



## **international debate education association**

### **IDEA Youth Forums**

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The purpose of an IDEA Youth Forum is to bring together debaters and educators from around the world to help them to test their existing debate skills and to learn new ones. In seeking to accomplish this purpose an IDEA Youth Forum introduces innovative approaches to debate. The primary goal of an IDEA Youth Forum should be education, and whatever competition takes place during the Forum should serve the purpose of educating Forum participants. An IDEA Youth Forum is a two-week event, co-sponsored by IDEA-USA and IDEA-NL, consisting of series of debate theory and content sessions as well as two debate tournaments, an IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament and an IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Teams Tournament.

#### **I. Forum Personnel**

##### **A. Curriculum Committee**

1. The Curriculum Director is selected every two years (in odd numbered years). The Curriculum Director is selected through an open call application process conducted by the IDEA-NL Board. The Curriculum Director
  - delegates a Curriculum Committee that assists in the process of training selection and in the outlining the curriculum goals for the Forum
  - supervises and coordinates the selection and preparation of the Forum curriculum
  - makes final decisions and modifications to the curriculum presented at the Forum
  - prepares the trainers for the Forum
  - supervises the curriculum presentation and the work of trainers at the Forum
  - prepares research packets for the Forum, if necessary
  - informs the IDEA-NL Board of Directors, IDEA-USA Board of Directors, the staff of IDEA, and members through the listserv and website about Curriculum Committee activities
  - communicates with Forum organizers
2. The Curriculum Committee, made up of experienced trainers
  - selects and assists in preparing trainers for the upcoming Forum
  - outlines the curriculum goals for the upcoming Forum

- communicates openly with members regarding committee decisions
- performs democratically

B. Tournament Director

A Tournament Director is selected through an open call application process. A Tournament Director is chosen by the IDEA-NL Board or, at the discretion of the IDEA-NL Board, by the Tournament Host. The Tournament Director will select his or her assistants with the approval of the IDEA-NL Board.

The Tournament Director

- runs the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament and IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Teams Tournament in accordance with the tournament procedures outlined herein.
- prepares the necessary lists for awards and results packets for participants
- prepares the list of mixed teams and assigns them to workgroups (in consultation with the Curriculum Director)
- informs the IDEA-NL Board of Directors, IDEA-USA Board of Directors, the staff of IDEA and Forum organizers about tournament issues

C. Topic Committee

The Topic Committee consists of the Curriculum Director, a representative of the host and trainers selected by the IDEA-NL Governing Board.

1. In consultation with the Forum host, the Topic Committee submits topic areas two years in advance and resolutions for the tournament to the IDEA-NL General Assembly for approval one year before the Forum.
  - a. Topic themes will be chosen at Youth Forums.
  - b. Papers on perspective themes should be presented to the General Assembly one month in advance of the annual meeting. Topic papers should include sample wording of topics under a theme.
  - c. The General Assembly will vote on the topic theme to be used.
  - d. A topic committee will work on selecting and wording actual topics under that theme that can be voted on electronically.
  - e. Topics should have resource books published by IDEBATE Press, if possible, which appear in advance of the topic being used in mixed team tournaments.
2. The resolution of IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournaments then become the resolution of IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournaments for the following year.

D. Forum Hosts

1. Forum hosts are chosen by vote of the IDEA-NL General Assembly.
  - a. The IDEA Forum Committee, a committee of at least three members of the IDEA-NL General Assembly, solicits proposals from potential hosts at least two years prior to a Youth Forum.
  - b. Once chosen, the site should be announced at least a year in advance.
  - c. Each country wishing to host a Forum should have three hotels or specific venues to propose, so that the General Assembly members have an idea of price ranges, etc.
2. Forum hosts responsibilities include to:
  - a. ensure that the rules of the Forum are obeyed and enforced by the adults accompanying students to the Forum
  - b. select the site of the Forum (see Site Requirements) and raise funds for Forum activities
  - c. prepares the Forum site by arranging rooms for classes and debates and ensuring that these rooms are clean and properly equipped for teaching/debating
  - d. arranges meal options (with consideration to cultural and dietary restrictions) and spaces meals so there is no more than 4 hours between the end of one meal period and the beginning of the next
  - e. wakes participants in time for each morning's general assembly
  - f. select and assign responsibilities to staff members for the Forum and inform the Curriculum Director and the Tournament Director of these assigned responsibilities
    - Technology – creates and updates the Forum website, provides equipment and technology assistance during the Forum. Wireless Internet access must be readily and freely available to Forum participants.
    - Travel assistance – provides travel information, visa assistance, communication with embassies and participants, organizes the pick-up and drop-off of participants, both to and from the Forum site
    - Registration - creates and maintains a registration form for participants, provides registration information to the Curriculum Director and Tournament Director
    - Copying - prepares welcome packets for all participants, volunteers, and staff, and provides signs and maps for the area. During the Forum works with the Curriculum Director to fulfill the printing needs of participants

