

## IDEA Four-Team Parliamentary Debate Rules

The rules of Four-Team Parliamentary Debate are intended to closely follow those of the Worlds Universities Debating Championships (WUDC). They differ in some places to provide tournament directors options of deviating from the WUDC rules when they need to do so.

### The Teams and Motions

The teams supporting the motion in Four-Team Parliamentary Debate are referred to as the "proposition." The teams arguing against the motion are known as the "opposition" teams.

Ordinarily motions are announced shortly before each debate begins. A different motion will be used for each debate, and will be presented to the debaters at a specified time, usually fifteen to thirty minutes prior to the round. In some situations subject matter areas from which topics will be chosen or even specific motions themselves may be announced prior to the tournament.

The motion will be announced to all debaters simultaneously. Preparation time will be fifteen to thirty minutes. During this time the debaters may consult any written materials. Debaters may confer with their debate partner during preparation time. The only materials allowed for use by the debaters during the actual debate are those notes the debaters themselves have written during the preparation time.

### The Debate Format

Each speaker will present a speech not to exceed 7 minutes in the order prescribed below.

#### Summary of Debate Format

Speaker	Common Titles for Speaker	Time
1st Proposition Team, 1st speaker	"Prime Minister" or "First Government Member"	7 minutes
1st Opposition Team, 1st speaker	"Leader of the Opposition" or "First Opposition member"	7 minutes
1st Proposition Team, 2nd speaker	"Deputy Prime Minister" or "Second Government member"	7 minutes
1st Opposition Team, 2nd speaker	"Deputy Leader of the Opposition" or "Second Opposition member"	7 minutes

2nd Proposition Team, 1st speaker	"Member for the Government" or "Third Government member"	7 minutes
2nd Opposition Team, 1st speaker	"Member for the Opposition" or "Third Opposition member"	7 minutes
2nd Proposition Team, 2nd speaker	"Government Whip" or "Fourth Opposition member"	7 minutes
2nd Opposition Team, 2nd speaker	"Opposition Whip" or "Fourth Opposition member"	7 minutes

### **Parliamentary Points of Information**

Debaters may request a point of information (either verbally or by rising) at any time after the first minute, and before the last minute, of any speech.

The debater holding the floor may accept or refuse points of information. If accepted, the debater making the request has fifteen seconds to make a statement or ask a question. During the point of information, the speaking time of the floor debater continues.

No other parliamentary points such as points of order or points of personal privilege are allowed.

### **Speaker Roles and Speech Specific Purposes**

Each speaker has a role and each speech has a specific purpose. The descriptions of speaker roles and speech purposes listed below are suggestive and are not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive. For reasons that vary from debate to debate, speakers may sometimes need to fulfill roles not mentioned here and speeches may be constructed to serve other purposes as long as proposition speakers affirm the proposition and opposition speakers oppose it.

All speakers, except the final speakers for the proposition and opposition (government and opposition whips), should introduce new material. All debaters should make rebuttal, except the opening speaker (prime minister).

### Summary of Speaker Roles and Responsibilities

Speaker	Role and Responsibility
"Prime Minister" or "First Government Member"	The first speaker's responsibility is to offer a reasonable interpretation of the motion and present a case supporting the interpretation. The primary role of first proposition team, initiated in this speech, is to establish the foundation for meaningful debate on the motion.
Leader of the Opposition" or "First Opposition member"	The first opposition's primary team role is to undermine the first government team's case for the proposition. This speaker introduces direct and/or indirect refutation to the government's case. The opposition speaker may also challenge the interpretation of the government's case if it is unreasonable, that is, completely inhibits meaningful debate or completely misinterprets the motion the motion. Challenges to the interpretation of the proposition are extremely rare.
"Deputy Prime Minister" or "Second Government member"	This speaker should rebut the first opposition team's speech, and further develop the proposition team's case.
"Deputy Leader of the Opposition" or "Second Opposition member"	This speaker supports his or her teammate, answering objections from the other side and introducing positive matter.
"Member for the Government" or "Third Government member"	This speaker should support the case developed by the first proposition team and must also introduce a case extension, a further development of the themes or issues initially established by the first government team. The primary team role is development of extension and government summary, which should be compatible with, but not identical, to that of the first proposition team.

"Member for the Opposition" or "Third Opposition member"	This speaker introduces direct and/or indirect refutation to the second government's case and selectively argues related issues of the first government team. The primary team roles are to answer the second proposition team's extension and effectively summarize the opposition.
"Government Whip" or "Fourth Government member"	This speaker summarizes the extension and makes a reply to each team's position in the debate. The speaker should not introduce positive (new) matter.
"Opposition Whip" or "Fourth Opposition member"	This speaker summarizes opposition to the extension and makes reply to each team's position in the debate. This speaker should not introduce positive (new) matter.

## Judges

Traditionally a consensus form of judging is used in four team debate. Following the debate, the judges confer with one another and come to an agreement on how the teams should be ranked and scored. The teams will be ranked based upon the manner and matter of presentations in the debate, including team and speaker role, argumentation, and persuasion, with the highest-ranked team awarded 3 points, the second-highest, 2 points, the third, 1 point, and the lowest-ranked team, 0 points. Verbal adjudication ordinarily is made for each debate by the judge designated as "chair" or by a judge appointed by the chair. Verbal adjudication should explain team rankings and provide any additional advice for teams. The adjudication should not last more than 5 minutes.

When consensus judging is not used, a single judge or multiple judges should deliberate independently. In debates following independent judging, each judge should come to his her own decision without consulting the other judges.

In both consensus and independent judging, judges will assign speaker points for each speaker based on the manner and matter presented during the speech.

Judges should be assigned to debates randomly from a pool of persons eligible to judge the debate. At the discretion of the tournament director, two pools may be formed: "pool one"

consisting of those persons eligible to be chairs of panels and pool two consisting of all other judges registered at the tournament. If consensus judging is used, one judge will be randomly selected from “pool one” then the panel will be filled by randomly selecting additional judges from “pool two” and from unassigned judges in “pool one.”

Judges must agree to follow these rules along with any modifications that have been made by tournament directors. Judges are not allowed to impose any other rules.