

Things you need for class: I expect you to have all of these.

- a. Red, black and blue pens-you can buy a combination pen in lieu of. Pencils are not acceptable.
- b. One pair of scissors can be school kind
- c. Scotch tape buy two or three rolls but only bring one roll to class
- d. Yellow highlighter
- e. small case to carry pens, scissors, highlighter, and tape.

First year expectations:

1. You can expect 2-3 hours of homework a week on average. There will be more assigned work at the end of the trimester than at the beginning. Even if there is no specific assignment you should be reading this booklet.
2. Everyone is expected to attend a tournament prior to the end of the trimester
3. Everyone is expected to contribute to class discussions
4. You are expected to do all the assigned readings and be prepared for discussion. This is critical.
5. Listening skills are very important. When I begin the period you should be listening. Sit close to the white board.
6. In the first weeks there is mostly reading. You are expected to be prepared each day.
7. Debate partners are assigned by me in the third week. You will be given some input, but the final choice is mine.
8. You will be asked to commit to tournaments about four weeks in advance of a tournament. Find out if there are conflicts.
9. Everyone will have the opportunity to attend at least three tournaments over the course of the year.
10. One team will be selected to attend the University of California Tournament in February.

INTRODUCTION

Cross Examination Debate consists of four constructive speeches each eight minutes in length plus four cross examination periods each three minutes in length and four rebuttal speeches each five minutes. Thus, a debate round takes just over an hour. Almost all tournaments have six rounds with each team debating half affirmative and half negative.

Topic and Tournaments

Each year a new debate topic is chosen from a list of five topic areas which are hammered out in a special meeting in August. Once five areas are agreed upon, a ballot goes out to find the two most popular. From there it's a two-topic race. By January the National Federation of High Schools publishes the final result. Every high school in the nation will debate the selected topic for 2002-03.

THE DEBATE RESOLUTION FOR 2002-2003

Resolved: That the United States federal government should substantially increase public health services for mental health care in the United States.

(memorize this resolution now-you need to get it exactly right)

- a. The resolution is a declarative sentence.
 - i. This ties the affirmative to the resolution
- b. The actor is the United States federal government
 - i. Who does the plan (this is what is meant by the actor)
 - ii. The three parts of the federal government are the executive, legislative and judicial branches.
- c. It calls upon the United States federal government to increase public health services for mental health care.
- d. This policy must be substantial
- e. The topic and the resolution are really the same thing. The purpose of the resolution is to provide guidelines for both the affirmative and negative teams. Remember there are always two sides to the resolution. The affirmative proposes and the negative opposes. At tournaments you will debate three times on the negative and three times on the affirmative. Your goal is to win all the affirmatives plus one negative debate round.

Questions:

1. Write out the resolution on the lines below? (You must be 100% correct)

2. Who is the actor and what is meant by the United States Federal Government?

3. What is a declarative sentence? explain

4. How many speeches are there in a debate? List them

The Resolution

Let me return to the resolution THE DEBATE RESOLUTION FOR 2002-2003

Resolved: That the United States federal government should substantially increase public health services for mental health care in the United States.

Every word in the resolution has a **specific** meaning. I will go through each one of them with you, but before I do this we should look at where you find definitions. First and foremost words are found in dictionaries. Ordinary dictionaries like *Webster's Collegiate* and *American Heritage* are two examples. These are abridged dictionaries and are somewhat easier to work with. They have fewer definitions and perhaps 100,000 words. Contrast this with an unabridged dictionary which has upward to 300,000 words with multiple-multiple meanings. The real benefit is **preciseness**. Dictionaries are but a starting place to look up meanings. Others include *Black's Law Dictionary* and *Words and Phrases* as well as **contextual** definitions found in what's called the literature. They can be difficult to find but are very powerful arguments. In many instances how well you clash over the resolution determines the outcome of the debate round. This is a bit confusing at first but as you go along you will find it a very valuable tool.

Why are unabridged dictionaries superior?

What is a contextual definition?

Prima-Facie

Affirmatives present their affirmative case in what is called the 1AC. This is an eight-minute speech prewritten before the debate round even begins. In Washington State we limit the number of affirmative cases for novices. Remember affirmatives are upholding the resolution. This means that they support the resolution. You might think this is easy to do? Perhaps, but the exact wording of the resolution is the key.

Affirmatives must present a prima-facie case, which comes from Latin, and the law. In a legal case the prosecutor must present a vigorous prosecution in order to persuade a jury that someone is guilty. In a courtroom a judge and/or jury determine whether or not a case is prima facie. In a debate round it's the debate judge. An affirmative case then must be all of the following: topical, have an inherent barrier, harms or significance, a plan and have solvency. I use the word must to emphasize that it's either all or none. You'll hear a lot about prima-facie cases in the days and weeks ahead. For now it's enough to understand that the affirmative has a responsibility to uphold the resolution by presenting a prima facie case.

What is the 1AC?

What is a prima facie case?

Basic Affirmative Cases

Types of Cases

The simplest form of affirmative case is called the stock issues case. It doesn't follow any particular order, but it does contain all of elements of a prima-facie case. Below is a brief example.

Important things to remember when writing an affirmative case:

- A. Look for evidence that is new. I define new as less than six months old. This is very important for both inherency and harms. There's nothing worse in a debate round than to hear an affirmative case with evidence from five years ago. Many times the negative will have newer evidence, and they will find it easy to

trump the affirmative. Some advantages need weekly updates. Sounds like overkill? Well good debate teams are always looking for the newest and best evidence. Sometimes post dating the other team is the quickest way to win a debate.

B. Plans are another difficulty for all debaters since they are usually written by team members. Sounds ok but it's problematic **because no one advocates the plan** except for the affirmative team. This removes authorship and any authoritative support for the affirmative. In any event it's important to find an **advocate** for the plan. Few debate teams do this which leaves themselves wide open to argumentation.

C. **Solvency is the most misused part of an affirmative case. Debaters write tags (what the card is supposed to say) before reading the evidence. However, tags are over tagged. Debaters call them power tags. Look at the example below.**

Why is it important to look for new evidence?

What is solvency?

What is an affirmative plan?

HOW TO DETERMINE THE LENGTH OF THE AFFIRMATIVE CASE?

In general the 1AC is about 12-16 pieces of evidence divided between harms/significance, solvency, and inherency. A rough breakdown would be 1 card for inherency, 3-5 cards for harms/significance and the remaining for solvency. You will notice that I have been grouping harms and significance together. They are different but serve the same function in a debate. A harm is something like thousands of people have died in Kosovo since March. It's quantifiable and easily understood. Significance would be Kosovo is vital to the interests of America foreign policy. This may or not be readily apparent. Never the less the affirmative is claiming that it is a significant issue. Enough on this.

What components do you find in an affirmative case?

How do you quantify harms?

RECAPPING:

The affirmative case can be built several different ways. The easiest is the stock issues case. This can be a real advantage in the beginning of the debate season because it leads to better clash (real debating) between both teams. Affirmatives with several advantages may only cloud the issue. Second, use the best evidence you have in the case. After all the 1AC sets the basic outline for the debate.

What are the elements in a prima-facie case?

Why is it important to have the most current evidence?

THE 1AC

The first speaker in a debate is the first affirmative. The speech should be as close to the **eight-minute maximum** as possible, after all this speech is the foundation of the debate round. It's very important to learn every card prior to the round. The cards should be read clearly and with enough energy to initially persuade the judge that your case is important. Many debaters speed through the first affirmative as rapidly as possible hoping to impress the judge and confuse the negative. Well, this usually makes for poor debating. **Slow down and be clear.** Be confident in your affirmative and hope that you win because your policy is superior to any negative argumentation.

What are some important things to remember when presenting the affirmative case?

INHERENCY

Inherency usually causes problems for beginning debaters. Putting it simply, inherency generally refers to why there is a problem. Usually, most inherency positions come from the fact that the Congress and/or president opposes the affirmative position. This is called attitudinal inherency. Another form of inherency is structural. This takes the form of some legal ban. Faulty inherency can result in a loss for the affirmative when you have a stock-issues judge. In Washington few debate rounds are won or lost on this issue. Never-the-less

ignore it at your own peril. Because of the topic this year we will be spending much more time on inherency.

