

The Constitution of the High School International Public Debate Association

PREAMBLE

This Constitution represents the fundamental set of operating philosophies, principles, and practices for the High School International Public Debate Association. The primary goals of this association are: To provide contestants with a forum in which they can enhance their education through the laboratory of productive, "real-world" competitive debate experiences. Public Debate competitions are intended to provide rhetorically sound models of communicative debate which competitors can experience, study, emulate, and internalize. Tournament Directors are encouraged to offer a wide variety of topics and a wide range of judges to encourage participants to become familiar with and think strategically about the relationships among issues, arguments and audiences. In this way, the High School International Public Debate Association strives to provide contestants with a chance to develop advanced skills in audience sensitivity and analysis and the opportunity to develop a range of speaking and argumentation styles which will be successful in business, legal and professional settings. To provide instructors with a debate activity to which they can proudly invite colleagues, administrators, and community members as observers. This Association was created to offer an alternative to traditional debate--an alternative which encourages the continued contributions of graduating team members, sparks increased campus and community interest & involvement in forensics, and serves as a bridge to fundraising activities. Competitions are intended to provide a forum in which classroom principles directly apply and where classroom students can be entered without undue embarrassment or ego-shock. And this Association encourages instructors to become active participants as well as judges so that they might remain sensitive to the students' experience, keep their own skills sharp, provide models of excellence for students to follow, and to provide additional avenues of instruction through mentoring. To provide economic and academic benefits to the forensic community. Public Debate is intended to offer a financially superior alternative to traditional debate. Tournament Directors are encouraged to keep Public Debate fees as low as is reasonably possible. The High School International Public Debate Association also encourages the scholarly and heuristic study of the pragmatics of effective argumentation and debate as it applies to real-world contexts, formats and audiences.

The philosophic foundations of the International Public Debate Association include:

Inclusivity: All interested individuals are encouraged to participate regardless of educational background, prior experience, or any other demographics.

Lay Judging: Tournament directors are encouraged to use as many real-world judges as possible. Training should be minimal and should emphasize fairness and how to properly conduct the round and fill out the ballot.

Multiple Topics: Each round should open with a set of five resolutional choices and the contestants themselves should select the topic they will debate.

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Limited Preparation: Debaters should be allowed sufficient preparation time (30 minutes) to give serious thought to their upcoming round. The use of extemporaneous preparation files and collaboration with coaches and colleagues is encouraged.

Extemporaneous Delivery: The use of evidence cards and/or verbatim printed materials is prohibited. Such materials may be studied, memorized and/or paraphrased and handwritten notes made, but printed information may not be physically present in the round.

Rhetorical Delivery: Students should be encouraged to develop winning oratorical styles. The speaking style of the top Public Debaters should be highly effective when transferred into real world settings.

Ethos: High quality speaking styles and courtesy should be prized, promoted, and rewarded. The use of appropriate humor is encouraged.

I. CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Proposals for amendments to this constitution may be generated by the Steering Committee or by any of the voting Association members. Such proposals must be submitted to the Executive Secretary in writing and approved by a majority vote of the Steering Committee before being submitted for ratification to the general voting membership. A 3/4 vote of at least 3/4 of the voting members is required to ratify a change to this Constitution.

Article 1.

Event Description

The critical principles and elements of Public Debate were listed in the preamble to the Constitution. The following more specific event description is intended to provide a practical set of guidelines for competitors and tournament directors. Public Debate is an academic public speaking exercise which is defined by the following elements, rules, and procedures:

A. Eligibility: Individual competitors must be a currently enrolled college student representing the school where they are currently enrolled. Otherwise, there are no restrictions on competitors within the organization. If students are competing in the open division at the national tournament, they must be a graduating senior. Independent entries will only be allowed in the Open division.

B. Judges: For the Varsity division, individual judges must be at least 18 years of age or older. For the Novice and open Division, judges can be any debater with a varsity classification or higher or any person 16 years or older. It is actively recommended that judging pools be made up of as wide a range of backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives as possible. Tournament directors are encouraged to use volunteer parents, undergraduate students, and competitors

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who may not be competing as judges. The National tournament will allow non-competing competitors to judge during the tournament.

C. Ballots: An official ballot will be used in judging Public Debates. Copies of this ballot will be made available by the Managing Director. They may be found on the national tournament tabroom page or requested from the organization at ipdahscircuit@gmail.com . Any substantial deviation from the official ballot must be approved by the Steering Committee.

