

Northeast Alabama Debate and Public Speaking League

Debate Competition

Judging Guidelines 2019-2020

Thank you for serving as a judge for the Northeast Alabama Debate and Public Speaking League Debate Competition. Competitive debating with the NEADL encourages constructive competition of ideas and policies within an organized structure. The NEADL offers middle and high school students an educational opportunity to consider the world around us by thinking about different arguments, engaging with opposing views, and speaking strategically. Our goals are to enhance students' critical thinking and public presentation skills in a comfortable setting where they can learn to be better leaders and involved citizens.

Debate Summary

In every debate there is a resolution: a statement, idea, or policy that is disputed. Usually, the resolution is either a policy which changes the status quo or a statement, the truth or falsehood of which is examined in the debate. There are two sides to the debate: affirmative and negative. The team *for* the resolution, also known as the affirmative, supports the resolution while the team *against* the resolution, also known as the negative, opposes it. After the debate, the judges will decide which debaters were most persuasive. For an instruction video created by former Pell City High School Debate Coach, Rachael Tawbush, please visit: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wX6lHiB-bxY&feature=youtu.be>. You can also find this video by searching "Northeast Alabama Debate League" on YouTube.

Your Role

Your role in this opportunity is especially important and very much appreciated. You are a tool that will help our students learn and prepare for their future. Some important things to remember:

- Debaters should always be respectful of one another and of you, and you should set a tone of decorum.
- We suggest that you introduce yourself to the debaters—specifically to put new debaters at ease—before the debate starts, if you are comfortable doing so, but without showing favoritism toward either side.
- The goals of the NEADL competitions are to encourage our students to learn, even when mistakes are made, and to be educated members of society.
- Please be an example of a professional. It is not always easy as some parents and coaches get emotional. Any complaints can be addressed via the organizers. Please be respectful at all times.
- Treat all students, coaches, and other tournament participants with civility and kindness. Do not tolerate rude or disrespectful behavior from contestants and report any such behavior to the student's coach and the registration table.
- Follow all announced guidelines and instructions.
- Pursue suspected dishonesty with tournament officials after the round.
- If you believe a student is plagiarizing, fabricating, or otherwise misusing research sources, notify the Coordinator as soon as possible after the debate and let him/her take the appropriate steps.

Preparing for the Debate Competition

Prior to the event, you will be sent the NEADL Guidelines, Debate Competition Ballot, and Debate Competition Rubrics to the email address provided by your team's coach. We ask that you please review the guidelines carefully to understand the competition and procedures. Please review the ballot and rubrics you receive so you will understand what is asked of you on the date of the competition.

Arriving at the Debate Competition

Please check in at the registration desk upon arriving at the competition. You will receive your judging packet that will include the competition schedule, your judging assignments, a copy of the NEADL Guidelines, Debate

Competition Ballots, and Debate Competition Rubrics. We ask that you sign a NEADL Judge's Agreement upon arrival. Please review your judging assignments immediately. If you recognize a conflict such as a former student, relative, or other association to a student you are assigned to judge, then please notify the Coordinator as soon as possible so a substitution can be made.

The Debate Competition

The NEADL Debate Competition is a two-round competition. Each team has received the NEADL Rules and Guidelines prior to the event and has received an evidence packet containing supporting and opposing documents for the resolution being argued. There is a maximum of three (3) speakers per team, each having different roles in the round.

Beginning the competition:

- Organize your ballots so that you list the names of the debaters and their team position for the round. This will be indicated on the schedule given to you. The students should write their names on the board for your reference.

During the competition:

- Judges need to monitor speaking times during the round. You can use your phone timer/stopwatch for monitoring times. Maximum speaking times are listed in the judging packet and are written on the board in the competition room. The rounds should not pause at any time. Each round is given 45 minutes, which leaves no room for pauses between speakers. Please make your notes efficiently and do not pause the students to "catch-up".
- Each team has a total of three (3) minutes *maximum* of preparation time that can be used between any of the speakers (Aff 1, possible prep time, Neg 1, possible prep time, Aff 2, possible prep time, Neg 2, possible prep time, Aff 3, possible prep time, Neg 3) for a total of six (6) minutes of prep time per round. It is your responsibility to time their preparation.
- Judges should not ask questions or otherwise interrupt the round. After the first speaker, there will be a cross-examination (CX) by the opposite team. During this time, debaters directly question the opposite position only during their assigned cross-examination. For example: Affirmative 1 speaks first, so debaters on the Negative team may question the Affirmative team, and the Affirmative team may respond only to the questions asked. Cross-examinations can last only two (2) minutes maximum. It is your responsibility to time the CX.
- The first speakers are the only speakers that may introduce a maximum of four (4) justifications. If any more justifications are introduced, please deduct points accordingly.
- The second speakers can only discuss previously introduced justifications and present statistics to support those justifications. The second speaker cannot introduce any new justifications. If they do, please deduct points accordingly.
- The third speakers can only discuss previously introduced justifications and previously introduced statistics. The third speaker cannot introduce any new justifications or new statistics. If they do, please deduct points accordingly.
- There may be an instance where a team will have only two (2) members. One of the members will be speaking twice. If this is the case, use a separate ballot for each of their speaking positions. The student will end the round with two (2) separate scores.

