

Team Debate/Policy Debate

Team debate is a form of speech competition in which teams of two advocate for and against a resolution that typically calls for policy change by the United States federal government. It is also referred to as **cross-examination debate** (sometimes shortened to Cross-X, CX, or C-X) because of the 3-minute questioning period following each constructive speech. Affirmative teams generally present a *plan* as a proposal for implementation of the resolution. The negative will generally prove that it would be better not to do the plan or that the opportunity costs to the plan are so great that it should not be implemented.

Team Debate: In team debate, there will be two teams. Each team consists of two debaters (designated 1st and 2nd Affirmative and 1st and 2nd Negative). These debaters take turns speaking. Each team must make persuasive presentations which are logical and appealing. Generally, the role of the affirmative team is to defend the changes in the “status quo” (present conditions) that are presented in the resolution. The negative team must create a reasonable doubt concerning the affirmative position. Cross examination is used only to clarify the issues and evidence.

The **Affirmative Team** has the following responsibilities:

1. Show reason for change (problem).
2. Show seriousness of the problem (significance).
3. Show why present system can't solve the problem (inherency).
4. Show that their plan will solve the problems (solvency).
5. Give reasonable definitions to pertinent terms.
6. Present a plan, including administration, finance, mandate and enforcement.
7. Prove that the plan works.

First affirmative rebuttal will be used to narrow the issues and respond to the negative attacks.

Second affirmative rebuttal is to isolate key issues in the debate and summarize the affirmative position.

The **Negative Team** has the following responsibilities:

1. To create a reasonable doubt concerning the affirmative position.
2. To present “minor repairs” which do not cause a structural change in the present system.
3. To present disadvantages which are unique to the Affirmative plan and contain these elements:
 - specific part of the Affirmative plan which caused the disadvantage
 - link between the Affirmative plan and the disadvantage
 - harm that would be created by the disadvantage

Time Allocations for Team Debate:

1st Affirmative Constructive 6 minutes

2nd Negative Cross-X 3 minutes

1st Negative Constructive 6 minutes

1st Affirmative Cross-X 3 minutes

2nd Affirmative Constructive 6 minutes

1st Negative Cross-X 3 minutes

2nd Negative Constructive 6 minutes

2nd Affirmative Cross-X 3 minutes

1st Negative Rebuttal 3 minutes

1st Affirmative Rebuttal 3 minutes

2nd Negative Rebuttal 3 minutes

2nd Affirmative Rebuttal 3 minutes

Five (5) minutes TOTAL preparation time is allowed for each team.

Team debate guidelines and responsibilities

"Resolved: *The United States Federal Government should support/endorse/enforce a plan to ensure reduced-affordable Mental Health services are made accessible to members of the BIPOC community.*

- When you argue the affirmative (aff.) side, you are agreeing (affirming) with the resolution.
 - Your research should find all the arguments that support your case and all likely arguments the negatives may use to counter.
- When you argue the negative (neg.) side, you are denying the resolution is true or correct.
 - Your research should include all the arguments that show the problems that will arise should we adopt the resolution as well as alternatives to the resolution.
- Each debate team chooses one speaker to be 1st affirmative/ negative and one speaker to be 2nd affirmative/negative. These labels and the debate format determine when you speak.
- The debate format lays out which speaker speaks when.
- It is reasonable and acceptable that each debater is recording questions and arguments for his/her portion while others are speaking. Think of it as taking notes in a class.
- **1st Affirmative Constructive-6 minutes:** Many teams will write out the entire 1st affirmative; since it is important that both members argue from the same point of view. Writing out the 1st affirmative often makes the case stronger.
- Get the audience's attention using a quote, anecdote, etc.
- State the resolution and briefly explain why it is important

- Define the terms in the resolution; you may quote a dictionary or other authoritative source.
 - Substantially
 - Social services
 - Poverty
- State each of your contentions (arguments, beliefs) supported with reason, logic and evidence.
- Conclude effectively with summary

2nd Negative Cross X of the Affirmative – 3 minutes

- You ask questions of the affirmative team that you have jotted down during their first speech. Have a strategy or at the very least a direction to your questioning.
- You may ask as many questions as you like, but the timer will stop the process at three minutes.

1st Negative Constructive – 6 minutes

- Present a good introduction that attracts the audience's attention and builds interest in the topic
- state each of your contentions supported with reason, logic and evidence
- State the negative's observations about the value and reasonableness of the affirmative's position; support with reason and evidence
- Attack and question the Affirmative's Contentions/evidence
- Conclude effectively

1st Affirmative Cross X of the Negative-3 minutes

- Ask questions that you jotted down during the negative's construction of their case; have a strategy or at the very least a direction to your questioning.

- You may ask as many questions as you like, but the timer will stop the process at three minutes.

2nd Affirmative Constructive – 6 minutes

- Clearly state each of your contentions; you may issue additional contentions; support with reason and evidence
- Respond to Negative arguments/attacks
- Conclude effectively

1st Negative Cross X of the Affirmative– 3 minutes

- Ask questions you have of the second affirmative's arguments– have a strategy or at the very least a direction to your questioning
- You may ask as many questions as you like, but the timer will stop the process at three minutes.

2nd Negative Constructive – 6 minutes

- Clearly state the negative's observations about and against the topic; the second neg. can introduce additional observations
- Support with reason and evidence
- Attack and question the Affirmative's Contentions/evidence
- Conclude effectively

2nd Affirmative Cross X-3 minutes

- Ask questions about the negative's last set of arguments; have a strategy or at the very least a direction to your questioning.

Rebuttal Speeches – no new arguments – new evidence and analysis are ok

1st Negative Rebuttal – 3 minutes

- Rebuild the neg. case by summarizing how the neg. position is superior and the aff. has not carried the burden-of-proof
- Conclude effectively

1st Affirmative Rebuttal - 3 minutes

- Respond to the neg. arguments, rebuild the aff. case and contentions; extend arguments and give additional support for them
- Conclude effectively

2nd Negative Rebuttal - 3 minutes

- Respond to latest aff. arguments
- Make your final case to the audience that the neg. position is superior to the aff.
- Try and convince the audience the aff. has failed to carry the burden of proof
- Summarize the debate and conclude effectively and ask for the audience to agree with the neg. position

2nd Affirmative Rebuttal – 3 minutes

- Respond to final neg. arguments
- Summarize the debate and show the audience how the aff. position is superior and the aff. has carried the burden of proof
- Conclude effectively.