

# **International Debate Education Association Training Manual**

**FLTRP Cup  
May 2008**

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## **IDEA Training Team**

### **Director of Training**

#### **Robert Trapp**

Robert Trapp is a professor of rhetoric at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon and holds a Pd.D. from the University of Denver. He is currently the director of the IDEA program at Willamette. He is the author of several books and numerous articles on debate and rhetoric. Mr. Trapp served as President of the National Parliamentary Debate Association from 1995 - 1999. Debate teams from his university have won the Season Sweepstakes National Championship and the Tournament Sweepstakes National Championship on three separate occasions.

### **The IDEA Training Team**

#### **Anne M. Canavan**

Anne M Canavan is the assistant debate coach for Tennessee Technological University, where she also works as an instructor of English Composition. She competed as a successful college policy debater for Tennessee Tech, and coaches an award winning parliamentary program. She has presented various papers in America and internationally on the value of using debate to teach writing skills.

#### **Steven Johnson**

Steven Johnson is an Associate Professor and Director of Debate at the University of Alaska Anchorage. He was the first president of the National Parliamentary Debate Association and currently serves as the Secretary for the World Universities Debating Council. He has been involved with the FLTRP Cup since 2004; this is the second year he has acted as the Chief Adjudicator for the Cup. In 2002 one of the teams he coached won the Championship of the National Parliamentary Debate Association. In January of 2007, a team from the University of Alaska reached the Semifinals of the World Universities Debating Championships.

### **Kevin Minch**

Kevin Minch is Associate Professor of Communication and Director of Forensics at Truman State University, a small liberal arts and sciences university in Kirksville, Missouri. He also serves as President of the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA) and as Speech, Debate, and Theater Consultant for the National Federation of State High School Associations, the national governing association for interscholastic activities in the United States. His parliamentary debate teams have won the NPDA Championship twice since 2000.

### **Bill Sheffield**

Bill Sheffield has been actively involved in competitive debate for over 26 years, having served as Director of Debate at several colleges and universities throughout the United States. He is a certified international debate trainer, and has participated in IDEA-sponsored youth forums the past three summers. He has also been selected to be a trainer this summer in the Czech Republic. He is currently the debate coach at Casper College in Casper, Wyoming. His debate team won a silver medal at this year's Phi Rho Pi National Tournament, and was also a silver medalist in the debate sweepstakes category.

### **Steven Woods**

Steve Woods is in his sixth year as the Director of Forensics at Western Washington University. In each of those years, Western Washington has finished in the top 20 at the NPDA Championships, and in the top ten the past two years. He has also coached at William Jewell College, the University of Vermont, Florida State University, and Kansas State University. His doctoral research was on the Rhetoric of the Endangered Species Act, and still pursues issues of the environment in his academic work.

**Why We Debate: or Plenty of Reasons to Attend a Debate Tournament**  
**Kevin Minch**

- I. Personal gains from debating
  - A. Improved Public Speaking Skills\
  - B. Enhanced Knowledge of the English Language
  - C. Refined Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Capacity
  - D. Better Awareness of the World Around You
  
- II. Community benefits of debating
  - A. Debating Promotes Public Knowledge
  - B. Debating Substitutes Discourse for Violence as a Solution to Conflict
  - C. Debating Promotes Civic Engagement and Appreciation for Others and Their Values

**Introduction To The Debate Format**  
**Bill Sheffield**

- I. A debate shall be timed by a timekeeper
  
- II. Each team will be comprised of the following members:
  - A. Government
    - 1. Prime Minister (PM)
    - 2. Member of the Government (MG)
  - B. Opposition
    - 1. Leader of the Opposition (LO)
    - 2. Member of the Opposition (MO)
  - C. Each debating team must be accompanied by an adjudicator
  
- III. Speaking Times (in order of speakers):
  - A. Prime Minister Constructive (PMC) Speech - 7 minutes
  - B. Leader of Opposition Constructive (LOC) Speech - 8 minutes
  - C. Member of Government Constructive (MGC) Speech - 8 minutes
  - D. Member of Opposition Constructive (MOC) Speech - 8 minutes
  - E. Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (LOR) Speech - 4 minutes
  - F. Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR) Speech - 5 minutes
  
- IV. Points of Information
  - A. Points of Information (POIs) are comments made by members directed at the speech of the member holding the floor
    - 1. POIs should be brief, pertinent, and preferably witty
    - 2. The POI should be phrased as clarification, or comment, and made in two sentences (or less) within 15 minutes
    - 3. POIs may be offered during the first four constructive speeches, after the first single knock of the gavel and up to the second single knock of the gavel **ONLY** (not before or after the single knocks, nor during the rebuttal speeches)
    - 4. Points of Order and Points of Personal Privilege are not allowed
  - B. A POI must be indicated by a member of an opposing team rising from his/her seat, placing one hand on top of his/her head, and extending the other towards the member holding the floor; a member calling for a POI may also draw attention to the offer by saying "On the point, Sir/Madam," or any such similar phrase

- C. The member holding the floor must respond to the opposing member (or members) offering the POI in one of the following ways:
  - 1. a clear gesture or hand signal rejecting the offer;
  - 2. a verbal rejection of the offer
  - 3. a verbal acceptance of the offer
    - a. if the POI is accepted, the speaker accepting it must frame an answer or response to it within the context of his/her speech
- D. Speakers not "holding the floor" may not rise during speech time unless it is to offer a POI
  - 1. speakers rising beyond the purpose of raising a POI, heckling, barracking, or engaging in behavior that interferes with the acceptable course of the debate will be declared "out of order" or be "called to order" by the Chairperson
- E. POIs should be assessed by the effect they have on both the cases of the offering team and the responding speaker (and team)
- F. Appropriate number of POIs
  - 1. Although not required to do so, each speaker should attempt to take at least 2 POIs during their constructive speech
  - 2. The opposing side should attempt to rise to at least 4 POIs in each constructive speech
  - 3. Debaters who fail to seek opportunities to offer POIs or who fail to take POIs during their speech may be penalized by the adjudicating panel



**The Structure of a Parliamentary Debate**  
**Steven Woods**

**I. Preparation**

- A. Venues to be announced before motions are revealed.
- B. Three motions are to be announced/revealed to teams 35 minutes prior to the commencement of debates in that round.
- C. The motion to be debated in a particular chamber between the teams matched therein is to be chosen in the following manner:
  - 1. The teams discuss preferred choices separately (less than 2 minutes). Teams should number the motions in order of their
  - 2. Teams compare preferences:
    - a. Third choice motions are automatically vetoed
    - b. If teams' first choice motion is the same, they debate that motion
    - c. If teams' first choice motions are different, but the third are the same, they toss a coin. Government representative calls and if calling correctly, teams debate government's first choice. If calling incorrectly, teams debate opposition's first choice.
- D. The Government have the right to prepare in chambers (venue), the Opposition prepare in the appointed venue.
- E. Printed and prepared materials may be used during the thirty-minute preparation period. No access to electronic media or electronic storage or retrieval devices is permitted after motions have been released. Printed and prepared materials may be accessed during a debate. The tutor has the right to help the debaters during the thirty-minute preparation.

