

OVERVIEW

The skill of debating is essential for government, business, and technology leaders as our society faces new challenges in areas such as medicine, space exploration, pollution, global warming, economics, manufacturing, and agriculture. Tied to these challenges is the necessity for proficiency in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). Developing debate and communication skills in students, in conjunction with a focus on topics related to STEM, is an effective way to increase technological literacy.

In this event, team members work together to prepare for a debate against a team from another chapter. The teams will be instructed to take either the Pro or Con side of a selected subtopic.

The theme (and subtopics) for this event will be posted on the national TSA website under Competitions/Themes and Problems.

ELIGIBILITY

Three (3) teams of two (2) individuals per state may participate.

TIME LIMITS

1. For the debate, see Preliminary Round, Procedure 2.6 for time limits.
2. The LEAP interview will be conducted immediately following each semifinalist debate round and will last a maximum of five (5) additional minutes (per team).

LEAP

A team LEAP Report is required for this event and must be submitted at event check-in (see LEAP Program).

ATTIRE

TSA competition attire is required for this event.

PROCEDURE

PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Participants research all subtopics and should be prepared to debate any of the subtopics from both Pro and Con views.
 - a. All participants will be assigned the same subtopic.
 - b. A new subtopic may be assigned for the semifinals, and all participants will debate that new subtopic.
2. Pre-debate meeting
 - a. Participants report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to receive an assigned debate time, a subtopic, general directions, and information from the judging team.
 - b. Failure of participants to attend this meeting will result in disqualification.
 - c. This meeting will be held for both preliminary heats and the semifinal portion of the event.
 - d. Participants will be reminded in this meeting to not state their individual or school name in the presence of judges.
 - e. Teams must submit a LEAP Report at the pre-debate meeting in order to compete.
3. Each team reports to the preparation room fifteen (15) minutes before the scheduled debate time.
4. One (1) minute before teams are instructed to report to the presentation room, each team will be informed of the view (Pro or Con) of the issue it will present to the judges.
5. Once the teams are informed of the view they are to take, they will be escorted to the debate room.
6. Order of debate format:
 - a. Pro Speaker (maximum of 2 minutes)
 - b. Con Speaker (maximum of 2 minutes)
 - c. Break (1 minute)

- d. Pro Cross Examination of Con (maximum of 2 minutes)
 - e. Con Cross Examination of Pro (maximum of 2 minutes)
 - f. Break (1 minute)
 - g. Pro Rebuttal (maximum of 2 minutes)
 - h. Con Rebuttal (maximum of 2 minutes)
7. During cross-examination, the team answering the questions remains seated.
 8. The escort will introduce the Pro team by identification number and the team will be instructed to sit to the left side of the podium.
 - a. The first speaker should sit next to the podium.
 - b. At this time, participants will present their schedule card and reference summary to the judges.
 9. The Con team will be introduced by identification number and will be instructed to sit to the right side of the podium.
 - a. The first speaker should sit next to the podium.
 - b. At this time, participants will present their schedule card and reference summary to the judges.
 10. When the judges and teams are ready, the Pro speaker will be instructed to move to the podium and begin.
 - a. Timing starts when the speaker begins.
 - b. After one (1) minute and forty-five (45) seconds, the timer will hold up a 4" x 6" card that reads "15 seconds."
 - c. Penalty points will be deducted if a speaker exceeds the allotted time.
 11. When the Pro speaker is finished and has been seated, the Con speaker will move to the podium and begin, according to the same procedure noted above.
 12. When the Con speaker is finished and has been seated, the timer will announce a one (1)-minute conference period in which both teams may prepare their questions for cross examination.
 13. At the conclusion of the one (1)-minute conference period, the timer will announce that the conference period is over and the Pro questioning speaker will approach the podium.
 - a. Timing starts when the speaker begins.
 - b. After one (1) minute and forty-five (45) seconds, the timer will hold up a 4" x 6" card that reads "15 seconds."
 - c. If the con team is in the process of answering a question, the team may finish its answer, provided it does not exceed an additional 15 seconds beyond the allotted two (2) minutes. At this time, the team will be cut off by the timer.
 14. When the Pro questioning speaker is seated, the Con questioning speaker will approach the podium.
 - a. Timing starts when the speaker begins.
 - b. After one (1) minute and forty-five (45) seconds, the timer will hold up a 4" x 6" card that reads "15 seconds."
 - c. If the pro team is in the process of answering a question, the team may finish its answer, provided it does not exceed an additional 15 seconds beyond the allotted two (2) minutes. At this time, the team will be cut off by the timer.
 15. At the conclusion of the cross examination, the teams will be given a one (1) minute conference break to prepare their rebuttals.
 16. The timer will announce the end of the conference break and the Pro rebuttal speaker will approach the podium.
 - a. Timing starts when the speaker begins.
 - b. After one (1) minute and forty-five (45) seconds the timer will hold up a 4" x 6" card that reads "15 seconds."
 - c. Penalty points will be deducted if a speaker exceeds the allotted time.