- Entertainment and Free Time Activities - runs the general assembly, provides and organizes optional fun activities for the evenings (activities must be safe and tasteful), organizes and supervises trips and excursions during the Forum
  - Fundraising, budgeting and public relations booklet
- d. submit design for t-shirts and the Forum motto/slogan to IDEA Governing Board for approval and once that approval is secured arranges printing and distribution
  - e. provide adequate supplies for the Forum personnel (see Supply List)

#### E. Forum Trainers

For general guidelines regarding trainers, please see International Trainers Process and Standards. For guidelines applicable to running any type of training, see Trainings.

##### 1. Selection

Trainers are a vital part of a Forum's activity. A call for trainers should be drafted and then circulated throughout the international debate community over the debate-listserv. The Curriculum Committee should select trainers from the applicant pool.

An effort should be made to recruit trainers of different experience levels, and from different countries and regions. So that they may gain experience, a special effort should be made to include individuals of limited international training experience.

It is particularly important that Forum trainers exhibit the following qualities:

- an ability to function effectively in a culturally mixed environment
- an ability to communicate ideas effectively in the English language
- an ability to maintain a positive and friendly atmosphere in relation to participants and staff
- an ability to maintain professional relations with students, coaches, and other trainers
- a willingness to observe, and assist in enforcing, Forum rules

##### 2. Duties Before the Forum

- a. Prior to the Forum, trainers have several responsibilities. Trainers who do not perform these pre-Forum duties will not be invited to train at the Forum.
- b. These duties include:
  - Curriculum Development (*six to eight months prior to the Forum*)  
Trainers will be divided into work groups to prepare different parts

of the Forum curriculum. All discussions and preparations will be conducted via email (or other means of electronic communication); trainers are expected to communicate actively and regularly with other training team members.

- Finalizing of Curriculum (*three days prior to the Forum*) Trainers will meet to finalize the curriculum, familiarize themselves with the Forum site, and prepare specific aspects of the training.

3. Duties During the Forum

- a. Trainers are divided into work groups, with group members selected to ensure geographical representation and to complement one another's expertise.
- b. Trainer duties include:
  - assisting teams and coaches in preparing for debates
  - teaching topic material as well as debate theory and practice
  - attending daily trainers' meetings, general assembly meetings, excursions, and other activities taking place during the Forum
  - During the IDEA Karl Popper Debate World Championship Tournament and the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Teams Tournament, trainers will be involved in judging debates.

F. Forum Coaches

1. Coaches must have graduated high school/secondary school and be a minimum of 20 years of age. Exceptions can be made at the discretion of the IDEA staff.
2. All adults at the Forum are responsible for insuring that the event is a safe and educational experience. No adult should ignore any activity that appears detrimental to the well-being of any debater participating in the Forum.

Ultimate responsibility for the debaters, however, lies with the coaches who accompany the debaters to the Forum. For general guidelines on being a coach, see NGO Accreditation Process - Affiliate Accreditation Process - Coach.

3. Coaches should speak and understand English and should be available to coach and judge for the IDEA Karl Popper Mixed Team Tournament.
4. At the Forum, coaches should agree to abide by the following guidelines:
  - rivalries with other coaches or teams have no place at the Forum. When working with their teams, coaches should emphasize that education, not competition, is the ultimate aim of the Forum
  - relationships with debaters and other staff should remain professional. Coaches should keep in mind their role as educators, and behave accordingly

- purchasing (or otherwise acquiring) alcohol or controlled substances for debaters is strictly prohibited
- smoking should take place only in designated smoking areas at the Forum
- coaches must arrive on time to all Forum activities and must ensure that their debaters are also on time