**II. Timing**

- A. Teams must arrive at their chamber within five minutes of the scheduled/given time of commencement of debate. Teams failing to arrive in time will forfeit the debate, at the discretion of the chair of the panel.
- B. It is the duty of the timekeeper to time speeches. The timing of each speech starts at the moment that the member begins speaking.
- C. Time signals will be given in the following manner i) Prime Minister (7 minutes) End of first minute - single knock of the gavel. / End of 6th minute - single knock of the gavel./ End of 7th minute - double knocks of the gavel. ii) Leader of Opposition, Member of the Government and Member of the Opposition (8 minutes) End of first minute - single knock of the gavel. / End of 7th minute - single knock of the gavel./ End of 8th minute - double knocks of the gavel. iii) Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (4 minutes) End of 1st minute - single knock of the gavel./ End of 3rd minute - single knock of the gavel. / End of 4th minute - double

knocks of the gavel. iv) Prime Minister Rebuttal (5 minutes) End of 1st minute - single knock of the gavel./ End of 4th minute - single knock of the gavel. / End of 5th minute - double knocks of the gavel.

- D. Overtime Speeches: Once the double knocks of the gavel has sounded, speakers have a 20-second 'grace period', during which they should conclude remarks already under contention. It is not a time for new matter to be introduced, and such new matter will be discounted by the adjudicators. Speakers continuing after this 'grace period' will be penalized in the Method category.
- E. Under time Speeches: If the speaker concludes his/her speech on or near the second single knock of the gavel, he or she will not be penalized for an under time speech. However, if significantly under time, a speaker may be penalized under Method and possibly also under Matter. The latter, assuming that less matter was advanced, or that it was clearly underdeveloped.

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III. ADJUDICATION

- A. Debates in Phase one of the competition will be adjudicated by an odd number of adjudicators, preferably three adjudicators.
- B. Debates in Phase two of the competition will be adjudicated by a minimum of 5 adjudicators.
- C. Adjudicators will arrive at their decisions on an individual basis, fill in the necessary ballots and pass their completed forms and ballots to the timekeeper. Prior to the announcement of the decision, the Chair may call upon the other panel members for the purposes of discussion.
- D. At the end of a debate, Chair of a panel will announce the decision and give an oral adjudication within 15 minutes. This is to occur in every round of competitive debating except for the knockout rounds.
- E. In the event that the Chair is in the minority of the panel's decision, he or she may call upon one of the other panel members to provide an oral adjudication.
- F. Chairs may not announce marks, nor indicate the margin of win/loss unless asked to by the Chief Adjudicator of the competition. All adjudicators are expected to observe the confidentiality of individual and team scores, and margins.
- G. Generally, adjudicators are required to fulfill four duties:
  - 1. To take clear notes and decide which team won the debate;
  - 2. To provide reasons for the decision with clarity and objectivity;
  - 3. To score the debate to reflect the decision;
  - 4. To provide teams and speakers with constructive feedback.

**Matter, Manner, and Method**  
**Anne Canavan**

- I. A quick metaphor for understanding
  - A. Think of matter as the building materials for a house—the wood, the nails, windows, etc.
  - B. Method is your blueprint—the strategic choices that you make in order to make the best house (debate) possible.
  - C. Manner is the aesthetic element of your house—how the inside is decorated, how clean it is, etc. These are the details that can make or break a close competition.
  
- II. Matter—The Building Materials
  - A. Matter is a term that includes all of the arguments that you or your opponents use in the course of the debate. This also includes the case advanced by the government team.
  - B. Think of these as the building blocks of the debate.
  - C. Your matter should be relevant—you would not want to build a house with paper. This would weaken your house, just as using arguments which don't relate to your case will weaken your position as a debater. In debate terms, it does no good to prove that cell phones are harmful if you are debating about the environment.
  - D. Try to pick the best matter to support your case. Just as you would want to build your house out of the best possible materials, you want to be choosy about what evidence and arguments you choose to introduce into the debate.
  - E. Be sure to explain to your adjudicator why you chose to use the materials you did. If you have any specialized evidence, or something that a general person may not know, be sure to explain this in as simple of terms possible. Remember, it is your job to explain, not the adjudicator's job to know.
  - F. Remember that as the negative team, it is not enough to say that the other team is using bad material, or that they are building a poor quality house. You also need to be advancing arguments of your own.
  - G. You may not introduce any new evidence during the rebuttal or response speeches (the last two speeches of the debate). You need to have all the materials you need to build your house before this point in the debate. After this point, you are restricted to using the materials you already have to finish building your house.
  
- III. Method—Your Blueprint for Success
  - A. Now that you have assembled all of your materials, you need to have a plan for what to do with them. This is where the blueprint is important.
  - B. Perhaps the most important element of method is organization. If you are undertaking a building project, you need to know where all of your tools and materials are in order to work effectively. More importantly, if you do not have a

clear plan for how to build your house, your adjudicator will not understand what you are trying to build. If the adjudicator can't clearly picture what you are trying to build, why would they vote for your argument?

- C. When the last two speeches of the round arrive, it is time for the debaters to take a hard look at the house they have been building. The government team needs to choose which parts of the house they have made the most progress on, and focus on those areas. The opposition team will choose the strongest of their arguments, and attack the weakest areas of the proposition's case. There is no clear formula for this; simply practice, and a realistic assessment of which arguments are doing well.
  - D. You also need to be able to explain why the issues that you choose to advocate are important in the context of the resolution.
  - E. You should always bring up your most important matter first. Once you have addressed all of the matter that is relevant to the speech, take a few moments to remind your adjudicator of what you have just spoken about before you sit down.
- IV. Manner—The presentation
- A. Manner relates to the way you present your matter and method. This references speaking style, delivery, audience appeal, professionalism, and body language.
  - B. Think of manner as the aesthetic choices of house. A house may be perfectly useful, but if it is not decorated well, or is not clean, then it is less attractive than the same house with those extra details.
  - C. This is also the part of the debate where you attempt to make a connection with your adjudicator. Good posture, strong eye contact, and clear delivery all serve to tell people listening to you that you are confident in your arguments, and that you should be believed.
  - D. Humor can also be an important tool in a debate, if used appropriately. Avoid humor at the expense of other people, or humor that seems to belittle your opponents.
  - E. In the same vein, avoid ad hominum (to the man) attacks. Treat your opponents politely and respectfully. Attacking the other person is unprofessional, and makes it appear that you can not effectively counter their arguments.
  - F. You may take notes with you as you speak, but try to use them sparingly, and do not simply read from your notes for the whole speech. Notes should be a reminder, rather than a script.
  - G. Gestures are a good way of drawing your audience's attention to an important point, but should not be over-used.
  - H. Remember to speak loudly, slowly, and clearly. It is better to go a bit slowly and be certain that the audience has time to understand your arguments than to go too fast and confuse your listeners.

**Adjudication Issues**  
**Steven Johnson**

- I. Orientation
  - A. Debating is subjective
    - 1. Human decision making is unique to each individual
    - 2. No “one way” or “right way” to debate
  - B. Drawbacks
    - 1. Confusion
    - 2. Lack of certainty
    - 3. Desire for rules
  - C. Advantages
    - 1. Creativity
    - 2. Free Expression
    - 3. Safe to explore and learn
  
- II. Contest of ideas, not English language proficiency or speaking skills
  - A. Substance and expression
    - 1. “truth of motion” standard
    - 2. “skill of debaters” standard
  - B. Combining the standards: the “movement” standard
  - C. Tabula Rasa
  
- III. Adjudicating
  - A. Decide the round
  - B. Assign the speaker points
    - 1. Guidelines
    - 2. Margin
  - C. Provide oral adjudication
    - 1. Reason(s) for Decision
    - 2. Constructive criticism
  - D. Complete adjudicator feedback

**Arguing Constructively**  
**Robert Trapp and Kevin Minch**

- I. Arguing constructively defined
  - A. Arguing constructively consists of arguing about issues while avoiding anything that might be interpreted as verbal aggression against another person.
  - B. Verbal aggression consists of attacking the worth of the person with whom you are arguing.
  - C. Almost all of our courses will consist of how to argue about issues. This session will involve a discussion about how to avoid verbal aggression.
  