What is inherency?

There are several different types of Inherency. The first, and best, to have as an Affirmative is called structural inherency. Structural inherency is a law or treaty that prevents the plan from happening. If this is the inherency you employ, then you must revoke that law or treaty in your plan. The second is attitudinal inherency. This merely means that Congress or some other area of government that Congress control, just doesn't want to do the plan. Their attitude is a barrier.

Your agent of action might be the one with the attitude. The last type of inherency is called gap or existential inherency. This is by far the weakest form and you should avoid using it on your Affirmative case. Gap inherency means there is no law or attitude preventing action, but we just haven't acted yet.

What are the three types of inherency and explain what each one is?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

THE PLAN

This is part of a *prima-facie* case. I'll give you two example and then explain about each.

Example One:

The affirmative will implement the Mental Health Parity Act

Funding and enforcement through normal means

You should ask yourself what the plan does. Obviously the affirmative implements the Mental Health Parity Act. However there is no explanation of what the act does. Of course this is critical. As a negative team member you should not only ask what the plan is or does but what the plan doesn't do. The second part of the plan is very vague. How can the affirmative team clarify? A little later I will go into this.

Example Two:

The affirmative will implement sections 1 and 2 of the Mental Health Parity Act

Funding will come from a \$10 billion grant to the states

Enforcement will come from the Halth and Human Services

This second plan is definitely an improvement on the first. Tell me why?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

THE NEGATIVE

For beginning debaters the negative is the most difficult side to debate. After all the affirmative always knows what they will advocate in the round. The negative must wait until the affirmative begins presenting their case before the negative can prepare to attack the affirmative case. Well there are a couple of ways that the negative can reduce this advantage. The first is to ask the affirmative if they will reveal their affirmative case prior to the beginning of the round. Some debaters will readily do this while others will not give any hint to you. A second and better way is to be prepared to debate all of the novice case areas.

This begins with a **frontline**, which is a group of cards designed to directly attack the heart of the affirmative case. These are on case arguments. The quality of the cards is important as well as timeliness. It's no use reducing the harms of the affirmative when your evidence is two or three years older than the affirmatives. In fact this will only strengthen the affirmative. The **frontline** should take three to four minutes at most. Most cards reduce the harms presented in the first affirmative. For example if the affirmative argues that achievement is dropping and that school vouchers will increase it, the frontline might consist of several cards showing that achievement is rising and that school vouchers only muddy the waters. A **frontline** like this will weaken the affirmative. Notice I said weaken. A good affirmative will now argue that despite some problems the affirmative case should be adopted because it has a comparative advantage over the present system (status quo). So, to shift the debate more towards the negative, it will be necessary to use a disadvantage. In debate speak, a disadvantage can be enough to give the round to the negative.

What is a **disadvantage(disad)**? In debate the disad contains three parts: uniqueness, a link and an impact. Uniqueness in debate centers around how the affirmative uniquely causes the disad. For example the affirmative passes a voucher plan that costs billions. The negative decides to use the States Disad, which says that the states only have jurisdiction over public health care. The uniqueness would have to say that the federal government is moving away from proposing federal intervention. The affirmative reverses this with their plan. **Got it?** The affirmative is responsible for a new trend. Now to the link. In this case it's easy since the plan of action calls for the federal government to increase public health care in mental health. Thus we can blame the plan on the affirmative, thus linking the disadvantage to the affirmative. The impact is vital since it squarely places the advantage of the debate round on the side of the negative. A typical impact must be measurable.

Usually the States Disad has an impact that says the encroachment of the federal government leads to **tyranny**. Now **tyranny** is not really measurable, as is an impact that says encroachment of the federal government leads to the death of millions. Debaters would love to have an impact like the second. However, in reality the States Disad claiming tyranny may be enough. Don't be alarmed; tyranny as you know led to the Revolutionary War. Now, it's a stretch to say that but it should illustrate that tyranny, as an impact could be a strong argument. Let me return to that plan now which costs billions. Instead of using a spending disadvantage the negative can use some evidence which says that spending federal money will trade off with spending on Medicare(a federal program for the elderly). Arguments like this are called PMNs or plan makes needs. Can you win with a PMN? Perhaps if the judge is using a stock issues paradigm.

TOPICALITY:

For beginners topicality can be confusing. Never-the-less it's very important that you learn the ins and outs of it. What does it mean and what is it? As you know we have a resolution. This resolution spells out some limits what the affirmative can talk about. If the team decides to write an affirmative case that **helps smokers stop smoking cigarettes and claims some health benefits for everyone.** On the surface this affirmative may not be topical-something that falls outside the resolution. Let's take a closer look at this affirmative. We know that the case has something to do with health care because they claim that smoking kills millions yearly. Frankly, the negative might have a hard time defeating a tobacco affirmative. However, if the negative can prove that this case is outside the resolution then they just may win. Remember that the affirmative has a prima-faice burden. Part of that burden is to be topical. Think of the resolution.
Resolved: That the United States federal government should substantially increase public health services for mental health care in the United States.

Here are some questions for you to ask yourself to see if they are topical:

- a. a. who is the actor? Is it the United States federal government?
- b. b. Is it substantial?
- c. c. Is it a public health service?
- d. d. Is it for mental health care?

Well let's see:

- a. a. It appears that the United States federal government is the actor.
- b. b. With millions dying it is substantial
- c. c. It probably is public health, but is it a service?
- d. d. It probably is not a form of mental health care?

In the end you could claim that the affirmative is not topical because they violate the terms **service** and **mental health care**.

I will explain a lot more later on in this paper, but it's enough to know that there are at least two topicality violations that give you hope of winning the debate round.

DEFINITIONS:

I'm going to include a rather lengthy discussion on each word in the resolution for you to read.

UNITED STATES FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

The term "United States federal government" is the agent of action in the resolution. A clear definition of the term may be found in Webster's Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged: "Of or relating to the central government of a nation; having the character of a federation as distinguished from the governments of the constituent units (as states or provinces)" (Webster's, 1976, p. 833). This definition establishes that the resolution refers to the government in Washington, D.C. rather than to the governments of the fifty states.

Some teams are going to argue that the topic gives them scope to advocate that some other actor be included in the plan text. However, only solvency evidence can serve to illustrate this kind of plan

SHOULD

The word traditionally allows the affirmative team to resolve their inherency by allowing plan to pass Congress and be signed by the president and focuses the

debate on what should be done rather than on what will be done Debaters use this term to mean “ought to, but not necessarily will.” We call this “fiat” ability to pass plan. Only the affirmative has this power. There is more to debating this than I mentioned here but, for most debate rounds this is sufficient.

SUBSTANTIALLY-

- 1.in an extensive, substantial, or ample way

Encarta® World English Dictionary © 1999 Microsoft Corporation.

for mental health care

This the most important phrase in the resolution. Notice that I said phrase. I defining this as a phrase rather than each word. This gives it some contextuality.

This is what the Colorado Department of Health Services says what it is:

SERVICES

WHAT KINDS OF SERVICES CAN PEOPLE GET FROM THE SYSTEM?

Behavioral health services can help people:

* Learn how to make good choices even when bad things happen to them. These services are called General Mental Health services and they help the greatest number of people, usually in a fairly short time.

- * Learn how to stay as healthy as possible and live as normal a life as possible with a serious emotional or mental illness. These services are used by a smaller number of children and adults, but usually are needed for several months or years, sometimes for the person's entire lifetime.
- * Learn new ways of thinking, feeling and coping with problems so they can stop using alcohol or other drugs. These are called Substance Abuse services. Both young people and adults can be helped by these services. Sometimes people need to have alcohol or drug treatment more than once before they are able to stop hurting themselves this way.

MORE ABOUT BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

There are three kinds of behavioral health services.

- * Prevention
- * Evaluation
- * Treatment

PREVENTION SERVICES

Prevention services assist people with knowledge, attitude and skills to strengthen healthy behaviors.

