

1AC. *See First Affirmative Constructive.*

1AR. *See First Affirmative Rebuttal.*

1NC. *See First Negative Constructive.*

1NR. *First Negative Rebuttal.*

2AC. *Second Affirmative Constructive.*

2AR. *Second Affirmative Rebuttal.*

2NC. *Second Negative Constructive.*

2NR. *Second Negative Rebuttal.*

Aff. Many debaters refer to their Affirmative Case or affirmative strategy simply as their Aff.

affirmative. The pro side of the topic in most American formats of debate.

alternative. *Also alt.* One of the key elements of a kritik. It provides an alternative way of thinking than the one offered by the opposing team.

a priori. A phrase that designates an argument as the most important in the round. Typically, this arises when one team believes that the other has violated a rule of the game, such as topicality or fiat abuse. Some debaters will identify certain substantive issues, such as those related to morality, as a priori impacts.

ballot. The form used by judges to declare the winning side of an academic debate. Many ballots also provide space for judges to rate the effectiveness of debaters, offer constructive criticism, and render a reason for decision.

brink. One of the key elements of a disadvantage. It demonstrates that we are on the verge of something bad happening.

cards. Quoted evidence used by debaters. The word is a holdover from the days when debaters physically cut quotations and glued them to index cards.

case. Generally refers to the story told by the affirmative team during the first affirmative constructive.

competitive. *Also competition.* Debate is defined by competing alternatives. All advocacies presented by the negative team should be competitive with the affirmative, meaning that they cannot coexist. The debate is between the plan and the status quo, the plan and the counterplan, the affirmative mindset and the negative mindset, and the like. See also mutually exclusive.

constructives. One of the first four speeches in a policy debate. Key features: they are longer than rebuttal speeches, new arguments are allowed, and the arguments are fully developed and explored.

counterplan. Also CP. A course of action advocated by the negative team as an alternative to the affirmative plan. It is one of the main offensive arguments used by negative teams.

cross-examination. Also *cross-x*, *CX*. The period of time following a constructive speech in which the opposing team may ask questions of the speaker. It is generally not considered part of the flow.

cutting cards. The act of turning a published article into usable quotations for a debate. The phrase is a holdover from the days when debaters physically cut quotations and glued them to index cards.

disadvantage. Also *DA*, *disad*. An unintended consequence of an action. It demonstrates that something bad will happen if a plan is passed. It is one of the main offensive arguments used by negative teams.

double turn. Occurs when a debater makes two (strategically) contradictory responses on the same argument; thus, providing a benefit for the opposing team.

drop (an argument). Also *dropped (argument)*. Failure to respond to an opponent's argument.

effects topicality. Also *FX*, *FX-T*. A variation on topicality. The plan starts outside the boundaries established by the resolution but through the effects of solvency appears to be topical.

ethos. The speaker's credibility in the mind of the judge or audience.

extra-topicality. Also *extra-T*, *xtra-T*. A variation on topicality. A portion of the plan falls outside the boundaries established by the resolution, from which the affirmative gains additional advantages or benefits.

fiat. Grants the affirmative team the power to implement a topical plan. The power of fiat allows participants to pretend as though the affirmative plan would truly go into effect if the judge votes affirmative at the end of the round.

first affirmative constructive. Also *1AC*. The first speech in a policy debate round.

first affirmative rebuttal. Also *1AR*. The second speech by the first affirmative speaker in a policy debate round. Sequentially, it is the sixth speech in the debate, following the negative block.

first negative constructive. Also *1NC*. The first speech by the negative team in a policy debate round. Sequentially, it is the second speech in the debate.

flow. Also *flowing*, *flows*. The notes of what transpired in a debate round or the act of taking those notes. It usually refers to a very specific method of taking notes that allows participants to track the arguments in a debate as they progress throughout the round. The term derives from the linear way of thinking about arguments found in most American

debate formats (policy debate, Lincoln Douglas debate, public forum, National Parliamentary Debate).

frame. *Also framing.* The act of shaping how the judge or audience views, weighs, or perceives different issues.

framework. Refers to how judges should evaluate the round. What types of arguments matter and what types do not matter? What roles ought debaters play? See also theory.