- II. Metaphors and aggression
  - A. Describing metaphors
    - 1. Metaphors as a way of speaking
    - 2. Metaphors as a way we think
  
  - B. Debate metaphors lead us to think of debate as a violent activity
    - 1. The debate “round.”
    - 2. “Opponents”
    - 3. We “hit” a team from . . .
    - 4. We “killed” the other team
    - 5. Etc.
  
  - C. Alternative debate metaphors
  
- III. Debaters stances toward one another
  - A. The importance of the debater in argumentation
    - 1. The debater is a necessary element in a theory or philosophy of arguing
    - 2. Unlike the study of logic, the study of argumentation cannot ignore the debater.
    - 3. The paradigm case of argumentation involves one person arguing with another.

- B. Three stances arguers may take in relationship to co-arguers
1. Rape
    - a. The rapist-debater is not interested in “constructive argument,” but in power, commands, threats and coercion.
    - b. The rapist-debater sees the relationship with the opponent as unilateral.
    - c. The rapist - debater sees the opponent as an object to be conquered
    - d. The rapist - debater sees the opponent as an inferior human being.
  2. Seduction
    - a. The seducer - debater conquers not by force but by charm and/or deceit.
    - b. The seducer - debater sees the relationship with the opponent as unilateral.
    - c. The seducer - debater is indifferent to the identity and value of the opponent.
    - d. The seducer - debater is indifferent to the humanity of the opponent.
  3. Love
    - a. The lover - debater sees the co-debater as a lover rather than as a victim.
    - b. The lover - debater sees their relationship as a bilateral one.
    - c. The lover - debater sees the co-debater as a person.
    - d. The lover - debater seeks a position of power parity.
- D. Some thoughts
1. “No lover worthy of the name would wish to secure assent unless that assent were knowingly and freely given.”
  2. No debater worthy of the name would wish to win a debate except through loving and constructive argument.

IV. Specific methods of avoiding verbal aggression

**Case Construction**  
**Anne Canavan and Steven Woods**

- I. Type of resolutions
  - A. Literal-lends itself to a particular set of interpretations ("Cell phones should be banned")
  - B. Metaphorical-subject to interpretation by government team ("This House would fold")
  
- II. Types of debates
  - A. Fact-government attempts to prove something more likely to be true than false ("The 2008 Olympics are beneficial for China)
  - B. Value-shows proof of a preference ("This House values security over privacy")
  - C. Policy-advocates a particular course of action ("This House would ban cell phones")
  
- III. Theoretic Concerns:
  - A. Issues of Advocacy-Starting off the debate and being an advocate
  - B. What are the fundamental elements of a persuasive argument?  
Greek "Stasis" the beginning points of argument or dispute
  - C. Example of Motivated Sequence:  
Attention, Need, Satisfaction, Visualization, Call to Act
  
- IV. Starting Points of Construction:
  - A. Resolution Wording
  - B. Your own Expertise and Knowledge
  - C. Strategic Issues; "Gameship"
  - D. Context: Judge, the Other Team, Context of the tournament
  
- V. Basic Template of Parliamentary Case:
  - I. Resolutional Analysis
    - A. Meanings/Definitions
    - B. Criteria/Decision Calculus
  - II. Harm Area/Establishment of Significance
    - A. Current Problems
    - B. Future Predictions
    - C. Reasons why not being dealt with (inherency)
  - III. Plan Text/Advocacy Statement
  - IV. Solvency/Advantages



- VI. Comments about the template:
  - A. Addresses the Stock Issues
  - B. Allows for a variety of interpretations of resolution (Qualitative and Quantitative)
  - C. Is basic "policy" model, but also appropriate for public political debate
  - D. Could be used for a value case
  
- VII. Logistical Considerations:
  - A. Prep time allocation
  - B. Sharing of team responsibilities
  - C. Using others as consultants in the process
  - D. PMC should pre-flow the speech-MG should flow the PMC to verify what actually is presented
  - E. Stress detail of examples given versus greater number of examples
  - F. Be able to discuss why the topic is important and establish empathy for those being harmed
  - G. Explain philosophical assumptions completely (ethical paradigms/Assumptions of "reality"/assumptions about the nature of the debate)
  - H. SAVE SOME TIME before you begin presenting to brainstorm responses to anticipated opposition arguments
  - I. Try to put answers to anticipated opposition arguments in the PMC

**Proposition Case Template**

**I. Resolutional**

**Analysis:**

A. Definitions/Resolutional Interpretation

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Some Key term in the resolution and how you are defining it)

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Some other key term in res.)

(3.) \_\_\_\_\_  
(Addt'l Def if needed)

(3.) Our interpretation of the resolution calls for \_\_\_\_\_ to be the agent.  
(Identification or clarification of agent or means of agency)

**II. Harms**

A. Example of harm

B. Another example  
(or greater detail about the first)

C. Explanation of why the harm is relevant and significant to action on

(D.) Inherency story or explanation why no action is taking place

**III. Plan:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

(Can be specific action or a statement of advocacy)

**IV. Solvency/Advantages**

A. Explanation of how plan action addresses and solves for harms identified

B. Explanations of additional benefits that occur because of plan action.

C. Establish a voting issue or explain decision calculus (Explaining the solvency benefits or advantages claimed through the means established in criteria)

**Speaker Roles and Responsibilities**  
**Steven Johnson & Bill Sheffield**

- I. General responsibilities of the debaters
  - A. Constructive argumentation
    1. Those arguments introduced, developed and defended by your team
    2. For Proposition: “On-Case”
    3. For Opposition: “Off-Case”
    4. Constructive efforts should be:
      - a. Complete (claim and support)
      - b. Varied (diverse reasons)
      - c. Relevant (connected to standard)
  - B. Deconstructive argumentation
    1. Responses to opponents’ arguments
    2. For Proposition: “Off-Case”
    3. For Opposition: “On-Case”
    4. Deconstructive approach (I.C.E.):
      - a. Identify your opponent’s argument
      - b. Critique the argument
      - c. Explain the consequence of the loss of this argument
  - C. Frameworking
    1. Prospective (procedural)
      - a. Interpretation (definitions)
      - b. Standard (evaluative phrase)
    2. Retrospective (rebuttal)
- II. The speeches
  - A. Prime Minister Constructive (7 min)
    1. Frameworking
      - a. Interpretation
      - b. Standard
    2. Constructive

- B. Leader Opposition Constructive (8 min)
  - 1. Frameworking (Optional, not required)
    - a. Interpretation
    - b. Standard
  - 2. Deconstructive (on-case)
  - 3. Constructive (off-case)
  
- C. Member Government Constructive (8 min)
  - 1. Frameworking (Optional, not required)
    - a. Interpretation of the Motion
    - b. Standard
  - 2. Deconstructive (off-case)
  - 3. Constructive (on-case)
  
- D. Member Opposition (8 min)
  - 1. Frameworking (Optional, not required)
  
  - 2. Interpretation
  - 3. Standard
    - a. Deconstructive (on-case)
    - b. Constructive (off-case)
  
- E. Rebuttal Speeches (Gov & Opp)
  - 1. Opp Rebuttal: 4 min
  - 2. Gov Rebuttal: 5 min
  - 3. Retrospective Frameworking
  - 4. Generic rebuttal structure:
    - a. Standard?
    - b. They fail to meet
    - c. We meet