G. Forum Debaters

1. An adult (20 years old or older) who speaks English and who is available to coach and judge in the IDEA Karl Popper Mixed Team Tournament should accompany debaters attending the Forum.
2. Forum debaters must be high school/secondary school students who have either not yet graduated or have graduated within the last 6 months.
3. Debaters who have graduated high school/secondary school are allowed to compete in the IDEA Karl Popper Debate World Championship Tournament. They will be made coaches during the IDEA Karl Popper Mixed Team Tournament. This takes precedence over the age requirement of 19 years of age for coaches.
4. In addition to complying with the general rules and behavioral guidelines of the Forum, debaters should obey the following:
  - their interactions with all other Forum participants must be respectful
  - they should arrive on time to all scheduled Forum events
  - drinking alcohol during the Forum is prohibited
  - smoking is restricted to designated smoking areas at the Forum
5. A debate team consists of three students. No two or four person teams will be allowed to compete and no substitutions will be made for 'sick' debaters.

H. Forum Observers

Observers should comply with the general rules and behavioral guidelines of the Forum. Observers may be asked to assist the host and staff with tasks during the Forum

**II. IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournaments Tabulation Policies**

Should more than one Youth Forum be held in a given year, the IDEA-NL and IDEA-USA Board of Directors will designate one as the IDEA Karl Popper Debate World Championship Tournament.

A. Preliminary Rounds

1. The IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament will have four preliminary rounds.
2. The constraints for pairing are as follows:

- a. Sides are assigned randomly in odd numbered rounds and side constraints operate in even numbered rounds. For the even numbered rounds teams will be assigned to the side of the resolution opposite from the side the teams were assigned in the previous round.
- b. Teams will be constrained from meeting other teams from their own NGO.
- c. To the extent possible teams will be constrained from meeting other teams from their lab during the first two preliminary rounds.
- d. The following method should be employed when pairing teams:
  - Round 1 will be paired randomly, meaning that with the exception of the previously mentioned constraints any team has an equal chance of meeting any other team in the tournament.
  - Rounds 2-4 will be paired using a high-low method of power pairing within brackets.

#### B. Elimination Rounds

1. The first elimination round for the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament is octofinals. The first 16 teams in the ranking of teams advance to octofinals.
2. No team constraints apply in elimination rounds.
3. The following method should be employed when pairing teams:
  - a. The first elimination round is paired so that the highest ranked team meets the lowest ranked team (team one will meet team sixteen, team two will meet team fifteen, etc.).
  - b. After the first elimination round the bracket is not reset. The team that wins in the first round simply assumes the place of the team they have defeated in the bracket ( i.e. should team sixteen defeat team one, team sixteen assumes team one's place in the bracket)
  - c. If the teams scheduled to debate have met before they will reverse sides. If the teams have not met before they flip a coin to determine sides. The Tournament Director will do the flip fifteen minutes before the round in the general posting area.

#### C. Judges

1. After the Opening Ceremony, trainers will hold a demonstration debate on a topic similar to the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament topic.
  - a. Prior to the Opening Ceremony debate, all judges (excluding trainers) will be attend a judging session during which judging standards for the IDEA Youth Forum will be presented.
  - b. All judges will attend a mandatory debriefing of the debate.

- c. The Tournament Director and his/her staff will assign an A, B, C, to all judges based on their knowledge of debate. Experience will be determined by their understanding of the debate and debate principles reflected in their ballots. An individual judge can find out how they were ranked by requesting that information from the Tournament Director.
  - d. Judges who do not meet the minimum judging standards may be assigned as a shadow judge.
  - e. Categories will be adjusted after the IDEA Karl Popper Championship Tournament.
  - f. In the middle three rounds of each tournament, the least experienced (C) judges will be in the minimum on all panels and the strongest panels will be in the middle third of the debates.
- 2. Three judges will judge each preliminary round. The number of judges in elimination rounds will be of three or higher, depending on the round. Judges that are not assigned to judge a round should remain on stand-by in case they are needed to judge a round until the Tournament Director releases them.
    - a. No coach or trainer will be assigned to judge debates involving debaters from his or her NGO or debate club.
    - b. In elimination rounds, judges can be assigned to judge teams they previously judged in the tournament on either side of the topic.
    - c. Judges and teams should also specify conflicts of interest (i.e., teams or individuals they have coached) that will be added as constraints.
  - 3. Judges are to reach their decisions independently and not consult with each other prior to completing their ballot. Judges are obliged to indicate reasons for their decision in writing on the ballot. All ballots shall be signed and completed in legible handwriting. In case of awarding a low-point win, the judge needs to indicate this decision on the ballot.
  - 4. Judges will announce their decision after each round. Speaker points will not be disclosed. The decisions cannot be appealed. Oral comments are encouraged but voluntary. At least one judge from the panel must give oral feedback to the debaters, but that judge's comments do not necessarily reflect the opinion of all the judges on the panel.

