

QUICK START GUIDE

Judging Policy Debate

Washington Urban Debate League

Washington, DC

October 2017

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# **Welcome to the Washington Urban Debate League!**

Urban debate is a unique youth program for middle and high school students in public schools nationwide. Its mission is to teach urban kids to think, communicate, collaborate, and love learning.

To achieve this mission, the Washington Urban Debate League (WUDL) offers free Policy Debate programming to public school students and schools in the District of Columbia and Prince George’s County, Maryland. Why Policy Debate? Policy Debate is the most challenging and academically rigorous form of competitive debate. We want every student to graduate from high school prepared to succeed in their future endeavors and to contribute to their community. Policy Debate builds these crucial skills and inspires students to enjoy learning.

We welcome you to our volunteer community, which makes this essential educational opportunity available to our community’s youth.

# **Why Volunteer?**

Volunteers can make a huge difference in a relatively short amount of time. Judging at WUDL tournaments is the engine that makes urban debate possible—every round you judge allows 4 more students to participate.

WUDL started in 2015-16, and served 8 schools and about 120 students. In 2016-17, we worked with 30 schools and 300 students. In 2017-2018, we anticipate serving 40 schools and more than 400 students. This growth is only made possible by lots of volunteers from the District, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) community.

Our debate season runs from October – April each year. Check our Tournament Schedule at Appendix A, or on our website under Programming.

Thank you for coming today, and we hope to see you many more times throughout the season!

### Volunteer Process

Becoming a volunteer debate judge is a simple process. It starts with a willingness to:

* Want to make an impact on middle and high school youth in your community
* Be a good listener
* Take notes and provide constructive feedback
* Decide objectively which team made the stronger case in the debate.

### Do I Need Prior Experience?

* Our judge pool is a diverse array of people from students to retirees, with all sorts of different personal and professional backgrounds. Some folks debated themselves, while others are new to the activity. Everyone can add a lot of value as a judge, and we encourage our students to learn to speak in front of diverse audiences.
* In the Novice Division, no prior experience is required. The students competing in the Novice Division are also just starting their debate careers, and most rounds are relatively easy to decide and provide feedback for.
* Judging Junior Varsity and Varsity Division debates can be a bit harder, and is for those who have judged several tournaments and are ready to learn more. They may or may not have had prior experience in debating or coaching. Once you’ve judged a tournament or two, check out some of the resources available on our website, and attend our advanced judge trainings held each morning before our tournaments.

Background Check

Volunteerism is a key element of our program, but so is protecting our students. All volunteers must fill out a short, five minute background check through our partners at Verified Volunteers. The background check has a suggested donation of $15, and can be completed online: <https://app.verifiedvolunteers.com/Candidates/Account/Register>

Volunteer Policies We ask all of our volunteers to follow three simple rules:

* **Respect:** Respect students, WUDL Staff, other volunteers, and the facilities we use for our tournaments.

​

* **Professionalism:** Staying professional is important to fostering the serious, learning-focused environment that makes the Washington Urban Debate League successful.

​

* **Positive Attitude:** Our students look up to you as an adult who is willing to listen to them. Stay positive and constructive during any conversations with students, and anywhere at the tournament.

### Online Volunteer Signup

Please go to the WUDL Website for volunteer signup:

<http://www.urbandebatewashingtondc.org/volunteer-signup>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with a link to the WUDL Intro to Judging video. If possible, please view this brief, informative video before you come to volunteer.

# **Judge Training**

We offer two different levels of judge training during breakfast (and sometimes again at lunch) at each competition. Here is the training schedule.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8:15-8:45 AM | Breakfast, Registration, and Judge Training |
| 12:15-12:45 PM | Lunch, Coaches Meeting, and Judge Training |

Beginner. This 30-minute course goes over the basics for those who don't have a debate background, and/or who haven't judgedmuch before. This course will cover the structure and flow of a debate round, how to fill out the ballot, and the basics of strategy and the use of evidence in policy debate.

