

The guide that follows is intended to provide an overview of the process followed for a typical IPDA debate tournament. This guide may be of use both as a coaching aid for new competitors as well as an overview for the first-time coach and coaches experienced in other formats of speech / debate competition may find segments useful for illustrating distinctions unique to IPDA debate. Additional organizational information can be found on the organization’s website: <http://www.ipdadebate.info>

Postings: Postings are where your debaters and judges can find out where they will be for the following round. Often postings are put up one round at a time; however multiple rounds may be posted at once. Because the tournament environment is fluid (rooms sometimes become unavailable, competitors and judges sometimes have to be dropped from the tournament, etc.), competitors and judges should always check postings before a round starts (and a judge who is not listed on the postings may sometimes be asked to substitute for another judge that has been listed but that is unable to judge the round). The example below illustrates a typical posting – competitors and judges are referenced by the code given to their program (often the school’s acronym – for example “LC” references “Louisiana College,” but at other times this may be a different acronym for the tournament; for example, when both “Lee College” and “Louisiana College” are attending a tournament, “Lee College” is often given the code “LEE”). The posting then typically has the last name (and occasionally a first name or first initial) for competitors and judges, as well as the room for the round (note – “topic draw” is usually in a central location, the “room” listed is the room where the actual debate will take place after preparation time is complete).

Novice Division							
Round 1							
Flight A: 11:30 Draw				Flight B: 12:00 Draw			
Affirmative	Negative	Room	Judge	Affirmative	Negative	Room	Judge
LC-Johnson	ULM-Herrington	Strauss 109	UAM-Wilkerson	ULM-Franklin	STM-Carrete	Strauss 109	UAM-Wilkerson
LC-Moncada	UAM-Williamson	Strauss 135	ULM-Belanger	UAM-Gillum	LSS-Ankoud	Strauss 135	ULM-Belanger
LSS-Wallace	LC-Dunn	Strauss 259	ULM-Bethard	STM-Villa	UAM-Davis	Strauss 259	ULM-Bethard
SFA-Burns	UAM-Banks	Strauss 269	ULM-Blackard	STM-Escobedo	LTU-Reeves	Strauss 269	ULM-Blackard
SFA-Williamson	STM-Pompa	Strauss 302	ULM-Chisolm	STM-Thomas	LC-Puckett	Strauss 302	ULM-Chisolm
STM-Butler	LTU-Hodge	Strauss 366	ULM-Denette				

Flighted Rounds: The majority of IPDA tournaments run individual rounds in a “flighted” format. When rounds are “flighted” it means that the round is divided into two patterns (typically referenced as an “A” and “B” pattern), with roughly half of the debaters divided into each pattern. At the initial draw-time for a round, the debaters for flight A will receive their topics and begin their 30 minutes of preparation; 30 minutes later, the debaters for flight B will receive their topics and begin their 30 minutes of preparation (so that in a given room, a judge will evaluate one debate + immediately afterward a second panel of debaters will enter the room for that same judge to evaluate). This process is adopted both to cut down on the number of judges necessary for a competition (one judge can evaluate 4 debaters per round, as opposed to

only 2) as well as to allow some break time for debaters during the tournament (debaters will typically have a half hour worth of break time per round). It is important to note that at most tournaments a debater is not guaranteed to remain in a certain flight (e.g., you could be “flight B” in round 1 + “flight A” in round 2), so it is important that debaters check the postings each round before taking any break time in between rounds (when rounds are scheduled back-to-back, a debater going from “flight A” in one round to “flight B” in the next, will often proceed immediately from the conclusion of one debate to the topic draw for the next).

Topic Draw & Strike Procedure: During the “draw” time that has been assigned, competitors will meet in the area assigned for their division (novice, varsity or professional). Pairs of competitors are typically called to the front and given a slip of paper with the five topics to choose from for that round (see example below; note that some tournaments have adopted a format of projecting the topics onto a wall in lieu of distributing individual topic sheets). Once competitors receive the topics, the negative will strike one topic by drawing a line through part or all of that topic (if topics are projected on the wall, competitors may choose to simply write the numbers 1 through 5 on a slip of paper and strike the number or simply notify their opponent of which of the choices they are “striking”). The process of striking continues by alternating strikes (affirmative, negative and finally affirmative again) until one topic remains & that will be the topic for the round. It is important to note that the 30 minutes of preparation time begins at the start of the topic draw period (meaning that any time that is used deliberating on “strikes” comes at the expense of preparation time). Occasionally the scheduled “draw” time will be delayed because of a significant event (rooms that were locked during the previous round, a previous draw getting started late, etc.) that causes a tournament to run late; however, competitors should always make every effort to arrive at the posted draw time (and not assume that a topic draw *may* be delayed, as this is rare event). Typically, tournaments offer a 5 minute grace period for competitors to arrive to the topic draw and if one competitor has not yet arrived at the conclusion of that five minute grace period, the competitor who is present will be able to choose which topic they wish to debate without having to complete the alternating strike process; a tournament official will then make an effort to inform the late competitor of the topic that has been selected for that round (it is important to note that preparation time is running during this process, including the 5 minute grace period which is included in the total of 30 minutes preparation time).