#### D. Rankings

- 1. Teams that advance to elimination rounds will be ranked using criteria in the following order:
  - a. Number of wins;
  - b. Number of ballots;
  - c. Adjusted speaker points with the highest and the lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - d. Total speaker points;

- e. Opposition win-loss record;
  - f. Double-adjusted speaker points with the second highest and the second lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - g. Continued adjustments with dropping additional high and low scores;
  - h. In the event of an unbreakable tie after all the above mentioned criteria, the ranking will be determined randomly by the computer.
2. Speakers will receive awards based on the following criteria
- a. Adjusted speaker points with the highest and the lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - b. Total speaker points;
  - c. Double-adjusted points with the second highest and the lowest second single-ballot points dropped;
  - d. Continued adjustments with dropping additional high and low scores;
  - e. In the event of an unbreakable tie after all the above mentioned criteria, the debaters will be declared tied for that particular speaker place.

E. Announcements and Postings

- 1. The pairings for each round will be posted in the general postings area.
- 2. Each team is expected to be on time for rounds. A fifteen minute delay after the time the last ballot has been picked up gives the judge the authority to declare the team present a winner (with 3-0 ballots and average speaker points). If the absent team has previously informed the Tournament Director of a justified reason for not being able to debate they will lose the round (0-3) but all speakers shall receive the average speaker points for the other debated rounds. If no such notice is given the absent team loses the round and all speakers shall receive 0 speaker points.
- 3. After the preliminary rounds the first sixteen teams to advance to elimination rounds will be announced alphabetically.
- 4. Each team will receive their ballots after the tournament but will not receive the full packet containing the results for the entire tournament (teams and speaker records) until just before their departure from the Forum.

F. Awards

- 1. Medals
  - a. First place teams, and their coach(es), as well as the top speaker should receive gold IDEA medals.
  - b. Second place teams, and their coach(es), as well as the second speaker should receive silver IDEA medals.

- c. All non-advancing octo-finalists, quarter-finalists and semi-finalists, and their coach(es) should receive bronze IDEA medals.
2. Certificates
- a. Certificates will be given to all teams and coaches that advance to elimination rounds in the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament.
  - b. Certificates will also be given to the top ten speakers in the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament.

### III. IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament

- A. The Tournament Director and the Curriculum Director will form the teams for the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament using the following procedure: (this would be modified if we also go with B below)
- 1. Divide the speaker rankings from the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Championship Tournament into three columns (i.e. 1-30, 31-60, 61-90).
  - 2. Pair the first with the last, the second with the second last (i.e. 1 with 90, 2 with 89 etc.)
  - 3. Find the middle of the second column (i.e. 45)
  - 4. Start adding the third speaker to the teams by moving away from the middle in both directions (i.e. team 1 gets 45, team 2 gets 44, team 3 gets 46).
- B. The IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament will consist of two divisions: open and junior. (Rationale: If the last 1/3 of the speakers to be put together competed in a junior division, the educational value would be much higher than the current team formation system (**above**). In addition, it would offer more balanced debate in the two divisions).
- C. Preliminary Rounds
- 1. The IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament will have six preliminary rounds (Rationale for an even number of rounds is if there is an unbalanced resolution it would not disadvantage some teams and not others).
  - 2. The constraints for pairing are as follows:
    - a. Sides are assigned randomly in the odd numbered rounds and side constraints operate in the even numbered rounds. For the even numbered rounds teams will be assigned to the side of the resolution opposite from the side the teams were assigned in the previous round.
    - b. Teams from the same lab group will be constrained from meeting other teams from their lab during the preliminary rounds of the tournament.
    - c. In the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament teams containing debaters from the same country of origin can meet.
    - d. The following method shall be employed when pairing teams:

- Rounds 1 and 2 will be paired randomly, meaning that with the exception of the previously mentioned constraints so that any team has an equal chance of meeting any other team in the tournament.
- Rounds 3-6 will be paired using a high-low method of power pairing within brackets.