D. Seating: Contestants should seat themselves such that, from the audience's point of view, the Affirmative is on the left and the Negative on the right.

E. Topic Areas & Resolutions: The topic areas and specific resolutions for Public Debate are left to the discretion of Tournament Directors. The National tournament shall be determined by the Steering Committee. Topics should be fair to all parties attending Public Debate tournaments. Tournament Directors should avoid local issues which are inaccessible to visiting competitors. Resolutions should be as balanced as possible giving equal ground to both the Affirmative and Negative. Tournament directors are encouraged to include a variety of fact, value and policy resolutions.

F. Topic Draw: All division contestants will meet in a central location for an extemporaneous topic draw before the scheduled start of the debate. The official recommended draw time is 30 minutes but the exact time is up to the Tournament Director. The National tournament will only use 30 minutes which will begin as soon as contestants receive a draw slip. Contestants will be offered five (5) topics. Each pair of opponents will independently select the topic they wish to debate. Starting with the Negative speaker, each contestant will alternatively strike one of the five until only one remains. That will be the debate resolution for the round. Contestants must complete the topic selection process independently and without outside assistance. Tournament Directors may set their own policies concerning the specific issues that come up during the draw including what to do about competitors who show up late and topic draw protests. It is recommended to use a 10 minute rule that states if competitors are not at draw within ten minutes then the topic will be chosen by their competitor (This will be the national tournament standard).

G. Preparation: Debaters are permitted to use reference materials during their preparation time before debating. They may utilize extemporaneous speaking type files, dictionaries, reference

books, libraries, or anything else for that matter. They may also consult with teammates and/or coaches for ideas and advice.

H. Format: Public Debate will use the following formats:

Individual Debate Format:

5 minute 1st Affirmative

2 minute Cross Examination

6 minute 1st Negative

2 minute Cross Examination

3 minute Affirmative Rebuttal

5 minute Negative Rebuttal

3 minute Affirmative Summary

Tournament directors must receive Steering Committee approval to deviate from the individual debate format. HS IPDA recommends that speakers be prepared to speak immediately following each other; competitors may be allowed up to 10 seconds. This is a matter of the Tournament Director's discretion and it is recommended that the policy be included in the tournament invitation. In the absence of an announced rule, special prep time beyond the aforementioned reasonable time between speeches is not allowed. Judges should be made aware of prep time rules and count off for abuses.

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I. Use of Evidence During Debates: Contestants may not bring printed reference materials into the round with them. **No "reading" of evidence will be permitted.** They may only bring and reference handwritten case outlines and limited notes which they have worked up during the round's preparation time. Evidence must be memorized or paraphrased for use during debates. This is another case where judges should be made aware of this rule and instructed to count off for abuses. **Serious violations of this rule should cause the judge to automatically award the decision to the opponent.**

J. Fairness: Debaters will, as much as possible, be left to their own devices. Affirmative's are allowed to define resolutions; however, Affirmative interpretations and definitions must fit within the resolution and leave Negatives fair ground for the debate. If an Affirmative's case is too lopsided and/or tautological (used to define itself as winning by definition), this opens the door for the Negative to provide an alternate set of definitions. **But the Negative can only redefine terms if the Affirmative has abused its prerogative.** If the Affirmative can demonstrate they have met the aforementioned burdens when challenged, then Affirmative definitions will have presumption. The judge is the final arbiter of definitional squabbles.

K. Nomenclature & Procedure: The two sides in a Public Debate will be known as the Affirmative and Negative. **There will be no "rising" to points of order, standing with one hand on your head, or heckling during speeches.** If debaters have questions or problems they should ask about them during cross-examination and/or raise them as points during their next speech.

L. Style: **The goal of the International Public Debate Association is to promote a highly rhetorical and oratorical style of public speaking.** For this reason, **it is recommended that judges be instructed to award the decision in a close round to the superior speaking style rather than to the negative.**

M. Etiquette: Public Debaters are expected to maintain a highly polite, civil, and professional demeanor during rounds. **Judges should be instructed to reward appropriate ethos and count off for abusiveness.**

N. Divisions:

IPDA Division Eligibility Rationale:

It is the intent of the International Public Debate Association to fairly categorize competitors based on their level of overall experience. The divisions adopted in the High School IPDA Bylaws reflect the idea that skill development in the art of argumentation is a product of time and experience. Coaches should assess any form of argumentation experience that their students may have as they are entered into the appropriate, competitive divisions.

