I. OVERVIEW

American parliamentary debate is a formal contest of reason, wit and rhetorical skill which simulates debate in a theoretical House of Parliament. Two teams, the Government and the Opposition, of two debaters each, consider a resolution proposed to the House. A different resolution is proposed each round. The debate is moderated by a Speaker of the House, who will also serve as judge for the round. In parliamentary debate, emphasis is placed on quick thinking, logical argumentation and analysis, a command of rhetoric over extensive research or collection of evidence. Accordingly, no recorded evidence or other outside written material may be consulted during the round.

II. THE SPEAKERS AND THE SPEECHES

DEBATE ROUND FORMAT

A. Prime Minister Constructive (PMC) 5 minutes

1. Announce resolution and provide link.
   a. define the terms of the resolution
   b. present a link to the resolution
2. Give clear and precise case statement.
   a. give govt. structure on which to build its case
3. Support case with several independent arguments.
   a. make at least 3 different points of analysis
   b. signpost by using ‘buzzwords’ to explain arguments

B. Leader of the Opposition Constructive (LOC) 5 minutes

1. Provide opposition philosophy
   a. the overarching principle which the opposition will support
      i. position statement that contradicts the govt. case
      ii. help create a framework for the opposition arguments
2. Announce opposition strategy/countercase
   a. directly confront the case as presented by the govt. (clash)
3. Rebut PMC arguments
   a. rebut the govt. analysis presented by the PM
4. Introduce independent analysis
   a. provide argumentation in support of the opposition’s side