**Opposition Strategies**  
**Kevin Minch**

- I. Opposing propositions of policy
  - A. A proposition of policy promotes action.
    - 1. Grammatically, it usually contains the words “should” or “would.”  
(Example: The United States should withdraw its troops from Iraq.)
    - 2. Conceptually speaking, when the adjudicator decides to vote for the Government, he or she is endorsing that this action is “the right thing to do.”
  - B. The opposition is primarily concerned with denying that the proposed action is the right course of action, or defending the present system.
- II. Opposing Policies: Harms and Inherency
  - A. Question the Need or Significance
    - 1. Are existing policies, or the absence of them, harmful?
    - 2. Are the harms or ills of existing policies significant? Do they cause enough harm to warrant action?
  - B. Deny Inherency
    - 1. Do mechanisms exist in the present system to alleviate the need or harm the Government identifies?
    - 2. Is the identified need or harm easily addressed by a minor change? Is a significant effort or plan really necessary?
- III. Opposing Policies: Workability and Solvency
  - A. Can the proposed plan or change fulfill the need or solve the ills of the present system.
  - B. Will the proposed plan actually “backfire”? Is it possible that the proposed solution actually makes the problem worse?
  - C. Have similar attempts to solve a problem worked in the past?
- IV. Opposing Policies: Disadvantages Underscore Negative Costs
  - A. What bad things might occur as a result of the adoption of the proposed policy?
  - B. How significant will the costs or disadvantages of the proposed policy be?
  - C. How do these disadvantages compare or “weigh” against the benefits highlighted by the Government team?

- V.       Opposing Policies: Superior Alternatives
- A.       Are there other policies or approaches that solve the harms, or fulfill the need, better than the Government’s policy?
  - B.       Are those alternatives actions that cannot exist at the same time as the Government’s policy? Would they compete with each other, or be redundant?
- VI.       Opposing Policies: Critiquing Underlying Assumptions
- A.       Sometimes proposed policies rest on faulty underlying assumptions that need to be refuted, or critiqued.
  - B.       Questions to be asked:
    - 1.       Is the assumption underlying the Government’s case an assumption that is harmful to society?
    - 2.       Would the perpetuation of that assumption cause harm to society?
- VII.      Opposition Propositions of Fact or Value
- A.       A proposition of fact asks the question, “is something true?”
    - 1.       Grammatically the resolution usually contains a form of the infinitive “to be” such as “is” or “are” (Example: The global war on terror has been successful.)
    - 2.       When the adjudicator votes for the Government, they affirm the truth of the statement being proposed.
  - B.       A proposition of value asks the question, “is something of greater value than something else?”
    - 1.       Grammatically, the proposition usually contains a word that promotes a comparison (“greater, superior, more important”) between two (or more) values.
    - 2.       Example: “The needs of the many are more important than the needs of the one.”
  - C.       Propositions of fact and value are rarely fit into discrete categories. Facts, values, and policies, are generally intertwined.

VIII. Refuting Factual Claims

- A. Question the criteria being used.
  - 1. Does the Government offer criteria to evaluate the truth or falsehood of the argument?
  - 2. If not, offer your own criteria for establishing truth.
- B. Question the authenticity of the supporting claims.
  - 1. Are the Government's claims factually accurate?
  - 2. Can the factual claims the Government is making be interpreted differently than they are interpreting them?

IX. Refuting Value Claims

- A. Question the criteria being used.
  - 1. What standard does the government propose we use to establish what we value more?
  - 2. If no standard is offered, suggest your own "counter-value" and explain why it is more important.
- B. Question the implications of the values being promoted.
  - 1. If we embrace a particular value, what are the implications for society?
  - 2. Does the acceptance of certain values have more far-reaching implications when applied to other aspects of life or culture?

X. Uniting Strategies

- A. Do not think of propositions of fact, value, and policy as being always distinct from one another. These areas overlap. Consequently, the strategies must also overlap.
- B. Think practically. What does it really mean to your audience if the proposition is affirmed as "true"?
- C. Overlapping content

**Reasoning and Argumentative Warrants**  
**Robert Trapp**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Example</b>
Example	Create an association between particular examples and a more general rule.	I have three debaters who are failing my class, so I am beginning to question how serious these debaters are about their classes.
Analogy	Create associations between things that are similar or dissimilar.	The war in Iraq is becoming America's new Vietnam.
Causal warrants	Create associations between causes and effects.	Smoking leads to heart disease.
Authority	Support a claim by associating that claim with the opinion of experts in the field.	Kofi Annan has announced repeatedly that millions in Africa are dying of AIDS.
Principle	Connect a particular situation to a general principle.	Capital punishment is always unjust because it violates the principle of the right to life.
Incompatibility	Evaluate one thing as incompatible with something else.	Persons who oppose abortion by arguing that taking a life is immoral are logically bound to oppose capital punishment as well.
Dissociation	Create new categories by dividing an old category into two new ones.	Abortion is not a matter of a "right to life." It's a matter of a right to <i>human</i> life.



**Delivery**  
**Anne Canavan**

- I. Loosening up
  - A. Why- Articulation and clarity are largely a matter of the muscles of the head, neck, face, and mouth being loose enough to give you the best range of motion. Just as you should always stretch before engaging in exercise, stretching before speaking can benefit your clarity, as well as helping you to relax.
  - B. Full body stretches
  - C. Breathing exercises
  - D. Face exercises
  - E. Mouth exercises
  
- II. Articulation exercises
  - A. Why-being able to speak clearly is a matter of practice rather than a natural talent. These exercises will help you learn to pay attention to the way you pronounce words so that your audience will have an easier time following your arguments and understanding your points in the debate.
  - B. Pen drills
  - C. Tongue twisters
  
- III. Speed issues
  - A. Why-Speaking too quickly can really decrease the audience's ability to follow your argument. Unfortunately, when you are nervous or excited in competition, the natural tendency is to speak more quickly. These points will help you keep your speed under control.
  - B. It is always better to be slow rather than fast when speaking. Speaking slowly adds emphasis to your words, while speaking quickly gives your audience the impression that you are nervous or unprepared.
  - C. Use your partner as a gauge of when you are speaking too quickly. You might want to use an unobtrusive hand signal to tell let each other know when you are speaking too fast.
  - D. Also watch your critic-if your adjudicator stops writing, or appears to be lost, slow down a little to see if your speed or clarity were causing them to be unable to follow your argument.
  - E. Be sure to put emphasis on certain strong words in your speech. This breaks up possible monotony, and draws people's attention to what is most important in your speech.

IV. Body Language

- A. Why-most of the message we send to our audience is non-verbal. In other words, actions speak louder than words. These are some of the main points to consider when you are speaking in front of an audience.
- B. Posture
- C. Eye contact
- D. Appropriate gestures

V. Notes

- A. Why-Notes can be a great way of reminding yourself where you are in an argument, as well as a way of helping you keep the debate as organized as possible. Too many notes can make you look unprepared to speak however. What follows are some thoughts to remember about using notes.
- B. Keep your notes minimal, and never read your entire speech directly from your notes.
- C. Maintain eye contact, and avoid speaking to the podium. Speak out rather than down.
- D. Use your notes as a reminder rather than a script.