* After completing Beginner training, you will “shadow” an experienced WUDL judge as h/she judges a round. This gives you the opportunity to observe a judge in action and to ask any questions you may have about the judging process.
* At that time, you will listen to the debate and take notes. At the end of the debate, you will fill in a practice ballot to share with your experienced judge only**.** You and your judge will discuss your observations and practice ballot results.
* When you are ready to judgea debate in the Novice Divisionon your own, alert the tab room, or contact David Trigaux, WUDL Program Director, to get a judging assignment.

Advanced.This course is designed for those who have judged several tournaments and are ready to learn more. Our goal is to provide the best feedback possible to our students, to help them grow, improve, and prepare our varsity students for regional travel. This course is designed to build your skills, learn more about the topic, and prepare you to judge JV and Varsity rounds.

# **A Day in the Life of a Judge**

Sign In as a judge**.** When you arrive at the tournament site, please sign in at the Registration table. Give your name andschool affiliation (if any) and state that you are a volunteer judge. Ask for directions to breakfast and the room number for Judge Training and arrive promptly.

Tournament Day schedule.Tournament schedules generally follow the format shown below, unless specified otherwise.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 8:15-8:45 | Breakfast, Registration, and Judge Training |
| 9:00-10:45 | Debate Round 1 |
| 11:00-12:30 | Debate Round 2 |
| 12:30-1:00 | Lunch and Coaches Meeting |
| 1:00-2:45 | Debate Round 3 |
| 3:00-4:45 | Debate Round 4 |
| 4:45-5:15 | Awards |

Breakfast and lunch are available for our volunteer judges. If you have a dietary restriction, please inform the tournament director, David Trigaux, at least a week before attending the tournament so we can accommodate you.

# **Policy Debate Basics**

### The 2017-2018 policy debate resolution

***Resolved:   The United States federal government should substantially increase its funding and/or regulation of elementary and/or secondary education in the United States.***

### Affirmative (AFF) and Negative (NEG)

For each debate round, each pair of students(a “debate team”)are assigned their debate role.

* The Affirmative team (AFF) argues in support of some part of this resolution
* The Negative team (NEG) argues against this resolution.

Teams come prepared to argue both AFF and NEG sides of the resolution during the tournament. In a 4-round tournament, each team usually argues 2 AFF and 2 NEG rounds.

Each school team has 2 students.

* The AFF team students sit at a table in positions 1A (first speaker, AFF) and 2A (second speaker, AFF).
* The NEG team students sit at another table in positions 1N (first speaker, NEG) and 2N (second speaker, NEG).

Note: Occasionally, a school will send only 1 student to the round. That student will take two turns - either as Affirmative (1A, 2A) or as Negative (1N, 2N). This is called “going maverick” and is allowed.

### WUDL Tournament Divisions

At WUDL tournaments, teams compete in 3 different divisions:

* Novice
* Junior Varsity
* Varsity

Judges new to policy debate will judge rounds in Novice Division only.

**5 Steps to Judging a Policy Debate**

# **1 – Get ready**

Be sure to complete Beginner training and follow up activities for Novice Division judges (shadowing, sitting with an experienced judge, etc.). See Judge Training section above.

1. Find your assignment on the “pairings.” Copies of thepairings are posted on walls in the tournament’s biggest room, usually the cafeteria. Here is a sample pairing:

|  |
| --- |
| Novice Division – Round 19:00-10:30AM |
| **Judge** | **AFFIRMATIVE****School/Debater Codes** | **NEGATIVE****School/Debater Codes** | **Room** |
| Carrera | Adams MS / ABAdams MS / DE | Jefferson MS / MNJefferson MS / PQ | C-101 |
| Johnson | Madison HS / GHMadison MS / JK | Harrison HS/ STHarrison HS / VW | C-102 |

1. Go to your room and get ready to begin the round. If needed, arrange the room for a debate. Use tables, chairs, or desks in the room. Move furniture respectfully, and do not use the teacher’s desk. After the last round, return room to its original setup, and get students to clean up any trash that might be related to the tournament.
2. Debate teams have two students each. Students are identified as the first speaker and the second speaker, and by which side of the debate their team is arguing.  For example, the first speaker on the Affirmative team is 1A, the first speaker on the Negative team is 1N, etc. Often, it is easiest to ask the students what their speaker positions are, or even to fill out their names on the ballot for you.
3. If a team isn’t ready to compete, hasn’t arrived at the room, or is otherwise unwilling to start the round **15 minutes** after the pairings were posted in the cafeteria, they have forfeited the round. Sign the ballot and return it to the tab room.

