

The Ohio Speech & Debate Association Debate Judges' Manual

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Lincoln-Douglas debate (LD) is an individual debate where the affirmative supports the resolution and the negative opposes it. The resolution, which changes every two months, is always a question of value. The debaters will try to show why their position supports the more important, fundamental principles inherent in their position and why that position is superior to the opponent's.

Generally, each debater will present a case that includes: a value, criterion, definitions, and contentions. A value is a universally-held principle that the debater advocates in order to affirm or negate the resolution, for example: justice. A criterion is the standard by which the debater achieves the value that he/she presents. It is a measuring stick. For example: How is the value of justice achieved? This is done by ensuring equality before the law. Definitions may be given by the affirmative to clarify terms in the resolution that are ambiguous. Not every word in the resolution must be defined. Sometimes the negative will offer a counter-definition because they disagree with the affirmative's interpretation. Contentions, also called areas of analysis / justifications / levels of argumentation, are the reasons the debater gives in support of the position presented.

Speeches

Affirmative Constructive	(AC)	6 minutes
Cross-Ex by Negative		3 minutes
Negative Constructive	(NC)	7 minutes
Cross-Ex by Affirmative		3 minutes
First Affirmative Rebuttal	(1AR)	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	(NR)	6 minutes
Second Affirmative Rebuttal	(2AR)	3 minutes

Prep Time (for each debater) 4 minutes

While many debaters will use their own timers, it is important that you are the official timekeeper and must keep track of time yourself.

Deciding the Winner

The decision should be based on the debater who is the most persuasive and does the better debating. Ideally, this is done with a balance of relevant arguments and persuasive speaking. Some criteria that could be considered are whether the argumentation is supported with logic and reasoning, is there a relationship between the value and the argumentation, which debater is better at attacking their opponent's case while defending their own, which debater is more persuasive/clear/professional.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate - Additional Items to consider:

- *An unfair interpretation.* If the interpretation is disputed by the negative, it shall rest with the judge whether or not the affirmative is supporting a tenable position.
- *Discourtesy toward opponents.* Discourtesy should be penalized according to the seriousness of the offense.
- *Falsification of evidence.* If a competitor falsifies evidence in support of a point, it shall lose the point; and if the falsification is obviously deliberate, the judge shall impose an additional penalty according to the seriousness of the falsification.
- *Misconstruing an opponent's arguments.* A speaker who misconstrues an argument unintentionally should not be penalized more than the time wasted. If it is intentional, the competitor should in addition forfeit the argument.
- *Introducing new arguments into rebuttal.* The judges shall disregard new arguments introduced in rebuttal. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the answering of arguments introduced by opponents.
- *Speaking overtime.* When a speaker's time is up, the judge shall disregard anything beyond a closing statement.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate Evidence Requests:

Debaters who cite evidence during each round must be able to provide the evidence promptly upon request. The procedure is as follows:

- a.) The debater making the evidence request must formally do so between speeches and must use their prep time to analyze the evidence provided.
- b.) The debater providing evidence is entitled to find and produce it off the clock (no prep time used), within a reasonable amount of time, as determined by the judge's discretion.
- c.) If the time used to produce the evidence becomes excessive as determined by the judge's discretion, the judge may announce that prep time is beginning on the debater searching for the evidence until it is produced.
- d.) While the debater satisfying the evidence request is searching their files to find the evidence, no debater is permitted to be visibly preparing for future speeches. All writing utensils must be down, and any notes regarding the round must not be viewed during this time. (Computers should be closed and paper flows should be turned over.)
- e.) When the evidence is produced, the requesting debater's prep time should begin immediately and all debaters may use this prep time as usual, consulting computers and written notes.
- f.) The requesting debater should return the evidence when they conclude that set of prep time.
- g.) If a debater becomes excessive in their evidence requests during a round, as determined by the judge's discretion, the judge may announce that the requesting debater's prep time will be used while their opponent searches for the evidence.