Example of a topic sheet:

Resolved: Healthcare is a responsibility, not a right.

Resolved: The U.S. should establish a timetable for withdrawal of American troops from Iraq.

Resolved: The Electoral College should be abolished.

Resolved: Poor defendants should have the right to counsel in civil cases.

Resolved: Marijuana is appropriate for medicinal use.

Preparation Time: IPDA discourages the usage of “canned” cases (cases that have been researched and written before a tournament begins) and instead provides 30 minutes for individual competitors to prepare and receive advice for the development of their advocacy. To that extent, tournaments often provide wireless internet access and competitors are encouraged to bring laptop computers, and many tournaments also attempt to provide desktop computers (for

competitors or programs that may not have access to laptop computers). Teams often will bring dictionaries, reference books and/or major publications with them both to provide backup in the event of an internet outage as well as to provide a supplement to materials available online. During preparation time, competitors may also consult with their teammates, coaches or anyone else who is willing to aid in their preparation. For specific ideas on the types of things to be prepared, see the debate instruction materials available outside of this document (affirmative case development, negative case development, etc.).

Signing In: Upon the conclusion of preparation time, competitors should have arrived in their competition room (if a competitor is in “flight B” a round may be concluding in the room that s/he is scheduled to compete in + they should wait outside of the room until the round concludes). Competitors should position themselves in the front of the room with the affirmative seated on the left side of the room (from the judge’s perspective) and the negative on the right side (this is done so that the positioning of the competitors mirrors the listing on the ballots). When resources are available (chalkboard, whiteboard, etc.), competitors are urged to “sign in” for the round. When signing in, each competitor should list their position (Affirmative or Negative, typically abbreviated “Aff” or “Neg”), their school code and their name, and the affirmative should write the resolution on the board (an example of what a typical “sign in” looks like is listed below). When resources for signing in are not available, competitors should inform the judge of their position/code/name and the topic before the round begins.

<u>Example of sign-in for an individual round:</u>			
AFF	SCSU		NEG
John Smith			Jane Smith
<i>Resolved: The U.S. should adopt a national sales tax.</i>			
<u>Example of sign-in for a team round:</u>			
AFF	SCSU		NEG
John Smith			Jane Smith
John Doe			Jane Doe
<i>Resolved: The U.S. should adopt a national sales tax.</i>			

How Debates are Evaluated: During each preliminary round, a judge assigns both a “win” to one of the sides in the debate, as well as “speaker points” for each of the debaters in the round. The “win” is assigned to the side (Affirmative/Negative) that did the best job of debating in the round. “Speaker points” are assigned to each debater, rating them from a total score of 8 (worst) to 40 (best) on their individual presentations during the round (typically, these scores are compiled by assigning a value from 1 to 5 on 8 different categories on the ballot (delivery,

courtesy, appropriate tone, etc.) and then summing those scores. Typically, there is only one judge during each preliminary round of competition.

During elimination rounds, judges are simply required to assign a “win” as speaker points have no bearing on elimination rounds (see explanation on “preliminary and elimination rounds); however, many will complete the “speaker points” section to provide additional feedback to competitors. Typically there is a panel of three judges during each elimination round of competition.

