

Lincoln Douglas Debate in the Time of COVID

1. Debaters have been given a topic, and during the tournament, they will debate both sides of the issue.
2. Before the tournament, you should let the coach of your school know that you are ready to judge. The coach will check the entire school in. After you check in, log onto Tabroom. There will be an option for the Judge's Lounge. You should report there and stay there until you receive further instructions.
3. When registration is finished, you will receive a text message to report for judge instructions. Please follow the link to these instructions. Instructions are very important if you have never judged before or if you are unfamiliar with the online tournament.
4. During the judge instructions, you will receive a TEST BALLOT. This is not your first-round ballot. Its purpose is to show you what to do. You will be instructed how to fill out the ballot.
5. When instructions are finishing, you will receive a text message if you are on the first round. Please do not report to the first round until instructions are finished.
6. When the instructions are finished, go back to Tabroom. If you are on Round 1, you will receive a text and an email blast telling you that you are on. If you do not receive this blast, please go back to the Virtual Judge Lounge.
7. Once the speakers have arrived, press the green start button on Tabroom. This will tell the tabroom that you are ready to start the round. Please do not hit that green button until you are ready to start.
8. Lincoln Douglas Debate is a debate of values. Each side will attempt to prove that they can provide a better value than the other side.
9. Debaters will use a combination of logic, research, and analysis to prove their side.
10. While the debate takes place, you should be taking notes (or flowing).
11. The debate will begin:
 - A) Affirmative Constructive (6 minutes): The affirmative will speak for 6 minutes to explain why the topic should be affirmed. The affirmative should define terms and explain his value. The affirmative speech should prove the value inherent in the resolution. This speech is usually written out.
 - B) Cross Examination (3 minutes): The Negative will ask questions of the affirmative. Both speakers should face the judge. During this time, the negative may only ask questions, and the affirmative may only answer questions. Both speakers should remain respectful, yet both speakers should be able to control the question period.

C) Negative Constructive (7 minutes): The Negative will use 7 minutes to do 2 things: 1) Prove the negation of the topics and 2) Present a direct clash with the affirmative's case. Negative debaters will usually use between 3 and 4 minutes of "negative" case (the negation of the topic), and the rest of the time to clash.

D) Cross Examination (3 minutes): The Affirmative will ask questions of the negative. Both speakers should face the judge. During this time, the affirmative may only ask questions, and the negative may only answer questions. Both speakers should remain respectful, yet both speakers should be able to control the question period.

E) 1st Affirmative Rebuttal (4 minutes): The Affirmative will have 4 minutes to rebut the Negative's points. This is a difficult speech, as the Negative has had 7 minutes. A good affirmative will need to creatively structure the speech to refute as much as possible in the short amount of time given. After this speech, no one may introduce new arguments.

F) Negative Rebuttal (6 minutes): The Negative will have 6 minutes to rebut the affirmative's points. As the end of the speech, a negative will often "crystallize", i.e. give 2 or 3 points to explain why the Negative wins.

G) 2nd Affirmative Rebuttal (3 minutes): The Affirmative will have 3 minutes to wrap up the debate and explain why the Affirmative wins. An affirmative will often "crystallize", i.e. explain why the Affirmative wins.

12. During the debate, please time the debaters. Debaters may also choose to time themselves, but you are the official time of the round.

13. During the debate, debaters may use "prep time." Each debater is given a specific amount of time to prepare their ideas. The amount varies from level to level, so please be sure to check the postings to be sure that you know the correct amount of prep time. You should count the prep time of the speaker who is about to speak. However, the other debater is also permitted to use that time.

14. During the debate, please fill out the ballot, either electronically or on paper. Please explain to the debaters which ideas worked and which ideas did not. Please give the debaters information about how they can perform better next time.

15. The stance of a debate judge is unusual. Debate is an intellectual exercise, not an ultimate search for truth. Your job is not to judge the debaters against what you know to be true; you judge the debaters against each other. If the affirmative makes a weak argument, the negative must point that out. If the argument goes unanswered, it stands, even if you as the judge know the correct answer. Thus, to win, a debater need not convince you of his side; the debater must merely be better.

16. After you choose a winner, please assign each debater points between 18 and 30. Please give more points to the winner. Please also realize that the points are relative. Thus, a 30 for a novice debater might only be a 24 for a varsity debater.

17. Please submit your ballot on Tabroom as soon as possible. If you need to write more substantive comments, be sure that you submit the results. Comments may be done up until the awards ceremony.