

## Lesson #1

**Academic Policy Debate**—a highly-structured and strictly rule-governed competition that is comprised of a series of arguments between two two-person teams. One team debates in favor of making a policy change and the other team opposes the change.

**Affirmative Team**—the team that says “yes” to change in support of the resolution; must uphold the resolution

**Claim**—An assertion – what you want to convince people to hold as true

**Clash**—What happens when debaters make arguments that directly refute one another.

**Constructive Speech**—the first four major speeches delivered by each of the four competitors in which they “construct” their major arguments in the debate.

**Cross Examination**— the question and answer period each competitor undergoes by a member of the opposing team after each constructive speech.

**Debate**—a series of opposing arguments that take place between individuals (or groups of individuals) to arrive, ideally, at the best possible solution to a problem.

**Flow**—a way of taking notes during a debate that keeps your arguments and your opponents’ counter-arguments together in a visual framework.

**Formal Debate** – is two opposing sides disagreeing on a given topic within a format to an audience.

**Impact**—The outcome of an argument, or why it matters.

**Negative Team**— team that opposes the affirmative team and/or the resolution. This team says making a change is not necessary because things are fine the way they are or the affirmative plan does not uphold the resolution.

**Proof**—Expert testimony, statistical data, court rulings, or other credible sources of evidence that support the arguments you are making.

**Policy**—a plan of action developed for and adopted by a political or social group. A “policy” can be one rule in a classroom, such as “Raise your hand before talking”, or a “policy” can be many rules and require entire government agencies to implement, such as the United States government providing healthcare to disabled individuals.

**Rebuttal**—the final four speeches of a debate delivered by each of the four competitors in which they analyze the arguments constructed at the beginning of the debate and attempt to persuade the judge that their arguments are the best. New *evidence or proof* may be read during this phase of the debate, but new *arguments* are prohibited due to fairness.

**Resolution**—firmly committed. Within policy debate, the affirmative team is firmly committed *to make a change*. (Think about resolutions you made on New Year’s Eve.)

**Signposting**- brief statement that lets everyone know what argument you will be addressing.

**Status Quo**— current state of things. The way things are right now.

**Tag**—a summary of your claim (usually 3-5 words).

**Warrant**—Reasoning that links the evidence to the claim of an argument.

## A-Z

### A

**Academic Policy Debate:** a highly-structured and strictly rule-governed competition that is comprised of a series of arguments between two two-person teams. One team debates in favor of making a policy change and the other team opposes the change.

**Addendum:** The concluding plank of the affirmative team's plan which adds further provisions that may be necessary to complete the plan's implementation. For example, it might provide for the repeal of conflicting legislation, indicate the intent of the plan, and provide other details that could help make the plan comprehensive and understandable.

**Add-on:** an additional affirmative advantage that teams may read in the 2AC. Add-ons are usually very short – two cards. The first card is usually a giant impact card and the second card is a card that explains how the affirmative avoids the impact.

**Advantages:** The benefits or gains that the affirmative team claims will result from adopting its plan or solving the harms in the status quo. These advantages must be shown to outweigh the disadvantages. For example, affirmatives could claim that increasing the number of troops protects us from the harms of declining military readiness.

**Add-on advantage:** a new advantage presented by the affirmative in 2AC

**Advocate:** To advocate something simply means to support it with an argument. For example, you may advocate going to the mall by making arguments in favor of going there.

**Affirmative:** the team that supports the resolution.

**Affirmative Case:** everything that is read during the entire first affirmative constructive, it usually includes the five stock issues. The part of the affirmative position that demonstrates that there is a need for change because there is a serious problem (need) that the present system cannot solve (inherency) but which is nonetheless, solvable (solvency).

**Affirmative Plan:** the sentence (or two) within the first affirmative speech says exactly what you are doing to solve the problem. The rest of what you read in your case is centered around this statement(s). The policy action advocated by the affirmative. Usually indicates an agent to take the action, the specification of that action, financing details, and other elements selected by the affirmative team.

**Affirmative Takeout:** a challenge to the negative's link, impact, or empirical evidence related to a disadvantage.

**Affirmative Team:** the team that says "yes" to change by debating in support of the resolution.

**Agency:** In this aspect of the plan, the affirmative team specifies who will be responsible for administering its plan. This may include identifying who will enact the plan and/or who will do the work of the plan. The affirmative must provide the essential details of the agency that will put its plan into effect.

**Agent of the resolution (Agency or Agent of Change):** That power called for by the resolution to carry out resolutorial action.

**Agent-Specification:** a theory argument that says the affirmative must specify which branch of the federal government – legislative, executive, or judicial -- is responsible for initiating/financing the plan.

**Alternate causality:** an argument that says that there is another cause of the harm that the affirmative seeks to solve for. For example, if the affirmative says that they save the economy by reducing taxes, the negative may say they do not solve because a housing crash will destroy the economy regardless.

**Alternate justification:** popularly referenced as "A-J," is derived from the theory of hypotesting. A-J is based on the idea that as long as the affirmative proves one example of the resolution to be true through one affirmative case, they prove the resolution to be true. A-J supporters do not think that the affirmative has to defend their original case, but that they can jettison it in favor of another one if the first one is proven undesirable by the negative.

**A Priori:** Literally, prior to. Arguments that are to be evaluated before anything else in the debate. An argument that indicates a particular issue should be resolved before all others. Frequently used to argue that procedural concerns, such as topicality, should be considered before substantive issues, such as advantages.

**Argument:** Basically, an argument is a claim – an assertion – that is backed up by a warrant or warrants – reasons. There are many different types of arguments in debate that are discussed throughout this volume and in this vocabulary section.

**To “Go For” an Argument:** Carry through a particular argument to the end of the debate round.

## Defensive Arguments

**Offensive Arguments:** Reasons to vote for you. They are impacts that you are capturing. Advantages are offense for affirmative teams, disadvantages are offense for negatives. If the affirmative can turn a disadvantage, it becomes offense for the affirmative.

**Argumentation:** Giving reason that justifies acts, beliefs, attitudes and values.

**Argumentation:** (Speaker Criteria) Refutation and rebuttal - challenging opponents' points by showing flaws or weaknesses in their arguments or overcoming opponents' arguments by re-explaining or rebuilding own arguments. A well-argued presentation includes tearing down a case by refuting evidence with stronger, more credible and current evidence as well as by challenging the opponents' reasoning with stronger, clearer, more logical reasoning using direct refutation, linking arguments, and showing significance of argument.

**Assertion:** A claim offered without supporting evidence or reasoning.

**Assumption:** Assumptions are arguments you take for granted when constructing your argument that are not explicit. Ex: in arguing that the \*federal government\* should increase service you are arguably generally assuming that the federal government should, and can, do good things. These assumptions are often attacked by the other side, usually in the form of a kritik.

**Attitudinal inherency:** This type of inherency identifies an unwillingness of those in power in the present system to take corrective measures to solve the harm cited by the affirmative. Identifies the attitude that opposes the adoption of the plan in the status quo. Ex: a piece of evidence that says Congress opposes the plan would demonstrate attitudinal inherency. Attitudinal inherency argues that there is some attitude that prevents their plan from being adopted. Ex: affirmatives may argue that Rumsfeld's attitude that money is better spent on military technology is an attitude that undermines efforts to increase the number of persons serving in the military.

**Audience:** Those who are physically present during the debate.

## B

**Backflowing:** After you give a speech you should give your partner a copy of your flow sheet so that he or she can fill in your arguments so that you have a flow of your own arguments. The 1NC & 2AC should both be back-flowed.

**Ballot:** The ballot is what the judge fills out at the end of the debate. The ballot indicates the winner and loser, speaker points for each time, and a ranking of the speakers in the debate in order from 1 to 4. Many judges will write freestyle comments on the ballot.

**Best definition:** The “best definition” is the definition the debaters argue the judge should accept in a topicality debate.

**Block:** is a single page of a file that includes a heading, tag, citation, and evidence. A “block” is simply a list of arguments constructed on a sheet of paper that contain multiple arguments in support of an overall claim. This should not be confused with the negative block. There is often more than one tag, cite and piece of evidence under a single heading. This is called a “block” because it blocks the opponents' arguments.

**Blow up:** Negative will take one argument or issue from 1NC and expand on it for many, many minutes in 2NC.

**Break:** Most tournaments have preliminary debates and elimination rounds. If you win enough preliminary debates, you will break to elimination rounds. Each tournament participant will have the same number of preliminary rounds, but only a given number will advance to the elimination rounds.

**Brief:** A prepared page with evidence and arguments already structured. A brief is a block.

**Bright-line:** Bright-line arguments most often arise in the context of topicality debates. Usually it is the negative team arguing that a bright-line – a clear division – of interpretations between conflicting meanings of a term must be established and that their interpretation creates the best bright-line. For example, on the national service topic, negatives may argue that interpreting a “person” to be a “human being” creates a bright line that excludes all non-human animals and inanimate objects.

**Brink:** Claims the present system is very close to the point of danger AND one more plan like the affirmative's, would push the present system over the brink, causing a negative side effect, or *impact*, to happen. The brink is the point at which a disadvantage actually begins to happen.

This concept explains why a disadvantage impact will happen if the plan is passed but is not happening now, because we are “at the brink” but not “over the brink” of this event actually taking place. A “brink” is part of a disadvantage. Negative teams will say that we are on the brink of some catastrophe now and the affirmative plan will push us over the edge. For example, they may say that the economy is on the brink of collapse and that by hurting the economy the affirmative will trigger an economic collapse - Or - the status quo economy is okay, but vulnerable, and the negative impact of the plan on the economy will trigger an economic decline.

**Burden of Proof:** The responsibility a debater has of proving an argument he offers in a complete fashion. The obligation of the affirmative, in order to overcome presumption, to give good and sufficient reasons for affirming the resolution. The burden of proof identifies whose responsibility it is to prove various arguments. The team advancing the argument is always the one responsible to prove various parts. For example, if the negative team presents a disadvantage, it is their responsibility to prove all parts of the disadvantage.