#### D. Elimination Rounds

1. The first elimination round for the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament is octofinals. The top sixteen teams will advance to octofinals.
2. No team constraints apply in elimination rounds.
3. The following method shall be employed when pairing teams:
  - The first elimination round is paired so that the highest ranked team meets the lowest ranked team (team one will meet team eight, team two will meet team seven, etc.)
  - After the first elimination round the bracket is not reset. The team that wins in the first round assumes the place of the team they have defeated in the bracket (i.e. should team eight defeat team one, that team assumes team one's place in the bracket).
4. If the teams scheduled to debate have met before they will reverse sides. If the teams have not met before they will flip a coin to determine sides. The Tournament Director will do the flip fifteen minutes before the round in the general posting area.

#### E. Judges

Three judges will judge each preliminary round. The number of judges in elimination rounds will be three or higher, depending on the round. Judges that are not assigned to judge a round should remain on stand-by in case they are needed to judge a round until the Tournament Director releases them.

1. No trainer will be assigned to judge debates involving debaters from his or her lab group. Coaches will be constrained against teams from their own lab and their own NGO. The first constraint to be broken in case of necessity will be the one against a coach's NGO.
2. In the elimination rounds judges can be assigned to judge one or both of the teams even if they have judged either of those teams in preliminary rounds.
3. Judges and teams should also specify conflicts of interest (i.e., teams or individuals they have coached) that will be added as constraints.

Judges are to reach their decisions independently and not consult with each other prior to completing their ballot. Judges are obliged to indicate reasons for their decision in writing on the ballot. All ballots shall be signed and completed in legible handwriting. In case of awarding a low-point win, the judge needs to indicate this decision on the ballot.

Judges will announce their decision after each round. Speaker points will not be disclosed. The decisions cannot be appealed. Oral comments are encouraged but

voluntary. At least one judge from the panel must give oral feedback to the debaters, but that judge's comments do not necessarily reflect the opinion of all the judges on the panel.

F. Rankings

1. Teams that advance to elimination rounds will be ranked using criteria in the following order:
  - a. Number of wins;
  - b. Number of ballots;
  - c. Adjusted speaker points with the highest and the lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - d. Total speaker points;
  - e. Opposition win-loss record;
  - f. Double-adjusted speaker points with the second highest and the second lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - g. In the event of an unbreakable tie after all the above mentioned criteria, the ranking will be determined by the toss of a coin.
2. Speakers will receive awards based on the following criteria
  - a. Adjusted speaker points with the highest and the lowest single-ballot points dropped;
  - b. Total speaker points;
  - c. Double-adjusted points with the second highest and the lowest second single-ballot points dropped;
  - d. Continued adjustments with dropping additional high and low scores;
  - e. In the event of an unbreakable tie after all the above mentioned criteria, the debaters will be declared tied for that particular speaker place.

G. Announcements and Postings

1. The pairings for each round will be posted in the general postings area.
2. Each team is expected to be on time for rounds. A fifteen minute delay after the time the last ballot has been picked up gives the judge the authority to declare the team present a winner (with 3-0 ballots and average speaker points). If the absent team has previously informed the Tournament Director of a justified reason for not being able to debate they will lose the round (0-3) but all speakers shall receive the average speaker points for the other debated rounds. If no such notice is given the absent team loses the round and all speakers shall receive 0 speaker points.
3. After the preliminary rounds the first sixteen teams to advance to elimination rounds will be announced alphabetically.

4. Each team will receive a full packet containing the results for the entire tournament (teams and speaker records) upon their departure from the Forum.

#### H. Awards

##### 1. Medals

- a. First place teams, and their coach(es), as well as the top speaker should receive gold IDEA medals.
- b. Second place teams, and their coach(es), as well as the second speaker should receive silver IDEA medals.
- c. All non-advancing octo-finalists, quarter-finalists and semi-finalists, and their coach(es) should receive bronze IDEA medals.

##### 2. Certificates

- a. Certificates will be given to all teams and coaches that advance to elimination rounds in the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament.
- b. Certificates will also be given to the top ten speakers in the IDEA Karl Popper Debate Mixed Team Tournament.

5/2006



## **international debate education association**

### **Host Supply List**

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Hosts should provide the following supplies:

Magic-markers in all colors, with the majority being red/blue/black and green. Each Trainer should receive three markers in their supply bag and fifteen markers should be retained for office use. A number of wide highlighters and Sharpies are also helpful.