**1N**

**2N**

**1A**

**2A**

**NEGATIVE (NEG) TABLE**

**AFFIRMATIVE (AFF) TABLE**

**TABLE**

**JUDGE**

**Debate Room Setup**

You may have a few adults who come to observe the round. They may be family or community members, coaches or teachers. Introduce yourself to each one. Ask the students before the observers get settled if they are comfortable with observers. If ANY member of either team seems uncomfortable with the prospect of an additional audience, tell the observers they’ll have to wait outside/find another round. Otherwise, tell them they are welcome to observe but must remain silent throughout the round. This means no talking, signaling, or clapping, and no cell phones or recording devices.

1. Check your cell phone to be sure you have enough battery for the approximately 90-minute round. Using your cell phone to time is an important component of judging.

TIP: Bring a cell phone charger so you can recharge your phone during the day.

1. The ballot will be brought to the room. DO NOT wait for the ballot to begin the round. Tournament volunteers deliver ballots at the beginning of the round and pick up completed ballots at the end of the round. If they don’t come by when the round is over, bring the ballot to the tab room.
2. Verify the pre-filled tournament and team information at the top of the ballot.
	* Are their school names correct?
	* Is each team debating its assigned position – Affirmative or Negative?

TIP: Novice Division debaters sometimes get confused, so it’s good to be helpful and patient. They will need to argue either position during the tournament.

**See the Sample Ballot on the next page.**

**SAMPLE Washington Urban Debate League Policy Debate Ballot**

Pairings Listed Here

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tournament Date: | October 14, 2017 | Room:  | C-101 |
| Round:  | 1 | Division | Novice |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Affirmative Team: Adams MS | Negative Team: Jefferson MS |
| Speaker  | Name | Points | Speaker | Name | Points |
| 1A | Allison Brown |  | 1N | Maria Navarro  |  |
| 2A | Donald Earle |  | 2N | Paula Quinn |  |

**Judge Instructions:** Listen and take notes. Let the debaters finish, even if you have decided the outcome.

Vote Affirmative if their proposed action is a good idea. Vote Negative if they prove the affirmative’s proposed action is a bad idea OR if they offer an alternative action that can solve the same harms AND is net beneficial.

**Prep Time:** Each team gets 8 minutes they can use to “pause” the debate. Prep time can be used in any increments before any of their speeches.

**Reason for Decision:** *(Students and coaches will read the feedback you provide below. Please outline why the winning team won, and what each team can do better)*

**Speaker Point Scale:**

0-24: Offensive/ Inappropriate behavior

24-25: More practice/research needed

26-27: Technical errors, but not bad

27.5: Average

28-29.5: Strong performance

30: Best speaking ever, no flaws

Judge’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Judge’s Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