**Burden of Rebuttal:** The burden of refuting issues offered by opponents. The obligation of the negative to refute at least one of the stock issues of the affirmative, otherwise the affirmative will prevail.

**Burden of Rejoinder:** The obligation to refute or respond to opposing arguments. It applies to both the affirmative and the negative. The burden of rejoinder says that once a team advances an argument that it is the burden of the other team to respond to it. If the team doesn't respond to it, it is considered to be won by the team that is advancing the argument.

### C

**Canned:** A canned speech is a speech that is prepared entirely before the start of the debate. 1ACs are entirely canned and 1NCs are mostly canned.

**Card:** A piece of evidence used to prove an argument. A card is simply a quote that teams read in a debate. These quotes are called cards because debaters used to bring their quotes to tournaments on index cards.

**Case:** The complete argument for the resolution offered in the 1AC. The case loosely refers to the contents of the First Affirmative Constructive (1AC). This speech outlines the affirmatives case – its support – for its plan. The case includes the affirmatives inherency, harms, significance, and solvency.

**Comparative Advantages Analysis Affirmative:** A case in which the affirmative team accepts the goals of the status quo and argues that its plan offers a better way to attain these goals and that its plan will produce greater advantages than the status quo. The four essential features of the comparative advantages case are 1) identify the goals of the status quo, 2) integrate the plan with the goals, 3) provide significant advantages directly linked to the plan, and 4) prove the advantages are comparative.

**Comparative advantage case:** A type of affirmative case that argues that the status quo isn't necessarily harmful but that things would be better with the plan.

**Criteria Affirmative:** A case which the affirmative team selects after they have concluded, from an examination of the problem, that the status quo is inherently incapable of attaining an important goal of the status quo and that this failure causes significant harm. Here, criteria refers simply to the standard basis on which a decision is to be made. To justify this case, they need to demonstrate that: 1) the goal cited by the affirmative team is, in fact, a significant goal of the status quo; 2) the status quo is inherently incapable of meeting this goal; and 3) significant harms result from the inability of the status quo to meet the goal. 4) The affirmative team must also justify the criteria by which the attainment of the goal can be judged. The essential elements of the criteria affirmative are the justification or goal/criteria and need, the plan, and advantages.

**Case attack:** Negatives can initiate a variety of arguments to attack the affirmative. These include attacks on the affirmatives inherency, harms, significance, and solvency. Any arguments that directly refute claims made in the 1AC are case attacks.

**Case list:** A case list is simply a list of arguments that various teams and schools make during debates. Your squad can keep its own case list, or you can participate in shared case list projects such as the one at Planet Debate.

**Case turn:** A case turn is can either be a solvency turn or an impact turn against the 1AC.

**Categorical Deduction:** An argument stating that all members of a category have certain characteristics, placing something or someone within that category, and thus claiming that it must have those characteristics.

**Circumvention:** A negative argument proving that the plan will not solve the problem. People are opposed to the plan (motivation), they will find a way to “get around” the plan (mechanism), and this will stop the plan from being effective (impact).

**Cite/Citation:** the source the evidence comes from , usually includes author's name, source, title (if different from source), date, and page number or URL, the year, and the date. A citation must be sufficient to allow someone to locate that evidence again.

**Claim:** an argument. A claim is simply an assertion made by another team. They may claim, for example, that an economic decline will trigger a war.

**Clash:** what happens when debaters make arguments that directly refute one another. Actively attacking and refuting positions of the opposing team.

**Common person:** The common person is a reference to a topicality standard that says that the definition that the judge should accept is the definition that a common person would likely accept.

**Communication:** (Speaker Criteria) Conversational quality - communicating so as to sound spontaneous no matter how many times it has been rehearsed. One facet of a well communicated speech is the use of verbal techniques which include changes in a speaker's rate, pitch, and volume that give the voice variety and expressiveness. Effective communication is also characterized by proper pronunciation and enunciation. The second facet of communication is the use of non-verbal techniques. This is communication that occurs as a result of appearance, posture, gestures, eye contact, facial expressions, and other non-linguistic factors.

**Competition:** A burden of the negative counter-plan. The counter-plan competes if it is a reasonable substitute for the affirmative, so in voting for the counter-plan, the judge would be rejecting the affirmative plan. A counter-plan is competitive if it would be better to adopt just the counter-plan rather than the affirmative plan and the counter-plan. The negative must prove that the counter-plan is better than the affirmative plan or a combination of the plan and all or part of the counter-plan.

**Concession or Concede:** to yield (agree) to your opponents' argument, sometimes without intending to do so.

**Conditional:** Debaters stipulate that their argument is "conditional" in that they can discard or drop that argument or issue whenever they wish or when certain conditions are met.

**Conditionality:** Any argument can be conditional – a team will only choose to advance it under a given condition. Most often, teams will advance arguments conditionally when they reserve the right to advocate them if they are losing them. Most often it is counter-plans that are conditional – negatives reserve the right to stop advocating them if they are proven undesirable by the affirmative. Negatives will argue that they can always go back to defending the status quo rather than their counter-plan or kritik alternative.

**Constructive speeches:** the first four major speeches delivered by each of the four competitors in which they "construct", build and elaborate their major arguments, issues and advocacy in the debate.

**Constructive:** There are eight speeches in the debate. There are four constructive speeches and four rebuttals. Each construct is 8 minutes long.

**Contention:** A major point in the debate. Affirmative cases are often built of such contentions. First affirmative constructive speeches (1ACs) are often organized into contentions. Affirmatives often present a harms contention, an inherency contention, and a solvency contention. Sometimes affirmatives will not use the word "observation" instead of "contention".

**Context:** is about whether or not the quote presented in the debate actually reflects the proper context of the article that it is taken from. An important context question is would the author of the original piece support the use of the quote in the way the debaters have used it.

1. The relationship of the evidence read in the debate to the original source material. Evidence must be consistent with the meaning of the evidence as it is written in the original source.
2. A standard for evaluating topicality arguments that is used to determine if the definition offered in the debate is consistent with the meaning of the term in relationship to authors who write about the subject matter of the topic, or to determine if the definition offered in the debate is consistent with the meaning of the term in relationship to other terms in the resolution.

**Context Challenge:** A context challenge is an argument made in the debate that says that the debaters are not using the quote that they have presented in its appropriate context. Context challenges are rare because they are considered a question of ethics.

**Contradiction:** Two arguments are incompatible with each other, or there is a perceived conceptual tension between two ideas.

**Co-option:** The influence of outside parties hampering an agency's efforts to carry out its instructions.

**Cost-Benefit Analysis:** is real-world terminology for the language of net-benefits. Comparing the benefits and costs of each side, weighing them, and selecting the side that has the greatest benefit with the least cost. Affirmatives have to prove that their plan is cost beneficial (net desirable in light of the disadvantages) and negatives have to prove it is not cost-beneficial (net undesirable in light of the advantages).

**Counter-interpretation:** In topicality debates, negative teams will offer interpretations of particular word(s) and then say the affirmative's plan doesn't fit within the meaning of those words. Affirmative teams will offer counter-interpretations of the words and then explain that their plan meets their counter-interpretation.

**Counter-plan:** An alternative to the affirmative's plan proposed/advanced by the negative team. The negative team's "better solution" to the affirmative plan. A counter-plan is like a "little affirmative case" and should have a plan and solvency as well as be competitive with the affirmative plan. The most essential defining element of a counter-plan is that it is competitive – the negative must prove that the counter-plan is better than the affirmative plan or a combination of the plan and all or part of the counter-plan. Some types of counter-plans:

**Agent Counter-plans:** A counter-plan that argues that the plan you are implementing through one agent of change, should instead be implemented by another agent of change.

**Conditional Counter-plan:** A plan tentatively presented by a negative team but one that can be dropped if undesirable without forfeiture of the debate.

**Counter-plan advantages:** Benefits that result from the adoption of the counter-plan.

**Counter-plan non-topicality:** The condition of a counter-plan of being outside the resolution lest it become further justification of the resolution. Since the obligation of the negative is to "negate" the topic being debated, the negative should not propose a topical counter-plan.

**Delay Counterplan:** A delay counter-plan is a counter-plan that supports doing the affirmative plan, but not until after some delay. For example, the negative may counter-plan to do the affirmative plan after the next election so as to not have it impact the election.

**Functional competition:** Functional competition is a form of counter-plan competition that establishes that the counter-plan must actually do a different thing than the affirmative plan. This is contrasted with textual competition

**Generic Counter-plan:** A counter-plan that can be prepared in advance to be used against many affirmative cases. For example, most affirmatives use Congress as their agent, so the "Congress Counterplan" is a generic counterplan.

**Hypothetical Counter-plan:** See *conditional counter-plan*.

**States Counter-plan:** A counter-plan that uses states to enact the plan.

**Status of the Counter-plan:** The status of the counter-plan refers to whether or not the negative is going to go for the counter-plan in the 2NR or the conditions under which the negative can kick the counter-plan. If the negative will not commit to going for the counter-plan in the 2NR, they negative will claim that the counter-plan is either conditional or dispositional.

**Topical Counter-plan:** A topical counter-plan is a counter-plan that is topical. For example, a counter-plan that simply increases public health assistance to Africa in a different way than the affirmative does is a topical counter-plan.

**Uniqueness Counter-plan:** A uniqueness counter-plan is a counter-plan that establishes the uniqueness for a negative argument. For example, if the affirmative says a disadvantage is non-unique because money is going to be spent in the status quo, the negative can counter-plan to stop current spending. This way the only spending that will result is the affirmative's spending.

**Counter-standard:** A counter-standard is an opposing topicality standard. For example, the negative may argue that the judge should accept the most limiting definition of a word, but the affirmative may argue that the judge should accept any reasonable definition that is not unlimited.