An example of a typical ballot is included after this paragraph. These ballots may vary slightly from tournament to tournament, but the basic elements remain consistent. At the top of the ballot, there is a place for noting the “division” (professional, varsity or novice). Additionally, the ballot asks the judge to list what round this ballot is for and the resolution for the round (these are both important for assisting competitors in recalling the details of the round when they get a copy of the ballot at the conclusion of the tournament). Next, the ballot has space for the judge to fill-in the names of the affirmative and negative – at the conclusion of the round, the judge should circle the name of the competitor that they have voted for (this is simply a quality control issue, it should match the competitor listed in the “I vote for” section in the middle of the ballot – this double check is done to ensure that judges have assigned the “win” to the competitor that they intended to). Next is the section for assigning speaker points – this section sometimes includes the boxes that are on the example sheet & at other times simply lists the categories (with judges assigning a score of 1-5 for each), and always those scores should be summed and entered in the “points” sections for each of the respective competitors (for team debates, each of the four individual competitors are evaluated using these same mechanisms). Some ballots include the “low point win” segment that is on this example ballots, and when this segment is not included, judges are asked to write “low point win” on the ballot if they have assigned a win that meets these criteria. As the example states “low point win” is “when the debater who you voted for had a lower point total than the other debater;” this can occur when one person is a better speaker, but the other provided better argumentation. The “low point win” verification is done as a quality control measure to ensure that the judge did vote for the competitor that they intended to vote for (because of the relatively rare nature of “low point wins”). The bottom half of the ballot is the area for judges to provide feedback to the competitors (note – in the example below, the extra space to fill in these comments has been compressed to save room on this document – on an actual ballot, this would fill the entire page); competitors will receive a copy of the ballot at the conclusion of the tournament and since this is the only opportunity for competitors to get the feedback from the judge – these sections are extremely important and judges should be encouraged to provide meaningful feedback as well as offering an explanation for why they voted they way they did (so that competitors can use the feedback to build upon their strengths in the future and to improve upon their weaker areas). At the conclusion of the round, the ballot should be completed promptly and returned to the ballot table ASAP.

PUBLIC DEBATE JUDGES' INSTRUCTION SHEET

YOU WILL LISTEN TO TWO SEPARATE DEBATES UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED. THEY WILL BEGIN BACK-TO-BACK. PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU HAVE THE CORRECT DEBATERS AND USE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA TO HELP YOU JUDGE THE ROUND. AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN MAKING THIS TOURNAMENT POSSIBLE.

TIMES OF EACH DEBATE

1 ST AFFIRMATIVE	- 5 MINUTES
NEGATIVE CROSS EXAM	- 2 MINUTES
1 ST NEGATIVE	- 6 MINUTES
AFF. CROSS EXAM	- 2 MINUTES
2 ND AFFIRMATIVE	- 3 MINUTES
2 ND NEGATIVE	- 5 MINUTES
FINAL AFFIRMATIVE	- 3 MINUTES

The debaters should be timing themselves, but if they don't, please try to provide signals and keep them true to time. As you listen, please make written (not oral) comments in the appropriate areas for each debater. Please keep the debate moving. Speakers should be prepared to speak immediately following each other. Allowing reasonable time (10 seconds) is okay, but no more.

RULES OF THE DEBATE

EVIDENCE – Debaters may refer to any evidence they like. It is important that you weigh its credibility when asked to by their opponent. However, **they may not read from written materials in the round** (such as Newspapers, Magazines, etc...). They may write quotes etc... in their speaking notes that they use for the debate. "The use of evidence cards and/or verbatim written materials is prohibited. Such materials may be studied, memorized and/or paraphrased, but they may not be physically present in the round. The "reading" of such materials should be highly penalized."

THE AFFIRMATIVE HAS THE RIGHT TO DEFINE, BUT MUST DO SO REASONABLY. Affirmative interpretations and definitions must leave Negatives fair ground for the debate. If an Affirmative's case is too lopsided and/or tautological (used to define itself as winning by definition), this opens the door for the Negative to provide an alternate set of definitions. But the Negative can only redefine terms if the Affirmative has abused its definitional privilege.

FILLING OUT THE BALLOT AND DECIDING THE ROUND

KEEP AN OPEN MIND - Though a debater may be arguing a position that you may differ with, please let the debaters do the arguing. Do not let your personal opinions influence your decisions.

VOTE – Simply vote for the best debater in the round. That may be the person that persuaded you the most, or it could be the best speaker. When you vote, please write "negative" or "affirmative" AND CIRCLE the name of the person who won.

SPEAKER POINTS – The total number of points you may give each competitor is 40. Under each competitor's name there are boxes. Please check off how you feel the competitor did under each of the 8 categories. Remember 5 means superior and 1 is poor. These should be added up to establish how the speaker did in the round or you may also choose to just use the point values below.