Prevention programs for young people are often provided in schools and other community settings. They work with kids to reduce risk of substance abuse and other behavioral problems while helping to increase resilience and promote positive behaviors.

Prevention services for adults are about these same goals. Prevention programs often work with both adults and youth to change conditions in their family and community which cause stress and contribute to negative health outcomes.

Prevention services are often focused in one or more of these areas:

- * Life Skills
- * Parent & Family Education
- * Public Information & Awareness
- * Training for Professionals & Community Groups
- * Peer Leadership
- * Mentoring
- * Alternative Activities

- * Community Mobilization & Development

EVALUATION SERVICES

Evaluation services are how professionals look at your problem and help you decide what to do about it. An evaluation can take place by telephone with a trained intake worker, or it can be a physical exam plus a personal meeting. Questions asked during an evaluation are:

- * In your own words, what is the problem?
- * Is this a new problem? How long has it been going on?
- * What have you done to try and solve this problem?
- * Have you been treated for this before? When? Where? For how long?
- * Are you taking medicine for this or any other reason? What kind?
- * Do you drink often or use drugs? Have you ever?
- * Have you ever tried to hurt or kill yourself or someone else?

TREATMENT SERVICES

Treatment services include many types of services. Some people need only one type of service for a short time. Others require many services at the same time over their entire lifetime.

Outpatient Counseling

Counseling is one type of behavioral health services. More people are able to learn how to change or deal with their problem with just a brief time in counseling. Counseling can take place in a number of ways and settings:

- * Individual counseling between a client and a therapist usually takes place at the community counseling center.
- * Family counseling for all or some members of a family can take place at the counseling center or, in some cases, at the family's home.
- * Group counseling for people who share the same problem usually takes place at the community counseling center. This form of counseling has proven to be very helpful for people trying to stop their abuse of alcohol or other drugs, and also for people who have a serious mental illness.

Other Treatment Services May Include:

- * Aftercare (counseling and group support) for people who have stopped drinking and using drugs.
- * Crisis Response and Stabilization (on-the-scene emergency help).
- * Partial Care.
- * Detoxification (for people who require medical intervention because they are drinking too much or using too many drugs).
- * DUI Screening, Education & Treatment (for people caught drinking and driving).
- * Inpatient Hospital Care.
- * Medication & Medication Monitoring (seeing if the medicine helps), including Methadone Maintenance for heroin addicts.
- * Residential Treatment - for both mental health and alcohol or drug problems.
- * Respite Care.
- * Therapeutic Group Home.
- * Transportation, for clients from priority populations only.
- * Consumer Self-Help Groups.
- * In-Home Support Services.
- * Vocational Rehabilitation Services.

PROCEDURAL QUESTIONS

Topicality is an absolute issue. Either the affirmative is topical or it is not. The impact in the debate round is also absolute. Losing topicality means that the negative wins. Thus an affirmative can win all the other issues in the round but still lose the round.

Topicality has the effect of dividing up ground between the two teams. If teams can't come to some sort of agreement as to the meaning of the resolution then there will be no reasoned argument, which is the primary reason for the debate. This happens quite frequently with the type of resolutions that we have been debating for the past several years. Those resolutions are very broad. Not only do we have broad resolutions, but the advent and widespread use of the Internet has led to an even wider variety of case which has broadened the scope of the resolution even further. It's not uncommon that teams may need to debate upward to 150 + cases in a season which even for very good teams is a real challenge. Thus the issue of ground becomes very important to the debate. An excellent analysis of this was made by Daniel McDonald who said that only when there is mutual acceptance of definitions can you go about "proving something." The importance for both teams should be obvious. You can't win without being topicality.

The judicial analogy is often held up as a prime example as to why topicality is so important. It goes something like this: "the court should consider first in

every case whether or not it has jurisdiction. If it does not, then it has no power to decide the case on its merits." You need to see that the question of jurisdiction is a procedural issue that is considered independently from the actual case itself. Procedural issues are very powerful and go to the heart of contemporary debate. Probably the hardest thing for debaters to do is to present the argument in a sufficiently clear manner to warrant a negative ballot. In the debate round the debate judge serves as the adjudicator. Thus you need to convince him/her of the merits of your arguments. A smart affirmative can still argue that a broad interpretation is best, so you need some good responses to broad interpretations answers.

Affirmative Responses

A well thought out negative topicality block will get an active response from good affirmative teams. Affirmative teams are usually well prepared to debate topicality. After all, they spent weeks writing their cases and adding 2AC blocks anticipating negative responses. Remember, the affirmative has such a great advantage in most debate rounds that negative teams can rarely out debate them especially on case. Be that as it may, second affirmative topicality blocks don't usually answer good negative blocks. Instead affirmative 2ACs present their own answers which can take many forms like giving counter definitions and counter standards. The usual reason for this is simple. Second affirmatives don't want to waste down time (prep times) writing new answers to the negative blocks. Additionally, the affirmative is calculating that by the end of the debate

the negative will have kicked their topicality blocks. However, failing to answer the negative standards and or definitions gives the negative a real opportunity to win the debate. It's been my experience that if you hear the words counter standards then you can count on the fact that they don't meet your standards. The same is true for definitions. This makes winning the debate much easier provided you exploit this inherent weakness.

Who should answer Topicality?

In most debate rounds the first negative rebuttal is usually a waste of time since the second negative rarely, if ever, will go for the same issues in the 2NR. Good affirmatives will quickly grasp this fact and ignore the first negative rebuttal as well. So how do you make the 1NR an important part of the debate round? The answer is simple. Give topicality to the INR. Remember what I said earlier about how affirmatives run counter standards and counter definitions. This is particularly true when affirmatives have no way of meeting contextual or very specific definitions or standards. A second reason is the amount of time that the 1NR has to answer the 2AC. At minimum you have 11 minutes and maybe more since 2ACs usually put topicality first in their blocks. So, you can have as much as 16-17 minutes to develop your 1NR. Another consequence of this approach is the amount of real pressure you place on the 1AR both in terms of time and

forcing the speaker to adequately cover the 2NC plus the 1NR. In recent years the 1AR has gotten easier partially because the 1NR has become a throw away speech allowing the 1AR to concentrate answering the 2AC and perhaps spending a minute answering the 1NR.

Answering topicality in the 1AR becomes more difficult when the 1NR spends 4 or 5 minutes exploding the weaknesses of the 2ACs blocks. Remember it's important to exploit what they don't answer first. If you can pounce on their topicality answers then much of the 1AR will be new. 2NRs should be drooling at this prospect. This gives real meaning to the 1NR and improves the negative chances of winning the debate round.

An Affirmative Bias

The wording of the resolution generally has an affirmative bias by calling upon some affirmative response. Why would you vote against a policy that makes the world a safer place to live? Overcoming this bias is difficult. Not only are topics skewed toward some sort of action. Affirmatives also are arguing that they have the right to define terms. If you allow them to get away without some sort of topicality debate you are conceding too much. I'm not advocating that negative teams use topicality every round but it should be an important weapon in their

arsenal. What makes the affirmative so powerful is simple? The 1AC begins with their case-specific arguments. Frankly the affirmative has the best case evidence in the round. On the other hand, the negative may have a generic strategy consisting of a Kritik, perhaps a disadvantage and maybe a topicality violation.

Those who believe that the affirmative has presumption defend it by saying that affirmatives must uphold with their case. They argue further that giving the negative presumption would mean that they would never win. If you presume they are always topical then topicality is a moot issue. My own view rests upon the assumption that affirmatives already have so many advantages granting them the right to define terms would mean that they would have a further advantage. Thus, the best approach for negatives is to test the affirmatives interpretation with your own interpretation. Affirmatives will resort to almost any definition to prove that they are topical. Definitions are not created equal. For example using a common dictionary can result in simplistic meanings. Negatives should always look for contextual definitions and argue precision and that there interpretation is superior. Arguably affirmatives would look for contextual definitions as well. In any event contextual definitions will improve both teams chances of winning a topicality debate.