**Administering the Debate**  
*Bill Sheffield*

- III. Preparation of the motions
  - A. 3 motions are presented
  - B. Selecting the motion to debate
    - 1. 2 minutes for each team (simultaneously) to discuss the motions; rank order the motions in order of preference
    - 2. both teams compare rankings
      - a. each team's 3<sup>rd</sup> choice is automatically eliminated
      - b. if the 1<sup>st</sup> choices are the same, that topic is debated
      - c. if the 1<sup>st</sup> choices are different, but the choices are the same, the government gets to call a coin toss
      - d. if the government wins the toss, teams will debate the government's 1<sup>st</sup> choice; if the opposition wins, teams will debate the opposition's 1<sup>st</sup> choice
    - 3. Both teams will then have 30 minutes to prepare
      - a. The government team has the right to stay in the debate chamber
      - b. The opposition preps in another designated location
  - C. Printed & prepared materials may be used during the preparation time
    - 1. no access to electronic media of any kind (internet, electronic storage or retrieval devices) may occur during preparation time
    - 2. tutors have the right to help the debaters during the preparation time
  - D. Teams must arrive back to the debating chamber within five minutes of the starting time of the actual debate/expiration of the preparation time
  - E. Teams failing to arrive back in time will forfeit the debate, at the discretion of the chair of the adjudicating panel
- IV. Timing
  - A. The timekeeper is responsible for keeping official time during the debate
  - B. The timing of each speech begins at the moment the speaker begins speaking

C. Time signals will be given in the following manner:

1. Prime Minister Constructive Speech -7 minutes
  - a. End of the 1<sup>st</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - b. End of the 6<sup>th</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - c. End of the 7<sup>th</sup> minute – double knock of the gavel
2. Leader of Opposition, Member of Government, & Member of Opposition Constructive Speech – 8 minutes
  - a. End of the 1<sup>st</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - b. End of the 7<sup>th</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - c. End of the 8<sup>th</sup> minute – double knock of the gavel
3. training manual.wpdLeader of Opposition Rebuttal Speech – 4 minutes
  - a. End of the 1<sup>st</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - b. End of the 3<sup>rd</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - c. End of the 4<sup>th</sup> minute – double knock of the gavel
4. Prime Minister Rebuttal Speech – 5 minutes
  - a. End of the 1<sup>st</sup> minute – single knock of the gavel
  - b. End of the 4<sup>th</sup> minute –single knock of the gavel
  - c. End of the 5<sup>th</sup> minute – double knock of the gavel

D. Overtime speeches

1. once the double knocks of the gavel have sounded, speakers have a 20-second “grace period”, during which they should conclude remarks already under contention
2. it is not a time for new matter to be introduced (no new arguments), and they will be discounted by the adjudicators
3. speakers continuing to speak after the “grace period” will be penalized as directed in the Method category

E. Undertime speeches

1. if the speaker concludes his/her speech on or near the 2<sup>nd</sup> single knock of the gavel, he/she will not be penalized for an undertime speech
2. if the speaker is significantly undertime, a speaker may be penalized under Method and also possibly under Matter (the latter, assuming that less matter was advanced or that it was clearly underdeveloped)

V. Adjudication

A. Number of adjudicators

1. Debates in Phase One of the competition will be adjudicated by an odd number of adjudicators, preferably three adjudicators
2. Debates in Phase Two of the competition will be adjudicated by a minimum of 5 adjudicators (odd numbers)

- B. Adjudicators will arrive at their decisions on an individual basis
  - 1. After making their decision, each adjudicator will fill in the necessary ballots, and pass their completed forms and ballots to the timekeeper
  - 2. Prior to the announcement of the decision, the Chair may call upon the other panel members for the purpose of discussion
  
- C. At the end of the debate, the Chair of the panel will announce the decision and give an oral adjudication within 15 minutes; this is to occur in every round of competitive debating except for the knockout rounds
  
- D. In the event that the Chair is in the minority of the panel's decision, he or she may call upon one of the other panel members in the majority to provide an oral adjudication
  
- E. Chairs may not announce marks, nor indicate the margin of win/loss unless asked by the Chief Adjudicator of the competition; all adjudicators are expected to observe the confidentiality of individual and team scores, and margins
  
- F. Generally, adjudicators are required to fulfill 4 duties:
  - 1. to take clear notes and decide which team won the debate;
  - 2. to provide reasons for the decision with clarity and objectivity;
  - 3. to score the debate to reflect the decision; and
  - 4. to provide teams and speakers with constructive feedback

**Judging “Dos and Don’ts”  
Steven Woods**

In general, as an adjudicator, you have a responsibility to set the tone for the debate and to approach the event in a professional and educational manner. However, you do not have to be an “expert” in either debate or the issue being debated to be effective. As you gain more experience in being an adjudicator you will develop a style that responds to your own personal preferences and through an awareness of the context of the event you are participating in. For example, you may be more relaxed with beginning debaters or in the preliminary rounds of a competition than you might be with debaters with more experience or in the knock out rounds. Ultimately, you want to create an atmosphere that is fair to the competitors and is cooperative with the adjudicators you may be paneled with.

**“Objectivity”**

This is a difficult issue in debate adjudication. There is a Latin phrase “tabula rasa” or blank slate that embodies the ideal of coming into a debate with no biases. While an ideal to strive for, it is in a practical sense impossible. We all have been exposed to differing information and experiences, and have differing takes on values and conceptualizations of good and evil. It is more realistic to acknowledge that you may have biases and be aware of them during the debate than rather pretend they do not exist. Should you find yourself in a debate on an issue that makes it difficult to feel objective, remember that you can focus on what is said by the debaters, and evaluate those ideas independent of your own feelings. You can include comments on the ballot that demonstrate your understanding of the area and suggestions to improve the students debating ability, but should try to refrain from substituting what you know about the topic in place of what was discussed in making your decision. Often it is possible to agree with the arguments of a team in the debate, but still feel that they did not do a good job of making their points, or were not effective in refuting the other team’s arguments. The debaters need to practice making arguments for settings outside of competitive debate rounds, so dealing with biases and subjectivity is a real life experience. You should not decide the debates in a completely arbitrary fashion based on your own feelings about the topic, but it is nearly impossible to ignore them as well.

**Good Judging Habits:**

Be attentive to the speakers; make sure that you are fully listening. Taking notes can help keep track of the arguments and also keep your focus.

Don’t make assumptions about arguments when they are first heard. Often an argument may develop to be more important than it sounded when it started, or have less value in the debate than initially thought.

Make note of positive contributions to the debate by each speaker. On the notes you use to keep track of the debate you can make comments about good things that you can put on the ballot later.

Think through your decision based on the arguments that are in the debate instead of arguments you thought should have been in the debate or arguments you are aware of but were not advanced. It is acceptable to make comments related to those other arguments on the ballot to be helpful, but not to explain a reason for decision.

Don't panic if the debate is seems like it is even or a tie. Good debaters can make it difficult to decide who won (both teams seem to make valid points), and sometimes beginning debaters can make it difficult to decide as well but for differing reasons (neither team is making a more compelling argument). Try to determine which team did the better overall or more consistent job, or which team did better with a tougher side to defend. You can also determine which side makes you have to do less work to create a coherent rationale for decision. It is also possible to factor in manner as a determining factor in deciding between two teams. Remember the responsibility is on the debaters to make your job easy, and to clarify the outcome of the debate as much as possible for you.

Remember the educational goals of the activity as you interact with the debaters and as you make comments verbally or by ballot to the participants. While being positive is important, you also can make criticisms that are specific, but targeted toward adding to the participants knowledge, or helping them improve their performance.

Don't be afraid to point out errors made by the debaters that impact your decision, but do so in a way that indicates how to avoid making that error in the future.

