

The information below is intended to be of assistance to the first-time director of an intercollegiate debate program. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the author, Bob Alexander, at any time either by email (BAlexander@BPCCEdu) or phone (318-678-6460).

Listserv & Website

IPDA hosts a listserv that provides a forum to discuss the organization as well as announcements/changes for tournaments and conference information. To subscribe to the service (or unsubscribe from the service), email President@IPDAdebate.info or use the web form on the organization's website <http://www.ipdadebate.info>

An additional resource for organizational documents as well as the sanctioned list of tournaments is the IPDA website, located at <http://www.ipdadebate.info>

Tournament Invitations

Tournament invitations are typically linked to the tournament schedule on the IPDA website (<http://www.ipdadebate.info>). Invitations provide scheduling information, fees, tournament awards and elimination round procedures, suggested hotels, etc. An important area to consider on each invitation are the entry deadlines and change deadlines. Typically, entries for a tournament will be due by the Tuesday afternoon preceding the tournament (though this deadline is not universal + the individual tournament invitation should be consulted for the specific deadline). Additionally, the invitation will offer an explanation of penalties associated with changes to the entry (if you add/drop competitors or judges after the entry deadline). In general, prompt notice of any changes is appreciated (for example, if you have a change that you do not know about until the morning of a tournament – calling the tournament host is preferable to waiting until you arrive at the tournament site – advance notice allows the host to make changes with a lesser propensity for delaying the tournament).

Student Information Sheets

Before traveling, it's important to have emergency contact information for all of your students. The student information sheet example that follows illustrates a form that can be used both to gather this information, as well as other information that can be useful for a coach. In this form, a question about previous experience is included for assistance in determining what division a student should compete in (novice, varsity or professional). Student ID number is included because it typically is used for reference when seeking travel authorizations and/or reimbursement from your institution. The other informational areas on this sheet (contact information, classification, and graduation date) are used for developing a long range competitive plan for the student.

Authorized Drivers / Vehicle Reservations

An important concern when planning your travel is to determine who will be able to drive on a trip. For example, in the state of Louisiana, for anyone to drive a university vehicle, a vehicle rental covered by the university or even a personal vehicle that they will be reimbursed for by the university – they must be on the “authorized drivers” list (which means that they’ve completed the driver’s safety course within the last 3 years, their driving records are current with the school, and they haven’t been kicked off of the list for too many violations). The age of the driver also is a potential constraint with both rental car agencies as well as with different state insurance regulations. As soon as possible, you should check what requirements your state and your institution may have so that you can begin to determine who will be able to drive (and schedule any driver’s safety or other courses that may be required).

Another concern is to determine what type of vehicles you will be using for transportation. Many institutions have motor pools, but use of these vehicles may not always be the most cost effective option. Additionally, many states have specific requirements for rental vehicles. Your state and institution’s guidelines for travel should be consulted ASAP to determine your options. Additionally, if you are considering renting a vehicle, the constraints of that rental agency should be considered (for example, in Louisiana we are required to use Enterprise for in-state rentals – yet Enterprise will not allow the rental of a 15 passenger van if that van is traveling to or through Florida).

Once the method of transportation has been determined, early reservation is recommended. Especially when using 15 passenger vans, these vehicles often are in high demand among campus organizations and community events (e.g. election season) can also create significant demand. Additionally, if you choose to rent a vehicle and you are renting on behalf of a public institution, you should check to see what tax exemptions are offered in your state (for example, in Louisiana, rental vehicles are exempt from state taxes when used for state business). If you are covered by any tax exempt status, be sure to take any tax exemption forms with you to the agency when picking up your vehicle. You should also make yourself aware of the insurance policies of your state and/or institution (for example, in Louisiana the state self-insures and will not reimburse you for any supplemental insurance coverage offered by a rental agency).

