

The Maumee Guide to Judging

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Lincoln-Douglas debate is a one-on-one event, with a student (Aff) against another student (Neg) arguing over a pre-determined resolution. The Aff must explain why the resolution is necessary, and the Neg must argue why the Aff is incorrect. The resolution is based on a present social issue that changes every two months. Judges will be given the resolution prior to the beginning of the first round.

A central focus of the debate is that the students must make a philosophical argument of whether or not the resolution has greater value to society than without. Unlike Public Forum debate which concentrates heavily on emotional appeal, Lincoln-Douglas debate focuses on using statistics and logic to uphold a certain value that is argued to be paramount to the issue at hand.

Besides using *hard facts*, such as internet sources, news programs, newspaper articles, documents, and reports to support the arguments, it is equally important that the student is able to convince the judge that the value they use in their argument is superior to the value of their opponent.

<u>Speaking Order</u>	<u>Time Limit</u>
Affirmative Constructive	6 min
Cross Examination by Neg	3 min
(Prep time if needed)	*
Negative Constructive	7 min
Cross Examination by Aff	3 min
(Prep time if needed)	*
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 min
Negative Rebuttal	6 min
Summary (Affirmative)	3 min

* 4 min Prep Time per Student

Instructions: **Before the Round**

1. Supplies:

- **Judging Ballot**

These must be picked up at the judges' table prior to every round. If you don't have one ready for you, please check the table regularly, unless otherwise told by tournament staff, to make sure you aren't needed for the very next round. Even if you aren't needed for one round, you may still be needed for the next round.

- **Stopwatch or time-keeping phone app**

While many debaters will use their own timers, as the official time keeper you must keep track of time yourself. It is important that you keep your cell phone on airplane mode or silent even if you are using it to keep track of time.

- **Flow sheet**

These help to keep track of arguments in an organized way, simplifying the decision process at the end. Flow sheets are available to be printed from our website or by request from a Maumee coach.

2. Ask the students to sit on the side corresponding to their spot on the ballot.

The students typically enter the round knowing which side of the argument they are on. The ballot will always have Aff on the left and Neg on the right, and it is recommended that you ask the debaters to sit accordingly. This makes it easier to keep track of which side is speaking, which can be tricky at times throughout the debate.

3. Remind the students that phones must be turned off or on airplane mode during the round, and laptops must be on airplane mode. Also, check your own phone to make sure it is also turned off or on airplane mode.

Researching using the internet is prohibited during the round and could be grounds for disqualification. Debaters must have the research downloaded and ready, either in physical copy or a PDF document on their laptop. You are welcome to request that the students show you their phone and/or laptop prior to the round, although this is often unnecessary. If you suspect that they are drawing their sources from the internet during the round, you may also ask to see the PDF regarding the suspected information after the round is fully completed. Do not interrupt the round for this request.

Additionally, if a student's phone rings, it may be grounds for disqualification. Exceptions are made if the ringing is meant to signify the end of their speech, produced by a timing app. Ringing that interrupts a speech, regardless of whether it is from a phone that belongs to a competitor, judge, or observer, will typically incur a fine imposed on the team that the student or adult came with.

During the Round

**Both teams can use up to a total of 4 minutes of preparation time.
They can request to use this time at any point during the entire round so long as it does not interrupt a speech.*

Affirmative

Constructive: This speech should outline the reasons to support the resolution. They should include facts, expert opinions, and sources of information. They should not include plans, counterplans, off-topic arguments, etc. There should be a clearly stated “Value” and a “Criterion” that ties all of the arguments together.

Neg Cross-X: The Negative speaker has the opportunity to ask the Aff questions for up to 3 minutes. Questions should be brief and relevant. Filibustering (very long answers) and rudeness are frowned upon. The Aff is not allowed to ask questions in return.

Negative

Constructive: This speech should outline the reasons to negate the resolution. They should include facts, expert opinions, and sources of information. A portion of this speech is expected to include rebuttals of the Aff’s arguments.