Another principal reason why the affirmative may claim they have the right to define terms is based upon a legislative analogy. According to the analogy, the authors of a bill have the right to define the critical terms of a piece of legislation to clarify its intent. An affirmative advocacy should have the right to define the important terms of the resolution. But this line of reasoning contains a serious flaw. The affirmative is not the author of the resolution the framers are. In this

instance the affirmative is presenting an interpretation of the resolution.

Affirmatives can turn to another interpretation of topicality to support its contention that they are topical. This stems from the courts. Since legislation is presumed to be constitutional until such time that it's effectively challenged in the courts leads the affirmative to contend that they are presumed to be topical. I see this a little differently. For me any discussion of topicality is similar to the legislature's discussion of constitutionality prior to passing a piece of legislation. Here, I believe you will find that legislature's rarely pass legislation that they know isn't constitutional.

Another **warrant** for affirmative presumption rests upon fairness within the context of the debate round. The assumption here is that general presumption is given to the negative thus affirmatives should then have the right to define terms. I believe this line of thinking has little merit. Arguing that because the negative has presumption the affirmative should have the right to define terms is like saying because you have the money that I should have the diamonds.

The Plan

In my estimation this is where you should focus your effort when arguing topicality not to the advantages. The plan must fulfill the wording of the resolution by calling for action.

Extra-topicality is when the plan falls outside the resolution. Permit to digress for a moment and spend a little extra time talking about extra topicality. First and foremost extra topicality is associated with plan and not advantages. Several discussions on the World Wide Web say that extra topicality is associated with advantages. Not true. Second, a few authors even dispute its existence. I'm afraid to contradict them but extra topicality has been a part of debate for over two decades. However, it's been misunderstood by many debaters and judges not to mention coaches. I've judged many rounds when teams have argued that the affirmative should sever those advantages that are extra topical. A better way of looking at this discussion is to look at plan for parts that fall outside the resolution. I should say that there are parts of plan that necessarily fall outside of plan like funding and enforcement. If you claim that your funding will increase economic growth and this becomes a advantage to plan you can argue that the affirmative will need to sever this plan plank and any advantages with it. In recent years some affirmatives have presented a plan that deconstructs government or gets rid of it altogether. In a situation such as this look for advantages that the affirmative claims have nothing to do with limiting weapons of mass destruction. If the affirmative team does claim that the actor (United States federal government) is the problem and then claim advantages like

ecological salvation the plan and advantages associated with it are not topical.

I want to spend some time looking at the anarchy affirmative plan which will be used by many teams as their affirmative. In past years teams have used "statism" and some form of social ecology to justify the destruction of the state. . In fact if the plan is worded poorly the negative should argue that they should sever the entire plan. A good example is when a mandate calls for action from a non topical actor say the United Nations when the resolution clearly states United States Federal Government. In this years' topic the word limit may pose some interesting questions whether you can do this through direct action. Affirmatives are going to be hard pressed if they don't show how plan limits weapons of mass destruction. Let me go a bit further in my explanation. Suppose the affirmative plan bans machine guns. Here you can that there will be some question whether or not machine guns are weapons of mass destruction.

Topicality Standards

Standards are lenses that we use in debate for evaluating whether a case is topical. Standards form the foundation for arguing topicality and play a valuable role in determining the outcome of a topicality argument.

Education

This is the most basic standard, and is used by both sides. Generally, a standard that is easily answered and rarely wins debate rounds by itself. The problem with education is that the affirmative will claim that they are educating the negative in the round, and on the most basic level they are. In order for this standard to be effective it needs to be related to something else like clash. Clash presupposes that the best form of education comes from arguing positions between the negative and affirmative. Thus the judge can make an educated judgment

between two competing teams. This neutralizes the simplistic affirmative response of “we are educating the affirmative.” The affirmative is looking at education only from the narrowest perspective. The negative needs to argue that education does not take place in a vacuum so when there is no clash there is no real education. The affirmative is in a real quandary by this time because their answer has nothing to do with clash which is your way of evaluating the standard. Let me caution you that negatives that have lots of case arguments should not run this standard, since it’s very obvious that you are providing plenty of clash. In addition, novices in Washington State already have case limitations thus there is no excuse of not clashing to with affirmative expect possibly not being prepared. In the end this standard is fraught with problems for most beginning debaters. It’s best to avoid this standard if possible.

Reasonableness

There is a school of thought that believes that this is one of most powerful arguments for the affirmative. Hey! We are perfectly reasonable. This a novice case area debated by first year debaters. This simplistic view of reasonableness may win debate rounds, but the reasonableness debate standard is not very authoritative. However, it’s quite popular in many areas of the country. Two prominent authors believe that the framework for the standard is largely based upon “the ambiguity of the English language.” The logical conclusion is that there is “no one correct interpretation of the resolution.” The counter to this standard is the better definition or best definition standard. The latter is direct response to reasonableness. You only need argue that you have the best definition in the

round. Of course, if the affirmative uses a dictionary and you use another dictionary then you will have a difficult time winning the better definition or best definition debate. To win this standards debate one of the teams will need a contextual definition. The contextual definition will enable one team to win the interpretation debate. In other words why is this interpretation superior? If you can win this argument then you should be able to win topicality.

Jurisdiction

I must admit this is my current favorite. It basically says that the judge needs to evaluate in the context of whether the affirmative case fall is topical. If not then the judge should rule that he/she has no jurisdiction and therefore can't evaluate the case on any grounds. Thus the judge votes negative. It's must like a court saying that it has no jurisdiction over a case and thus rejects it on those grounds. Part and parcel the negative should also argue that this sends a signal to the affirmative that they should find a new affirmative that is topical.

Grammar and Context

This is a very powerful negative standard, but it's difficult to argue well because of high degree of clarity that must be used for the judge and other team to

understand. Coupled with a lack of understanding of grammar by many teams, the standard is best used by elite teams. Usually, what happens in a debate is that the negative will define a few words that they believe will win them the topicality debate. The affirmative responds by either redefining those words or saying that they meet the definitions. In both of these instances they are pulling the words out of context within the resolution. This standard looks at the resolution in a grammatical sense. The exact wording of the resolution becomes more important because it purports say that the grammatical pattern of the resolution is how you arrive at the meaning of the resolution. The grammar becomes a limitation on the possible interpretations of the resolution. In this year's resolution:

Resolved: That the United States federal government should substantially increase public health services for mental health care in the United States.

Teams who define each individual word can create a new interpretation of the resolution that falls outside the topic area.

Common Person (formerly known as common man)

This is another standard that has little meaning except in the context that some teams will argue this in the debate round. However this standard has lost much favor in the past several years, for good reason. This standard is so vague that it renders the resolution almost meaningless. Using this standard, affirmatives

have a multitude of meanings to justify their topicality. Many times this can delimit the resolution making debate almost meaningless.

Limits

The importance of this standard cannot be understated because it seeks to get to the heart of the debate by helping to divide ground between the affirmative and negative. The resolution seeks to limit the discussion in the debate round. If the affirmative interpretation is so broad to make the resolution meaningless then the affirmative has reduced the negative ground to such a degree to render the debate itself meaningless. The negative approach is to use the limits standard as way of reclaiming ground. You can argue fairness or even education as a subset of limits. Be careful, however, in arguing fairness when you also use a couple of Kritiks or disadvantages as part of your strategy since the affirmative can easily claim that they are not restricting your ground. After all you have plenty to argue in the debate round.

Bright Line

This can be a very useful standard. It basically says that on face (first look) that you can tell the affirmative is topical. For example if plan mandates that the United States reduces its nuclear arsenal by 50%. It quite clear that plan limits the use of Weapons of Mass Destruction. Many cases would have trouble meeting this standard. An example would be a plan that begins talks with the North Koreans to reduce its chemical and biological weapons. This plan

mandates talks and an increased openness between the U.S. and North Korea. Whether this limits the use of WMD is anybody's guess? Even if the affirmative had solvency cards that said that NK wants to increase contact with America is not enough to pass the bright line test.