(40-36 = SUPERIOR) (35-31 = EXCELLENT) (30-26 = FAIR) (25-21 = POOR) (<20 = NEEDS WORK)

LOW POINT WIN? – If you add up the points and it turns out that competitor who won the debate has fewer points than the loser, please check to make sure you circled the correct winner. If your decision was correct, please note on the ballot that you intended for the winner to have fewer points by checking "yes" next to "low point win."

PROVIDE COMMENTS – Please provide comments for the debaters. These are the only window through which debaters may improve. It is especially important for you to provide reasons for voting the way you did.

LAST CHECK – Make sure you have added up speaker points carefully and given the win to the correct debater.

RUSH THE BALLOT TO THE RETURN TABLE – As soon as you are finished judging your **complete round of debate**, please get the ballot(s) back to the judges' table so that tabulation can begin immediately.

Preliminary and Elimination Rounds: Most tournaments offer 4 to 8 preliminary rounds of competition (with the norm being 6 preliminary rounds). During preliminary rounds, debaters will be assigned to be either "affirmative" or "negative" in the round, and over the course of the tournament they should have an even balance of affirmative & negative preliminary rounds

(though it is not uncommon to have back-to-back rounds assigned as the same position, but this will be equalized by the end of the preliminary rounds). Occasionally, because of an odd number of debaters in the field, a debater may receive a “bye” in a preliminary round; in the event of a “bye,” the debater receives a win for that round and their speaker points will be averaged for their other rounds to determine the speaker points for this “bye” round. During preliminary rounds, debaters from the same school will not be scheduled to debate each other, and every effort is made to ensure that debaters are not scheduled to debate the same person twice (though when there is a limited entry, sometimes it is a necessity to debate the same competitor more than once during a preliminary round). At the conclusion of preliminary rounds, the debaters who will advance into the single elimination tournament are announced (commonly referred to as “breaks”). The number of competitors eligible for elimination rounds is determined by the size of the entry in a given division; current guidelines issued by the IPDA for the number of sanctioned elimination rounds establish the following ratios: 4-7 competitors entered / 2 qualify for elimination rounds (commonly referred to as “finals”), 8-15 competitors / 4 qualify for elimination rounds (“semifinals”), 16-31 competitors / 8 qualify for elimination rounds (“quarterfinals”), 32-63 competitors / 16 qualify for elimination rounds (“octofinals”), 64-127 competitors / 32 qualify for elimination rounds (“double octofinals”), 128-255 competitors / 64 qualify for elimination rounds (“triple octofinals”). The method for determining who advances to elimination rounds is to sequentially list the competitors based first upon the number of wins that they earned during preliminary rounds, and then speaker points earned are used as a tiebreaker among those with the same number of wins (note – tournaments vary in how speaker points are summed: some tournaments use the total of speaker points for all preliminary rounds as the first method for summing the points, while others choose to use a “high/low” formula where the highest and lowest points earned by a competitor during a single round will be eliminated from their total and the remaining points will be summed; the specific formula for this as well as additional tiebreakers should be listed in the individual tournament’s invitation). Once the sequential listing of competitors qualifying for elimination rounds is determined, competitors are then placed into a seeded bracket (for example, in a tournament starting with “octofinals” #1 vs. #16, #2 vs. #15, etc.) for the remainder of the competition. The typical tournament practice is to say that these brackets will not be “broken;” what this means is that no adjustment will be made for competitors who may be from the same school who are scheduled to debate each other. In the event that two competitors from the same school are scheduled to debate each other, the coach for that program has the ability to decide what action to take (most coaches have a policy of not having their team members debate each other + instead they advance whoever was the “highest seeded” in that tournament; however, coaches also have the option to have the competitors debate each other with a panel of independent judges or debate the round with judges from their own school, and occasionally, you will see this occur). In IPDA debate, all elimination rounds are “flip” rounds, regardless of whether the competitors have debated already during the competition. A “flip” round simply means that before the topics are released, the competitors should flip a coin to determine who will get the chance to choose to be affirmative or negative in the round & that decision should be made before the competitors receive their topics. For the elimination round, competitors are typically evaluated by a panel of 3 judges & the competitor who receives a plurality of “wins” from this panel will advance to the next round of the tournament. Depending on an individual tournament’s policy, judges sometimes “disclose” results in elimination rounds (announcing the decision of the panel at the conclusion

of that round) and at other times, complete results of an elimination round are announced at a central gathering.