Hotel Reservations

Many tournaments will attempt to secure a block of hotel rooms during a competition. These blocks often offer a discounted rate, but the “release date” is typically 3 or 4 weeks before the tournament; accordingly, reservations should be made promptly if booking within a block. Even if not reserving within a block rate, the most desirable hotels often fill prior to a tournament, and thus, early reservations are encouraged.

Similar to the van rental, if you are a public institution you may be exempt from some or all taxes within your home state. If you are covered by any exemption, be sure to bring a copy of all forms and submit them upon check-in to your hotel.

Additionally, if your state and/or institution will permit you to do so (in my experience, most will), I encourage you to join the various hotel rewards clubs. Many coaches will choose to use rewards credit earned through team travel to provide free rooms for the team during future tournaments (thus, stretching your travel budget further). Others may choose to use these nights as a perk for their own travel. Either way, you’ll inevitably spend a lot of time in hotels & these rewards programs will provide an additional benefit.

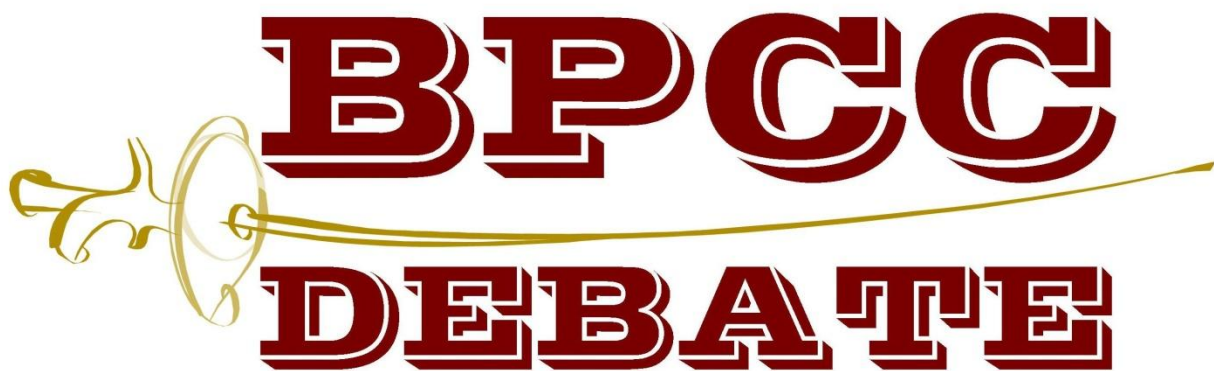
Tracking Performance

Using the IPDA season long sweepstakes calculations can be an effective method for tracking the performance of your students over the course of the year. Additionally, utilizing a spreadsheet for tracking can help you to keep track of eligibility for the novice division (students are limited to a total of 8 debate tournaments across all formats of debate for novice eligibility); for example, in the excerpt from a personal tracking spreadsheet below I’ve noted on two competitors (“Nov – 3 left”) next to their names – this is to serve as a reminder that at the start of this competitive season these competitors only had 3 tournaments that they would be eligible for the novice division (those without any indication next to their name had not entered in a debate tournament before those listed in this personal tracking report). Utilizing this spreadsheet format also allows you to evaluate the competitive arc of your debaters, as well as keep track of season long individual and team points for IPDA season long awards (see “season long awards” segment for an explanation of this process).

	Total Points	UAM			ULM			Lee			LSUS			MC			LSU		
		N	V	O	N	V	O	N	V	O	N	V	O	N	V	O	N	V	O
Chinedu (Nov)	7											4W+Brk	5	2W				2	
Kady (Nov)	21								5W,brk	6		5W+Brk	6			4w,brk, OF, QFW		9	
Lamar (Nov)	25	4W, brk, OF W	7		4W	4		5W, brk	6		4W,brk	5						3W	3
Mallory (Nov - 3 left)	5																	4W,brl	5
Tim (Nov)	31				4W,brk QFW, SFW	9		5W, brk, QFW, SFW	10				4W+Brk	5				6,brk	7
Valerie (Nov - 3 left)	8	5W, brk, OF W	8																

Team Policies

Establishing a set of clear policies for your team is essential not only for fair governance of the team but also to establish a tone for all students joining the program. In the following pages, I’ve clipped the current version of team policies that I’ve implemented at BPC. Feel free to adapt these policies to your own program and your desires for your team. Additionally, you’ll note that on the final page of the example there is a signature sheet for the student – I have each student sign this form upon receiving and reading their copy of the policies, so that a paper trail has been established in the event that disciplinary action is necessary.