Using Topicality as a “Time Suck”

Let me say at the outset that I don't like this strategy, but it can be very effective in some rounds. Be careful especially in the lower debate divisions where judges will vote against teams who use this strategy particularly when the affirmative puts a reverse voter on your topicality violations. Thus your offensive topicality violations become defensive in nature and you will be forced to abandon the violations sooner than you want to in the round, and could even leave your partner with little to extend on in the rebuttal. This strategy is best used when one team is much better than the other. However, I would tell you that in these circumstances you probably don't need to run topicality violations. How do you determine when topicality is a time suck? The usual rule is that the negative is required to utilize this argument throughout the debate, right through the second rebuttal. I would say that this line of reasoning is probably abusive, but never the less the risk for the negative is real one.

Framers Intent

This standard claims that the framers intended for the affirmatives to stick to some what they call are specific cases that appear in the literature coming from the topic selection committee. This is like trying to debate some original intent standard. The affirmative assumes that there is a definitive guide that determines topicality. Wrong, the framers understand that the resolution will encompass many cases that were not originally thought of when the wording committee put the topic together. Teams in Washington State often claim framers intent on the novice level since we limit affirmative cases. They usually say that because this is a novice case then it must be topical. Wrong! Frequently the framers want cases that may be non-topical because they wish teams to learn how to use topicality as a negative strategy.

DEBATING TOPICALITY

Preparation is the key to debating topicality. However, It's my belief that the real key in winning topicality debates is for the affirmative to pick a case that's topical. After all if your case is topical then winning a topicality debate will be relatively easy. Teams frequently ignore this and select cases that are either marginally topical or wildly outside the resolution. The latter believe that they can outdebate the negative plus win the topicality debate. A good team will usually be able to anticipate the negatives topicality violations. Some teams can get away with this, but for most teams this line of reasoning is fraught with problems. First, negatives good will use contextual definitions which will trump most other interpretations. Second, you risk never gaining the offensive if all you are doing is answering

topicality violations. On the plus side you may get a judge who either doesn't like topicality or doesn't have the ability to decipher the myriad of answers the negative will use in the round. Good second rebuttals will spend up to five minutes exploding topicality which makes the second affirmative a defensive speech as well.

Topicality Violation:

- a. **Negative claims that the affirmative plan is outside the resolution.**
- b. **If you can prove that the affirmative is outside the resolution then the then the negative should win the debate round.**
- c. **Topicality violations are a priori-*above all the other arguments in the debate round.***
- d. **Topicality is a good way to learn how to construct arguments**
- e. **There is a right and wrong way to construct an argument**
- f. **Typically negatives would claim one or two violations.**
- g. **Constructing a violation:**
 - a. **State the violation this should be followed by a definition supporting**

your violation.

- b. The definition is your piece of evidence**
- c. Once you read your definition then you give a list of standards supporting why your definition is best. The affirmative will answer your violation with definition of their own, and perhaps their own standards.**

I'm going to begin with a resolution that has nothing to do with this years' topic. My intention is for you to see how the argument is constructed and how to use it.

Resolution:

Resolved that Vashon High School will require all male students who attend the junior prom must wear a tux from Martha's Tux Shop.

Affirmative Plan is allow male students to wear a tux from anyone's shop.

Topicality Violation

1. Violation

Affirmative violates the words Martha's Tux Shop with a plan that allows wearers to go to anyones' shop.

Standards

Precision-the wording of the resolution is clear and the affirmative is not being precise with its interpretation by using an existing policy.

Framers Intent- the authors of the resolution intended for the debate to focus around Martha's Tux Shop.

2. Impact

Affirmative is not topical and because topicality is an a priori issues the ballot should go negative.

Increase = Greater in size

A. Definition:

Increase means to become greater in size.

The Oxford English Dictionary. 1989 [2nd edition. p 827]

To become greater in size, amount, duration or degree; to be enlarged, extended or intensified to wax grow.

B. Violation: The Affirmative case is creating a new public service instead of making a current public service greater in size.

C. Standards:

1. Bright line: Our interpretation gives a clear bright line for what is and is not topical. Affirmatives that create a new public service are not topical.

Those that

increase a current public service by making it greater in size are topical.

2. Research Burden: The Affirmative would have the Negative research and prepare

for any possible public service that could be created. This is impossible for the

Negative to research and prepare for. Thus the Affirmative is severely abusing

the Negative.

D. Topicality is a voting issue for:

It's important to remember that the affirmative has the burden of proof.

Burden of Proof:

Since presumption rests against the affirmative at the beginning of the debate, the affirmatives are required to bear the burden of proof in a debate. They must show a serious problem to solve and the inability of the present system to halt that problem. And a way to use the topic to reduce or eliminate the problem. Overall, the affirmative burden is to establish a *prima facie* case by showing both significant harm and an inherent barrier resolved by a solvent topical case.

You are responsible for learning the debate terms. Memorize them if you need to.

You will be tested on them during the third week of class.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS:

Status Quo. The present system of doing things. Things that exist now.

Case...The part of the affirmative presentation giving reasons for the change called for in the resolution. These statements are called “contentions” and normally encompass statements of significance, harm, inherency, and solvency.

Plan. The affirmative proposal (s) to overcome the inherent problems of the present system, remove the harms. and either solves completely or gain advantages not gained in the present system. The statements of the plan are called “planks” and normally encompass at least four items. These items are:
(I) An agency or board to bring about the change and administer the change.

- (2) Specific “mandates” (laws or rules) or specifies the changes.
- (3) A method of funding the proposed change.
- (4) A method to enforce the mandates

Constructive Speech. A speech used to establish the positions of each side in regard to the issues in the debate. They are called the 1AC- first affirmative, 1NC-first negative, 2AC-second affirmative, and 2NC.

Rebuttal Speech A speech used to rebuild positions after they have been attacked by the opposition. The rebuttal speeches center on the voting issues and cannot contain new arguments. Rebuttal speeches may, however contain new evidence and may show reasoning that extends arguments in a new fashion as long as those arguments were established in the positions developed in the constructive speeches.

Extensions...The use of additional evidence and/or reasoning to advance arguments to support the issues. Once an opponent has attempted to refute an argument, you will provide counter-refutation of your own to offset their argument. Once done with this refutation, you then add to your original argument by extension.

Fiat...The power granted to and assumed by either team that allows them to institute their plan. Fiat does not have anything to do with case side issues. Affirmatives may not fiat solvency, but may provide necessary provisions for solvency.

Fiat addresses the word should which appear in all policy debate topics. The existence of that word means that whichever side introduces a plan only has to

show that the plan should be adopted, not that it will be adopted.

Plan Meet Need. (pma or pmn). A negative attack on the solvency of the affirmative plan...an attempt to show that it won't work as claimed. PMN's may be absolute...cause the plan to fail to function at all. They may not be absolute, but they may show the plan will function poorly. A plan that is not absolutely useless can still function to some degree and get some advantage. so try for absolute pma's.

Flow Sheet -learning to use a flow sheet properly is very important. Effective flowing only comes with practice. We usually flow on yellow legal pads.

Arguments are statements supported by proof comprised of evidence and/or reasoning that are used as support themselves for the issues in a debate.

Blocks are attacks written or typed before the debate (s) Usually these are structured outlines with subpoints supported by logic and/or evidence. Each block usually focuses on one attack (e.g.) one disadvantage are one block. One topicality attack is one block, etc.).

...demonstrating can show Significance of harm significance: (1) A "qualitative" amount...The problems are serious in nature. A serious harm, even if suffered by only a few people, justifies change. (2) A "quantitative" amount...The problem is widespread, and it affects a large number of people. If the harm does only a little damage to each sufferer, it must, at least be widespread in nature.

Causal Links are the connecting between evidence/reasoning and the arguments they claim to support. The connection between the harms and the cited cause of the harms. The connection between the plan proposals and the advantages claimed from the plan. (Many other types of examples exist.) The connections are necessary in thinking and reasoning.

Decision Rules are not the general voting issues in the debate. They are arguments that request the judge to vote based upon attacks seen by one team as priority values that supersede even the normal voting issues. A “decision rule” asks the judge to vote on the attack identified by the team introducing the “decision rule” rather than on the basis of normal voting issues.

