

IPDA National Championship Tournament and Convention 2026
Convention Panels
Saturday, April 11, 2026
10:00 am – 11:00am

Panel One – ROOM: SU 210

Presentation with discussion and Q&A

From Recording to Revision: Using AI to Strengthen Round Vision

Presenter: Iain Lampert

This session explores practical, responsible uses of AI to expand access to high-quality debate feedback within IPDA programs. Many large teams struggle with coach-to-student ratios, while smaller programs may lack experienced coaching support. The presentation demonstrates how competitors and coaches can use round recordings, transcripts, and structured prompting to generate constructive AI-assisted feedback modeled on IPDA judging norms. The session will also address adaptation across differing debate paradigms and discuss ethical guardrails for AI use. Drawing on emerging research in AI-assisted learning and communication coaching, the session emphasizes supplementation of coaching rather than replacement.

Panel Two – ROOM: SU 218

Presentation with discussion and Q&A

Grow or Die: A Data-Driven Case for Expanding IPDA

Presenters: Evan Garrison and Ben Harvey

Despite years of rapid growth, participation in the IPDA is slowing. Historical examples show that college debate formats rarely remain on a plateau: they are growing, or they are declining. An analysis of IPDA data shows signs of the beginning of a decline phase. The IPDA must adapt on multiple fronts—digital presence and public image, active recruiting of institutions, and more—to continue its positive trajectory and avoid the fate of other debate formats.

Panel Three – ROOM: SU 220

Presentation with discussion and Q&A

Resolved: Change is Inevitable in the IPDA

Presenters: Lindsay Duede and Hannah Morris

The goal for this presentation is to have an open conversation about change and how it's approached in the IPDA. Presenters will explore historical precedence (creation of novice division, varsity, TIPDA, and finally JV) as well as changes that have occurred systemically that may not have been wanted, but occurred anyway, especially those that linger from the COVID era. They will also be surveying the general body of coaches and students to discuss changes they have seen since being on the circuit, and what changes they would like to see, in order to provide context of what future the IPDA holds.

Panel Four – ROOM: SU 221

Discussion panel with Q&A

The Use of Esoteric Topics in Limited Prep Debate

Presenter: Gabriel Adkins, PhD

Given the nature of IPDA as a limited prep form of debate, the use of esoteric topics at IPDA tournaments can be potentially problematic. This panel will explore the desirability of esoteric topic use in IPDA tournaments and consider whether use of more "general knowledge" topics would be preferable. Subtopics will include burdens placed on coaches, competitors and judges as well as impacts in debate rounds in terms of "source pressing" and other evidentiary issues.

Panel Five – ROOM: SU 224

Presentation with discussion and Q&A

"The Legacy Panel"

Presenters: Mary G. Jarzabek, Dr. Jack Rogers, and Dr. Trey Gibson

This panel is aimed at showing that the past and present standards of communication in IPDA have been, and continue to be, aimed at helping students develop professional skills for success.

--Founding mission statement, ideals, and culture of the IPDA organization – Dr. Jack Rogers

--Explanation of the history of the IPDA Ethics Statement – Dr. Trey Gibson

--A review of the research about best practices for professional communication – Mary G. Jarzabek