Power Matched Rounds: When a field is large enough, tournaments attempt to “power match” X number of preliminary rounds in a tournament (typically the final two preliminary rounds are “power matched,” however, this can begin as early as after the 2nd round of competition). For rounds that are not “power matched,” the “pairing” (which competitors are assigned to debate each other) is simply determined at random (while avoiding competitors from the same school debating each other and attempting to avoid competitors debating each other twice within the same tournament). When “power matching,” competitors are paired together based upon their current ranking in the tournament (number of wins and speaker point total) so that the top ranked competitor debates the highest ranked competitor that they are eligible to debate (constraints include whether a person needs to be affirmative or negative in order to achieve balance for the tournament, whether two competitors are from the same school, whether two competitors have already debated each other, etc.) and this process of pairing continues until all competitors in that round have been scheduled. If there is a “bye” available when “power matching” a given round, that “bye” is typically assigned to the competitor ranked lowest in the competition at that point; whenever rounds are not “power matched,” that bye is simply assigned at random as well (whether the rounds are “power matched” or not, bye’s are assigned with the constraint that no competitor should receive more than one “bye” in a given tournament).

Coaches Review: The “coaches review” period is a concept unique to IPDA debate. Before the first elimination round, coaches have the opportunity to review the ballots for their teams and how those ballots have been recorded for the tournament. This provides a chance to catch any errors (though rare, occasionally a ballot may have been entered incorrectly into the computer & a competitor's win/loss record or speaker points may not reflect the total that they have actually earned). Because an error in ballot entry could affect who advances to elimination rounds and/or the seeding of elimination round brackets, IPDA has adopted this protocol to ensure that tournaments have the opportunity to correct any mistakes before the elimination rounds begin. It is important to note that this time is simply for checking for errors, and coaches should not abuse this access to the tabulation room by releasing any information to competitors (note this includes, but is not limited to, removal of ballots from the review room - all ballots, tab sheets, etc. are released to programs at the conclusion of the competition and nothing should be removed from the review room nor should this information be discussed outside of the review room).

Awards at Tournaments: Most tournaments offer “speaker awards,” “sweepstakes awards,” and “awards for elimination round contestants.” “Speaker awards” are awards given to the top X number of students in a division listed sequentially based solely on the number of speaker points earned during preliminary rounds (see the discussion of high/low versus total speaker points in the preliminary and elimination rounds section for how different tournaments choose to sum these points). “Sweepstakes awards” are awards for the top X number of teams, based on the overall team performance during a tournament (the formula for determining these awards varies greatly with differences in whether only preliminary rounds are counted or all rounds are counted, the number of competitors that will be counted, whether speaker awards will be counted, as well as the point values for each category – the invitation for each tournament should detail how this award will be determined). “Awards for elimination round contestants” are

awards given for a competitor's final placing in the single elimination tournament (e.g. "octofinalist").

Guide to the IPDA Organization

Divisions

IPDA sanctions three divisions of individual (one on one) debate. The novice division is limited to students currently enrolled at the institution they are representing, who have competed in fewer than eight debate tournaments (in any format, at any level – high school included) and who do not possess a bachelor's degree. The novice division allows for a true introductory experience for students to learn academic debate while competing against others with similarly limited experience. The varsity division (analogous to the open division in most intercollegiate formats of debate) is limited to students currently enrolled at the institution they are representing, who do not possess a bachelor's degree, and have not competed in any format of debate while representing a college/university during 10 semesters of competition (or fifteen quarters of competition, depending upon the classification system of their academic institution). Unique to IPDA is the opportunity for professional development among practitioners that is available with the IPDA Professional division, which is truly open to anyone. IPDA Professional gives the experienced debate coach a chance to refine their craft and practice what they teach their students. For the first-time debate coach, IPDA Professional gives a coach the chance to gain experience in debate that they may have missed out on as an undergraduate. For graduate students and community members, IPDA Professional provides an opportunity for involvement in academic debate. Additionally, some students, who otherwise may be eligible for the varsity division, choose to enter the IPDA Professional ranks to test themselves against this diverse field. In team debate, IPDA hosts one Varsity division that follows the same guidelines as the individual debate "varsity division" described above.

Judges

IPDA debate encourages a diverse judging pool. To that extent, traditional debate judges (degreed individuals with some degree of experience in academic debate) are a part of the field; however, IPDA expands this field to encourage community and student involvement. Unique to IPDA is the option to have your students judge the event before competing in it. This opportunity provides the benefit of "thinking like a judge" for the student as well as an additional adaptation requirement for competitors. This diverse judging pool allows competitors to appeal to a broad array of judges while discussing a variety of topics (analogous to the burdens placed upon lawyers speaking to judges and juries, politicians appealing to diverse constituencies and businesspersons seeking to persuade the general public).