#  **2 – Start and time your round**

1. Introduce yourself briefly to the students. Let them know your name, professional and/or family background, why you think debate is important, etc. Be natural.
2. Talk about roles – yours, students, and any observers
	1. Judge – “My job is...”
		1. To listen carefully and judge this round objectively
		2. To be the official timer
		3. To follow WUDL procedures for Novice Division
		4. To give you constructive feedback to help you improve your skills
	2. Students – “Your job is…”
		1. To speak loudly and clearly enough so that I can hear every word
		2. To persuade me that your case is stronger and your team should win the round
		3. To respect each other, everyone in the room with us, and the space.
3. Timing
	1. Set your timer for 8 minutes for first speaker
	2. Ask first speaker if ready to begin. When yes, begin timing.
4. Using the Debate Structure Chart, track the order of speakers and cross-examinations. Call time to start and end each speech and cross-examination.
	1. Note: There are two types of speeches in the debate. The first set of four speeches - 1AC, 1NC, 2AC, 2NC- are Constructives. During Constructives, debaters are building (constructing) their cases, either for or against the resolution. These speeches should be composed of evidence to support the arguments made by the debaters.The second set of four speeches – 1NR, 1AR, 2NR, 2AR - are Rebuttals. During Rebuttals, debaters focus on negating (rebutting) their opponents’ case and explaining why their side should win. These should reference evidence but be composed of analysis and a debater’s own words.
5. In addition, keep track of each team’s preparation time. Each team can use a total of 8 minutes prep in any increment before any of their speeches during the debate. The team chooses the amount they want for each prep time – 2 minutes, for example.

**You can use the Debate Structure chart on the next page to track and time the round.**

****

# **3** – **Listen and take notes**

***Resolved:   The United States federal government should substantially increase its funding and/or regulation of elementary and/or secondary education in the United States.***

**Topic Summaries help you get up to speed.** When you are judging, it is helpful for you to know a bit about the core questions you’ll hear debated regarding this year’s resolution. The WUDL Topic Summaries 2017-2018 will help you get up to speed. Please see Appendix B.

**What to listen for.** Each team is expected to build its case. A case is a set of arguments. Each argument should be structured as a claim (what you believe), a warrant (why you believe it – “because…”), and evidence to support your claim (give source/date).

1. In their case, the Affirmative team proposes something that the federal government should do. This is called their plan. The Affirmative team should address:
* Inherency – why the plan is not happening now, in the status quo
* The Plan – A proposal for action by the federal government
* Advantages – the problems that the plan is going to fix, why we should do the plan
* Solvency – howthe plan will work
* They should also be ready to address questions of Topicality, if challenged – the plan fits within the boundaries of the resolution’s key words; it is “on topic”
1. In their case, the Negative team has to prove that the Affirmative's plan is a bad idea.
* The Negative team can rebut (negate) the key arguments in the Affirmative case.
* In addition, the Negative team:
	+ Can choose to bring out disadvantages (DA) of the Affirmative’s plan to increase federal funding/regulation for education. For example, they could argue that the plan would result in a budget trade off, decreasing spending on the military, criminal justice, or healthcare.
	+ Can argue topicality. Topicality is an argument about definition of key words in the resolution to determine if the affirmative is on topic or not. If an Affirmative case stretches the definitions too far, its case is considered “untopical,” and unfair to the negative, who prepared to debate “topical” cases.
	+ In Junior Varsity and beyond the Negative team may offer a counterplan or a Kritik, but they do NOT have to do this to win the debate.

**Important: Novice Division teams can only use approved cases from the WUDL Novice Packet. See the next page for the list of Novice Packet cases.**

Here are the ONLY cases approved for teams to use in the WUDL Novice Division. This is called the Novice Packet, and all schools receive a copy ahead of the debate season. The Novice Packet is available at: <http://www.urbandebatewashingtondc.org/evidence-zone>

|  |
| --- |
| WUDL Novice Division – Novice Packet |
| **Affirmative Cases** | **Negative Cases** |
| STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) Promotion Affirmative  | STEM Promotion Negative |
| Disability Vouchers Affirmative | Disability Vouchers Negative |
|  | Spending Tradeoff DA (Disadvantage) |
| Topicality |

Enforcing Novice Packet Case Use. If you observe a team using cases not in the Novice Packet, per WUDL rules, the other team automatically wins the round. You can stop the round to tell the students this is what you’ve observed, and what the consequence is. DO NOT engage in a debate with the students or their coaches; simply report it to the tab room. Then let the students finish the round. Afterwards explain that the team that used external research forfeited the round. Award speaker points as if the round went on normally. Bring it to the attention of the tab room. This team is likely ready for Junior Varsity.

Refer any questions to the WUDL Program Director, David Trigaux.