17. When the Pro rebuttal speaker is finished and has been seated, the Con rebuttal speaker will move to the podium and begin, according to the same procedure noted above in Procedure 16.
18. When the Con rebuttal speaker is finished and has been seated, the timer will announce to both teams that they may leave the debate room.
19. If there is an odd number of teams entered in the event, one team will debate twice, based on a random drawing for teams that wish to go twice. (Note that the coordinator may not force a team to go twice if it does not wish to do so.)
20. If a team debates twice, it may or may not have the same side of the debate.
 - a. The team will also be required to provide an additional copy of the Resource List (see Regulation M) to the judges.
 - b. The highest score of the twice-debating team will be used as its score.
21. If preliminary heats are used, twelve (12) semifinalists will be posted in random order.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. Semifinalists will report to the event area at the time and place stated in the conference program to receive an assigned debate time, as well as general directions and information from the judging team. Note that a different subtopic from the preliminary round may or may not be used.
2. Each team reports to the preparation room at its assigned time.
3. The semifinalist LEAP interview will take place immediately following each semifinalist debate round.
4. Preliminary round, Procedures 4-18 will be followed to determine the ten (10) finalists.
5. Room set-up:



REGULATIONS

PRELIMINARY ROUND

- A. Participants must debate the current year’s selected subtopic, as assigned at the conference.
- B. Pre-written notes may be used. Notes must be written on 3" x 5" notecards.
- C. Handwritten notes may be taken during the debate.
- D. A three (3)-ring binder of reference materials, as noted on the summary provided to the judges, may be used during the debate.
- E. No audio-visual materials of any type may be used.
- F. Participants are not allowed to hear the debates of other teams, aside from the team they are debating.
- G. Participants may use their own stopwatches to time themselves. These may only be traditional stopwatches; cell phone stop watches are NOT ALLOWED.
- H. No observers or assistants are allowed in the preparation room.
- I. No observers are allowed to view the preliminary heats.
- J. Teams are penalized five (5) points for speaking over the allotted time.
- K. Participants must both present at different times during the debate. Only one (1) speaker per side is allowed at the podium at any time.
- L. Cross examination (questioning) of the opposing team is to remain civil. Any aggressive behavior, belittling of opponents, or shouting will result in immediate disqualification of the offending team.
- M. Each team is required to submit a summary of references (used to prepare for the event) on an 8½" x 11" sheet of paper; both sides of the paper may be used.
 1. The event title, the event’s yearly topic, and a line for the entry number must be printed at the top of the front side of the paper.
 2. The reference summary must be typewritten (handwritten is not acceptable).
 3. Font size must not be less than 10 point.

4. MLA format must be used to cite sources.
5. References for all three (3) subtopics are to be submitted on one (1) sheet of paper, not a separate sheet for each subtopic.
6. The summary of references must be given to the judges at both preliminary heats and semifinalist rounds.
7. Not having a summary of references will result in a rules violation deduction.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

(In addition to the Preliminary Round regulations)

- A. Observers are allowed in the debate room during the semifinalist debates.
 1. No audio or visual recording devices are allowed.
 2. No talking or gesturing is permitted.
 3. Observers are not allowed to enter or leave during a debate.
 4. There is no applause until the debate is completed.
- B. The LEAP Report
 1. Teams document the leadership skills they have developed and demonstrated while working on this event, and on a non-competitive event leadership experience.
 2. Teams will respond to questions about the content of the LEAP Report as part of the LEAP interview, which will be conducted immediately following each semifinalist debate round.
 3. Specific LEAP Report regulations can be found in the LEAP Program section of this guide and on the TSA website.

EVALUATION

1. The team's knowledge of a selected subtopic
2. The team's communication ability (i.e., the use of debate and presentation skills)
3. The LEAP requirements and interview

Refer to the official rating form for more information.