**Counter-warrant:** A counter-warrant is a counter-example for the resolution. A counter-warrant is an argument that says that a given example proves the resolution false. For example, if the affirmative says AmeriCorps is good, the negative's counter-warrant could be that the Armed Forces are bad. Counter-warrants do not directly respond to the affirmative case, but are arguments against the resolution in general. Since current policy debate is focused on the specific plan advanced by the affirmative, counter-warrants are no longer run. Often, you will hear the term "counter-warrants" used in theory debates. Teams will say something like, "Your theory argument justifies counter-warrants." Since most debate theorists do not believe that counter-warrants are legitimate, they are using counter-warrants to make an argument against your theory argument.

**Cover:** Dealing with an issue in a speech, either by refuting or rebuilding it, you have "covered" it.

**Credibility:** A quality a speaker has that makes the audience want to believe him. Usually audiences find speakers credible if they communicate well, have knowledge of the topic, and seem to be of good character.

**Criteria:** A decision rule or conceptual tool to be used in deciding who wins the debate. The term literally means the standards by which an argument should be evaluated. For example, if money were your only criteria for choosing a job, you would look at that factor over others. Never ignore any argument called a criteria, or all of your other arguments may be made irrelevant.

**Critique/Kritik:** An argument that establishes that the fundamental assumptions embodied by the other team are false or reprehensible. It is really impossible to give a brief sentence or paragraph explanation of a critique since there are so many different forms and applications of critiques in debate. For a proper understanding, you should read the chapter on critiques.

**Cross-Examination:** There are four three-minute cross-examination periods during the debate following each constructive speech during which opponents may question the constructive speaker.

**Cross-Examination (Speaker Criteria):** An effective cross examination will employ assertive, thoughtful, pertinent questions and responses. The ability to think and respond spontaneously without much preparation time is an important facet of cross-examination and should include questions of fact, value, and policy. Cross-examinations provide the opportunity to investigate, check, inquire, clarify, interrogate, and question.

**Cut evidence:** To copy a portion of a book, magazine, or hearing onto a note card or brief.

## D

**Debate:** a series of opposing arguments that take place between individuals (or groups of individuals) to arrive, ideally, at the best possible solution to a problem. An equitably structured communication event about some topic of interest with opposing advocates alternating before an opportunity is given for decision.

**Debate theory:** In most areas of the country there are no specific rules governing the debate other than the time limits. Debate theory is about making arguments over what arguments and argumentative practices should be acceptable in modern debate.

**Debatability:** A concept related to topicality and other theoretical arguments. One team will claim that the other team's interpretation of the topic or the debate setting is inferior because it makes the essential debate process more difficult. For example, a topicality definition that is very broad might make the topic itself "undebatable" because it would have no real limits.

**Decision-rule:** an argument that one team contends is apriori – the most important argument in the debate/an argument that trumps all other arguments. An idea that tells the judge how to weigh and compare issues. For example, you might say in a debate about health care, "The decision in this debate should be for the team with the policy that best provides for the health of each citizen." Thus, the judge would focus on "health" as the decision rule. Always be wary of teams proposing a decision rule, as it usually favors them in the debate.

**Defensive Arguments:** Are the arguments that reduce or mitigate the offense of your opponent's arguments. Defensive arguments refute the basic claim made by the other side by saying that they are not true. For example, if one said argues that economic decline causes a war and you argue that economic decline does not cause a war, you have made a defensive argument.

**Definitions:** Are critical to policy debate; it is important that all parties involved understand what is meant by a particular word usage.

Some criteria to prove a satisfactory definition are: (*not all of these will apply in all circumstances*)

- Prove your definition is officially stipulated as the correct one for this resolution.
- Prove your definition is grammatically correct
- Prove your definition is derived from the appropriate field
- Prove your definition is based on common usage
- Prove your definition is consistent with policy maker's usage
- Prove your definition meets the original understanding of the framers of the resolution
- Prove your definition provides a clear distinction between what is legitimately included and what is legitimately excluded by the definition
- Prove your definition provides a fair division of ground

**Disadvantage:** (also called a "disad" or DA) Argument that the plan proposed by the other team will cause bad things to happen which would not have happened otherwise. The problems or undesirable consequences that the negative claims will flow from the affirmative's plan or the affirmative plan will create. A bad circumstance that only results from the adoption of the affirmative plan. These must be shown to outweigh the advantages. A disadvantage proves that the affirmative plan is undesirable. For example, the affirmative plan may save lives. The disadvantage proves that the affirmative plan may hurt the economy, triggering poverty and death. It is important to note that any given disadvantage is not necessarily a reason to vote negative alone. Negatives must argue that the disadvantage proves that the affirmative's plan is net-undesirable – that the costs outweigh the benefits.

**Dirty word critique:** A "dirty word" critique is a critique of a specific word that one team says is bad. For example, the negative may say that the affirmative's use of the word "development" is bad because it is bad to say hold other people to Western standards.

**Disclose:** When you disclose you tell the other teams what your main arguments are before the debate. Affirmative disclosure – telling the other team what your case is – is common, whereas negative disclosure is not.



**Disco:** A term used to describe a type of debate strategy where a team takes advantage of the interrelationship among arguments in the debate to concede large portions of the opponent's arguments. The hope is that such a strategy will dismiss large portions of arguments and allow the team to focus the debate on issues favorable to its side of the question.

**Discursive:** Discursive arguments are about the choice of words a team may make in a debate. For example, a team may argue that it is bad to describe a given instance of violence as a "terrorist" incident because such loose terminology results in more violence. Discursive arguments are usually grouped in the category of "kritik."

**Discursive impact:** An argument that the language used within the debate is more important than the issues debated. Discursive impacts are usually claimed by critiques.

**Dispositional:** An argument, usually a counter-plan, that can be discarded by conceding competitiveness.

**Dispositionality:** a form of conditionality. Negatives will say that their counter-plan is dispositional when they reserve the right to stop advocating it only if the affirmative straight turns it.

**Division of Labor:** Occurs between negative team speakers when the 1NC spends a majority of its time focusing on some, but not all, of the affirmative arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, only briefly addressing all other on-case arguments. The 2NC then spends the majority of its time focusing on the remaining arguments using logic, evidence, and reasoning, but, again, at least briefly addressing all on-case arguments.

**Double solvency:** When affirmative teams extend a permutation they will often claim that if both the plan and the counterplan are done then there will be twice as much solvency.

**Double turn:** This takes place when in answering a disadvantage, a team argues a link turn (we solve that problem) AND an impact turn (that problem is actually a benefit). Thus, it is saying that it stops a good thing from happening. If you make a double-turn you are making both a link turn and an impact turn. For example, you could argue that you both save the economy and that economic growth is bad. If you do this, you will essentially be presenting a disadvantage against yourself – you are arguing that you strengthen the economy and that that is bad. Double turn. A team double-turns itself when the present both a link turn and an impact turn. For example, they may present a link turn claiming that they save the economy as well as an impact turn that says saving the economy is bad. If a team does this the other team can grant both arguments, to prove that the team originating the double-turn actually causes the something undesirable.

**Drop (out):** When you do not discuss an issue or argument in a speech, you are considered to have "dropped" that argument or issue. Dropped issues or arguments are considered to be won by the last speech to discuss them in some detail. A dropped argument is any argument that is not responded to by your opponent in his or her next speech.

**Dropped argument:** an argument that is not addressed by the opposing team in the subsequent speech. In debate, if you do not challenge your opponent's argument, then you are *conceding* (agreeing) to that argument—even if you just didn't have time to get to it. Debate rounds can be lost if you drop too many arguments.

E

**Elimination rounds:** After the preliminary debates are complete, debaters in the top four to thirty-two teams (depending on the size of the tournament) are selected to participate in elimination rounds. Teams are seeded from one to anywhere from four to thirty-two based on their performance in the preliminary rounds. Teams that lose are eliminated until one team remains.

**Ellipsing of Evidence:** An ellipse (period space period space period space) is used to denote when excess verbiage has been dropped from a quotation. It is the debater's responsibility to insure that the removal of excess verbiage does not change the intent of the original author. It is recommended that the full quotation be maintained in the debaters file in order to answer any questions of propriety.

**Emory switch:** A negative strategy involving presentation of plan attacks in 1st negative constructive and need or advantage attacks in 2nd negative constructive. In the past, and still in some regions of the country today, the first negative constructive presented the case arguments and the second negative constructive presented the disadvantages. The "Emory switch" is simply a switch in these responsibilities. Since all major positions, including disadvantages and case arguments, are now presented in the first negative constructive, this is kind of a dead concept.

**Enforcement:** The aspect of the affirmative case which administers consequences for a lack of compliance with the mandates of the plan.

**Enforcement plank:** A part of the affirmative plan providing assurance that the plan's mandates will be carried out, usually through a directive that a particular agency will oversee and ensure compliance with those mandates.

**Empirical evidence:** Empirical evidence is evidence cited in a debate that is supported by a study. The evidence doesn't just rely on the opinion of an expert, on proven support. It also is a reference to something happening in the past that supports the argument being made.

**Empirically denied:** Empirically denied means that history has denied the argument. For example, in response to a spending disadvantage, the affirmative may argue that we have spent a lot of money in the past but the economy hasn't collapsed.

**Ethics:** The principles of right and wrong that govern conduct.

**Evidence.** In debate, evidence refers to authoritative, quoted, published material (facts, expert opinions, stats, empirics) entered into the debate to prove and support the arguments being made.

**Existential Inherency:** Existential inherency is a minimalist form of inherency that simply indicates that the plan is not being done in the status quo. Existential inherency does not identify an attitudinal or a structural barrier to the adoption of the affirmative plan. With this kind of inherency, if the affirmative can demonstrate a massive problem exists, then it has met the burden of inherency by showing that the present system is not solving it.

**Extend:** Extending an argument basically refers to keeping the argument alive in later speeches rather than kicking it. Extension includes refutation of the arguments made against it.