Generics...are attacks or blocks that can be applied to several different affirmative cases.

THE RULES

There are very few universal rules in debate. Instead most tournaments and most of the state speech organizations set the rules for their tournament or state competition.

Rules for Time

High school and college debate is nothing like the “debates” you have with your friends or parents. It is a formal process of organizing arguments both for and against a specific proposition to facilitate effective oral communication of the issues within a point of view open to disagreement. Competitive/educational debate uses an organizational pattern, which is called “cross examination debate.” All four “constructive speeches” are 8 minutes in length. Each constructive speech is followed by 3 minutes of “cross examination” questioning by the other team. Each speaker- is allowed a final 5-minute “rebuttal speech”. Both teams are allowed a limited number of minutes of “preparation time” which can be used between any of the speeches in the debate. In Washington this is 5 minutes whereas in Oregon prep time (down time) is usually not given.

First Affirmative Constructive	8
C-X of 1st Affirmative	3
First Negative Constructive	8
C-X of 1st Negative	3
Second Affirmative Constructive	8
C-X of 2nd Affirmative	3
Second Negative Constructive	8
C-X of 2nd Negative	3

First Negative Rebuttal	5
First Affirmative Rebuttal	5
Second Negative Rebuttal	5
Second Affirmative Rebuttal	5

“prep time” may be used at any time during the debate.

Each speaker has specific responsibilities to fulfill during each constructive speech.

Why does the affirmative always begin and end the debate? Because the burden of proof rests with them. They introduce the resolution for consideration, and they should have the right to conclude their case before final judgment is passed.

“Prep time” or “down time” is preparation time, the amount of total times your team gets between speeches to get ready to give the speeches that follow. The amount of time provided varies greatly. At some Oregon tournaments zero prep time is allowed. At most national tournaments prep time is usually eight minutes. The general strategy is save your down time for rebuttals.

For the affirmative team the first rebuttal is much more difficult than any other, speech, because it must answer twelve minutes of attacks and extensions in just four or five minutes. For the negative the first and last speeches are the most challenging. The first is difficult because you have just heard the case area for the first time. The last rebuttal is challenging because the speaker must drop some issues and select those that are most likely to win the debate for the negative and win those issues.

Thus, if the tournament allowed four minutes of prep time per team the good

team would probably use it as follows:

1. The affirmative would use none before their second constructive speech, three minutes before their first rebuttal, and save one minute to prepare for their last rebuttal.
2. The negative would use as little a time as possible before the first negative constructive speech, a minute to two minutes before the second constructive, none before the first rebuttal, and all that is left before their second rebuttal.
3. I can't emphasize enough the importance of using your prep time wisely. Using your prep time up early puts you at a significant disadvantage in the latter stages of the debate round.

RESOLUTION

How do you evaluate the entire resolution? First, you can do it word by word beginning with federal and ending with States. This may not be the best way but nevertheless it's one legitimate way of examining the resolution. A second way of looking at the resolution is grammatically. "Should establish a policy" is a verb phrase. Thus debaters must evaluate the debate by looking at all of the words in the phrase. A third way of doing it is what is called framers intent. This refers to the notion that the people who wrote the resolution intended for the resolution to be looked at in a specific way. A fourth method is holistically. Using this method debaters must look at the resolution as a whole.

Evaluating the wording of the resolution is called topicality, which is a *prima facie*

burden that the affirmative must uphold in each debate round.

I can't over emphasize enough the importance of this speech. You are given eight minutes, and your speech your speech should be right on the money. By this I mean a full eight minutes, not 7min30 seconds or 8 min 10 seconds. You can achieve this with lots of practice, again a timer helps a lot. (I like the countdown type the best)

1. Put plan somewhere in the middle. Don't risk not being able to get it in your constructive.

2. Tags on the cards should say what the card does. Don't power tag them.

Good teams will catch you and make you look stupid.

3. I'm a big fan of reading the tags very very slowly so that all judges can at least flow the entire tag. Included are the date and source.

4. Cards should be current especially solvency and inherency cards. I define current as no older than one year, better yet no older than six months.

5. Before you begin your speech ask if the other team is ready and whether the judge is ready.

6. Memorize as much of your speech as possible.

7. Look at the judge for the first few seconds of the speech

8. Prior to the speech ask the judge to tell you if you going to fast

9. Know your sources and authors

10. If you have long tags make sure there is a pause between the tag and the actual card.

11. Don't look at your opponents at any time except to ask them if they are

ready

Slow down when reading plan text. This is very important since the plan is the real foundation for your advocacy.

13. Be prepared for a rigorous cross examination. This is another reason for really knowing your cards.

14. I can overemphasize the importance of making sure that the judge can understand what you are saying.

15. Have at least two versions of case. I regular and one very short. I define short as no more than ten cards.

16. Make sure you have several copies of your IAC

The INC is an important speech that sets out the basic negative arguments in the debate round. Frequently, poor strategy spells doom for the team and results in a loss. This speech is designed to wrest away any advantage that the first affirmative gave them. Remember, most of the debate is going to center upon answering the first negative speech. The sooner the affirmative can return to case the greater the likelihood that they will win the debate.

How can the negative win the round in the 1NC?

1. The negative needs to come up with a strategy handbook covering as many cases as they can think of.
2. The negative arsenal should include a variety of options starting with topicality and proceeding to case turns, disadvantages, and Kritiks. And over reliance upon any one of the options will skew the number of wins towards the affirmative.
3. Don't forget the case debate. Try to always have five-ten cards of which three or four of them should be case turns. Virtually, all judges like a case debate. Remember case turns give the negative a decided advantage.
4. Read over the frontlines at least twice before the debate and make sure you have highlighted the cards. All of this should be done before the debate has begun.
5. Make sure your highlighted cards don't contradict themselves later in the card. Consistent conclusions are the key to case side arguments.
6. Do speaking drills: clarity is the most important consideration. Speed can kill.
7. Don't overestimate the abilities of the judge. This is the number one problem with experienced and inexperienced judges. Just because the 1AC broke all speed records doesn't mean that 1NC should be just as fast.
8. During the 1AC look intently at the judge during the first minute of the debate. Usually the 1AC is reading the least important cards like inherency during this time period. A no flow judge or a partial flow judge will give you lots of signals during that first minute. If you discover that the judge seems to be more inexperienced than you thought then you may need to change your strategy.

9. A conversational INC would center most around case cards and some case pimps with lots of analysis. Appealing to the limited knowledge of the judge is the key to winning.

10. You will need a timer so that you can cover your intended strategy. There is nothing dumber than having a 1NC not use their most powerful arguments because of poor time management.

11. Don't use a KRITIK that you don't understand or that is too long. Read the Kritik toward the middle or end of your speech.

12. If there is not a clear link to the Kritik to the case you are probably wasting your time reading it.

13. Look at the judge periodically and see if he/she is flowing and is concentrating on what you are saying. Some non verbal clues like nodding or frowning make give you strong clues, but they may be meaningless as well.

14. Look and act confident even if you are not.

15. Speak with authority and briefly pause before moving on

16. Make sure you understand the plan. What the plan doesn't say is almost as important as what it does say.

17. You should be ready to do a standup speech immediately after 1st Cross X.

2AC.

I see this speech as a speech that more or less covers all arguments of the 1NC.

Having good 2AC blocks is the real secret to this speech. These blocks should anticipate what kind of strategy teams will use to try to beat you. You should have at least one accordion devoted to your blocks.

1. Make sure you flow topicality and all solvency cards. You can lose the debate round if you don't cover these well. Now sometimes you may need to have your partner do the topicality flow.
2. You need to answer the standards on topicality and case turns. This should be your top priority. Put these at the top of your speech.
3. Don't take more than two minutes of prep time if possible.
4. Use a timer and make sure you have adequate time allocation
5. Instruct your partner to flow your speech and tell you if you are not covering something.
6. Your partner can help you with time allocation.
7. Sign post-sign post. I can't over emphasize the importance of making sure everyone knows what you are trying to answer. A confusing flow on the judges flow sheets can mean disaster.
8. Since this is a coverage speech there is no need to give an overview unless the judge is either a no flow judge or an inexperienced one.
9. You must answer any case turns even if you don't have great answers. Dropping even one can result in a loss

10. Put the judge into a paradigm that is most suitable for winning the round. In recent years this has become a most neglected part of the debate round.

