in Varsity.

Waivers & Releases

All competitors must sign and return the following documents (available for download on the tournament website) before being allowed to compete in the tournament:

- LAMD L Participation Agreement
- Permission for Online Learning and Electronic Communication
- LAMD L Media Release
- LAMD L Liability and Indemnification Waiver

General Conduct

All students, coaches and volunteers are expected to act in manner appropriate for an academic event. This includes, but in no way is limited to, interactions with judges, coaches and students from other teams, the league staff, and any guests attending the LAMD L tournaments. Students, coaches, and volunteers are expected to treat each other with respect and to avoid participating in hazing, bullying, and harassment.

Coaches and students should refrain from arguing with judges, volunteers and tournament staff.

Physical hazing and initiations are prohibited and may not be included as part of any LAMD L activity.

Verbal, physical, and cyber bullying are prohibited in LAMD L.

Members are responsible to act according to the law. All members of the LAMD L are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the principles set forth in the federal, state, and local laws. Physical violence, theft, verbal insults, drugs, and alcohol have no place in the urban debate program and may result in the revocation of a debater's membership.

These rules apply to interactions at all LAMD L events, and interaction outside of LAMD L events including but not limited to when coaches and students are interacting in person, over the phone or online.

Rules & Guidelines

The Los Angeles Metropolitan Debate League (LAMDL) exists to provide the academic and social benefits of policy debate to students who may not otherwise have the opportunity to compete. All rules and guidelines made for the LAMDL are guided by and attempt to provide competitive equity and educational fairness. It is the belief of the LAMDL that these standards will ensure that the experience is fun and educational for all students involved.

Topic

Teams will debate the national resolution: *Resolved: The United States federal government should enact substantial criminal justice reform in the United States in one or more of the following: forensic science, policing, sentencing.*

The LAMDL uses the standard policy debate format. Speeches are as follows:

- First Affirmative Constructive (1AC) – 8 minutes
 - Cross Examination (CX) (2NC asks the 1AC questions) – 3 minutes
- First Negative Constructive (1NC) – 8 minutes
 - CX (1AC asks the 1NC questions) – 3 minutes
- Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC) – 8 minutes
 - CX (1NC asks the 2AC questions) – 3 minutes
- Second Negative Constructive (2NC) – 8 minutes
 - CX (2AC asks the 2NC questions) – 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

Prep Time

Each team is awarded eight minutes of preparation time. This time may be used before their speeches or before the other team's speeches, but not in the middle of a speech. When no prep time is left, judges should begin the speech time (after allowing students appropriate time to give a speaking order). Outside of prep time, teams will be given 10 minutes of "technology time" time in case of a technology issue that arises once the debate has started. If the technology issue takes more than 10 minutes to resolve, the round may be ended in order to keep the tournament on time and give the affected debater or judge proper time to fix the issue before the next debate.

Cross Examination

The LAMDL allows "tag team" cross examination. This occurs when both partners ask questions and answer questions during cross-examination. While this strategy is allowed, the LAMDL encourages the individual responsible for answering and asking the questions to answer most of the questions.

Prompting

"Prompting" occurs when a speaker is helped by the speaker's partner, through oral or written suggestions, during a speech. The LAMDL allows "prompting," though judges may consider prompting as having marred the stylistic impact of a speech (and therefore as having a negative influence on the assignment of speaker points).

Disclosure of Affirmative Case

Unless otherwise specified, the LAMDL requires that each team disclose the affirmative case and the plan text to the opposing team prior to the round. The disclosure should be done no more than 5 minutes after the releasing of pairings to provide adequate preparation time prior to the debate round. Negative teams are not required to disclose the negative arguments they plan on running, but are encouraged to disclose prior 2NR arguments.

Tournament Procedure

Registration

This year LAMDL will use tabroom.com to handle registration. Registration must be completed by the deadline and should be as accurate as possible. Prior to registration, coaches should submit an estimated number of attendees at their earliest convenience. The numbers on the registration deadline are used to arrange rooms, organize judges, and acquire other necessary supplies. Registration after the deadline may risk your teams being unable to debate if the tournament is unable to accommodate due to space or personnel. Drops at the last minute also affect the tournament administration and should be discouraged in the strongest possible way. Any drop made after the deadline should be noted in the registration software, as well as by email or text message to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director reserves the right to disallow any team reconfigurations or adds on the day of the tournament, though these will generally be allowed (as far as feasible) up until about 2 hours prior to the start of the first round.

Coach Attendance and Judging Expectations

LAMDL coaches are expected to attend both days of each of these LAMDL tournaments. There are some obvious instances where exceptions will be made, but exceptions to this rule must be discussed and cleared with the Tournament Director prior to tournament or day in question. Every coach is expected to judge all of the preliminary debates and at least one additional elimination round beyond that of in which their team competed.

Each school is expected to bring 1 qualified, “fully committed” adult judge for every 2 teams that they have entered in the tournament. While the tournament director will try to recruit volunteer judges to the tournament it is ultimately the responsibility of each school to cover their judging commitment.

At each tournament during the semifinal round there will be a Coaches Meeting where the Tournament Director will lead a discussion about any exigent issues facing the league. At least one representative from each school in attendance is expected to attend these meetings unless they have been excused by the Tournament Director.