**Extension:** Continuing to advance and elaborate on an issue through several speeches of the debate.

Arguments given in response to an opponent's attack on your original argument. Extensions are not new arguments, and are therefore allowed in rebuttals. Extensions are briefs that provide additional support for arguments already made. For example, a brief that has three pieces of evidence that indicate that the economy will collapse in the status quo is an extension for an original 2AC economy non-unique on a disadvantage.

**Extra-topicality:** Advantages are extra-topical when they stem from portions of the plan that are not topical action. Affirmative plans may be basically topical, but may also include elements that go beyond the resolution. For example, affirmatives may lift the ban on gays in the military to increase the number of persons participating, and also institute a program to stop discrimination against gays. The latter would be extra-topical – it's something "extra" in the plan. It is really something "extra" that is "non" topical.

## F

**Fiat:** The assumption that in order to decide the desirability of an alternative future, we first have to imagine that it exists. Thus, teams are not required to show that their plans "will" be adopted but that they "should" be adopted.

**Fiat Power:** The affirmative's authority, as defined by the resolution, to implement its plan.

**Post-Fiat**—An assumption that the plan passes, and then examining the affects of the plan. Post fiat refers to assessing the debate based on the benefits of the plan – the benefits that occur after the fiat of the plan. This is contrasted with pre-fiat implications.

**Pre-Fiat**—The space that exists before we enter the pretend world of fiat, where we assume that the plan will pass. Kritiks contend pre-fiat impacts are more real because affirmative plans will never actually come to pass.

**Fiat:** Fiat stems from the word "should" in the resolution. It is the idea that we can assume that the plan is adopted for the purpose of testing its merits. It removes the focus from questions about whether the plan would actually be adopted.

**Field context:** Field context is a topicality standard that says that the definition that the judge should accept, is the definition that defines how the term is likely to be used in a particular field. Field context is derived from the writings of experts on the subject of the resolution.

**File:** contains all of the evidence/blocks that support/defend a particular area of the debate. If you have more than one affirmative case, you will have a separate file for each case. Additionally, you will have separate files for different disadvantages, advantages, etc.

**Flip:** See *Turn*

**Flip for sides:** In elimination round debates, or in preliminary rounds in tournaments where there are an odd number of debates, teams will flip for sides if they have not previously met in the tournament. The winner of the coin toss gets to pick their side.

**Floating PIC:** A Floating PIC is a kritik alternative that endorses all of what the affirmative does, but not some minor element, usually a word or a specific idea. It is "floating" because it does not usually take the form of a counter-plan, but simply floats – teams will mention it in their speeches and then develop it in the 2NR.

**Flow:** A flow is what debaters use to take notes in a debate. Usually most people take notes vertically – in an outline form. In debate you take notes horizontally – noting the arguments and the responses to them across the course of the debate. Flowing is a fundamental and absolutely essential skill if you want to be a good debater.

**Flow:** a way of taking notes during a debate that keeps your arguments and your opponents' counter-arguments together in a visual framework.

**Flow judge:** An experienced judge who takes extensive notes during the debate round

**Flow sheet:** Paper used to keep track of the arguments in a debate.

**Framework:** The structure that serves as a basis for evaluating a debate. The framework is the explanation of how the judge should evaluate the debate. Framework debates have become common since the advent of the critique because critiques introduce important questions about how the debate should be resolved – should the judge evaluate the net desirability of the plan (the standard means of evaluation), evaluate language choices made by each side, prioritize process considerations such as the use of speed (fast-talking by the other team)? Arguments that address fundamental questions regarding how the debate should be decided deal with important issues of framework.

**Frontlines:** A frontline is a set of arguments that are designed to answer a general argument. Debaters write frontlines against off-case positions as well as advantages and solvency claims. Answers to arguments that are prepared in advance of the debate. Prepared answers to arguments that are anticipated from the opposing team.

**Funding plank:** The part of the plan naming or listing those sources that will supply the money that the plan requires.

**Funding and Staffing:** The aspect of the affirmative case that provides the necessary finances to implement the plan.

## G

**Games theory:** A paradigm for debate that views the debate as an educational game requiring fair rules to insure each participant has an equal chance of winning the game. Game theory is a meta-theory of debate that says that the theory arguments that provide for the best competitive game are the ones that should be accepted.

**Generic.** A generic is a general argument advanced by the negative that applies to many different affirmatives. For example, most affirmatives use Congress as their agent, so the "Congress counterplan" is a generic counterplan. Most affirmative plans spend money, so "spending" is a generic disadvantage. Most plans use the government, so "statism" is a generic critique.

**Generic arguments:** Arguments, usually negative, that are general and apply to a wide range of affirmative cases or plans.

**Generic disadvantage:** A disadvantage designed to link to almost any conceivable affirmative plan. A generic disadvantage is a disadvantage that applies to many affirmatives. For example, most affirmatives spend money, so spending is a generic disadvantage.

**Goals case:** A type of affirmative case that claims a particular goal is sought by the status quo and that argues that the plan better meets that goal.

**Grammatical context:** A topicality definition that is derived from the relationship of terms in a consistent grammatical form with other terms in the resolution.

**Ground:** The positions teams must defend as affirmative or negative. Each team needs to have some "ground" to defend in order for the debate to be a fair contest. Thus, interpretations of the topic that leave the negative no "ground" to defend should be rejected because they are unfair.

## H

**Harms:** the problems in the status quo that Aff plan proposing to fix. The evil or important problem that the affirmative team claims exists in the status quo and that requires remedy. (Often referred to as "need".) The harms refer to the part of the affirmative case that the affirmative tries to solve for. For example, affirmatives may claim that in the status quo many people have poor educational opportunities and that this results in poverty and economic decline. The poverty and economic decline are the harms that stem from a lack of education.

**High-low:** When deciding speaker awards, tournaments usually drop from considerations a debater's highest speaker points and a debater's lowest speaker points. High-low also refers to how debates are paired at a tournament. After the first two to four preset debates, most debates are paired high-low within brackets. What this means is that teams with identical records (say 2-2) will meet in future debates but those with the highest speaker points will debate those with the lowest speaker points.

**Hypothesis testing:** Hypotesting is a debate theory that says that the central question to be addressed in the debate is the overall truth of the resolution. It comes from the idea that the affirmative is testing a hypothesis – the hypothesis being the resolution. Since the focus of modern debate is on the plan, hypotesting is not a popular theory. One of many paradigms used to explain the debate process. It means that the focus of the debate is on testing the resolution as if it were a scientific hypothesis.

I

**Impact:** Explanation of why something is important, and thus how it influences the end result of an argument or the outcome of the debate. Usually impacts need to be proven, not just assumed. The effect of the link and the ultimate effect of the disad. The impact is similar to a harm, though the term is usually used in the context of the disadvantage. The impact is the final, end problem that results. For example, if the negative's disadvantage argues that the affirmative's plan undermines the economy, the impact is the final result – an economic decline may cause poverty, or even trigger a war.

**Impact Calculus:** The system the judge uses to evaluate the impacts in a debate round.

**Impact Comparison:** When debaters compare the arguments and weigh the impacts, they are winning ones that their opponent could be winning. They explain why their impacts are more important.

**Impact defense:** Impact defense consists of impact take-outs.

**Impact non-unique:** An impact non-uniqueness argument says that the impact to the disadvantage is already happening – that the economy is in a downturn now, that there is widespread poverty now, or that the war that the affirmative says will happen is already occurring.

**Impact take-out:** An impact take-out says that the impact is false. For example, if you argue that an economic decline doesn't cause a war you are taking out an impact claim that an economic decline causes a war.

**Impact Turn:** An argument that establishes that the supposed impact or harm claimed is actually not a bad thing but a good thing. An impact turn says that not only is the final impact not bad, it is good. For example, if you argue that an economic decline is good because it will protect our environment, you are arguing an impact turn.

**Independent advantage:** An advantage that can justify adoption of a plan even if the other advantages claimed may not be true.

**Inherency:** Inherency is a stock issue that the affirmative must prove. It centers around the idea that the plan the affirmative advocates is not being implemented in the present world – the status quo. There are three types of inherency – existential inherency, structural inherency, and attitudinal inherency. Each of the three types is discussed in more detail in specific vocabulary entries. The reason why your plan does not already exist, why the problem identified persists and why it is not being solved. One of four stock issues in policy debate – a basic component of an affirmative case. It argues the relationship between the status quo and the probability of future harm. The affirmative team must prove that each significant harm it identifies is built into the essential nature of the status quo such as through legal structures and/or societal attitudes, and will not be solved without the affirmative case.

**Inherent Barrier:** the barrier (*either structural, attitudinal, gap or existential*) that is preventing the affirmative plan from being passed.

**Internal link:** Conceptual linkages and relationships between ideas. Part of a causal chain debaters construct in their arguments that hold them together.

**Internal link turn:** Just as you can turn an link and turn an impact, you can turn an internal link by arguing that the opposite of the internal link is true. For example, if the internal link is "recession causes a depression," an internal link turn is that a recession stops a depression.

**Interpretation:** Where you identify and define the word or phrase of the resolution you think the affirmative fails to meet. You can use a dictionary or field specific evidence to provide the definition. Topicality debates will revolve around the interpretation of the resolution, or term in the resolution, offered by the affirmative team and one offered by the negative team. For example, a negative team may advance an interpretation of the "substantial increase" that says a substantial increase is a "one percent" increase.

**Interventionist Judging:** That aspect of the judging paradigm that allows a judge to use his personal knowledge, wisdom and experience to evaluate matters of ethics in the round regardless of the student's arguments.

**Intrinsic:** A situation in which a disadvantage is a necessary result of the affirmative plan that cannot be prevented in another way. Internal link. The internal link connects one link to another link, or one link to an impact. It is often discussed in the context of disadvantages, but all arguments have internal links. For example, if the negative argues that the plan causes a recession, a recession causes a depression, and a depression causes a war, the internal link is the argument that a recession will cause a depression.