BPCC DEBATE

TEAM POLICIES

(REVISED JULY 23, 2008)

MISSION: To provide an educational forum for students that will enable them to improve their communication skills, outside of the classroom, both formally (i.e. public speaking) and informally (i.e. interpersonally). To instill in each student a sense of competition, ethics and fairness. To have fun while traveling and gaining life experiences. To promote Bossier Parish Community College and its community as good citizens, good students and excellent communicators.

GENERAL TEAM POLICIES: Each member of the team will be required to brief articles from an assigned number of electronic archives/newspapers/databases for use in debate preparation. You are encouraged to become familiar with Lexis/Nexis as a means of researching not only topics relevant to debate, but topics that result in an enhanced worldview. In addition to article research, you will be expected to maintain your scheduled practice times as dictated by the coaching staff and/or team captains. A minimum of one practice per week per event is expected. Additional time will be assigned on a case by case basis. In addition to individual practice, you are expected to attend scheduled team practices and meetings. The team meetings will be used to coach team preparation, to provide mock tournament situations, seminars, and peer evaluation. If the meeting conflicts with another scheduled class, you will be expected to make up any lost practice time by appointment. Finally, you will be expected to participate in events that relate to the team that may or may not involve competition. Examples of this may be tutoring/coaching area high schools in debate, serving as a judge for local debate competitions, performing volunteer work with the team or on behalf of the team, and participating in any non-competitive performances scheduled by the coaching staff.

BPCC DEBATE TEAM BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES:

- **Your Responsibilities as a Student:** They include keeping your grades up to a 2.5 GPA; anything lower than this will keep you from attending tournaments. Also, you must attend your scheduled classes; you will miss enough class without cutting unnecessarily. Make sure to arrange absences due to tournaments with your professors. It is your responsibility to keep yourself in good academic standing and to not jeopardize your eligibility to compete on this team.
- **Your Responsibilities as a Team Member:** They include all aspects of travel, practice, and school representation. Being a member of the Debate Team is a privilege, not a right. You have been chosen as a talented, hard-working and bright individual to represent your team and school. However, with that privilege comes responsibilities.
 - Deadlines will be set as to when assignments should be completed. These deadlines should be taken seriously and should be met. If you are not ready for a tournament, you won't go. Budgets are tight and students who are not prepared will not waste college time

and money. If you want to travel, be prepared. Saturday practice sessions may be held if a big tournament is scheduled or teammates need more practice sessions. You will be notified early when these may occur and you are expected to attend and participate. There may be other practices required. Generally, you should have a minimum of one practice session a week per event.

