

Lincoln Douglas Judging Instructions

EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT JUDGING LINCOLN-DOUGLAS (L-D) DEBATE BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK

WELCOME and THANK YOU for judging at this San Diego Imperial Valley Speech League Lincoln-Douglas Debate Tournament. Your children may not have mentioned that if it were not for you, the judges, these contests would not be possible. We appreciate your sacrifice of time and energy. We offer the following information to help the day go as smoothly as possible.

What am I doing here? What do I have to know?

JUDGING IS REQUIRED: Each school is obligated by league policy to provide one judge all day (or the equivalent) for every 2 debaters. The larger your school's entry, the larger its judging obligation. It is important therefore that you check with your school's speech coach if you must leave earlier than the end of the your assignment. If you do not know the length of your assignment, you should ask the coach also. (Students usually will have forgotten this information in the heat of competition.)

IF YOU HAVE NEVER JUDGED BEFORE, DON'T WORRY. We want students to learn to communicate with all kinds of audiences. We want you to look at the standards for debate, but beyond that, you will simply be choosing what you thought were the best arguments. It is important to realize that a competitor's college career, self-esteem and ultimate destiny do not rely on your ballot (contrary to popular belief and paranoia).

ALWAYS REMEMBER – YOU ARE THE JUDGE. Please remember that you are in charge and the students know it. We would like the rounds to run efficiently, so start the round when you get there and caution students to be thoughtful and courteous to other contestants.

PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE anywhere on campus.

How does this tournament work anyway?

There are two levels of debate: novice for beginners and varsity for the experienced students. Within each category, a debater is assigned to represent the affirmative or negative side of the debate topic. Two debaters are then assigned to rooms along with one judge in preliminary rounds, and more in later rounds. The first debate, lasting approximately forty minutes constitutes Round I. After Round II, teams are matched based on their win-loss records. The final rounds work best with three judges, All undefeated teams in each category receive awards as do teams who have lost only one debate to an undefeated team. (Unfortunately, we have no awards for the judges who stay.)

To save space and time, Lincoln-Douglas debates are often "double-flighted," that is, two debates are assigned to a single room. Thus, you may be judging two L-D debates during one round which will take about an hour and a half. While the first two opponents are debating, the second two must wait outside the room. Before the second debate begins, the first debaters must leave. Thus, only one set of L-D competitors may be in the room at one time. Only judges and contestants in a particular debate may take notes/flowsheets.

Where do I start?

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

1. Paper and pencil/pen to help you keep track of arguments.
2. A digital watch with stopwatch function (just kidding--this is useful, but optional.)
3. A book, knitting, newspaper, etc. to fill any waiting time. Waiting time is the result of many tournament variables which cause delays, including lost students, lost judges, lost ballots, and insufficient number of judges.

IN THE JUDGES' ROOM:

1. REGISTER with the judges' chairperson. Registration involves telling your name and the name of the school you represent.
2. Help yourself to refreshments.

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3. Get a map of the school. Learn where the bathrooms are.
4. When the tournament begins, you will be called by name to judge. When you hear your name, pick up your ballot from the judging desk. If there is more than one judge in your room, you should wait until all three (3) judges are together to go to the room.
5. IF timekeepers are available, ask for one at the judges' desk to accompany you.

JUDGING: MOST IMPORTANT-AS POSSIBLE, PLEASE TAKE NOTES.

1. DEBATERS ARE ASSIGNED the side they debate in each round. The structure of the debate demands that the affirmative and negative speakers alternate. Be sure to fill in each debater's name in the appropriate blank on the ballot.
2. DO NOT ALLOW anyone to interrupt or otherwise rattle a speaker. If severe distractions occur, please take these into account when evaluating the speaker's performance.
3. TIMEKEEPERS will be assigned to as many room as possible. They will time each speech, indicating to the speaker, usually with hand signals, how much time remains for his/her speech. The timer should not call time, nor interrupt the overtime speaker.

COMPLETING THE ROUND

1. CHOOSE A WINNER. Only one debater may win, so one debater must lose. There can be no ties. Be sure to fill in both the number and the side of the winning debater. It is also helpful if you complete the speaker evaluation boxes. These evaluations are merely informational for students.
2. DO NOT DISCUSS your rankings with anyone. If more than one judge is in the room, arrive at your decision independently; tournament officials will tabulate the ballots.
3. DO NOT TELL ANY DEBATER how s/he ranked in a round. Do not give any comment to any contestants even though they may ask for them. Should you discover that you have been assigned a round where a student is known to you, return to the judging room for reassignment.
4. SIGN YOUR BALLOT AND RETURN IT IMMEDIATELY IN PERSON to the judges' room. When you return from a judging assignment, please let the chairperson know if you are able to judge another round.
5. COMMENTS ON BALLOTS: It is very important for students to get feedback from you about their performances if they are to improve as speakers. Constructive comments, indicating the students' strengths and weaknesses, make speech tournaments an authentic educational experience for these students who have worked so hard. Debaters that lose, in particular, want to know the judges' reasons for their decision.

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What are the basics of Lincoln-Douglas debate?

THE TOPIC: The topic changes through the year. The current topic is :

THE STRUCTURE:

Lincoln-Douglas (L-D) differs greatly from team debate in its style, format, rules, voting issues and ballots. Unlike team debate, L-D has an individual student debating another.

TIME: Although the lengths of the various speeches are quite varied, each student has an equal amount of time to persuade the judge:

Affirmative constructive	6 minutes
Cross-examination by Negative	3 minutes
Negative constructive	7 minutes
Cross-examination by Affirmative	3 minutes
Affirmative rebuttal	4 minutes
Negative rebuttal	6 minutes
Affirmative rebuttal	3 minutes

PREPARATION TIME: In addition to the time limits given, each debater has an additional four (4) minutes to use for preparation between speeches. This time is cumulative and must be tracked throughout the debate. Preparation time in excess of the 4 allotted minutes must be deducted from speech time. Judges or timekeepers should notify debaters of preparation time used and/or remaining.