**Take notes**

As a judge, it is critical for you to take notes as you listen to the debaters’ speeches. Why? A debate round lasts at least an hour and possibly another 16 minutes with team preparation time. That’s a lot of information to track. You need this information to help make your decision on the team you decide is the “winner,” that is, the most persuasive in supporting or opposing the resolution.

Our experienced WUDL judges recommend using a Flow Sheet to document a debate round.

This simple note-taking method helps you keep track of each team’s case, speaker by speaker. It also helps you identify the “flow” of both Affirmative and Negative team arguments, evidence, and rebuttals from the round’s start to finish. It is particularly useful to point out arguments that were dropped, or conceded during the round.

**Please see Appendix C - Flow Sheet to Document a Debate Round**

# **4 – Decide debate and complete the ballot**



After the teams have finished debating,complete the ballot.

1. Assign speaker points to each speaker.
	* Use the Speaker Point Scale on the ballot to determine points assigned.
	* Write the speaker point rating next to each student’s name at the top half of the ballot.
	* Each speaker should have a distinct point rating. You may assign whole numbers, for example, 25, 26, 27, 28.
	* Or you may use increments of 0.1 to distinguish between two speakers, for example, 25, 25.5. 26, 26.8
2. Briefly describe the reason for your decision. Outline why the winning team won, and what each team can do better. Students and their coaches get a copy of the ballots after the tournament, so please give them something to work on for future competitions.

**Please see COMPLETED Washington Urban Debate League Policy Debate Ballot on the following page.**

**COMPLETED Washington Urban Debate League Policy Debate Ballot**

Pairings Listed Here

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Tournament Date: | October 14, 2017 | Room:  | C-101 |
| Round:  | 1 | Division | Novice |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Affirmative Team: Adams MS**AWARDED TO AFFIRMATIVE**  | Negative Team: Jefferson MS |
| Speaker  | Name | Points | Speaker | Name | Points |
| 1A | Allison Brown | 28 | 1N | Malia Nelson | 26 |
| 2A | Donald Earle | 27 | 2N | Paula Quinn | 25 |

**Judge Instructions:** Listen and take notes. Let the debaters finish, even if you have decided the outcome.

Vote Affirmative if their proposed action is a good idea. Vote Negative if they prove the affirmative’s proposed action is a bad idea OR if they offer an alternative action that can solve the same harms AND is net beneficial.

**Prep Time:** Each team gets 8 minutes they can use to “pause” the debate. Prep time can be used in any increments before any of their speeches.

**Speaker Point Scale:**

0-24: Offensive/ Inappropriate behavior

24-25: More practice/research needed

26-27: Technical errors, but not bad

27.5: Average

28-29.5: Strong performance

30: Best speaking ever, no flaws

**Reason for Decision:** *(Students and coaches will read the feedback you provide below. Please outline why the winning team won, and what each team can do better)*

The AFF team clearly supported the resolution with its STEM technology case. It pointed out why the status quo of public education funding needs changing. It presented a detailed plan for change – what the plan would do, how, and when. It made the case for STEM education with solid arguments supported by sound evidence for the Clean Energy advantage. Next time, the team could improve cross-examination, asking more questions and making fewerunsupported statements.

The NEG team made a spirited effort to counter the AFF’s plan. The team worked well together. However, the NEG team was somewhat disorganized and did not offer a compelling reason why the affirmative plan was a bad idea. Next time, the team will be more successful with clearer organization and offensive reasons why the plan is a bad idea.