Evaluating Competing Lines of Argument  
Steven Johnson

- I. “Stasis” and evaluating debates
  - A. Defining “stasis”
  - B. Identifying points of stasis
    1. Proposition
      - a. The motion
      - b. The case
    2. Issues
      - a. As they emerge
      - b. Topoi
- II. The standard
  - A. Evaluative phrase
    1. Paternalism in governance is desirable
    2. Performance enhancing drugs ought to be tolerated in sport.
    3. India should be given a permanent seat on the UN Security Council.
  - B. Two potential sources for standard
    1. Explicitly contested point of stasis between teams
    2. Implicitly emerges from the positions advocated by each team.
  - C. Employing the standard
    1. Evaluating the arguments relative to the issues
    2. Evaluating the issues relative to the proposition
- III. Evaluating the arguments
  - A. Truth: do the arguments prevail over competing arguments?
    1. Fidelity (external consistency)
    2. Coherence (internal consistency)
  - B. Validity: are the arguments well-constructed and well-executed?
    1. Sound reasoning and support?
    2. Effective expression?
- IV. Evaluating arguments to adjudicate a round
  - A. Identify the proposition: About what are the teams disagreeing?
  - B. Identify the standard: How should I decide if the proposition is true or false?
  - C. Identify the issues: What are the specific points of the proposition contested by each team?
  - D. Evaluate each team’s arguments: Which team prevailed on each issue?
  - E. Render and justify a decision: Which team won and why?



**Effective Note Taking**  
**Anne Canavan**

- I. Why take notes?
  - A. Organization is crucial to a good debate. Your best argument does you little good if the adjudicator is uncertain what the argument is answering.
  - B. You and your partner may not always write down the same thing, even though you are both listening to the same team. Being able to read someone else's notes can help you gain insight on a debate.
  - C. Having notes will help keep you organized and on-track. Without detailed notes, it is very easy to forget to answer an argument.
  - D. Good notes will help you to prepare for future rounds by giving you records to refer to in similar situations.
  
- II. How to take notes
  - A. Remember that you can't possibly write everything the other team says, so don't try. Listen for a few moments, and then summarize what they have said into one or two sentences.
  - B. Develop shorthand that you and your partner can read. Use symbols to substitute for whole words, shorten long words, and use abbreviations. Be certain that your partner can read your notes in case they need your notes to speak from.
  - C. Use different color pens if possible to visually separate what you have said from what the other team says.
  - D. Once you are practiced at this, it will be possible to write your answers to what the other team is saying while they are speaking.
  - E. The bottom line is to develop a system that works for you, and keep refining your system.
  
- III. Note taking practice
  - A. Note taking exercises
  - B. Abbreviations
  - C. Numbers

**Arguing Against Your Views:  
or “what to do when you’re forced to debate for the side you don’t believe in.”  
Kevin Minch**

I. Why we argue

- A. Debates occur, in part, to advance the goal of finding truth.
  - 1. Leaders in government engage in protracted debates to decide what makes the best policy.
  - 2. Leaders in business debate to determine what tactics will produce the most profit.
  - 3. Leaders in society debate what values best promote the betterment of communities.
  - 4. Leaders in academics debate philosophy and fundamental questions of knowledge.
- B. The Opposition serves a crucial function in decision making. Without them, decision making would be ineffective.

II. The Function of “The Devil’s Advocate”

A variety of systems assume that “zealous advocacy” on both sides of an issue is a good way to arrive at Truth:

- A. “The Devil’s Advocate” in the Catholic Church’s process of selecting saints.
- B. The defense attorney in a court who advocates for a client he/she suspects of being guilty.
- C. The teacher, who challenges the assumptions of a student to encourage them to think more critically about an intellectual problem.
- D. You, in the form of the Opposition team, when you challenge a Government team’s advocacy, which you essentially agree with.

III. Undermining Solvency, and Underscoring Costs

- A. In many instances the Government and Opposition may agree on the fundamental problem and its cause, but disagree about the solution.
- B. Opposition teams should focus attention on:
  - 1. Questioning the effectiveness of the plan at solving the problem.
  - 2. Highlighting the costs of adopting a misguided solution.

IV. Questioning Solvency

- A. Has the proposed solution been tried before? Has it been proven an empirically effective solution?
- B. What intervening factors might prevent the solution from being effective?
- C. Does the actor lack the resources necessary for the proposed action to work?
- D. Is there a probability that the proposed action may actually worsen the problem, or set-back the goal? (Turn-around).

V. Accepting the Premise, Offering Alternative Solutions

- A. In many cases the Government will offer a sound case that is difficult to refute.
- B. The Opposition may offer a superior counter proposal, that achieves the same goal more efficiently, or with greater advantages.
- C. This strategy allows for acceptance of the underlying goal of the Government's position, but gives the Opposition ground to argue.
- D. Example:
  - 1. The government advocates that the United States government should send peacekeepers to Somalia.
  - 2. The Opposition agrees that violence in Somalia is a bad thing, and should be stopped, but sees problems with United States involvement there.
    - a. The United States has a bad history with interventions in Somalia.
    - b. The United States faces strong opposition in Islamic countries right now.
    - c. African nations have already been harmed by the colonial legacy of Western powers.

VI. The Counterplan or Alternative Proposal

- A. The Opposition argues that another body should take the action instead of the United States (possibilities could include the African Union, South Africa, the United Nations, etc.)
- B. The Opposition argues that these alternative groups are more likely to succeed.
  - 1. They have a regional or multinational component.
  - 2. These actors avoid the stigma associated with prior United States and Western intervention in Africa.
  - 3. A successful mission boosts the credibility of regional or multinational actors.

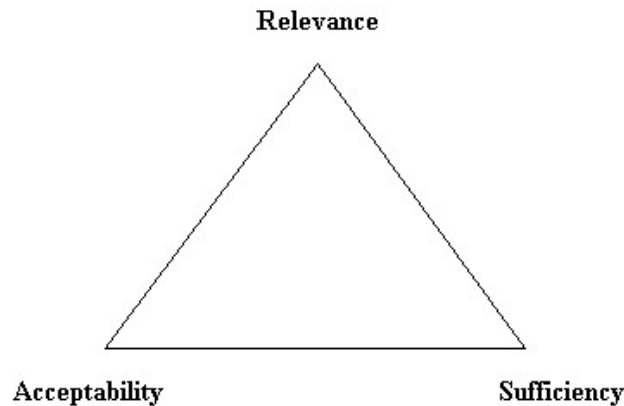
VII. Engaging the case critically

- A. “Devil’s Advocacy” requires the zealous pursuit of numerous points of contention—some major, some relatively minor.
- B. In the absence of a significant disadvantage, alternative, or flawed premise, zealous engagement of the particulars of the Government case is desirable.
- C. Tools
  - 1. Ask questions about proof.
  - 2. Ask questions about reasoning.
  - 3. Ask questions about biases.
  - 4. Offer alternative interpretations.
- D. Use these tools to foster a general feeling of uncertainty in the minds of the audience. Lead your audience to question fundamental assumptions and think critically!

## Quality of Arguments: Fallacies Robert Trapp<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Three Criteria for Logical Assessment of Arguments

**RSA Triangle: The criteria that a good argument must satisfy.**



#### 1.1 The Standard of Acceptability

The standard of acceptability is related to *evidence*. Evidence is the starting point of argument. It is the foundation on which an argument is built. Evidence is another word for what some call the *premises* of an argument. For an argument to proceed, the evidence needs to be “acceptable” to the audience who is to judge the argument.