**Intrinsic/non-intrinsic:** Affirmatives will often argue that the negative's disadvantage is non-intrinsic – that the affirmative plan could be voted for and that intervening action could be taken to prevent a given disadvantage from happening. For example, if the negative argued that the affirmative's plan will cause the U.S. to attack Iran, the negative could argue that we could simply do the plan and not attack Iraq.

**Intrinsic-ness permutation:** As discussed in the section on counter-plans, and in the definitional entry, a permutation is a combination of the affirmative plan and all or part of the counter-plan. If the affirmative's permutation includes action beyond the affirmative plan and all or part of the counter-plan, the permutation is intrinsic.

**Issue-specific uniqueness:** Issue specific uniqueness is a type of uniqueness that is frequently defended in politics debates. For example, negatives extending a politics immigration disadvantage may argue that while Bush may not have political capital now, they have established issue-specific uniqueness by proving that immigration reform will pass in the status quo.

## J

**Judge:** The judge is the person who decides the winner and loser of each debate. In elimination rounds there are usually three judges.

**Judge philosophy:** A judge philosophy is a written statement by a judge that establishes his or her preferences on various debate practices and theoretical issues. More than 1,500 judge philosophies are [freely available on Planet Debate](#).

**Judge paradigm:** A judge paradigm is the paradigm that the judge uses to evaluate the debate

**Jurisdiction:** The parameters, provided by the topic, within which actors in the debate operate.

**Justification:** A rarely used negative argument asserting that the affirmative must have a reason for each part of the resolution.

**Justification:** (Speaker Criteria) The basic issue in the speech which deals with the questions of policy: "Is there a serious problem or need that requires a change from current policy? Is this problem widespread and it is significant enough to require change?" A speech designed to change or reinforce the audience's beliefs or actions. A well-justified speech will use Aristotle's Available Means of Persuasion of Logos [logical appeal], Pathos [emotional appeal], and Ethos [speaker's character or likeability] by presenting evidence and reasoning in a winsome manner.

## K

**Kick-Out:** Negative concedes to a takeout argument made by the affirmative in order to abandon the DA debate. This is a tactic used to eliminate an argument from the debate. This can only be done only by the debater who originally made the argument. Thus, the negative may "kick out" of a disadvantage by conceding some of the affirmative's answers to it. You can kick a kritik or disadvantage argument in a debate as long as it is not straight-turned. There is a debate about whether or not counterplans that are straight-turned can be kicked.

**Kritik (or Critique):** A German word for philosophically-based arguments that question and criticize explicit or implicit assumptions made by the affirmative team. Also referred to by its English spelling – critique. It is difficult to say exactly what a kritik is. Kritiks have taken many forms in debate, and the popularity of many has come and gone. It is best to read the chapter on critiques to gain the best understanding.

## L

**Label:** The short form of the argument presented as a way to identify and preview the argument. "Democracy does not guarantee solution of all problems" might be an argument label. After the label is given, it will have to be more completely developed in order to be accepted.

**Language Kritik:** A language kritik argues that the other team's language choice is bad. For example, a team may argue that it is bad to describe a given instance of violence as a "terrorist" incident because such loose terminology results in more violence. Discursive arguments are usually grouped in the category of "kritik."

**Lay Judge:** A person with little debate experience. This judge might prefer a more oratorical style of delivery.

**Legislative intent:** A provision in a plan that future judgment of the meaning of the plan will be based on its advocate's speeches.<sup>202</sup> The Code of the Debater

**Legislative intent** Legislative intent is generally a determination of what the legislature meant when they wrote a law. In debate, it is a claim made by the affirmative that they get to clarify and explain what their plan means.

**Limits:** Limits questions arise in topicality debates. Negative teams will argue that their interpretation of the topic is more limiting than the affirmative's interpretation. For example, teams will argue that if you define a person only as a human being it will produce a more limited topic than if you define it to include animals.

**Linearity:** Most teams who present disadvantages will argue that the affirmative will do something (like trigger price inflation) that will push us over the brink to complete economic ruin. All disadvantages do not have to be structured in this fashion, however. Disadvantages can also be

argued as being linear - -that the affirmative plan causes some incremental harm, such as environmental destruction and that each increment of the harm is bad.

**Line-by-Line:** Line-by-line refers to going point-by-point through the flow of the other sides arguments and answering each one as you go.

**Link:** A link is generally discussed as part of a disadvantage. It is the part of the argument that ties the negative disadvantage to what the affirmative is arguing. For example, a link to a spending disadvantage argues that the affirmative plan will spend money. How the plan causes the negative action of the DA. A causal or correlative relationship between two ideas.

**Link defense:** Link defense is an argument or set of arguments that establishes why the link is false.

**Link expander:** Link expanders are arguments that identify why a more general link applies very well to a particular affirmative plan. For example, if the negative has a "soft on crime" link to the affirmative plan, a link expander would be to explain why a plan that legalizes drugs would be very soft on crime.

**Link non-unique:** A link non-uniqueness argument attacks the uniqueness of the link. For example, a link-uniqueness argument against a spending disadvantage argues that the government is spending money now.

**Link Turn:** An argument that establishes that a given policy does not cause a problem or disadvantage identified by the other team but actually works to solve that problem. A link turn argues that the opposite of the link is true. If a disadvantage claims that the affirmative plan spends money as the link, an affirmative argument that the plan saves money is the link turn.

**Logic:** The use of evidence and reasoning in one of many forms with the objective of persuading.

**Link uniqueness:** Link uniqueness says that the link will not occur in the status quo. For example, if you link is increasing aid to Africa, link uniqueness would be that aid to Africa won't increase now.

## M

**Mandates:** Those elements of the affirmative team's plan that will be implemented through fiat power in order to solve the harms presented and accrue the advantages.

**Minor Repair:** A non-resolutional, small change in existing programs to solve the problem, which is advocated or presented by the negative. Should not require structural change and should not be within the philosophy of the present system; a form of Counter Plan. A minor repair is a small change that the negative will suggest to the status quo in lieu of adopting the major change advocated by the affirmative plan. It is not clear how minor repairs differ from counter-plans or what burdens minor repairs have to meet. Minor repairs are not frequently made in most parts of the country.

**Moving target:** Moving target is a theoretical complaint that advances the argument that the other team's argument keeps shifting, making it too difficult for the other team to answer it. Teams often complain that new explanations of plan and counter-plan texts are moving targets.

**Multi actor fiat:** Multi actor fiat occurs when a team fiats the actions of more than one actor. For example, a counter-plan to have the U.S. reduce its current family planning assistance and to have the EU fund it would involve multi actor fiat – fiating of both U.S. and EU actor. Multi actor fiat is considered theoretically suspect, but it remains popular.

**Multiple perms:** Multiple perms are simply a series of permutations advanced by the affirmative.

**Mutual exclusivity:** Method for determining competition of the counter-plan. If the affirmative plan and the negative counter-plan cannot exist at the same time, they are competitive with each other. Mutual exclusivity is a standard of counter-plan competition that establishes that the plan and the counter-plan cannot both be done at the same time. For example, you cannot fund increased HIV/AIDS assistance to Africa and use that same money to fund space exploration.

## N

**Need:** The problem that the affirmative hopes to solve; the area of affirmative significance. See definition of "Harm."

**Needs Analysis Affirmative:** An affirmative case wherein a significant inherent need (or harm) in the status quo exists that can best be solved by adopting the affirmative team's plan. This plan will solve the need and, thus, provide significant advantages.

**Negation theory:** Negation theory is an argument that says that any negative argument that responds to an affirmative position is legitimate because it negates it.

**Negative:** The negative team argues against the resolution. In modern policy debate, the negative directs their arguments against the specific policy proposal outlined by the affirmative

**Negative Block:** The negative block is the two negative speeches that occur back to back – the 2NC & the 1NR, the 2nd negative constructive and the 1st negative rebuttal; the two negative speeches in the middle of the debate. These speeches are to be treated as separate speeches and have the same responsibilities as every other speech in the debate round.

**Negative Case File:** Contains all the necessary arguments to effectively debate against a particular affirmative case.

**Negative Team:** team that opposes the affirmative team and/or the resolution. This team says making a change is not necessary because things are fine the way they are.

**Net Benefits:** Method for determining competition of the counter-plan. If it would be more beneficial to adopt just the counter-plan than both it and the affirmative plan, they are competitive with each other based on the concept of net benefits. The benefits received by adopting the counter-plan by itself instead of adopting the affirmative plan or the counter-plan simultaneously with the affirmative's plan via a permutation. Net-beneficial is a standard of counter-plan competition that says it is better to do the counter-plan alone than a combination of the plan and the counter-plan. The arguments that prove it is undesirable to do both together are disadvantages that are referred to as net-benefits. They are not, however, technically net-benefits until they prove that the counter-plan is not net-beneficial. Disadvantages or kritiks that the negative uses to prove that it is better to just do the counter-plan than a combination of the plan and the counter-plan (the permutation) are often referred to as net-benefits. These disadvantages or kritiks need to at least link less to the affirmative plan than to the counter-plan. Technically these arguments are not net-benefits until it is proven that they are reasons to support only the counter-plan.

**Net beneficial:** In order for the negative team to win a counter-plan, they must prove that the counter-plan is net-beneficial. A counter-plan is net-beneficial if it is better than the affirmative plan or a combination of the plan and all or part of the counter-plan.

**New arguments:** New arguments are arguments made in the debate that are made after the team had a speech to answer the arguments. For example, if you make five arguments to the disadvantage in the 2AC, and you make a sixth argument in the 1AR, the argument you make in the 1AR is new. You have to answer arguments in the debate at your next available opportunity – the next speech. The only exception to this is that 2AC arguments can be answered in the 2NC or the 1NR.

**Non-topical:** If the affirmative plan does not fit within the bounds of the resolution it is deemed to be non-topical.