DEBATING TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES

2019 & 2020 OFFICIAL RATING FORM

HIGH SCHOOL

Judges: Using minimal (1-4 points), adequate (5-8 points), or exemplary (9-10 points) performance levels as a guideline in the rating form, record the scores earned for the event criteria in the column spaces to the right. The X1 or X2 notation in the criteria column is a multiplier factor for determining the points earned. (Example: an “adequate” score of 7 for an X1 criterion = 7 points; an “adequate” score of 7 for an X2 criterion = 14 points.) A score of zero (0) is acceptable if the minimal performance for any criterion is not met.

Go/No Go Specifications

- Before judging the entry, ensure that the items below are present; indicate presence with a check mark in the box.
- If an item is missing, leave the box next to the item blank and place a check mark in the box labeled ENTRY NOT EVALUATED.
- If a check mark is placed in the ENTRY NOT EVALUATED box, the entry is not to be judged.

- Completed LEAP Report is present.
 ENTRY NOT EVALUATED

DEBATE (110 points)				Record scores in the column spaces below.
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance	
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points	
Points of argument (X1)	Team does not get the attention of the audience, and/or does not outline points clearly.	Team makes an effort to grab the attention of the audience; previewing points are somewhat organized in a logical manner.	Introduction uses an attention getter, clearly states the thesis, and previews main points of the argument; the team is cognizant of the audience.	
Organization (X1)	The main idea may not be focused or developed; the introduction is undeveloped; transitions may be needed.	The main idea is adequately presented, but the organizational structure may need to be strengthened; ideas are generally developed and flow smoothly.	The main idea is clearly presented, well-developed, and firmly supported.	
Topic knowledge (X2)	The team does not have a grasp of the information; inaccurate, generalized, or inappropriate supporting material is used; there is an over-dependence on notes.	The team has a partial grasp of the information; supporting material is adequate and the team is at ease.	The team has a clear grasp of information; citations are introduced and attributed accurately; the team demonstrates full knowledge, with explanations and elaboration, of the subject area.	
Delivery (X2)	Delivery detracts from the message; eye contact may be very limited; presenter may tend to look at the floor, mumble, speak inaudibly, fidget, or read from notecards; gestures and movements may be jerky or excessive.	Delivery generally seems effective, however, use of volume, eye contact, vocal control, etc., may not be consistent; some hesitancy may be observed; vocal tone, facial expressions, and/or other nonverbal expressions do not detract from the message.	Delivery is extemporaneous, natural, confident, and enhances the message; posture, eye contact, smooth gestures, facial expressions, volume, pace, etc., indicate confidence, a commitment to the topic, and a willingness to communicate.	
Cross Examination (X1)	Questions posed to the opposing team show a minimal knowledge of the subtopic and do not leave much room for discussion.	Questions posed to the opposing team show an adequate knowledge of the subtopic and prompt reasonable discussion.	Questions posed to the opposing team show excellent knowledge of the subtopic and prompt eloquent discussion.	
Question Responses (X1)	The team’s responses are minimally sourced and do not fully answer the questions posed.	The team’s responses are moderately sourced and mostly answer the questions posed.	The team’s responses are fully sourced and completely answer the questions posed.	

DEBATE (110 points) – continued			
Rebuttal (X1)	Rebuttal is unorganized, unclear, and/or incoherent; rebuttal includes no counter to points made from the opposing team.	Rebuttal is somewhat organized, and it creates a mostly logical counter to the opposing team's points.	Rebuttal is logical, concise, and creative; counter arguments from the opposing team are incorporated in the rebuttal in a unique and interesting way.
Voice and language (X1)	Language choices may be limited, peppered with slang or jargon, too complex, or too dull; language is questionable or inappropriate for the audience.	Language used is mostly appropriate, respectful, or inoffensive; word choices are adequate.	Language is familiar to the audience, appropriate for the setting, and free of bias; word choices are vivid and precise.
Group member participation (X1)	One team member speaks for the initial, cross examination, question responses, and the rebuttal; the other team member is disengaged.	Each team member speaks in the debate—one for the initial portion and the other for the rebuttal; during questioning, both team members have adequate knowledge of the topic and subtopic and share ownership equally.	Each team member speaks eloquently in the debate—one for the initial portion of the debate and the other for the rebuttal; during questioning, both team members show clear understanding, knowledge, and ownership of the topic and subtopic.
DEBATE SUBTOTAL (110 points)			

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points in the semifinalist section) must be initialed by the evaluator, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right. Indicate the rule violated: _____
Time violation (a deduction of five [5] points total will be incurred for exceeding the debate time limit). Record the deduction in the space to the right.