After the competition:

- Please pay close attention to positions of each team in the debate and which spoke first and last.
- It is not recommended that judges reveal their decision at the end of the round. Each team will see a copy of your thoroughly written comments on the ballot you turn in. Students will receive their results at the end of the competition. However, it is encouraged that you give the students feedback on their performance. Please do so without showing favoritism.
- Please be respectful of other events scheduled at the same time. If your teams finish the round early, instruct the teams to stay in the room until the round ends, and you may excuse yourself

- until the next round. If you wish to complete your ballot after the round ends or need extra time to make your comments on your ballot, you may do so in the opening session room.
- Please do not discuss your decisions with anyone while judging is taking place.

Judging the competition:

- You will be given scratch paper in your judging packet. Use this as needed to make notes to help you in scoring.
- We require written comments on the rubrics. Please be as constructive as possible.
- Your ballot will have the exact wording of the resolution being debated so there is no confusion.
- Average speakers scores are between 20 and 25. Please use the rubric to help assign scores. Indicate the score of each speaker on the ballot.
- You may give your completed ballots and rubrics to the assistant at your room. On the ballot, please make sure that you assigned speaker scores, provided useful suggestions for improvement, declared a winner, gave a clear reason for your decision, signed the ballot, and indicated which school you are representing.

Ballot Instructions

The use of the ballot is for team scoring. The ballot is a valuable educational tool for students and their coaches long after the tournament is over. The heading of the team ballot for each round will be filled out according to your judging assignment. There will be blank spaces that you will fill-in (speaker names and scores). Please add the individual speakers scores and indicate this total for "Team Total". Circle which position the better debating was done by, in your opinion. A good question to ask as you decide each round is, "if I had no prior beliefs about this resolution, would the round as a whole have made me more likely to be *for* the resolution or *against* the resolution?" Prefer quality and depth to mere quantity of arguments. Use the space at the bottom to write constructive suggestions for each team and a thorough reason for your decision. You will make your individual comments on the rubrics. Students and coaches appreciate these comments and suggestions as this is a learning competition.

Rubric Instructions

The use of the rubric is for individual scoring. Please use the rubric as a guide for scoring the quality of the speaker. Judge the debaters on the quality of arguments made, not on your own personal beliefs or on the arguments you wish they had made.

Understanding of the topic: Debaters have at least two weeks after given their evidence packets to prepare for the debate. Please score from 1-5 with 5 being a clear understanding of the topic. If the debaters offer different interpretations of the resolution, make your decision on the basis of whichever interpretation better fits ordinary English usage and provides more equal grounds for reasonable public debate.

Organization: Please score from 1-5 with 5 having well-organized materials and organized presentation. Treat clear communication as a major consideration. Remember that this debate is a speech communication event.

Delivery: Please score from 1-5 with 5 using all style features (tone, persuasiveness, strength, articulate, comfort in speaking). To be convincing in public debate, debaters need to present an air of professionalism in their dress, demeanor, and delivery. *If at any time students use foul language, speak out of their turn, are disrespectful to all parties involved, etc., deduct 2 points in the "Penalties" column.

Justifications (Speaker 1): Score this section on 1st speakers ONLY. Please score from 1-5 with 5 being complex and articulate justifications. It is acceptable to discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. Reward students who present well explained arguments. Weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained. *If the student introduces more than four (4) justifications, deduct 2 points in the “Penalties” column.

Evidence (Speaker 1): Please score from 1-5 with 5 having numerous, relative support materials given with every point addressed. Arguments unrelated to the truth or falsehood of the resolution should not influence your decision. Well-chosen evidence may strengthen arguments. All evidence should be relevant.

Statistics (Speaker 2): Score this section on 2nd speakers ONLY. Please score from 1-5 with 5 being complex and articulate justifications. It is acceptable to discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. Reward students who present well explained arguments. Weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained. Consider only previously introduced justifications and new statistics as support for arguments. *If the student introduces more justifications than already discussed, deduct 2 points in the “Penalties” column.

Supporting arguments (Speaker 3): Score this section on 3rd speakers ONLY. Please score from 1-5 with 5 being complex and articulate supporting arguments. It is acceptable to discount arguments that are too fast, too garbled, or too jargon-laden to be understood by an intelligent high school student or a well-informed citizen. Reward students who present well explained arguments. Weigh arguments only to the extent that they are clearly explained. Consider only previously introduced justifications and previously discussed statistics as support for arguments. *If other justifications or statistics are introduced than previously discussed, deduct 2 points in the “Penalties” column.

Counter-arguments (Speakers 2 & 3): This section should be used when judging their cross-examination periods. Please score from 1-5 with 5 directly addressing each argument raised by opponent and offering extensive evidence to refute opposing points. Students can respond only to the arguments their opponents make. Do not penalize a debater for failing to understand his or her opponent's unclear arguments. If a student does not participate in the cross-examination periods, please score a 2.

If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please contact the NEADL Coordinator, Amy Tomlinson, at 256.782.5696 or atomlinson@jsu.edu.