**Non-unique:** A non-unique argument is an argument that will occur regardless of whether or not the affirmative's plan, or the negative's counterplan or kritik alternative, is adopted. For example, if the negative argues that the plan will cause the economy to crash and the affirmative argues that the economy has already crashed, then that problem is non-unique to what the affirmative is advocating.

**New affirmative:** A new affirmative is an affirmative case that a team has not run before. Affirmative disclosure is common, but teams will not usually disclose new affirmative cases.

**No threshold:** No threshold is an affirmative disadvantage answer that claims that the negative has not established the threshold or the brink for the disadvantage

**Normal means:** Normal means is the way that the affirmative would likely be implemented if it were to be passed. Most affirmatives do not specify the details of implementation and instead usually just argue that the plan will be implemented through the normal process.

**Novice Team:** A team consisting of two students who are both in their first year of debate.

## O

**Object fiat:** Object fiat is an attempt by the negative to fiat out of the object of the plan. For example, if the affirmative promotes confidence-building measures to avoid war between India and Pakistan, a counterplan that fiats that India and Pakistan do not go to war with each other would be object fiat. Object fiat is generally considered illegitimate.

**Observation:** First affirmative constructive speeches (1ACs) are often organized into observations. Affirmatives often present a harms observation, an inherency observation, and a solvency observation. Sometimes affirmatives will not use the word "contention" instead of "observation."

**Off case:** In addition to direct case attacks, the negative can refute the idea that the affirmative should win the debate through topicality arguments, kritiks, counterplans, and disadvantages. These four arguments are referred to as "off-case" positions. Issues such as counter-plans, topicality arguments, disadvantages, or critiques offered by the negative that do not directly refute the affirmative case but introduce new issues arguing for its rejection.

**Off-case Arguments:** Negative arguments that, while not directly responding to the affirmative's case point by point, are offered as significant reasons for rejecting the case or plan. Arguments made by the negative that do not directly attack the affirmative's case (Counter-plans, Disads, Critiques, Topicality)

**Offensive arguments:** If someone tells you to make an offensive argument, you may think that he or she is telling you to be rude. This is not the case, however. An offensive argument simply refers to a turn – a link turn, an internal link turn, or an impact turn. If the negative says your plan spends money, and you argue that it saves money, you are making an offensive argument.

**On-case:** On case arguments are specific arguments made by the negative that directly refute the affirmative's inherency, harms, or solvency.

**On-case Arguments:** Arguments that directly respond to the affirmative team's case, point-by-point, using the affirmative team's case organization. Arguments that address the specifics of the affirmative's case (Inherency, Significance/Harms, Solvency)

**Opportunity cost.** Opportunity cost is an economics concept that is used to support modern counter-plan theory. One argument is favor of counter-plans is that counter-plans are the opportunity cost of voting for the affirmative plan – if you vote for the plan you cannot vote for the counter-plan.

**Oral Critique:** A ten minute period at the end of the debate round where the judge may review the debate, give examples of effective argumentation from the round, and offer suggestions for improvement. The judge does not reveal the outcome of the round in the oral critique.

**Organization:** (Speaker Criteria) Strategic organization - putting a speech together in such a way as to achieve a certain result with a particular audience. A well-organized speech has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion It uses main points, transitions, signposts, internal previews, and internal summaries which the listener is able to follow.

**OSpec:** OSpec is a theoretical argument that is the opposite of ASpec. OSpec argues that the the affirmative cannot specify its agent – that it is only permitted to defend action by the "federal government." This is widely considered to be a terrible argument.

**Overlimiting:** Overlimiting is an affirmative topicality argument that establishes that the negative's definition/interpretation is too limited.

**Overview:** An overview is a general explanation of a major argument in that occurs before you begin answering the line-by-line argument(s) that the other side has made. 2NRs and 2ARs will also give overviews that include a general assessment of the debate that explains why they are winning the debate.

## P

**Pairing:** The pairing is the sheet that is released by the tab room before the start of each debate. The pairing identifies your team, the team you are debating, the room where the debate will occur, and who the judge(s) of the debate.

**Paradigm:** A paradigm is a way of seeing the world. In debate, judges have different paradigms – or ways of seeing the debate. The most popular contemporary paradigms are stock issues and policy-making.

**Partner:** In policy you debate with a partner – it's two people vs. two people.

**Perception link:** A perception link is a link that is perceived to be true even if it is actually false. For example, the affirmative's plan may actually not cost very much but may be perceived as being very expensive. Sometimes the perception of the expense, or the perception of any link, may be enough to trigger the disadvantage.

**Permutation (Perm):** An argument that says we should combine some or all of the counter-plan and the affirmative plan. A test the affirmative uses to examine the competitiveness of the counter-plan, in which it speculates on how the two plans might be merged. A permutation is a combination of the plan and all or part of the counter-plan (or kritik alternative). Affirmative teams make permutations to test whether counter-plans and/or kritiks are competitive. Usually it is not simply enough to point out that a permutation is possible – you need to prove that the permutation is a net-desirable course of action compared to the counter-plan.

**Persuasive:** If an argument is persuasive, it is convincing to the audience.

**Philosophical competition:** A standard of competition for counterplans that argues that since the two plans under consideration have different philosophical approaches, they are exclusive of one another.

**Plan:** That portion of the affirmative case that Proposal for policy action, attempts to solve the harms in the status quo, and accrue advantages - comprised of mandates (action), extent, funding, agency, and enforcement.

Plan. The plan is the affirmative's basic statement of how they believe things should be changed – most always by the federal government.

Negative teams can also introduce plans – in the form of counterplans.



**Plan attack:** Arguments directed at an affirmative policy itself (e.g., plan-meet-need, disadvantage, workability).

**Plan flaw:** A plan flaw exposes an error in the affirmative's plan writing. The plan flaw may be substantial and undermine or turn all of the affirmative's solvency

**Plan Inclusive Counterplan (PIC):** A plan-inclusive counter-plan is a counter-plan that does part of the affirmative plan, but not all of it. They will argue that the part that they do not do is bad. They will link disadvantages and kritiks to the part that they do not do.

**Plank:** A plank is one of the plan mandates. A plan can have multiple mandates/planks.

**Plan mandates:** The resolitional action specified in the affirmative plan.

**Plan-meet-need:** An argument claiming that a plan does not solve the need. Usually a subdivided and structured argument presented in 2nd negative constructive.

**Plan meet need (PMN):** plan meet need is a basic solvency argument that says that the affirmative plan will not solve for the harms that they have identified. For example, a PMN may say that the affirmative doesn't recruit enough troops to avoid the readiness crisis that they have identified.

**Plan Meet Advantage (PMA):** A PMA is the same thing as a PMN.

**Plan-Plan:** Plan-plan is an out-of-fashion debate theory that says that the negative and the affirmative should both advance plans and whichever plan has the greatest advantages should win. Plan-plan theory never survived close analysis because it ignores that critical concept of counter-plan competition that demonstrates that the counter-plan is a reason to vote against the affirmative.

**Plan-side:** That part of the flow on which arguments are written about the plan.

**Plan spike:** A non-topical element included in a plan to avoid a disadvantage. A plan spike is something that the affirmative adds to the plan to prevent a disadvantage from occurring. For example, the negative may spike a deficits spending disadvantage by cutting the space program to fund the plan. Plan spikes are of questionable legitimacy because they are usually extra-topical.

**Policy:** a plan of action developed for and adopted by a political or social group. A "policy" can be one rule in a classroom, such as "Raise your hand before talking;" or a "policy" can be many rules and require entire government agencies to implement, such as the United State's government providing healthcare to disabled individuals.

**Policy making:** A philosophy that debate rounds should be evaluated from the perspective of pseudo-legislators weighing the advantages and disadvantages of two conflicting policy systems. Policy-making is one of the most popular paradigms – ways of viewing and judging the debate. Policy-makers believe that the affirmative plan should be voted for if it is on balance beneficial and believe that the negative should win if the affirmative plan is prove to be net undesirable

**Political capital:** The amount of good will a politician can muster to get policies enacted. In debate this argument says passing the plan will consume so much political capital that those enacting the plan will have to sacrifice other important issues on their political agendas. The political capital expended passing the plan sacrifices the political capital necessary to get other policies passed.

**Political disadvantages:** Arguments that indicate that the political consequences of passing the plan will lead to impacts that will outweigh the case.

**Political focus:** The ability of political leaders to concentrate on particular issues. In debate, the argument says that passing the affirmative plan will require so much energy and time that policy makers will be unable to get other, more important issues passed.

**Political popularity:** The approval rating of a politician. In debate, the argument considers the public approval of the plan. If the plan is unpopular, policy makers will lose credibility, making it nearly impossible to pass other, more important plans. If the plan is popular, it may boost the credibility of policy makers, making it easier for them to get other, less desirable plans passed.  
**Positions.** Positions are the major off-case arguments advanced by the negative. Negative positions include topicality, counterplans, critiques, and disadvantages.

**Posting:** A list of debates that have been scheduled at a tournament. The "posting" includes room, affirmative team, negative team, and judge(s).

**Power-match:** After a set-number of preliminary debates, the tournament is matched (also known as "power-pairing") so that teams with the same records debate each other.

**Power-protect:** After a set-number of preliminary debates, the tournament is power-matched so that teams with identical records debate each other. Power protect refers to protecting the best teams within those matches so that the teams with the best speaker points in with a given record debate the teams with the worst speaker points who have the same record.

**Preemption or preempt:** An argument designed to respond to an anticipated argument.

**Prep time:** Time between speeches when debaters prepare. A total of five minutes allotted to each team in the round. It can be used at the team's discretion, except that it may not be used prior to cross examination.

**Presumption:** An assumption that we should stay with the system that we have now; it operates against change and untried policies. The perspective that the essential feature of the status quo should continue until good and sufficient reason is given to justify a change.