front line. The prewritten first line of responses to an opponent's arguments. Debaters often prep front lines to potential arguments that their opponents might run and place them on prewritten blocks.

games player paradigm. A judging paradigm in which debate is viewed as a game with rules that govern how it is played. Debaters may contest and establish the rules of the game.

harms. One of the five stock issues of an affirmative case. It refers to the qualitative damages found in the status quo. It is what the affirmative team hopes to fix with its plan.

hypothesis tester paradigm. *Also hypo-tester.* A judging paradigm in which the resolution is viewed as a hypothesis to be tested by the debaters.

impact. One of the key elements of a disadvantage or kritik. It is the equivalent of a harm. It is often used to explain why an argument matters in the debate. More generally, it can refer to the quantitative and/or qualitative damage (or benefit) of an action or inaction.

inherency. *Also inh, inherent barrier.* One of the five stock issues of an affirmative case. It demonstrates that the affirmative plan is not being done in the status quo.

judge. In an academic, competitive debate this is the person assigned to determine the winning and losing debater/teams.

kick (a position or out of a position). *Also kicking, punt, punting.* The act of conceding that a major argument is no longer relevant in the round. Affirmative teams might kick an advantage or harms story. Negative teams might kick a topicality argument, disadvantage, counterplan, or kritik.

kritik. *Also K.* An argument that challenges the assumptions, logic, or thought processes present in the round. It is one of the main offensive arguments used by negative teams in policy debate and is gaining popularity in Lincoln Douglas debate.

lay judge. A judge who lacks formal training in academic debate.

line-by-line. The point-for-point discussion on an argument. When viewing the flow of a debate round, one can see the various lines of argument that occurred. The line-by-line refers to examining each line of argument in turn.

link. One of the key elements of a disadvantage or kritik. It explains why the argument applies to the affirmative case/team.

mutually exclusive. The notion that two perspectives or policies cannot coexist. Since policies and ideas advocated by debaters are thought of as competing policy options, interpretations, or perspectives, the two teams' advocacies ought to be mutually exclusive. See also competitive.

national circuit. High school tournaments in the United States that draw competitors from across the nation or a geographic region. Students who do well at these tournaments are often rewarded with qualifying legs for the Tournament of Champions hosted by the University of Kentucky.

negative. The con side of the topic in most American formats of debate.

negative block. *Also neg block, the block.* The point in the debate where the negative team has back-to-back speeches. Most members of the debate community conceptualize the second negative constructive and the first negative rebuttal as a single speech given by two debaters.

net benefit. An additional advantage achieved with a competing advocacy. For example, a counterplan may accrue an additional advantage that the affirmative team's plan does not achieve.

non-unique. An affirmative response to a disadvantage. The disadvantage is going to occur in the status quo regardless of whether or not the affirmative plan is passed.

off case. The portion of debate not contained specifically in the first affirmative constructive. Off-case debate includes topicality arguments, disadvantages, counterplans, and kritiks.

on case. The portion of debate related to the ideas contained in the substantive aspects of the first affirmative constructive. On-case debate includes the affirmative harms, inherency, solvency, and advantages.

overview. Students sometimes use overviews to frame their argumentative positions in the mind of the judge relative to other arguments and advocacies.

paradigm. The lens through which one views debate. Judges hold different views about what debate should look like, what is acceptable and not acceptable, the types of arguments that should be run in debate rounds, and how debates should be evaluated.

perm. *Also permutation.* A test of competition between the affirmative and negative advocacies to determine if the plan and counterplan or the affirmative and the alternative can coexist. The affirmative may offer a perm to show how its advocacy can be combined with the negative's advocacy.

plan. *Also plan text.* In policy debate, the affirmative team presents a proposal or course of action that serves as the basis of its advocacy throughout the debate round. While the affirmative can craft any proposal it can imagine, the policy is still limited by the boundaries established by the resolution or debate topic.

policy (debate). *Also cross-examination debate, CX debate, team debate.* An American debate format practiced in both high school and college. The format consists of two two-person teams assigned to opposite sides of the resolution. The early speeches in the debate round are (usually) heavily built on lengthy quotations, with most of the analysis, depth of discussion, and framing of issues coming in later speeches. Traditionally, it was defined by a specific policy proposal or plan presented by the affirmative team.