Judge’s Name: \_\_Jasmine Robinson \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Judge’s Affiliation: Community volunteer

# **5 – Give constructive feedback**



# **Appendix A – WUDL Tournament Schedule 2017-2018**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Name** | **Location** | **Type** |
| October 14, 2017 | WUDL Season Opener | Capitol City PCS100 Peabody St NWWashington, DC 20011 | First regular season WUDL tournament of the year |
| November 4, 2017 | WUDL Fall Classic | Greenbelt/Dora Kennedy | Second regular season WUDL Tournament |
| November 18, 2017 | TBD | TBD | Third regular season WUDL Tournament |
| December 9, 2017 | 3rd Annual DCI Invitational | DC International PCS | Fourth regular season WUDL Tournament  |
| January 27, 2018 | WUDL Winter Classic | TBD | 5th regular season WUDL tournament |
| February 10, 2018 | WUDL Spring Classic | Columbia Heights Education Campus | 6th regular season WUDL tournament |
| March 17, 2018 | WUDL March Madness | Largo High School | 7th regular season WUDL Tournament |
| April 14, 2018 | DMV Urban Debate Regionals | TBD | Final tournament of the WUDL regular season. Year-long awards and the Sweepstakes trophy will be awarded. |

Please check the WUDL Website for updates.

<http://www.urbandebatewashingtondc.org/>schedule

# **Appendix B – WUDL Topic Summaries 2017-2018, Novice Packet**

The Washington Urban Debate League provides a collection of evidence and sample cases to get novice debaters started. These “Core Files” will let students get started in 5-6 meetings and lower the barrier to entry. The following summaries should help you, as a judge, get up to speed on some of the core questions you’ll hear debated in the WUDL.

**STEM Promotion**

A large push in education today is to promote STEM education. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) education is a push towards updating education to a technologically dependent 21st century workforce. Its proponents argue that training a STEM-oriented future workforce will propel our economy and our industries into the future (and our students towards well-paying jobs). A booming US economy driven by science and technology can lead to all sorts of benefits. Opponents believe that a more well-rounded approach to education is necessary. They question the need for additional programs and/or funds beyond the ones that already exist, and that these programs work. STEM programs are also expensive, requiring labs, computers, etc. to properly execute. An issue on both sides of the debate is that STEM programs are disproportionately available to male and affluent students, and many students don’t want to study.

**Vouchers for Disabilities**

School choice is a core concept in education reform that can take many forms. Our students will debate the merits of school vouchers, specifically for students with disabilities, in the novice packet. Schools are funded by a per-pupil head count. A school voucher is a program where parents can take the money a public school would have spent on their student and take it to a school of their choice, including a private school. This affirmative suggests that the government create a national school voucher program for students with disabilities, modeled after a program in Florida called the McKay Scholarship Program. The affirmative will argue that students with disabilities will be better served by having more options like going to private schools. A proper education can help folks with disabilities avoid poverty (which a disproportionate number of people with disabilities live in), and can improve their quality of life. Opponents will argue that public schools do a better job educating students with disabilities, protecting their civil rights, and that limited voucher programs never stay that way. They will also argue that the program will be very expensive.

**Topicality**

Topicality is a negative argument that argues that the affirmative isn’t falling under the umbrella of the resolution. Topicality is a theoretical argument that says that the negative only has to respond to “topical” affirmatives, and if the affirmative doesn’t propose a topical plan that falls under the resolution, they should lose. This argument should be presented in the following form: 1) an interpretation of the topic (usually a definition of some part of the resolution), 2) a violation that specifies what the affirmative did wrong, and 3) standards, or theoretical reasons why the affirmative case is bad. These usually revolve around the standards of fairness and education.

# **Appendix C – Flow Sheet to Document a Debate Round**

**Blank flow sheet. 8 ½ x 11 paper, 1 page single-sided**

TIP: Fold in half horizontally 3 times for single-sided flow sheet with columns for all 8 speeches.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **1AC** - 1st Affirmative Constructive**8 mins.** | **1NC** – 1st Negative Constructive**8 mins**. | **2AC –** 2nd Affirmative Constructive**8 mins.** | **2NC** – 2nd Negative Constructive**8 mins.** | **1NR** -1st Negative Rebuttal**5 mins**. | **1AR**- 1st Affirmative Rebuttal**5 mins.** | **2NR** – 2nd Negative Rebuttal**5 mins.** | **2AR** – 2nd Affirmative Rebuttal **5 mins.** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

For further information, contact:

David Trigaux,

Program Director

Washington Urban Debate League

david.trigaux@urbandebate.org