**Pre-fiat:** Pre-fiat considerations are arguments that the judge should consider prior to assessing the net-desirability of voting for the affirmative plan. Some think that critiques are pre-fiat considerations. Topicality is widely considered a pre-fiat consideration.

**Preliminary rounds:** Most debate tournaments have both preliminary rounds and elimination rounds. In the preliminary rounds each two person team is assigned a number of affirmative and negative debates (say three of each). After the preliminary debates are complete, debaters in the top four to thirty two teams (depending on the size of the tournament) are selected to participate in elimination rounds.

**Pre-round prep** Pre-round prep is all the time that you have to prepare prior to the start of any given debate to prepare.

**Press:** A press is any argument made against a piece of evidence. You may, for example, press your opponent's evidence by arguing that the evidence doesn't really say what your opponent says.

**Prima Facie:** A Latin term which means "on its face" or "at first glance." In debate, this term refers to the fact that the affirmative case, upon its first hearing as presented in the first affirmative constructive speech, must present a complete case -- a case that, in and of itself, provides good and sufficient reason for adopting the proposition. The requirement that the initial presentation of major issues in the debate should be "logically complete". Each case must provide effective issue statements to answer all four stock issue questions. It does not demand that the presentation be perfect.

**Prima Facie Burden:** generally things that the affirmative must prove in order to win. Generally, they must prove that their plan is inherent, that significant harms will occur if the plan is not adopted, and that the affirmative can solve for the identified harms

**Probabilistic topicality:** Probabilistic topicality is a negative argument that says that the affirmative is not definitely topical but only probabilistically topical. For example, if a plan doesn't directly increase public health assistance to Africa, but only could potentially result in an increase, it is probabilistically topical.

**Probability:** Probability refers to how likely something is. It is an important means of risk analysis. For example, if you argue that the affirmative plan will destroy the economy, you need to argue how probable that is. As you will learn in debate, almost anything is possible. The question is how probable is it?

**Procedural:** A procedural is a debate theory argument that argues that that some specific argument advanced by the other side should not be allowed, and often it will at least be asserted that the procedural objection is a reason to vote against the other side

**Pull-down:** After a set-number of preliminary debates, the tournament is power-matched so that teams with identical records debate each other. If there are an odd number of teams with a given record, a team will have to be "pulled-down" to debate a team with a lesser record.

**Process counter-plan:** Most affirmative plans are adopted and implemented through normal means. Some counter-plans will change the normal means process, for example by consulting NATO. Any counter-plan that changes the adoption and/or implementation process is considered to be a process counter-plan.

**Proof:** Expert testimony, statistical data, court rulings, or other credible sources of evidence that support the arguments you are making.

## R

**Ranks:** In each debate the judge rates the debaters 1-4. This rating number is your rank in a particular debate. A 1 is the best rank and a 4 is the lowest rank.

**Read evidence:** In a policy debate, the requirement that a debater actually read passages from that evidence into the debate.

**Reasonability:** Reasonability issues arise in topicality debates. Reasonability is a topicality standard that indicates that the affirmative need only to offer a definition that is not excessively broad and would appear legitimate at first glance. Affirmatives will argue that their interpretation of the topic is reasonable and that topicality debates should not be about discovering the most limited interpretation

**Reason to prefer:** In a topicality debate, a reason to prefer is any reason advanced by one side that makes an argument as to why the judge should prefer/accept their definition/interpretation.

**Reasons to Prefer/Standards:** Part of a topicality where the negative explains why their interpretation of the resolution is better than the affirmatives.

**Rebuttal:** the final four speeches of a debate delivered by each of the four competitors in which they analyze the arguments constructed at the beginning of the debate and attempt to persuade the judge that their arguments are the best. New *evidence or proof* may be read during this phase of the debate, but new *arguments* are prohibited due to fairness. Argumentation meant to overcome opposing evidence and reasoning by introducing other evidence and reasoning that will destroy its effect. In modern debate, it is useful to think of each speech after the first as a rebuttal. You are constantly in the process of answering – rebutting – arguments.

**Redundancy:** This standard for counter-plan competition argues that if the counter-plan can achieve the affirmative advantage, then the affirmative has not demonstrated that the advantage is an inherent result of the resolution.

**Record.** Your record is the total number of wins and losses that you have at any point in a tournament. For example, if you have two wins and one loss, your record is 2-1

**Refutation:** The act of answering or criticizing ideas and issues presented by the other team. Argumentation meant to overcome opposing evidence and reasoning by proving that it is false or erroneous

**Regional overview.** A regional overview is an overview of a particular argument. For example, a regional overview of a disadvantage would include an explanation of the argument and reasons why the judge should vote for that argument over arguments advanced by the other side.

**Reify:** Using language that makes “false” or “illusory” concepts seem real and/or legitimate. For example, some critics might say that advocating aid for minorities actually makes racism more legitimate because it “reifies” the idea of race. These critics argue that, because there is no biological basis for race, targeting people of specific races for help supports (or “reifies”) the false notion of race, thus legitimizing racism.

**Resolution:** The topic or chosen subject of a particular debate. A statement of policy that identifies the central issue(s) in a debate (also known as a proposition). Literally, means firmly committed. Within policy debate, the affirmative team is firmly committed to *make a change*. (*Think about resolutions you made on New Year’s Eve.*) Affirmatives will support it, and negatives will go against it.

**Resolutional Analysis:** A statement of analysis by the affirmative team. A resolutional analysis is not required in any CCA debate case structure, does not confer any burden of proof on the negative team, nor any advantage to the affirmative team. A resolutional analysis is analogous to an opening quotation, it may be illustrative, but it is not one the arguments on the flow in the round. Please see the Policy Debate Guidance Information for further clarification if needed.

**Rethinking:** The process of tearing down all we know about subject, followed by a new thought process.

**Retrench:** To reinforce the present system. Usually occurring in discussions of critiques, the argument says that the effect of a policy is to reinforce the prevailing attitudes in the status quo. Thus, the problems that exist won’t be solved and may worsen.

**Reverse voting issue:** Often used when one team argues that something is a “voting issue.” The other team can explain that if it is a voting issue one way, it should also be a voting issue the other way.

**Rhetoric:** As defined by Plato, “A universal art of winning the mind by argument.”

**Risk analysis:** The theory and procedure of claiming that 100% certainty is not needed to act and that the level of certainty that does exist is sufficient basis for policy decisions. Risk analysis involves assessing risks of the costs and benefits of a given proposal. The central elements of risk analysis are the impact, the probability, and the time-frame.

**Road map:** The road map is the identification of the order you will address the major positions in the debate, such as topicality, disadvantages, critiques, counter-plans, solvency, and advantage/harm arguments. In most regions of the countries judges will let you explain your roadmap before they start running your speech time in order that they can also put their flow sheets in order.

**Round:** A round is a single debate that occurs during the course of a tournament.

**Round overview:** A round overview is a global overview of the entire debate that is often advanced by one of the final two rebuttalists. Some judges appreciate round overviews and others think that they are a waste of previous speech time.

**Run:** Debaters refer to “running” arguments in a debate. This simply means making the argument in a debate. If you “run” a spending disadvantage, for example, it simply means that you have presented it.

## S

**Sandbag:** Saving the best evidence for an argument until the rebuttals, or presenting the impact for an argument later. For example, in the 2AC you may make a non-uniqueness argument against a disadvantage and use a weak piece of evidence. Since the evidence is weak, the negative may choose to extend the disadvantage. In the 1AR, however, you may sandbag and read your best evidence, defeating the disadvantage.

**Scenario:** A specification of a particular series of events, usually consists of who, what, when, where, how, and why. A scenario is a chain of events that results in a given impact. For example, you a team may argue that if U.S. global leadership declines China will invade Taiwan, triggering a war throughout Asia.

**Severance:** Severance occurs when the affirmative attempts to jettison part of their plan. They try to do this when creating a severance permutation, or if the negative argues that part of their plan is extra-topical, they may argue that they should be able to jettison that part of their plan.

**Severance permutation:** A permutation is a combination of the plan and all of the counter-plan or a combination of all of the plan and a part of the counter-plan. If the affirmative eliminates part of the plan in the permutation (for example, the part that spends money), this is a severance permutation.

**Shell:** The shell is the basic outline of the off-case argument that is presented in the first negative constructive that can be further developed in later speeches.

**Shift:** Changing advocacy in the middle of the debate from one position to another.

**Should-would:** The concept that the affirmative does not have to show that its proposal would be adopted, but that it should be adopted.

**Significance:** An explanation of the serious problems that exist now, how big the harms are. Usually a component of the affirmative case, deals with numbers/statistical data, or it places weight on issues of morality.

**Significancy:** One of four stock issues in policy debate. It argues the degree of importance or impact attached to an issue. The affirmative team must prove that the essential elements of the case are quantitatively and/or qualitatively important. As a concept, significance can also refer to affirmative case advantages and negative case (or status quo) disadvantages, as each must prove the value of the advantage or disadvantage.

**Sign posting:** Sign-posting is using the flow to go point by point through your opponent's arguments. When you reference what specific arguments you are answering, and on what flow, you are sign posting for the judge so that he or she can put your answers in the right place. Signpost. Sign-posting simply refers to making references to where you are on the flow and what you are answering so the other team and the judge can follow. A brief statement that lets everyone know what argument you will be addressing. For instance, "No Link..."

**Skeleton Shell:** A marker you place on your flow to hold the place of an argument you missed during the round. Its purpose is to remind you to fill in the gap later when you have more time, like cross-examination or prep time.

**Solvency:** One of four stock issues in policy debate. An explanation of how the plan proposed by the affirmative works to solve the problem or significantly reduce the harm(s) identified by the affirmative - usually a component of the affirmative case. Solvency is a basic affirmative stock issue that explains how the affirmative plan will fix – or solve –the problem(the harm) that the affirmative has identified.