policy maker paradigm. The most common judging paradigm. This judge evaluates the debate through the lens of two competing policy alternatives, using cost-benefit analysis to determine the superior policy option.

power wording. The act of marking a piece of evidence in a way that designates which portions will be or were read by the speaker. Usually accomplished through one (or several) methods (boldface and underline and/or highlighted text) to show which portions of the text were read during the speech.

prima facie. A Latin phrase meaning “on its face.” Within academic debate it refers to whether, at first glance, a debater has presented a coherent argument or case.

reason for decision. *Also RFD.* The judge’s explanation for how he or she determined the winner of a debate contest.

rebuttals. The last four speeches in the debate. Key features: they are shorter than constructive speeches, new arguments are not allowed, and the arguments of both teams are summarized and compared.

resolution. *Also res.* The broad topic to be debated. It is usually set by a governing organization such as the National Speech & Debate Association or the Cross Examination Debate Association.

roadmap. The order in which arguments will be addressed, provided by the speaker to the other participants before his or her speech begins.

round. A single matchup between two debate teams. Tournaments consist of multiple preliminary rounds (usually 4, 6, or 8) prior to identifying the top teams that advance to elimination rounds.

shell. The bare-bones version of an argument. It is developed enough to make sense when taken at face value but leaves significant room for development in later speeches.

significance. One of the five stock issues of an affirmative case. It refers to the quantitative or numerical harm in the status quo.

signpost. *Also signposting.* Verbally identifying where the speaker is on the flow.

signposting. *Also signpost.* The act of verbally identifying where the speaker is on the flow. Usually done with an alpha or numeric identification in conjunction with a tagline.

solvency. One of the five stock issues of an affirmative case. It refers to the affirmative plan's ability to reduce or eliminate the harms identified in the case.

speed. The rate at which a debater speaks. Generally, it is used to refer to the tactic of speaking at an incredibly high rate of delivery.

spread. *Also spreading.* The number of arguments presented against an opponent and/or the number of individual responses to a specific argument. Generally, it is used to refer to the tactic of placing a large number of arguments and/or responses on the flow. It is often, but not necessarily, accompanied with speed. Colloquially, many simply use the term spreading as a substitute for any combination of talking fast and/or giving multiple responses to an argument.

standards. One of the key elements of a procedural argument, such as topicality. Standards provide a framework for evaluating the acceptability of a procedural argument.

status quo. *Also SQ, squo.* The present system. The way things are now. stock issues. The five core elements of an affirmative case.

stock issues. The five core elements of an affirmative case. In policy, an affirmative case contains five core elements (or stock issues): significance, harms, inherency, topicality, and solvency.

stock issues paradigm. One of the most common judging paradigms. It evaluates the debate round by examining whether the affirmative team effectively upheld the five stock issues.

tabula rasa paradigm. *Also tab.* One of the most common judging paradigms. Judges are a blank slate with no preconceived notions about what debate should look like, the acceptability of arguments, or how debates should be evaluated.

tag. *Also tagline.* A one-sentence summary of a piece of evidence or analytical response.

theory. *Also theory debate.* The portion of the debate in which students discuss how the game should be played, how the judge should evaluate the round, and so on.

topicality. *Also T.* One of the five stock issues of an affirmative case. Affirmative plans must fall within the parameters established by the resolution.

turn. *Also case turn, impact turn, link turn.* The act of taking an argument run by your opponents and turning it against them.

uniqueness. One of the key elements of a disadvantage. It explains that the disadvantage is not going to occur in the status quo but will occur if the affirmative plan is passed.

violation. One of the key elements of a topicality argument. It explains why the affirmative plan falls outside the boundary established by the resolution.

voters. *See voting issue.* The impacts of any procedural or rule of the game argument. They are the explanation for why an argument will win a debate round. In policy debate, voters usually reference the impacts of a procedural argument such as the rules of the game, fair competition, or educational benefit. In other debate formats, debaters will usually use the term voters to refer to any winning argument in the debate.