Season Long Awards

At the annual national tournament, IPDA distributes numerous awards based on the season-long performance of competitors and programs. At the individual level, IPDA awards the top 10 competitors in each division. Points are earned based on the competitor's top six tournaments for the season (earning 1 point for each win in a preliminary round, 1 point for advancing to elimination rounds, and 2 points per win in elimination rounds). At the program level, IPDA awards top programs per division as well as a founder's award for the top programs overall in individual debate (all three divisions of individual debate combined), and a Scholastic National Championship (for the top programs in the novice/varsity divisions combined). The points

formula for program awards is the same as individual awards, and a program counts their top 4 competitors per division in a given tournament.

Program Membership

Annual membership dues for an IPDA program are \$35.00 and are paid to the Executive Secretary (for more information, email: ExecutiveSecretary@IPDAdebate.info).

Additional IPDA organizational information is available on the IPDA website:
<http://www.ipdadebate.info>

Key Terms Used in this Guide

Affirmative (AKA: “AFF”): The side designated with supporting a resolution.

Coaches Review: The time allotted before elimination rounds when coaches have the opportunity to review the tabulation room’s work to ensure that no data entry errors have occurred. See page 8 for a more detailed description.

Code: The two to four character code typically assigned to indicate one’s program affiliation (e.g.: “Lee” for “Lee College” or “LC” for “Louisiana College”).

Divisions: Competitors are separated based upon experience levels into one of three categories “Novice,” “Varsity” or “Professional.” See page 9 for a more detailed description.

Elimination Rounds: Debate rounds that occur in a single elimination tournament after the conclusion of preliminary rounds. See pages 6-8 for a more detailed description.

Flighted Rounds: When two individual debates are scheduled back-to-back in the same room, with the same judge. Typically, individual debates are “flighted” to more efficiently utilize available judges. See pages 1 & 2 for a more detailed description.

Flip Round: When competitors flip a coin to determine which side (Affirmative or Negative) they will be debating. In IPDA, all elimination rounds are “flip rounds.” See page 7 for a more detailed description.

Judge: The person(s) evaluating a debate who ultimately decide who won/lost the debate. See pages 3-6 for a more detailed description.

Negative (AKA: “NEG”): The side designated with opposing a resolution.

Postings (AKA: “Pairings”): A listing of what debaters will be paired to debate each other, what room in which the debate will occur and the judge for that round of competition. See page 1 for a more detailed description.

Power Matched Rounds: When the pairings for rounds are determined based upon the win/loss records of competitors in a given tournament. See page 8 for a more detailed description.

Preliminary Rounds: The rounds of competition that all debaters are eligible to compete in. Based upon one’s performance in these qualifying rounds, one may advance into “elimination rounds.” See pages 6-8 for a more detailed description.

Preparation Time: The 30 minutes before a debate, beginning with topic draw and topic strike, that is used to develop one's arguments for the upcoming debate. See pages 2 & 3 for a more detailed description.

Resolution: The topic for a debate round – with one side (“Affirmative”) designated to support the “resolution” and one side (“Negative”) designated to oppose the “resolution.”

Signing In: When competitors write their side (“Aff” or “Neg”), code and name on the board and the affirmative writes the resolution on the board before the beginning of a debate. See page 3 for a more detailed description.

Speaker Awards: Awards given to the top X number of competitors in each division, based upon the total of speaker points earned in preliminary rounds. See page 8 for a more detailed description.

Speaker Points: A numerical score, ranging from 8 (low) to 40 (high), given to competitors based on their performance in a round based upon criteria established on the ballot (delivery, courtesy, tone, etc.). See pages 3 & 4 for a more detailed description.

Sweepstakes Awards: Awards given to the top X number of programs, based upon the performance of their teams during a competition. See page 8 for a more detailed description.

Topic Draw: This is used to refer to the process for when competitors are given the topics to choose from at the start of preparation time before a round. After “drawing” their topics, competitors then begin “topic strike.” See page 2 for a more detailed description.

Topic Strike: This is the process in which the five topics competitors may choose from are eliminated (or “struck”) until one topic remains. The negative strikes first, the affirmative strikes second, the negative strikes third and the affirmative strikes fourth – leaving one topic, which becomes the resolution for the round. See page 2 for a more detailed description.