Aff Cross-X: Now the Affirmative speaker has the opportunity to ask the Neg questions for 3 minutes. Questions should be brief and relevant. Filibustering (very long answers) and rudeness are frowned upon. The Neg is not allowed to ask questions in return.

Aff Rebuttal: This speech should emphasize the points that the Aff feels it is winning and should refute their opponents’ arguments. Rebuttal speeches may include new information, but they may not include new arguments. (New information used to counter an old argument is not a new argument.) Any individual arguments that are not brought up during this speech are considered “dropped” by the Aff. Any dropped Aff arguments don’t need to be countered and any dropped Neg arguments are considered undefeated.

Neg Rebuttal: This speech should emphasize the points that the Neg feels it is winning and should refute their opponents’ arguments. Rebuttal speeches may include new information, but they may not include new arguments. Any individual arguments that are not brought up during this speech are considered “dropped” by the Neg. Any dropped Neg arguments don’t need to be considered and any dropped Aff arguments are undefeated. This is also the Neg’s opportunity to give their own version of a summary to provide the reasons the Neg won the debate.

Summary: In this speech, the Aff should emphasize the arguments or single argument that should win the debate for their side. No new arguments are permitted; if you hear something in this speech that was not mentioned before, it should be disregarded. Pay attention to which arguments the Aff claims were dropped so that you don’t disregard any Neg arguments that went undefeated. The quantity of undefeated arguments does not determine the winner; rather, it is the quality of each argument that needs to be considered.

After the Round

1. Do not provide verbal feedback unless otherwise directed by tournament staff

It is important that the students do not know who won or lost until after the tournament. This is intended to ensure that all students are on equal terms up until the awards ceremony. Additionally, do not give them feedback on their speeches or arguments until you have turned in the judge ballot. As the judge, you must rely on the information provided during the round only; the final decision is not up to a group discussion.

2. Write both positive and negative feedback on the ballot, once the students have left the room

Again, the students should not know who won or lost, so please avoid making such marks until they have left the room to avoid them accidentally seeing the decision. The students will receive copies of the ballots after the awards ceremony, so please add a combination of positive and negative feedback to aid in their future improvement. It's helpful for these students to know what they did correctly AND what they did wrong in order for them to practice the appropriate changes for the next tournament, and it is helpful for coaches to know what they need to focus on and what they can leave be.

3. Be brief, using bullet points or short sentences to explain your decision

The tournament staff needs to know the results of the round in order to organize the next round. While it is encouraged to have comprehensive feedback for the student, it is equally important that the ballot is turned in before the next round is scheduled to begin. The easiest way to ensure that both of these can be achieved is by using bullet points or short sentences that focus on what the root of your comment is. Writing paragraphs to explain a single cause of concern is both time consuming and unnecessary for the student to understand the issue. Don't worry about sounding too blunt: a good balance of straightforward positive and negative feedback is more important than a paragraph explaining the nuances of a specific issue.

4. Deciding the Winner

You should decide which debater was most persuasive in the debate. It is best to be objective about the issues, setting aside your original opinions and attitudes. You should determine which team did the better job of debating, using evidence and logic to best support their position. Some criteria that could be considered are logical reasoning, maturity of thought, and quality of communication.

Sample considerations for ballot comments and reasons for decision:

- An unfair interpretation.
If the interpretation is disputed by the Con, it rests with the judge whether or not the Pro is supporting the position well.
- Discourtesy toward opponents.
Discourtesy and rudeness should be penalized according to the seriousness of the offense.
- Falsification of evidence.
If a team falsifies evidence in support of a point, they should lose that point.
- Misconstruing an opponent's arguments.
A speaker who misconstrues an argument unintentionally should not be penalized more than the time wasted. If it is obviously intentional, the team should lose that point or argument.
- Speaking overtime.
When a speaker's time is up, the judge shall disregard anything beyond a closing statement.
- Delivery
Rate of speech should be at a conversational pace. Debaters should be fluent, articulate, free of slang and jargon, have good vocal variety and good eye contact with the judge.