- Be on time for all practice sessions and tournament departure times. You will need to sign up for individual practice sessions with the Director of Debate or assistant. You are also expected to attend scheduled meetings. If problems arise PLEASE contact the person who you were scheduled with. We do not want to wait for you if you are not showing up. If you are going to be late for a coaching session, you must show courtesy and call.
- Be polite and courteous to other teams, your team members, couches, and judges. Every time you are around other schools or judges you are being judged, this includes social situations.
- NEVER argue with a forensic judge, no matter who it is. If a problem with a competitor or judge arises, find the Director or Assistant and let them handle the problem. Do not take things into your own hands.
- Tournaments can be long and exhausting. Do yourself and your team a favor and go to bed at a decent hour. Curfews at tournaments may be set and are expected to be followed. Remember, your coaches need sleep too.
- You are expected to stay with your team when away from the tournament site. Don't socialize in other teams rooms. You should not leave the school grounds or hotel without permission from the Director of Debate.
- Any student who travels with the team must travel to and from the tournament in the team vehicle(s), unless prior written authorization is given by the Director of Debate.
- Depending on their severity, behavioral problems that occur on trips will be dealt with through warnings, probation and possible expulsion from the team. These trips are not designed as party sessions -- you are there as ambassadors for the college. Behavior during tournaments, during travel to and from tournaments, and other activities of the team will be governed by good taste and common sense. If you have a question as to what constitutes "good taste and common sense" please consult the Director. Once entered in a tournament, if you must be "dropped" from the tournament, you will be responsible for reimbursing the college for any entry fees and/or drop fees incurred, unless written approval is given by the Director.
- Illegal substances are strictly prohibited. College travel regulations regarding the use of these substances will be put into effect and students will be sent home from the tournament. No illegal substance will be tolerated once you are on a forensic trip. Cigarette smoking is not allowed on vans or in hotel rooms or in tournament buildings.
- Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated.
- **Tournament Policies:** The following list of guidelines is intended to govern your behavior while traveling to, competing at, and returning from tournaments.
 - **Competition Attire:** Tournament attire should be described as professional. Women should wear tailored dresses, tailored suits including pantsuits or separates. Fad clothing should be strongly discouraged. Skirt length should be no shorter than three inches above the knee. Jewelry is a nice way to accent an outfit, but too much is distracting. Also, avoid fad or casual jewelry as well (i.e. hemp bracelets and chokers, distracting anklets, etc.). Makeup and hair should accent not hinder the competitors performance. Hair should not be in the eyes or hanging down in your faces. Competitors should be encouraged to avoid extreme looks that might not look professional or effect their performance or reputation. Pantyhose should be worn if skirts or dresses are worn. Shoes should be polished and attractive and accenting the outfit. No platforms, wedge heels, or

clunky shoes for a professional look. Ladies should bring flats to change into between events . . . we do lots of walking!!! (PLEASE REMEMBER TO CHANGE BACK FOR YOUR EVENTS!) Men, should wear dark suits that fit the standard for professional attire. No shiny material, no bizarre colors. Blazer and trousers are acceptable. Dark socks and shoes should be worn. Shoes should be loafers or other dress shoes, not tennis shoes. Ties must be worn. Novelty ties are discouraged if they are distracting. Hair for men should be professional. Pull long hair back for performances. Shave EVERY day of competition. Avoid too much color and no patterns or denim. Trousers should be dress pants not jeans. Chinos are acceptable but not very dressy. A T-shirt under dress shirts, makes for a very professional look, as well as helping with perspiration.

- College Logos: During a trip you are representing BPCC. No items with a logo for another college or university should be brought on a trip.
- Packing: Due to space limitations on van trips, you should only pack one hanging bag and one carry-on style bag, if necessary. Students can also bring back packs with their books and homework for the long trips. You should also ALWAYS bring an umbrella (looking like a drowned rat before competition is not conducive to winning -- you won't get the pity vote from your judge).
- Obviously, illegal drugs are forbidden.
- Cigarettes, although not recommended for good vocal production, are not illegal but smoking etiquette WILL be mandated. No smoking in the vans, no smoking in hotel rooms. Trips should not be held up because of smokers — they should plan their smoking breaks in conjunction with scheduled or necessary trip stops (gasoline, bathroom, etc.).
- Cellular Phones: while at the tournament site, cellular phones should be turned off & only used in the event of an emergency. Do not plan to use your cell phone as a timer in rounds – you should bring a timer with you to use.