Hybrid Teams

Hybrid teams (teams with students from two different schools) are generally not allowed at LAMDL tournaments. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, a school with an odd number of Novice or JV debaters may arrange to have a single debater compete with an unpartnered debater from another LAMDL school. Hybrid entries are a last resort for schools unable to find a partner for a single Novice or JV debater, and no school may have more than one student on a hybrid team in any division at the same tournament.

Maverick Teams

Single-person teams in policy debate are called “Maverick” teams; policy debate is designed for two-person teams, so debating Maverick is only possible with explicit permission from the Tournament Director. Maverick entries will only be allowed if a school has an odd number of students entered. Maverick debater’s eligibility for elimination rounds and awards will be determined at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

Intra-squad Debates

While we will try to avoid having 2 teams from the same team debate against each other, there are a couple of circumstances that might make intra-squad debates necessary.

- **Preliminary Rounds--** if 1 school makes up more than 35% of the pool in a particular division, it may be necessary to have teams from the same school compete against each other in preliminary debates.
- **Elimination Rounds--** elimination round brackets will not be broken in the event that two teams from the same school are scheduled to debate each other. In the event of intra-squad debate in elimination rounds, the Tournament Director may ask the teams to debate and assign judges like usual, but if the team's coach requests a “close out,” the higher seed will presumptively advance.

Punctuality

All rounds must begin within 10 minutes of their scheduled starting time, or a forfeit will be charged against the team that is unready to begin. Double forfeits are possible. All forfeits will be issued at the discretion of the Tournament Director or empowered tab room personnel. Judges are encouraged to begin debates as soon as possible so that the tournament can adhere to its schedule.

Evidence & Communication Procedure

For the sake of competitive balance, the LAMDL has adopted the following evidence procedure.

Rookie Division, Novice Division & Junior Varsity Division

Debaters competing in the rookie division are limited to using only evidence found in the official LAMDL Rookie evidence set. Debaters competing in the novice division are limited to using only the evidence found in the official LAMDL Novice evidence set. Debaters competing in the Junior Varsity (JV) division are limited to using evidence from the LAMDL Novice evidence set and the LAMDL JV evidence set. Evidence may be added to these sets during the season.

Open Division

There are no evidence restrictions in the open division. Any evidence read in the round must meet the basic standards of evidence requirements for debate (properly cited, published, re-producible, etc.) Students competing in the open division are required to post the outlines (including full tags, cites, and the first and last few words from the text of their evidence) for their affirmatives and major negative off case 1NC shells, on the NDCA wiki page. [See the LAMDL Wiki Guide for more specific guidelines.]

Challenges to Evidence

Coaches and/or students who feel that a team read an ineligible argument or card in the round should tell the judge immediately of their concern. The round should stop and the judge or one of the debaters should call the Tournament Director to evaluate the evidence or argument in question. If the evidence or argument in question is found to be outside of the evidence set then the team who read it will lose the debate and may not be eligible for elimination rounds or speaker awards. If the evidence challenge is found to be invalid then the team who made the challenge will lose the debate. Teams/students that are found to engage in a pattern of inappropriate use of evidence/arguments may be disqualified from future LAMDL activities. The Tournament Director will make all final decisions on the enforcement of these rules.

Evidence Sharing

Teams are required to “share” – i.e., provide a copy of any evidence that they read into the debate with their opponents upon request. Analytical arguments are not expected to be provided in written format from one team to the next, but may be done so at the discretion of each debater.

Plagiarism, Card Clipping, and Evidence Tampering

Debaters should not plagiarize or tamper with (change or alter by inserting or removing words) evidence. Evidence used in a debate should be properly attributed to the author verbally during the debate. Debaters should be able to provide, within a reasonable time, complete documentation of all evidence presented. Documentation includes: name of author(s), source of publication, full date, page numbers and author(s) credentials when available. Evidence that is not attributed adequately should be disregarded by judges.

Card Clipping- Debaters should “mark,” or note at what point they stopped reading evidence during the speech by making a noticeable mark on the piece of evidence. Underlining, highlighting, or final marks should be presented honestly in all contexts to the opposing team and judge. Violation of this is akin to an act of academic dishonesty.

Ethics Challenges- If a participant (student or judge) believes that a violation has occurred, and has conclusive evidence that such a violation has occurred, then they should stop the debate and contact the Tournament Director. The Director will allow them to explain the violation and present their proof.

If the director does not find that there is conclusive evidence of plagiarism, card clipping or evidence tampering then the team who made the accusation will forfeit the debate. If the director finds conclusive evidence of a violation then the violating team may forfeit the round, be deemed ineligible for awards and elimination rounds, be removed from the tournament, or deemed ineligible for future LAMDL tournaments including, but not limited to, the City Championship tournament and the National Tournament depending on the severity of the offense.

Communication During Debates

Debaters may not, in any way, communicate with any individual outside of the debate about the debate during the debate. Seeking guidance from a coach, peer, or any individual after a debate has begun and before the final speech is grounds for a loss and potential dismissal from the tournament. To be clear, this kind of guidance is perceived as a form of cheating regardless of whether it occurs in person, over text message, or over the Internet.