2NC

Second negatives always have favorite arguments that he/she wants to cover in this speech. This can become very predictable since these same arguments are liable to be repeated in 2NR. Once the negative figures out that you have a pet Kritik or disadvantage that you will go for in the 2NR you will most surely give the affirmative a much easier time in the rest of the debate round.

1. Divide up the ground and leave your partner at least one important argument like topicality.
2. Give an overview. It need not be more than twenty or thirty seconds but it will help guide the other team and judge through your speech.
3. Make sure you answer the 2AC as well as extending or adding some additional arguments.
4. Good signposting is paramount
5. Try to take as little down time as possible
6. You should begin collapsing your arguments by this time with the intent of going for only one or two arguments in 2NR
7. If necessary have your partner backflow any important parts of your speech as needed
8. This is depth rather than breadth speech. Impact important items

FLOWING

NOTE TAKING & FLOWING

The basic skill of note taking (or flowing) in the debate is discussed. This includes: what to write with, what to write on, how many columns to use, use of separate pads, guidelines for leaving sufficient room, symbolic vocabulary, abbreviations vocabulary, tips for special situations. Read an argument and have them flow

INTRODUCTION:

Taking notes properly (“flow sheeting” or “flowing” is the debate term) is an essential entry level skill for novice debaters. In order to answer arguments by your opponents, you must be able to write them down so that you can remember them and respond to them in order. Likewise, your flow sheet becomes the text which you use when you speak...it is the notes which you speak from. You must work at improving your flowing and you will never be too good at it. More than any other skill besides speaking itself, flow sheeting is important to your debate experience.... and important to winning.

WHAT TO WRITE WITH

Write in black and red. You can use black for the affirmative and red for negative.

I don't like pencil since it's not easy to read. Use something which moves smoothly over the paper and allows you to write quickly. Use something which does not smear. Use something which is comfortable in your hand. Try a medium point pen, though if you write small use a fine point, and if you write large you can get away with a broad point pen. Always have lots of the right kinds of pens.

WHAT TO WRITE ON

Most debaters flow on yellow legal pads. Yellow because it is easy to read (especially with black ink!), and a legal size (8.5" x 14") because it allows for more room. Some debaters buy a ream of white legal size paper and just use that as it is more economical. Legal paper in pads allows you to have several pages attached together at the top.

HOW MANY COLUMNS TO USE

There are 8 speeches in the debate, but you will only need 7 columns. This is because the 2NC-1 NR occur one right after the other without an intervening affirmative speech, so they can share the same column.

Thus, the 7 columns would be: 1AC, 1NC, 2AC, 2NC-1NR, 1AR, 2NR, 2AR. My advice is to draw these columns in on your pages well before the debate starts. You should flow the entire debate, even after you have given your rebuttal, so that you can help your partner. For new issues introduced in 2NC (which happens from time to time) you will only need 4 columns: 2NC, 1AR, 2NR, 2AR.

USE OF SEPARATE PADS

It is often useful to have several different pads, and put different kinds of

arguments on each one. For example, the affirmative case could be on one pad, the negative topicality and procedural arguments could be on another, the negative disadvantages could be on a third pad, and the negative counterplan could be on a fourth pad...depending on if these issues make an appearance at all. This use of separate pads allows you to keep your notes organized around major types of issues in the debate.

GUIDELINES FOR LEAVING SUFFICIENT ROOM

As a speech is given, you write down what is being said in that speech's column. If, for example, it is a negative argument against the case made in 1 NC you would flow it on the case pad, in the 1 NC column, next to the part of the case the argument clashes with. But it is very important not to crowd things together. If things are all packed together on your flow it will be hard to refer to it and read from it which you are speaking. Do not be afraid to use many pages, with a different major point on each page. Also, when you flow issues just being introduced into the debate (affirmative case, negative counterplan, etc.) do not try and put them one right under another on your flow...space them out. Leave open space in the beginning and then it will be there if and when you need it.

SYMBOLIC VOCABULARY

People speak more quickly than you can write, therefore your flow will not contain a word for word version of what you and/or your opponents say, but it will (hopefully) contain a shortened and Meaningful version of the idea they were expressing. One useful way to do that is to use symbols to stand for concepts we commonly encounter in an argumentative situation. By turning their statements into a new symbolic and abbreviated form, we can boil down what they are saying to what they mean.

Logic symbols: Some useful symbols of this type include: [imagine the drawing if it is in brackets]

[arrow up] means increasing or increases.

[arrow down] means decreasing or decreases.

= means is, or the same as

--->, means causes or leads to

> means greater than

< means less than

Also, all of these can be negated (turned into "not") by putting a line through them, so you get not increasing, not decreasing, not equal to or not same as, not lead to or not cause, etc.

Debate symbols:

x piece of evidence used by speaker

? no answer to this

[triangle] change

[small circle with line through it] assertion which should have been proven

[small circle with x through it] evidence does not prove argument claimed

Also, you will develop abbreviations for common debate terms as well as common terms in the topic. If you are making an abbreviation for the first time try just leaving the vowels out, thus "hospital" becomes "hsptl." As you become more familiar with an abbreviation you can drop out more and more characters to increase efficiency.

Debate abbreviations:

T=topicality

DA=disadvantage

AC=aff case

AP=aff plan

CP=counterplan

VI=voting issue

You will develop your own.

Topic abbreviations:

SP=severe punishment

Cr=crime

MM=mandatory minimums

You will develop your own.

When you combine argument and debate symbols with debate and topic abbreviations, you are able to quickly write down what the arguments of your opponent mean in a way that can make sense to you and that you can interpret to the critic.

“Legislating new mandatory school laws would reduce crime..”

“Mn Sc Lw (arrow down) Cr

If you look at the flow it would read mandatory School Law reduces crime. This flowing technique drops the use of vowels in words to shorten your task of flowing. It takes practice but becomes very useful.

TIPS FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

1. Never give up. If you miss something, get the next argument. Once you stop flowing in a debate, you are opting out of meaningful participation in it.

2. Try and write down everything you can. Pour your entire attention and energy into this task.

3. Ask to see the flows of your fellow debaters.

4. Practice...go and watch a debate and try to take the best flow you can.

Good flowing takes lots of practice, and everyone will develop their own shorthand notation systems and abbreviations. One of my best debaters used a combination of shorthand and Japanese characters. Those who write larger will find that they need more room to keep their arguments from bleeding together. Some will write in script, while others find printing more legible and rapid. There are many other variations as well. Everyone's flow looks different, and everyone's experience with flowing is different. However, learning how to flow well is essential to learning to debate well, for one who cannot keep track of the logical progression of arguments in a debate is obviously at a strategic disadvantage to the opponent who can.

THE COUNTERPLAN

Novice Instructional Series

Alfred C. Snider, University of Vermont

In some debates the negative chooses not to defend the status quo (the present system) but wants to defend something else. When this is the case, the negative responds to the affirmative's plan with the negative's counterplan.

Definition: (generally thought to be) a non-topical reasonable alternative to the affirmative plan.

The counterplan is almost always presented in the 1 NC, and then becomes the policy system defended by the negative. The counterplan has a specific "plan" just like the affirmative, explaining what the negative thinks should be done and how.

After presenting their counterplan proposal, the negative has a number of other obligations to fulfill in order for the advantage of the counterplan to be weighed against the advantage of the affirmative plan.

1. The counterplan has to be non-topical.

Just as the affirmative has to embody the resolution in their proposal, most judges also require the negative NOT to embody the resolution in their proposal (the negative, after all, is supposed to "negate" the resolution, not "affirm" it). Non-topical in one word or term only is sufficient.

Many judges may accept topical counterplans if they are competitive (see below) because that is sufficient to divide argumentative ground in the debate.