**Solvency advocate:** A solvency advocate is someone who supports the adoption of the plan or the counter-plan.

**Solvency turn:** A solvency turn is a negative argument that says that instead of solving the affirmative will actually increase the harm that they attempt to solve.

**Speed and Spread:** A debate technique where a speaker uses a rapid mode of speaking, typically speaking faster than 185 words per minute, in an attempt to overwhelm the opposition. (Note: This technique is prohibited in this league.)

**Splitting the Negative:** A debate technique where the first negative speaker (1NC) fails to address the entire affirmative case, usually only addressing half (definitions and harms) of the case. The second negative speaker (2NC) then addresses only the arguments omitted by the first speaker (plan and advantages). (Note: This technique is prohibited in this league.)

**Spread:** means to talk as quickly as possible, making many, many arguments in an attempt to prevent the other team from answering them all.

**Speaker points:** In every debate a judge assigns speaker points to each debater. Speaker points are rather subjective.

**Squad:** In this text, the squad refers to everyone from your school's debate program. Sometime this is also called the debate "team," though the word "team" in this text refers to a two person team – you and your partner

**Standards:** In a topicality debate, there has to be some means for the judge to decide which interpretation of the resolution, or a specific word, that the judge should accept. The standards part of the topicality debate governs this decision, with both teams introducing opposing standards for the judge to decide the debate on. Negatives will often argue for the most limiting standard, whereas affirmatives will argue that the judge

should be more reasonable and allow common sense interpretations of the term. Explanation and methods of evaluation that clarify why one interpretation of a word or phrase is superior to another. Usually part of topicality arguments. Also known as reasons to prefer.

**Status quo ("squo"/SQ):** Latin for "the present system." The existing, current state of affairs - the way things are right now Affirmatives attack the status quo. And Negatives, unless they run a counter-plan or a kritik with an alternative, generally defend the status quo. Often, debaters simply refer to it as the "squo."

**Stock issues:** one of the popular paradigms. According to this Paradigm, affirmatives must prove each of the stock issues – inherency, harms, significance, solvency, and topicality or they lose the debate. Issues common to most decision-making situations. In policy debate, these standard points of controversy are topicality, significance, inherency, and solvency.

**Straight-Turn:** Only reading offense/turns against the position and leaving the negative with no way to kick the position.

**Strategy:** a means of achieving a specific goal. Debaters often loosely use the word strategy to simply reference what arguments they are going to run in the debate. But, strategy refers to more than that – it refers to a consideration to how that package of arguments will advance throughout the debate to secure victory.

**Structural inherency:** the idea that there must be some legal barrier currently in place that prevents the adoption of the affirmative's plan. Affirmative passage of the plan would effectively remove the barrier. Structural inherency. Structural inherency is a type of inherency that says that there is a structural barrier, such as a law, that prevents the affirmative plan from being adopted now.

**Squirrel case:** An affirmative approach that isolates an obscure area of the topic to justify the resolution.

**Subpoints:** Substructure of a larger argument, contention, or observation.

**Switch side debate:** debate where debaters argue both sides of the resolution by alternative between the affirmative and negative. Switch-side debate is the standard way that debate is currently practiced.

**Systemic Impact:** An impact that happens through an entire system or structure on a regular basis. Speaker award. The person with the greatest speaker point totals at the end of a tournament is the tournament's top speaker and receives a speaker award. The person with the second highest total speaker points is the second speaker. Usual ten to twenty speaker awards are given.

## T

**Tab room:** where the pairings for the tournament are produced and the results are calculated.

**Tabula Rasa:** Latin for "blank slate." Generally, debaters wish judges to be "tabula rasa – or "tab" for short. They want the judge to leave as many predispositions as possible at home and judge the debate solely based on the arguments made by the debaters.

**Tag:** the brief statement that precedes the card that is a basic summary of the card. Tag. The tag is the summary statement that summarizes the quote that a given team introduces. The tag is what constitutes the argument being advanced in the debate.

**Take-out:** a strictly defensive argument that refutes the claim made by the other side. For example, if your opponent claims that economic decline causes a war and you say that economic decline doesn't cause a war, then you have made a take-out.

**Team:** In this text, a debate team refers to two individuals – you and your partner. People often refer to the "debate team" as the squad.

**Textual competition:** a form of counterplan competition that says as long as the counterplan is competitive with the plan in terms of how it is written it does not matter if it is competitive in function. Textual competition is highly suspect theory. See "debate theory."

**Threshold:** A threshold argument is similar to a brink argument. When presenting a disadvantage, negatives will argue that the economic decline triggered by plan will push us over the threshold to economic decline.

**Time frame:** The time-frame refers to how quickly the impact scenario that is isolated by one of the teams will happen. Both teams will usually at least assert that the time-frame for their impact happens quickly and will argue that the judge should give it primary consideration for that reason

**Time-frame permutation:** a permutation that sequences the adoption of the counterplan either before or after the counterplan. Time-frame permutations are widely considered to be illegitimate.

**Top heavy:** refers to the notion that debaters spend a lot of time giving overviews for their arguments and strongly answering the first few arguments that their opposition makes while ignoring – or at least poorly answering – many of the arguments at the bottom of the flow.

**Topic:** There are two ways that the “topic” is defined. First, the topic can be defined as a one word statement that summarizes what is being debated. For example, many says that the 2006-7 topic is “national service.” The “topic” also refers to the “resolution.” The 2006-7 policy debate resolution is: That the United States federal government should establish a policy substantially increasing the number of persons serving in one or more of the following national service programs: AmeriCorps, Citizen Corps, Senior Corps, Peace Corps, Learn and Serve America, Armed Forces.

**Topical:** Affirmative plans are topical if they meet each word of the resolution. This year, affirmative plans have to be a substantial increase in U.S. public health assistance to Africa.

**Topic-specific education:** Topic specific education is the education that you gain from debating the specific topic. In theory debates different sides will argue that certain practices enhance or undermine topic-specific education.

**Topicality:** A stock issue. A negative argument that essentially contends that an affirmative’s plan does not fit within the meaning of the resolution, and thus they should lose the debate. For example, if the affirmative only increases the number of people serving in the Armed Forces by one, the negative will argue that it is not a substantial increase.

**Effects topicality:** The affirmative claims that the plan itself is not topical, but that it leads to a topical condition or result.

**Tag:** A summary of your argument (usually one sentence).

**Tag-teaming:** Receiving hints, clues, or answers from a team or audience members while speaking or during cross-examination.

**Take out:** A defensive answer to an argument. It claims that the argument is not true and should be eliminated from the debate.

**Threshold:** See Brink.

**Time frame:** Explanation of when a predicted or caused event will take place.

**Topicality:** One of four stock issues in policy debate. It argues a state of conformity between the affirmative case and the intent of the debate resolution. The notion that the affirmative plan or negative counterplan should/should not fall within the conceptual boundaries of the resolution.

**Best definition standard for topicality:** Usually argued as a topicality standard by the negative team. The negative argues that the judge must choose the best definition offered in the round in order to decide whether the plan is topical. Affirmatives often argue that there is no need to choose, since a definition only needs to be reasonable (not “best”) for debate purposes. “Best” is determined by arguments made by the negative, such as source, context, date, specificity, etc.

**Tournament:** The tournament is the place where debates occur. All tournaments have a given number of preliminary debates where everyone participates and then elimination rounds where two person teams debate until the last one is undefeated.

**Turn (or Turn Around or Flip):** When you turn an argument you say they opposite - “Turns the tables” on opponents. Argues that the problem raised by opponents is unique to the policy system they defend, not to the policy system they oppose. Thus, the plan may not cause the problem—it may solve it (turn). If the other side argues you spend money, and you argue you save money, you are turning their argument. There are three types of turns – link turns, internal link turns, and impact turns. Be careful not to double-turn yourself.

## U

**Uniqueness:** Part of a disadvantage that states the DA is not happening now. Uniqueness states that the present system prevents a certain harmful side effect from occurring, or simply that such a bad effect will not happen in the status quo. Whether something is an essential cause of a situation or scenario. The component of a disadvantage that illustrates that the disadvantage impact, that the negative claims, results only from the adoption of the affirmative plan -- that is, the disadvantage impact would not occur absent the affirmative plan.

**Uniqueness:** refers to the part of the disadvantage that argues that the disadvantage will not occur absent the adoption of the affirmative plan (or negative counter-plan or kritik alternative). Uniqueness is one of the most hotly contested issues in modern policy debate.

**Underlimits:** is a topicality theory argument which contends that a given interpretation/definition is underlimiting – meaning it creates/supports a topic that is too broad.

**Underview:** an overview that is given at the end of the speech rather than the beginning. Underviews can help focus the judge, but arguments that are made in underviews are usually best advanced in overviews because that is when you have judge’s closest attention.

### V

**Violation:** Part of a topicality argument that explains how the affirmative plan is inconsistent with one of the words in the resolution or fails to meet the negative interpretation. For example, if the affirmative only increases the number of people serving in the Armed Forces by one, the negative will argue that it is not a substantial increase.

**Voting issue:** An argument stipulating that this issue alone, and its fate, should determine the decision in the debate; an issue that the judge should vote on before anything else; often claimed for topicality issues. The stock issues of topicality, significance, inherency, and solvency.

**Varsity Team:** A team consisting of two students where at least one of the students has debated at least one year

### W

**Warrant:** a reason that is given in support of a claim. For example: Claim – economic decline causes war. Warrant—World War II followed from a period of economic decline.

**Whole Resolution (or Whole Res):** A generic debate argument that says that the resolution must be debated in a holistic manner to determine its probable truth. Usually the negative must establish some form of standard to measure when it is possible to induce the truth of the resolution.

### Fallacies

**Ad Hominem:** A Latin term that means "attack on the man." This form of argument attacks the person rather than the argument.

**Hasty generalization:** An argument asserting that a judge cannot conclude that a resolution is true based on a minor or small example.

**Post Hoc Ergo Proctor Hoc**

**Red Herring**