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<sup>1</sup>This approach to the quality of arguments is not our invention. In fact, we borrow the approach fully from Canadian philosophers Ralph H. Johnson and J. Anthony Blair, *Logical Self-Defense* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994). Unfortunately Johnson and Blair’s book is now out of print. A similar approach is taken by Trudy Govier, *A Practical Study of Argument* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2001). Although these two books share important features, we prefer Johnson and Blair’s approach to Govier’s because they have better avoided the trappings of formal, deductive logic.

Four acceptability conditions are useful to debaters<sup>2</sup>.

1. Supported by a cogent subargument: acceptable if the debater provides a cogent argument to support that evidence. In other words, evidence is acceptable to the extent that a debater provides good reasons for its acceptability.
2. Common knowledge: considered “common knowledge” if it is known by virtually everyone in the debater’s target audience.
3. Supported elsewhere: that the evidence is supported in some other source, usually a published source.
4. Authority: the opinion of an authority as evidence when that authority possesses specialized knowledge.

## **1.2 The Standard of Relevance**

The standard of relevance is related to what we usually call “reasoning.” Reasoning is how a debater connects evidence to a claim. The standard of relevance asks whether that connection is relevant.

### **1.2.1 Relevance and example**

Basis: Relevance and example presumes that regularities exist within classes of phenomena and that if those regularities are found to exist within a sample of the phenomena, they probably exist in all or most examples.

For instance: Point to six examples of drugs new to the market and show that each has unintended side effects. In so doing, she might claim that most or all drugs have unintended side effects

### **1.2.2 Relevance and similarity**

Basis: Relevance and similarity is used in arguments by analogy. This kind of argument considers similar cases and their relationship to one another. One case is relevant to another if its features exhibit more important similarities than differences.

For Instance: claim that the Soviet war in Afghanistan was to the Soviet Union what the Vietnam War<sup>1</sup> was to the United States. To make this argument effectively, a debater

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<sup>2</sup> Govier (140–155) originally suggested seven acceptability conditions; we have reduced these to the four that we believe are most useful for debaters.

would need to point to the similarities between the events and argue that these similarities were important to each event.

### **1.2.3** Relevance and causality

**Basis:** When arguing that one thing is causally related to another, one question of relevance involves how the two things are related to one another in time. Obviously, the cause needs to come before the effect. The relationship of the two things over time is simply one relevance question that might be raised about arguments by causality.

For instance: claims that the Warsaw Ghetto uprising caused *Kristallnacht*, a series of violent, anti-Jewish attacks led by Nazi Party officials and Nazi storm troopers. A perceptive and knowledgeable audience would quickly realize that the Warsaw uprisings could not possibly have caused *Kristallnacht* because the uprisings were in 1943 and *Kristallnacht* occurred November 9–10, 1938.

### **1.3** The Standard of Sufficiency

The question of sufficiency involves how much certainty we require to assent to a claim. In the case of argument in the social sciences, for instance, arguments in support of a research hypothesis are considered sufficient only if the researcher is able to report results that exceed a preset probability—usually 95 percent or 99 percent.

A different context provides a different example: the standard of proof used in the U.S. criminal court system. In that system, a person may not be declared guilty of a crime unless the jury is convinced “beyond a reasonable doubt.” The standard of sufficiency in the U.S. civil court system requires only proof by a preponderance of evidence.

## **2. Fallacies and Argument Adequacy**

We see the presence or absence of fallacies as a general way to place arguments along the spectrum from very good to very poor. The presence of a fallacy does not automatically disqualify an argument from consideration. It simply invites, perhaps requires, you to improve your argument to make it more persuasive. Similarly, you might find an argument that is relatively free of fallacies and that argument still might not be “true.” In other words, the presence of fallacies does not automatically mean we should not give consideration to an argument, just as the absence of fallacies does not automatically mean we should believe the argument.

### 3. Three Basic Fallacies

The system we use in this text includes three basic fallacies, one corresponding to each of the three criteria for a logically adequate argument.<sup>3</sup> These fallacies are: the problematic premise, the irrelevant reason, and the hasty conclusion.

#### 3.1 Problematic Premises

Problematic premises refer to arguments that fail for any reason to fulfill the acceptability requirement.

As we said, the general category of problematic premises is related to the accuracy of a debater's evidence or starting points. Two variants on the problematic premise:

**3.1.1** Begging the question occurs when a debater introduces a starting point or evidence that is the same as the claim.

Richard Whately presents a classic example of begging the question in his 1862 book *Elements of Logic*:

To allow every man unbounded freedom of speech must be on the whole, advantageous to the state; for it is highly conducive to the interests of the community that each individual should enjoy a liberty perfectly unlimited of expressing his sentiments.<sup>4</sup>

In this argument, the phrase, "advantageous to the state," seems equivalent to the phrase "highly conducive to the interests of the community." Similarly, the phrase "allow every man unbounded freedom of speech" means the same as "each individual should enjoy a liberty perfectly unlimited of expressing his sentiments." In this instance, then, the starting point and conclusion are the same, and the argument commits the fallacy of begging the question.

**3.1.2** The fallacy of incompatibility also falls into the category of fallacies related to the standard of acceptability. *Incompatibility* can have a number of meanings, but for our purpose, incompatibility becomes a fallacy (1) when a debater makes a statement as evidence that is at odds with another statement made by the debater, or (2) when a debater's argument is incompatible with some action she has performed or recommended elsewhere.

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<sup>3</sup> These three basic fallacies are borrowed from Johnson and Blair, *Logical Self Defense*

<sup>4</sup> Cited in Johnson and Blair, 81.



### 3.2 Irrelevant Reason

An irrelevant reason is one that, in conjunction with other premises offered, fails to minimally satisfy the relevance criteria.<sup>5</sup> Canadian philosophers Ralph H. Johnson and J. Anthony Blair present one in their text on informal logic:

A Member of Parliament in Canada once charged, in the House of Commons, that the Federal Department of Health and Welfare had been cooperating with the Kellogg Company in permitting the sale of a cereal (Kellogg's Corn Flakes) that had "little or no nutritional value." Marc Lalonde, then the Minister of Health seeking to rebut that charge stated: "As for the nutritional value of Corn Flakes, the milk you have with your Corn Flakes has great nutritional value."<sup>6</sup>

- 3.2.1 Argument *ad hominem*, meaning argument "to the person," involves an attack on a person's character or background irrelevant to the claim.
- 3.2.2 Straw person fallacies involve arguments based on a sometimes intentional misinterpretation of an opponent's argument. The debater construes the argument to be other than what it is, then attacks this misconstrued version rather than the actual one.
- 3.2.3 Red herring is an argument that shifts the focus from the current argument. The new "red herring" argument is irrelevant to the argument under discussion and is used to sidestep the present discussion or even end it.
- 3.2.4 Poisoning the well: an attempt to discredit a person or a source in advance of their argument. "Dr. Summers is a Republican. We can only expect him to be against affirmative action."
- 3.2.5 Guilt by association: a person's argument is attacked not based on the issues pertinent to the argument, but on the basis of groups and people with whom the person is associated. "How can we possibly support Ms. Cooper's views on foreign affairs? After all, she married a socialist."

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<sup>5</sup> Johnson and Blair, 65–67.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 65–66.