2. The counterplan has to be competitive. There are a couple of ways to think of this concept.

The counterplan must be an "alternative" or "substitute" for the affirmative plan. The counterplan is competitive with the affirmative plan if it would better to adopt

just the counterplan instead of BOTH the affirmative plan and the counterplan. There are some standard types of arguments, which are used to show the counterplan is competitive.

Mutual exclusivity: the counterplan and the affirmative plan “cannot” coexist.

Net benefits: it would be better to do just the counterplan than to do both the counterplan and the affirmative plan. Often having a disadvantage, which applies to the affirmative plan, which did not apply to the counterplan, shows this.

There are other, weaker, competitiveness arguments.

Philosophical competition: the philosophies behind the two are contradictory.

Contradictory thoughts, of course, have never been a problem for some people, especially policy makers, so this standard is of little real use.

Topical competition: if the counterplan is not topical, so it cannot be adopted by the affirmative. Wrong, the test is “substitution” of one for the other, not topicality.

Redundancy: there is no need to do both, because doing just one solves the entire problem at hand. Wrong unless the counterplan has 100% solvency, which is difficult to imagine.

The affirmative generally answers competition with the “permutation test.”

Remember that it is only a test. Here, they try to suggest ways in which we could “do both.” If they show that they can and should “do both” then the negative loses the competition of the counterplan, and it becomes irrelevant for the debate.

These “perms” suggest ways in which both could be done. Suggesting a permutation of the counterplan does not indicate advocacy of it, just testing it for relevance. Here are the generally accepted types of permutations.

Logical permutation: do both at the same time.

Temporal permutation: do one first, then the other.

Partial permutation: does the counterplan everywhere except in the area of the affirmative plan.

Other, weaker, types of permutations include:

Restructuring permutation: change the plan in major ways so that it can be done at the same time as the counterplan. Wrong. This involves advocacy shift.

Non-topical permutation: change the plan into something non-topical and then

argue that the two can be done at the same time. Wrong. The affirmative still needs to be topical to win the debate, presumably.

3. The counterplan must have an advantage. In other words, it has to address a problem and actually solve it. Or, after having been adopted, the counterplan would have to produce an advantage. The counterplan, therefore, needs to have significance and solvency just like the affirmative case. The affirmative may wish to argue that the counterplan has no advantage because it “doesn’t work.” The advantage of a counterplan may be a disadvantage it avoids that the affirmative plan does not.

4. The counterplan may have disadvantages alleged against it by the affirmative, just as the negative has disadvantages against the affirmative plan. The counterplan may “drop out” of the round if it is not relevant. If it is not competitive, then it is irrelevant to the decision. Negatives may “kick out” of a counterplan by conceding competition.

For more information, check the counterplan section of the Critical Advocacy theory reader.

PARADIGMS

You need to understand that every judge has his/her bias. This bias is usually labeled a paradigm which really is a definite philosophy on how the judge will evaluate the debate round. In the not too distant past judges had one paradigm. (I'm defining paradigm as a specific lense through which the judge sees the debate round.)

Important things to remember:

1. listen very carefully to what the judge says prior to the round. If he/she has a definite preference for rate of delivery then it's very important that you adapt. The difference between the best teams and merely good teams is adaption.
2. remember that judges probably don't know the ins and outs of the topic as

you do. This is particularly true at the beginning of the season.

3. novice teams usually get the more inexperienced judges. What does this tell you?

4.

POLICY MAKING [Unger-Lichtman-Rohrer]

Tenets: Judge is weighing two policy systems

1. Assumes that affirmative is advocating a real world policy.
2. Assumes that there are two competing systems.
4. Most popular type of case.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING [Zarefsky]

Tenets: Judge is testing hypothesis of resolution

1. Social scientific search for truth.
2. Resolution is a hypothesis.
3. Negative need only disconfirm the resolution.

TABULA RASA [Ulrich]

Tenets: Judge is a blank slate

1. Let the debate happen without intervention from the judge.
2. Let the debaters create the theoretical framework.

Use in round:

1. Way out of theory problems.
2. Acceptance of counter-intuitive arguments.
3. Plea for impartiality.
4. Abdication of responsibility by the judge.

STOCK ISSUES:

Tenets: Judge disposition of set issues.

1. Points of stasis exist in every discourse.
2. Stock issues exist but can vary.
3. Stock issues can interact or stand alone.
4. Stock issues bridge the paradigms.

Use in round:

1. Appeals to a broad range of judges, and new judges.
2. Justifies concentrated negative attack.
3. Negative does not need to take a position.

Criticisms:

1. Stock issues neglect non-policy debating.
2. Stock issues are also not policy issues: topicality, inherency.
3. May neglect issue interaction.
4. Shackles debate theory development.
5. Not comprehensive: competition.

Using the World Wide Web

The World Wide Web has been a boon to debaters like no other in recent memory. Those of us that qualify as fossilized debate coaches can remember what it was like when the copier became the newest and latest techno gizmo. Never the less, the web has leveled the playing field between rural and urban communities in terms of having access to articles and documents that only were available at research libraries a few short years ago. Now, we have too much. However, I'll take what the web has on offer to those of us in the debate community. Despite the fact that we have this new tool, there are some associated dilemmas with using material from the web that needs to be addressed. In this brief description I want to spend some time looking at some issues.

Evidence citations need to be included on each piece of evidence. Sometimes this is quite easy, but many teams rely upon camp evidence or prepackaged evidence from sources like West Coast Publishing. I know that much evidence from camps have partial citations or come from the World Wide Web without any note of where it came from .In these instances debaters should try to find the original source and then cite it. When doing their own research debaters should always include the URL together with page number. In addition debaters need to include the date of publication if available. I know that many sources will only cite a year and not month or day. Remember the date of the evidence is not associated with the day you printed it from the web. A huge pitfall for debaters is the quality of evidence that you are using. In many instances the quality is very

high like from think tanks like Brookings or CATO. However, there is lots of junk and sometimes sources that are downright inaccurate. Remember anyone can post a webpage and say anything they want without anyone checking on the validity or accuracy of material.

Finding material is no longer a problem for debaters. Here are a few tips to help you. First, most of the worlds' newspapers have free access to much of what they publish. However, here are a few caveats. Access to free stuff is usually limited to 5-14 days of archival material. Some particularly good papers like New York Times are controlled by pass words and email accounts. However they don't distinguish between a 14 year old and an adult. Other good papers are the Los Angeles Times and Washington Post which have foreign bureaus stationed in the major capitals of the world. Good foreign papers like the Guardian, Telegraph, and Times of London all have good coverage of foreign policy topics. An additional mention should go to the Financial Times of London which is a business newspaper, but with very good coverage of foreign policy topics like nuclear missile defense. A further advantage that the Financial Times gives us is a 14 archive of materials related to the topic you're reading. It cross references articles from other foreign papers like French or German papers, an enormous help. Be warned that debaters will need to be religious in their dedication to topic research if they want the best and latest materials. If you are using newspapers then you always want evidence that is only a few weeks old at the latest. If you are using a political disadvantage you want evidence that's only a day or two old for your uniqueness. There's no excuse for using a six month old uniqueness on an economic or political disadvantage.

A word about search engines and their effectiveness or lack of effectiveness. I use Google almost exclusively. It's huge and searches all the words that you type in, no need for using words like and. However, you still need to spell correctly, a big problem for some debaters. Be specific. If you are looking for Nuclear Missile Defense then spell the whole phrase out and even include things like 2001 to limit your search to articles from this year. Use names of people to help you search. For example Senator Jeffords and Nuclear Missile Defense would be about as specific as you would need to get. Recently, Google has added a translation feature for websites which is particularly useful for searching foreign newspapers. These translations are not totally accurate representations, but do serve as important tools. As you find articles you can use this information to spur further research. If you are going to use a translated source make sure you include it when you are citing the source.

One of the greatest problems for some teams is that they use the web almost exclusively. Don't neglect journals or other professional publications which may or may not be available on the web. Kritiks pose a serious problem for most debaters and using the web can result only skimming the surface of something like postmodernism. In these instances debaters are advised to actually read the literature. This usually means books. The web can help getting together a good reading list, which you then can get from your local library or book seller.