Please see attached for more specific guidelines on timing and signals.

THE APPROACH:

Unlike team debaters who must develop a workable plan to solve a problem, L-D debaters must convince the judge that the position on the resolution they uphold is better/ more important/ more meaningful than the position their opponent s uphold. More specifically, LD debaters prove the right or wrong of a question; they discuss what, in the conflict, the parties ought to do. In support of their argumentations on a given side, the speakers will show how their side of the resolution best leads to the strengthening of a given value in our society. And, since, it is difficult to know when we have achieved, for example, the value of dignity, the speaker may choose to offer a VOTING CRITERIA, which is a means by which we know the value has been achieved. This is optional.

SPEAKER'S DUTIES

A. BOTH SPEAKERS

1. **Burden of clash:** Each speaker must respond to his opponent's position/ assertions/ assumptions.
2. **Evidence:** In L-D, the QUALITY of examples and other information is important, rather than the quantity of statistic, comparison of dates, or methodology of study. Students should use evidence, but may rely on common knowledge, historical examples or philosophical works as well as the empirical evidence.
3. **Sources:** Any evidence that is used must be from a nationally published source. Students should cite the source in their speech.
4. **Sportsmanship:** ONLY THOSE ARGUMENTS/ISSUES RAISED IN THE CONSTRUCTIVE SPEECHES MAY BE MENTIONED IN REBUTTALS. New evidence, however, may be used to support the already established arguments. Courteous behavior is mandatory.

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- B. **AFFIRMATIVE DUTIES:** In the constructive speech, the Affirmative must present arguments and evidence upholding the resolution. Most affirmatives will mention a "core" or "paramount" value, but this is not mandatory. The nature of the topic is what makes L-D "value" debate.
- C. **NEGATIVE DUTIES:** In the constructive speech, the Negative may:
1. simply negate the Affirmative position,
 3. offer a value and case counter to the Affirmative value OR
 4. offer a combination of (1) and (2).

CONSIDERATIONS FOR JUDGING:

A. JUDGES' OBJECTIVITY:

- Remember that the debaters have no choice about the side of the resolution they must uphold.
- Listen closely to all arguments, issues and evidence
- Consider only those issues/ arguments presented by the debaters. Do not base your decision on your personal opinions, feelings, or knowledge of the topic.
- Make your judging decision independently. **DO NOT DISCUSS YOUR DECISION WITH THE DEBATERS, OBSERVERS OR OTHER JUDGES PRIOR TO HANDING IN YOUR BALLOT. MAKE NO ORAL CRITIQUE OF DEBATERS AT ANY TIME.**

B. VOTING ISSUES: Since neither debater can absolutely prove one value is better than another, the decision should go to the debater who best upholds his/her side of the resolution through effective analysis, evidence, delivery, reasoning and refutation.

C. STUDENT BEHAVIOR: All students are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship and courteous behavior, Noises during an opponent's speech, rudeness during cross-examination, inappropriate language and any other behavior which may be taken as discourteous and unsportsman-like should be noted on the ballot and taken into account when choosing a winner.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I've been waiting 25 minutes and still have not been called to judge. What's going on?

Gee, only 25 minutes? Actually, we do the best we can to avoid long waits for judges, but large events and a procedure which requires a particular distribution of judges can take time. One complication is that judges are not assigned to judge teams they have judged in earlier rounds in the tournament. Make sure you report to the desk each time you return a ballot and let them know you are able to continue judging. If the time is really excessive, you may want to double-check that your card has not been misplaced.

What do I do if I know one of the contestants in the room I'm assigned to judge?

Except in extreme circumstances, it would make the tournament run more efficiently if you would simply stay and judge. We are aware when we send you out that you may be judging contestants from your own school. Simply be as objective as possible. If, however, the contestant is a very close family friend, you may want to come back to the desk and be reassigned. If the contestant in your assigned room is your own child, you definitely must be reassigned.

I'm ready to start the round and one debater hasn't shown up. Can I go home now?

The league operates on a fifteen minute forfeit rule. Still, at that fifteen minutes, it would be helpful if you would send a student to the tab room to find out if the other team has dropped. Even if a debater drops, be sure to write the decision on the ballot, then return to the judging room with your ballot.

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What if I disagree with one debater or the other?

Try to remain objective. The basic rule is to "let the debaters debate the debate." By keeping track of all the arguments, you can base your decision on the clash of the debaters, rather than on your own arguments which may not have been mentioned by the debaters.

Are you sure I can't give a tie? They were all so good.

Yes. We're sure.

What do I do if one of the speakers exceeds the time limit?

Do not stop nor interrupt the contestant. Overtime is deducted from the offending debater's preparation time. However, after a short "grace" period, please do not consider arguments made after time has elapsed. (A nice grace period is a sentence or two after the signal has been given.)

What if a speaker is rude to another speaker?

Let the student know on the evaluation sheet or through your decision. We want to encourage courtesy, particularly in debate. Only when students lose due to their rudeness will they begin to control themselves. If this action seems unsatisfactory, make a note of the student's code, come to the judge's desk after the round and ask to speak to the student's speech coach.

How about food?

(I'd love some, but I'm working on the tournament.) All judges will be given lunch/dinner, gratis.

I think I'm gonna love this. When can I come back?

If you enjoy your judging experience, we have many other tournaments and many other events, including formal debate and student congress. See us for this year's calendar.