1. Novice Division entries must adhere to the following definition: Competitors must be currently enrolled students at the institution they are representing and must be

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representing an official program affiliated with an academic institution; they will no longer be eligible to compete in the Novice Division once they:

a. have competed in ten debate tournaments in any capacity at any level in any combination (e.g., high school or college; novice, junior or open, CX, Policy, Value, NDT, CEDA, Parliamentary, NFA, L-D, etc.). If a student has competed in ten tournaments AND the IPDA National Tournament would constitute their eleventh tournament, then they will be deemed eligible for the Novice Division. And/or:

2. Varsity Division entries must adhere to the following definition: Competitors must be currently enrolled students at the institution they are representing and must be representing an official program affiliated with an academic institution; they will no longer be eligible to compete in the Varsity Division:

a. once they have been awarded a high school diploma or G.E. D. from an accredited institution. Students who earn a diploma or a G.E.D in the middle of the IPDA competitive season, who otherwise meet the requirements for Varsity eligibility and who have never competed at the IPDA National Tournament in the Varsity Division may have a coach apply to the HS IPDA Steering Committee for eligibility to enter the Varsity Division in that season's National Tournament (if granted, this exemption will apply only to the IPDA National Tournament for that season, and not to regular season or other tournaments); any request for exemption must be received a minimum of one week prior to the entry deadline for the national tournament.

3. The Open Division shall be open to any individual age 18 and older or a graduating senior who is not competing in any more tournaments on their state circuit, provided they meet the general requirements for competitors listed elsewhere in the Constitution and Bylaws.

4. For determining what counts as a "debate tournament" for purposes of eligibility, the following shall apply:

- a. Any structured competition event that includes constructive and rebuttal argumentation would be defined as a "debate" for purposes of eligibility requirements.
- b. A "tournament" shall be any official competition regardless of the level (ex: middle school, high school or collegiate). This shall not include practice competitions that are a part of a workshop.

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O. Electronic Devices: Debaters are encouraged to bring a timer/stopwatch for use during rounds. However, no electronic devices capable of receiving and/or retrieving data (cellular phones, laptop computers, etc.) may be used during a debate; exceptions to this rule will be granted based solely upon A.D.A. compliance. If a tournament director wishes to make this rule look differently then they may choose to do so.

P. Any tournament that deviates from the prescription of tournament practices in the constitution and/or bylaws must receive written Steering Committee consent at least two weeks prior to the scheduled tournament for that tournament to receive HS IPDA sanctioning and so that we are aware for deviations to prepare for national tournament time. Additionally, these deviations should be clearly detailed in the official tournament invitation.

R. For an issue with an individual round, whenever possible a grievance or challenge should be made to the tournament director prior to the decision of the round being known.

II. MEMBERSHIP & DUES

At this time the High School International Public Debate Association does not require membership or dues by individual programs or people for competition. However, to represent a school you will have to have explicit permission of that school. Individuals may enter the open division as representatives of an organization (i.e. Toastmasters Club, After School programming or club). Independent entries will not be allowed in any other division other than open.

III. OFFICERS AND DUTIES

A. The Steering Committee:

The Steering committee of the High School International Public Debate Association will be made up of the three primary officers. Past officers and such additional officers as may be added to the association can serve in an advisory capacity to the Steering Committee but will not vote in Steering Committee matters. The Steering Committee members will in addition to their individual responsibilities share the following duties:

- Uphold the basic principles and further the basic goals of the Association.
- Deliberate over such issues and challenges as are placed before it.
- Set policies, rules, procedures and fees associated with their administrative duties.
- Deliberate in the process of selecting the succession of steering committee officers and make appointments or, at their discretion, submit a set of candidates to the membership for election.
- Resolve unforeseen problems and disputes which may arise and/or be beyond the scope of this document.