PRELIMINARY SUBTOTAL (110 points)
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SEMIFINAL LEAP INTERVIEW (11 points)			
CRITERIA	Minimal performance	Adequate performance	Exemplary performance
	1-4 points	5-8 points	9-10 points
LEAP Report/ Interview (10% of total event points)	The team's efforts are not clearly communicated, lack detail, and/ or are unconvincing; few, if any, attempts are made to identify and/ or incorporate the SLC Practices and Behaviors.	The team's efforts are adequately communicated, include some detail, are clear, and/ or are generally convincing; identification and/ or incorporation of the SLC Practices and Behaviors is adequate.	The team's efforts are clearly communicated, fully-detailed, and convincing; identification and/ or incorporation of the SLC Practices and Behaviors is excellent.
SEMIFINAL LEAP INTERVIEW SUBTOTAL (11 points)			

Record scores in the column spaces below.

Rules violations (a deduction of 20% of the total possible points for the above sections) must be initialed by the judge, coordinator, and manager of the event. Record the deduction in the space to the right. Indicate the rule violated: _____

SEMIFINAL SUBTOTAL (11 points)

To arrive at the TOTAL score, add any subtotals and subtract rules violation points, as necessary.

TOTAL (121 points)

Comments:

I certify these results to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

JUDGE

Printed name: _____ Signature: _____

DEBATING TECHNOLOGICAL ISSUES

EVENT COORDINATOR INSTRUCTIONS

PERSONNEL

- A. Event coordinator
- B. Judges
 - 1. Preliminary round of debates, two (2) or more
 - 2. Semifinal round of debates, two (2) or more; these judges should not judge the preliminary round of debates
- C. Timekeeper/Announcers
 - 1. Preliminary round of debates, one (1) timekeeper/announcer per heat room; timekeepers may serve as judges
 - 2. Semifinal round of debates, one (1) timekeeper/announcer per heat room; timekeepers may serve as judges
- D. Escorts for moving teams from preparation room to debate room
 - 1. Preliminary round, one (1) per heat room; escorts may not serve as judges
 - 2. Semifinal round, one (1) escort

MATERIALS

- A. Coordinator's packet, containing:
 - 1. Event guidelines, one (1) copy for the coordinator and for each judge
 - 2. TSA Event Coordinator Report
 - 3. List of judges/assistants
 - 4. Pre-populated flash drives for judges
 - 5. Signs that read "DEBATE in PROGRESS" for all rooms, as needed
 - 6. One (1) stopwatch for each debate room
 - 7. A 4" x 6" card with the message "15 seconds" written on the card, one (1) card for each debate room
 - 8. Two (2) 3" x 5" cards with "Pro" written on the card; two (2) 3" x 5" cards with "Con" written on the card; and one (1) 3" x 5" card with "2 minutes" written on it for each debate room
 - 9. Copies of schedule cards

- 10. Results envelope
- 11. Envelope for LEAP Reports
- 12. LEAP Interview Judging Protocol
- B. Podium for each debate room
- C. One (1) table and two (2) chairs for the Pro side and one (1) table and two (2) chairs for the Con side for each debate room
- D. One (1) table and three (3) chairs for judges and timekeeper/announcer for each debate room; one (1) chair in the back of the room for the escort
- E. Chairs for observers during the semifinalist debate round
- F. Three (3) tables and three (3) chairs in the preparation room for event personnel and participants

RESPONSIBILITIES

AT THE CONFERENCE

- 1. Attend the mandatory coordinator's meeting at the designated time and location.
- 2. Report to the CRC room and obtain the coordinator's packet; check the contents.
- 3. Review the event guidelines and check to see that enough judges and assistants have been scheduled.
- 4. Inspect the area in which the debates will take place for appropriate set-up including sufficient number and size of tables.
- 5. Develop a heat schedule, taking into consideration the number of preparation and debate rooms, the number of entries, and the time allotted for the event. Twenty (20) minutes should be allowed for each debate.
- 6. Develop a semifinalist schedule, taking into account the number of semifinalists and the time allotted for the event. Twenty (20) minutes should be allowed for each semifinalist debate. Include an additional ten (10) minutes per round to allow for each team to participate (individually) in the semifinalist LEAP interview immediately following their semifinalist debate (maximum of five [5] minutes per team).

