



The Columbia University Invitational follows Columbia University's [non-discrimination](#) and [sexual misconduct](#) policies. All participants are expected to be aware of and abide by these policies, and program directors/coaches are encouraged to discuss these policies with their team.

Equity Procedures

For this year's Columbia Invitational, we have created an equity team composed of the Columbia Debate Society's Equity Officers. This team will be an available resource throughout the tournament weekend for individuals who feel that another participant (student, judge, coach, etc.) at the tournament has made them uncomfortable. Examples of actions that we encourage participants to bring to the equity team include, but are by no means limited to: deliberate misgendering, sexual harassment, use of racial slurs or other offensive/discriminatory language, and bullying. Participants should feel free to request a meeting with any (or all) of the members of the equity team if they would like, even if they may feel as though the incident/interaction is not severe. However, if requested or severe (i.e., it poses an immediate harm), the equity team may bring up concerns to tournament directors, coaches and program directors, or to the relevant authorities.

In order to get in contact and/or request a meeting with the equity team, we have created an equity form for participants to report instances of harassment and/or discrimination. On the form, tournament participants can also describe the incident of concern and explain what action, if any, they would like the equity team to pursue. Examples of actions include: a conversation with the parties involved, a general announcement, a meeting with coaches, etc. The equity form can be filled out anonymously if participants do not want their identity to be known by our team. The equity team will be continually monitoring the form throughout the tournament and will follow up on all complaints as soon as possible. Please note that complaints about judging ability, incorrect evaluation, and other competitive concerns are not within the jurisdiction of the equity team and should not be raised on the form.

If the participant does not want their concern to be heard by the entire equity team (e.g., an incident involves a member of the team, or someone in close contact with a member), they can reach out individually to any individual equity team member, whose contact information will be at the end of this document.

Columbia Invitational Equity Form

Best Practices for Tournament Participants

Judges and coaches should be mindful of the power dynamic they have with students, working to respect boundaries at all times. Judges are expected to behave in a professional, educational manner—no matter how friendly they may be with a student. Judges should not share or request personal information, comment on a student's physical appearance, or discuss mature or illegal topics with students. At no point should a judge attempt to establish one-on-one contact with a student beyond the context of the round. If a student feels uncomfortable with a judge's behavior—even if not explicitly listed above—they should contact a coach, trusted adult, or our equity team.

Furthermore, judges should actively work to ensure their decisions are not informed by [implicit biases](#). Specifically, they should be careful when basing decisions off of or commenting on a student's tone or demeanor, as such perceptions can be informed by biases against gender minority or non-conforming debaters and debaters of color.

Both judges and students should respect preferred pronouns when indicated. If you feel comfortable doing so, please indicate your preferred pronouns on Tabroom (click on your profile and fill out the appropriate box). Additionally, please respect those who do not feel comfortable disclosing their pronouns. Participants may report deliberate instances of misgendering as a form of harassment on our equity form.

Debaters should keep in mind that while debate is a competitive sport, the object of winning should never take away from the fun of the activity. Instead, success in debate should be measured by skills developed and enjoyment had, not by victories or losses accrued. Likewise, debaters should remember that food and water are fuel, and that depriving their body of either is not a sustainable coping mechanism throughout any tournament. Participants should reach out to a trusted adult if they feel as though their mental or physical health is being compromised due to the tournament.

Equity Officer Contact Information

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