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1. Self-Perpetuating Board: The three primary officers of the High School International Public Debate Association are constituted as a self-perpetuating board.
2. The three officers of the High School International Public Debate Association are:
 - a. *President* - The President is appointed to a four-year term of office. The duties of the President are to chair business meetings, promote the High School International Public Debate Association and its goals, uphold this Constitution, serve as primary spokesperson and liaison for the organization, be the principal individual responsible for administering this constitution and its bylaws, and to monitor the progress of the Association.
 - b. *Executive Secretary*- The Executive Secretary serves an indefinite term of office. The duties of the Executive Secretary are to take care of the budgetary and secretarial duties of the Association, to conduct such elections as may be necessary, to be responsible for maintaining the membership records and the tournament sanctioning process, to record and make available the minutes of business meetings; and to coordinate with the Managing Director to ensure the efficient dissemination of materials to the membership.
 - c. *Managing Director* - The Managing Director serves a four-year term of office. The duties of the Managing Director are to oversee the management of the materials and supplies used by the association including the editing and production of Association publications; making such publications available to the general membership & other interested parties; and keeping such records pertaining to Association publications. The Managing Director will also be responsible for arranging and coordinating all IPDA events including the end of the season Championship Tournament.
3. Responsibility to Create and Review Bylaws: These are the general set of objectives and responsibilities for the three primary Association officers. Unless otherwise stated, these officers shall have full authority to set rules and procedures for carrying out the duties within their domain of responsibility. Such rules and procedures which achieve the status of bylaws will be submitted to the program membership for comment a minimum of 60 days before implementation. Changes that will alter competition must be announced before the first tournament of that season. Any member of the High School International Public Debate Association may propose additions and revisions to the bylaws (and/or suggestions for constitutional amendments). Such proposals must be submitted in writing to the executive secretary and receive the approval of the steering committee before continuing through the aforementioned process.

IV. ELECTIONS

Elections will be held when called for by the Executive Committee. The Executive Secretary will conduct elections in accordance with the Rules & Procedures set up by the Steering Committee. Additional elections will also be held by member schools, which shall be defined as any school who competed at the national tournament the prior competition year.

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V. TOURNAMENT SANCTIONING & PROCEDURES

A. Sanctioning Guideline:

One goal of the High School International Public Debate Association is to reserve as much local latitude and control to the Tournament Host/Director as is possible. The procedures governing Tournament sanctioning are as follows:

- ☐ At this time we ask that all tournaments that choose to host IPDA as a debate event follow all of the bylaws set forth in this constitution.
- ☐ One stipulation to be counted as a tournament win for the National tournament, a tournament cannot be intramural and consist of 2 or more programs including the host program, with at least 6 competitors in a division (at least 3 not from the host school). There must be at least 3 preliminary rounds with elimination rounds culminating in a final round.
- ☐ It is requested that tournament directors please send a copy of IPDA results packets to the executive secretary at ipdahscircuit@gmail.com

VI. THE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The Championship Tournament will be the culminating event of the High School International Public Debate Association competitive season. All cumulative awards will be presented at the Awards Assembly of this event. The Championship Tournament will also be associated with an annual Convention and Business Meeting of the Association members (providing information from the year). The Managing Director will organize and coordinate the various activities required for hosting the Championship Tournament and Convention.

VII. CONFLICT RESOLUTION

A. Guidelines:

The High School International Public Debate Association is open to everyone, regardless of race, gender, age, religion, political affiliation, or demographic discriminator. As a membership, we are committed to equal opportunity and the maximization of personal growth for all of our members. Respect must be extended to all.

B. Grievances & Challenges:

Any member with a grievance or belief that there has been some violation of the rules or philosophy of this Association has the right to register that complaint with the Association. The procedure regarding such complaints is as follows:

1. First, it is expected that a reasonable, good-faith effort will be made to discuss and remedy problems at the lowest possible level. For an issue with an individual round, whenever possible a grievance or challenge should be made to the tournament director

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prior to the decision of the round being known. Tournament directors are encouraged to resolve tournament disputes on site if at all possible.

2. The member with the grievance has the option of making informal contact with one or more of the association officers who may, at their discretion, offer advice and/or attempt to mediate a resolution of the dispute.

3. If the informal problem-solving process has failed, the grievance may be written up and submitted to the executive secretary. No 'official' action will be taken until such a written complaint is received. Association members should, consistent with making every effort to resolve the problem at lower levels, try to file their complaint in as timely a manner as possible.

4. The Steering Committee will attempt to investigate, discuss, and resolve complaints as quickly as possible. The Steering Committee may, at its sole discretion formally mediate the dispute, issue a summary judgment, or set up some other adjudication process. As a condition of membership, all members of the association agree to accept the decisions of the Steering Committee as final and binding.

C: Sanctions:

The Steering Committee will make every effort to settle disputes without resorting to sanctions. If sanctions are in order, the Committee will try to avoid making them unnecessarily harsh. However, here again, all members of the association agree to abide by the rules and decisions of the Steering Committee as a condition of membership.