7. From the list of subtopics, choose one subtopic that will be used for each round. One (1) subtopic may be chosen for the preliminary heats and a different subtopic for the semifinalist round. The subtopic chosen must apply for all teams.
8. At least one (1) hour before the event is scheduled to begin, meet with judges/assistants to review time limits, procedures, and regulations. If questions arise that cannot be answered, speak to the event manager before the event begins.

EVENT CHECK-IN/PRELIMINARY ROUND

1. Gather with the participants at the scheduled time and place noted in the conference program for a pre-event meeting.
2. At this meeting, take attendance, collect LEAP Reports, review rules and procedures, provide directions and information, and announce the selected subtopic that all participants will present on in the first round.
3. Teams who do not submit the required team LEAP Report are not permitted to compete.
4. Only one (1) team member needs to attend this meeting. Failure of a team representative to attend this meeting will result in disqualification. The coordinator may:
 - a. allow participants to select a debate time, or
 - b. pre-assign times and inform the participants of the schedule
5. Begin the event by checking in the participants when they arrive at the preparation room at their scheduled time.
6. When two (2) teams and a debate room are available, have one (1) team draw one (1) or two (2) schedule cards (one [1] card will have Pro written on it and the other card will have Con written on it).
 - a. The view a team selects will apply for the entire event.
 - b. Each team, with the coordinator's assistance, will complete the remaining information on the card.
 - c. This card, along with a team's reference summary, will be given to the judges once a team has entered the debate room.
7. Record the view each team is presenting on the scheduling sheet.
8. Have the escort take the teams to the debate room.
9. The escort will announce to the judges the identification number of the Pro team first and then the Con team.
 - a. Each team will then sit on a designated side of the podium.
 - b. The judges will need to record each team's identification number on the judge's evaluation sheet.
10. The escort should remain in the debate room until the end of the debate, when s/he will escort each team from the room. This process of escorting teams into and then out of the debate room for competition will take place until all teams have participated.
11. If there is an odd number of teams entered in this event (see Procedure 19), teams will be randomly selected to determine the team that will debate twice. If a team debates twice, its highest score will be used to determine placement.
12. When the timekeeper/announcer has confirmed that the teams and judges are ready to begin, s/he will instruct the Pro speaker to approach the podium and begin.
13. The timing of each debate will start when the speaker begins; however, if there are any unreasonable delays, the speaker will be warned by the timer and timing will begin.
14. Timing of the conference break will start once the Con speaker has completed the presentation. The timekeeper will inform the teams that they are in the conference break and will also inform the teams when the period is over.
15. Once the conference break is over, the Pro cross examination speaker will approach the podium and begin, followed by the Con cross examination speaker.
16. Timing of the second conference break will begin once the Con cross examination speaker is seated.
17. Once the second conference break is over, the Pro rebuttal speaker will approach the podium and begin, followed by the Con rebuttal speaker.

18. When the Con rebuttal speaker is finished, s/he should return to his/her seat. The timekeeper will collect the summary of references from both teams. When the evaluators are ready, the timekeeper will announce to the teams that they are to leave the room and they will be escorted out by the escort.
 19. The judges will inform the escort when they are ready for a new set of teams so that the escort may return to the preparation room.
 20. Following the last team's presentation, the judges will complete the scoring, making adjustments for time penalties.
 21. For participants who violate the rules, the decision either to
 - a. deduct 20% of the total possible points or
 - b. to disqualify the entry must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and a CRC manager.
 - c. The event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must all initial either of these actions on the rating form.
 22. Following the preliminary heats, judges determine twelve (12) semifinalist teams and submit the results to the CRC for posting.
4. For participants who violate the rules, the decision either to
 - a. deduct 20% of the total possible points or
 - b. to disqualify the entry must be discussed and verified with the judges, event coordinator, and a CRC manager.
 - c. The event coordinator, judges, and CRC manager must all initial either of these actions on the rating form.
 5. Judges determine the ranking of the ten (10) finalists, and discuss and break any ties. (Determine the procedure for breaking ties before the onsite competition begins.)
 6. Review and submit the finalist results and all items/forms in the results envelope to the CRC room.
 7. If necessary, manage security and the removal of materials from the event area.

SEMIFINAL ROUND

1. At the time and place stated in the conference program, meet with semifinalists to review scheduling and procedures.
2. Follow procedures as above for the semifinalist round of debates. The semifinalist LEAP interviews will take place immediately following each semifinalist debate and will last a maximum of five (5) minutes per team.
3. All communication related to judges and participants during the debate should be handled by the timekeeper.