- Who Goes on Tournaments: This depends on several things. No student has the "right" to go on a tournament. The decision is based on the following criteria:
 - Whoever is best prepared to represent the college. "Prepared" includes having completed your assignments, practices, etc. If you are not prepared you do NOT go!
 - Ability to work harmoniously with others. NO one is worth taking if you have a bad attitude and cause morale problems. Be supportive to team members. Exhibit good sportsmanship. Remember, you do this for fun.
 - The financial resources available at the time.
 - The team's competitive needs and how they may best be met for the tournament.
 - Your competitive record, how well you attend practice, your attitude at practice, and whether or not you have put forth the time and effort to deserve to go.
 - Your attendance at practice sessions and team meetings. You must attend all meetings and scheduled practices. If the Director feels outside practice is needed then you must attend needed practice sessions before you will be allowed to travel.
 - The final decision is left up to the Director.

BASIC TOURNAMENT RULES: These rules are designed to make things run as smoothly as possible. Please follow them faithfully and without constant reminding.

- Get up, get dressed and be ready ON TIME!!! We will not wait for you!!!!!! If you miss the team's leave time during a tournament, you will be responsible for getting to the tournament – if

you are dropped from the competition, you will be responsible for reimbursing the college for the drop fees.

- Find your competition rooms five minutes before the round is scheduled to begin.
- ALWAYS remember to sign in!
- Be a good listener. Do not do anything that is distracting. Be the listener that you would like to have in your round.
- If you have a round off, go support a team member.
- DO NOT fall asleep during a round.
- DO NOT chew gum or candy while performing.
- DO NOT make any negative comments in regards to the tournament, a judge, or another performer. You will always have time to debrief and vent in the van in the privacy with your teammates.
- DO NOT suck up to judges! AND NEVER say “this is my first tournament.” Always look and act like you know what you are doing.
- Be professional during the awards ceremony. This includes, but is not limited to the following: applauding for competitors from other schools who have earned awards (even if you think that you should have placed higher than an individual!!!), not overly applauding / cheering for members of our program (we should expect to win, and should act professionally when we do), not applauding / cheering when our team wins a team sweepstakes award (this is your chance to receive the applause of others, not the opportunity to gloat), etc.
- Stay in forensics attire until the awards ceremony is over, unless otherwise mentioned.
- If there is a major problem, find the Director, Assistant, or find a Team Captain and pull him/her aside. If an emergency occurs, or you become ill and cannot find the Director, Assistant or a team member, go to the ballot table and tell the people running the tournament.
- Members are obligated to attend each event entered. In the event that a student requests to drop an event after the entries have been made, the student may (at the Director’s discretion) be responsible for any fees associated with dropping the slot. During the tournament, “no shows” or “forfeits” will not be tolerated except for in the case of serious physical illness or the like; in those cases, the Director must be notified immediately and no rounds may be dropped without prior approval from the Director or the Assistant in charge for that tournament. Additionally, violation of any of the team policies stated in this document or of directives issued by the Director during a tournament may result in a student being “dropped” from part or all of a tournament; in the event that a student is “dropped” for disciplinary reasons, the student may (at the Director’s discretion) be responsible for any fees associated with dropping the slot.
- After the tournament: Part of being on a team is getting along with one another and forming relationships with one another. As such: Dinner is a time for the team to sit together and debrief. If you have friends or relatives in the town we are competing in, they may accompany us to dinner, but you cannot go off to dinner with them. Due to liability issues, students can not go off with individuals while attending a tournament. Stay with the team at all times. You should not leave the hotel or tournament site without permission of the Director . Students should never just take off and go places. When the team gets back to the hotel, we will have a brief team meeting every evening and then you should begin to rest and prepare for the next day’s competition. Curfews will not typically be set, but common sense is needed. Do not stay up all night!!! You cannot perform at your best and it isn’t fair to your roommates.
- Just 2 It: Stay in pairs, whenever possible. Look out for each other.

Amendments to Team Policies: These policies may be amended at any time by the Director of Debate. The most current version will be posted in the office of the Director of Debate.



BPCCC DEBATE

By my signature I confirm that I have received and read a copy of the BPCCC Debate Team Policies (Revised July 23, 2008). I understand these policies and agree to abide by them.

(STUDENT NAME – PRINTED)

(STUDENT SIGNATURE)

(DATE)