- 3.2.6** Appeal to fear: an attempt to invoke fear to take the focus off the argument. An appeal to fear is only fallacious when fear is used *solely* to shift the focus from the issue. “If we elect my opponent, we should all build bomb shelters for our families immediately and prepare to be attacked because my opponent has very little foreign policy experience.”
- 3.2.7** Appeal to popularity: when a debater uses the popularity of a person, product, or belief to justify a favorable conclusion about that person, product or belief. “Most Serbs support President Boris Tadic. So should you.”
- 3.2.8** Appeal to tradition: an attempt to argue in favor of a particular action on the grounds of tradition rather than on the basis of the merits of that action. “The U.S. Constitution has allowed citizens to possess guns for the past 200 years so we should continue to do so for the next 200 years.”

### **3.3 Hasty Conclusions**

Sometimes referred to as “jumping to a conclusion,” this general category of fallacies is one wherein all of the evidence and arguments the debater offers, taken in combination with one another, do not meet the test of sufficiency.

- 3.3.1** Hasty generalization is a fallacy of reasoning by example that occurs when the examples selected to support the claim are either insufficient in number or in their representativeness.
- 3.3.2** Slippery slope arguments are those in which a debater tries to connect a series of events in a causal chain that ultimately “culminate in calamity.”<sup>7</sup> Contrary to popular opinion, slippery slope arguments are not necessarily fallacies.<sup>8</sup> They only are fallacies when the debater does not make all the connections properly.
- 3.3.3** Two wrongs is a shortened label for a fallacy commonly called “Two wrongs don’t make a right.” The two wrongs fallacy is “a misplaced appeal to consistency. A person is urged to accept, or condone, one thing that is wrong because another similar thing, also wrong, has occurred or has been accepted and condoned.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Govier, 439.

<sup>8</sup> See for instance, Eugene Volokh and David Newman, “In Defense of the Slippery Slope,” *Legal Affairs* (March/April 2003): 21–23. Also see Douglas N. Walton, *Slippery Slope Arguments* (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Govier, 444.

- 3.3.4** Improper appeal to practice: this fallacious argument assumes that a person is justified in doing things that are common practice, even if that practice clearly is wrong. “Why should I pay the women in my business wages equal to men? Other businesses pay men more so I should be able to do the same.”
- 3.3.5** Fallacy of composition: in this fallacious argument, the evidence is drawn from some part of a whole but the conclusion is about the whole.<sup>10</sup> “Tim Howard, the keeper for Manchester United, is a superb keeper. Therefore, Manchester United is one of the best football teams in Europe.” Manchester United may well be a superb football team, but this argument nevertheless, makes a fallacious statement about the relationship of the part (keeper) to the whole (team).
- 3.3.6** Fallacy of division: in this fallacious argument, the evidence is drawn from the whole, but the conclusion is made about the part. The argument assumes that what is true of the whole must be true of its constituent parts. “Harvard is an excellent university, therefore Lawrence Tribe, who is a law professor at Harvard, must be an excellent professor.” Like the above example, the claim may be correct, but the reasoning is fallacious because it makes an improper statement about the relationship between the whole (Harvard) and its constituent parts (Professor Tribe).
- 3.3.7** *Post hoc*: this fallacy, also called by its Latin name *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*, means “after this, therefore before this.” The fallacy comes from assuming that because one thing predates another, the first must have caused the second. A person may argue that “After George W. Bush took office, the U.S. economy went into a recession; thus, Bush’s policies were the cause of the recession.” Whether Bush’s policies contributed to the recession has not been argued well here. The debater has simply assumed a cause-and-effect relationship.
- 3.3.8** Faulty analogy: this fallacy occurs when two cases are compared to each other but are not similar in terms of the relationship stated in the comparison. Speaking at the Republican National Convention, former New York mayor Rudolph Giuliani compared George W. Bush and Winston Churchill, implying that Bush is the Churchill of our times. Several newspapers responded that the comparison was faulty. For instance: “Sir, Winston Churchill’s enemy was a powerful, determined dictator; President Bush’s conflict is with a shadowy nemesis and his small band of idolaters, set on destruction rather than conquest. Mr Churchill welcomed allies; Mr Bush would happily ‘go it alone’.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 439.

<sup>11</sup> . *The Times* (London), November 8, 2004, Features sec., 16.

**Analyzing Propositions**  
**Bill Sheffield**

- I. Propositions
  - A. Heart of the debate
  - B. Central to determining sides; “divides ground”
  
- II. Types of Propositions
  - A. Propositions of Fact
  - B. Propositions of Value
  - C. Propositions of Policy
  
- III. Formulating Propositions
  - A. Categories of Motions
    - 1. Open (linkable)
    - 2. Closed (straight)
      - a. Literal
      - b. Defined set
  - B. General Elements for Effective Propositions
    - 1. an identifiable controversy
    - 2. one central idea/ avoidance of ambiguity
    - 3. single declarative statement
    - 4. clear burden of proof for government
    - 5. phrasing that includes a desired outcome/a conclusion only
    - 6. neutral terminology
  - C. Burdens in the Debate
    - 1. a burden of proof
    - 2. burden of refutation
    - 3. the burden of proof
    - 4. presumption and the status quo
  
- IV. Avoiding Interpretation Dilemmas
  - A. Specific Knowledge
  - B. Truism
  - C. Tautology
  
- V. Examining Past Propositions (Optional: Time permitting)

## Weighing Issues: Putting A Round Together

### The Use of Impacts and Significance:

Establishing the harms of a case (stock issues)  
Showing a need for action  
Weighing the Disadvantages versus case

### Types of Impacts and Significance:

Quantitative  
Qualitative  
Abstract  
Concrete

### Issues of Impacts:

Being able to explain the “harm” or negative aspect of the impact

Examples:        Racism  
                      Immorality  
                      Economic recession

Keep asking yourself “so?”

Giving ample time for explanation AND comparison

What is in your head must come out of your mouth  
“Enthymeme” aspect of harms—judge awareness

### Premise of Risk Analysis:

How to weigh probabilities of impacts  
What risks are we willing to take for rewards/benefits  
What are the chances of solvency actually occurring

### Comparing Risk:

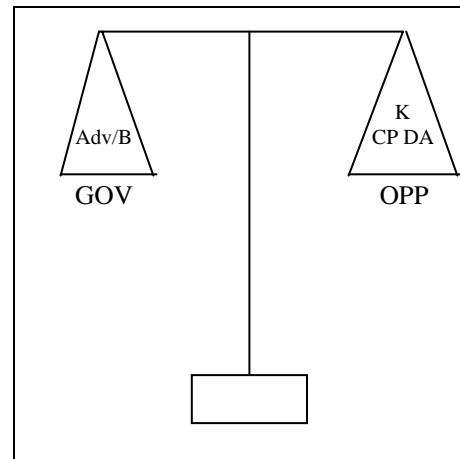
Size of impact  
Certainty/Probability of impact  
Timeframe of impact  
Reversibility of impact  
Intervening factors of impact

### Issues of Risk Analysis:

Quantitative vs. qualitative  
Mini-max assessments  
Problems of predicting the future (narrative fidelity)  
Issues of presumption (precautionary v. reactive approaches)

### Arguing Risks:

Clear identification  
Explanation of context  
“Decision Rules” “Decision Calculus”: directions for weighing unknowns or guidelines on how to act with unknown outcomes



Adv/B=Case Solvency-Benefit  
CP=Counterplan Solvency  
DA=Impact of DA  
K=Impact of Critique

### The great big scale of debate decision making:

Each team is trying to make the other side weigh less, and their side weigh more.

### Some ideas for technique:

- Bundle examples with statistics
- Creation of virtual experience
- Make the abstract concrete—narrative examples, contextualization of events, specifics, details
- Consistency of harms/significance claims and the moral values embraced by case