One black and one blue pen for each participant (including all volunteers and staff), to be provided in the welcome folder. Approximately twenty more should be retained for office use.

A notebook or paper pad (for note-taking) for each participant (including all volunteers and staff) and an additional fifteen or more for office use.

One folder for each participant (including all volunteers and staff). The folders should be large enough to hold the notebook, pen, schedule, and information distributed on the first day. Because a great deal of information is accumulated during the camp, a folder design that features pockets and a rubber-band binding or strap (to keep the folder closed) is advisable.

A single roll of scotch tape for inclusion in each trainer's supply bag. Additionally, at least six rolls of scotch tape and two rolls of masking tape should be retained for office use (alternatively, glue tack can be procured and distributed instead of tape).

Four staplers and several boxes of staples for office use. Additionally, trainers often request packets of material copied and stapled for distribution. If the copy machine is equipped with a staple option, two staplers will suffice. Staple removers should also be available.

Six boxes of white paper and a variety of colored paper (pastels and neons). (The colored paper is useful for sign-up sheets, reminders, various items of importance in the welcome folder, etc.).

Large manila or plastic-covered envelopes (used for camp completion certificates), to be distributed by NGO group or by team. A sufficient number should be supplied for students, coaches, trainers, volunteers/interns, as well as for a variety of other purposes.

At least ten pads of large "flip-chart" paper or newsprint sheets, and an equal number of stands. At the beginning of the Forum, Trainers should receive ten to fifteen sheets for use in their preparations. Trainers should have access to the paper storage area, which should be restocked as needed.

Three or four pairs of scissors

One large box (or several smaller boxes) of crayons, for use throughout the camp

5/31/2006



## **international debate education association**

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### **Forum Site Requirements**

Hosts should use the following guidelines when looking for a Forum Site:

The site must accommodate all Forum participants.

Apart from bedrooms, the site must have at least 10 rooms available for use as “lab rooms,” each of which should accommodate 20 people.

The site must have an available staff meeting room (if necessary, a bedroom of sufficient size could be used for this purpose).

The site must have a room available for the Tournament Director and his/her staff (a large bedroom can be used for this purpose).

The site must provide camp participant access to at least ten computers equipped with high-speed Internet connections.

The site must have at least one fast computer for the Tournament Director and two computers with Internet access for the trainers.

The site must provide two high-capacity copy machines for the needs of the tournament.

11/2005



## international debate education association

### Speaker Points Guidelines

Judges are encouraged to do their best to conform in awarding of speaker points to the point ranges described below. Given the substantial diversity of perspectives on speaker point values represented in the judging pool, adherence to these guidelines will provide at least some degree of standardization. Although they do not eliminate subjectivity from speaker points, these point ranges can be critical to producing fair overall rankings among the teams.

Some coaches and judges like to think of speaker points as grades, while others have described them with textual comments. Regardless of the approach you choose, the following is an attempt to normalize scores.

Points	Grade	Text Description of Points
30	A+	Perhaps the best speech you have ever heard. This speaker will likely win the tournament and, in your opinion, is in need of no improvement. Both speaking and argumentation were flawless.
29	A	An almost perfect speech in need of virtually no improvement - this is a speech that you would expect from a debater who would be in the final round in the senior division at any tournament.
28	A-	Significantly above average debater for a student. You would expect a debater who will be in semifinals or higher in any tournament to give this speech.
27	B+	This person is a very good debater and is clearly above average but could still make a few improvements. This debater will likely be in the top 1/3 of the tournament.
26	B	A good debater, but can still make some improvements both in terms of delivery and argumentative content. He/she will likely be in elimination rounds but is an outside chance to advance must past the first round or two.
25	B- or C+	The average debater - this speaker shows competence as a debater but can still make improvements. This debater might advance to elimination rounds but is likely not to advance very far.
24	C	Slightly below average debater - he/she makes some mistakes but nothing critical. This debater is typically in the "middle of the pack" and not likely to advance to elimination rounds. His/her performance is in need of improvement.
23	C-	A below average debater - this person is still in need of making improvements as a speaker before he/she will be successful enough to make elimination rounds.

<b>Points</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Text Description of Points</b>
22	D+	A well below average debater - there are no significant problems with the speaker's performance, but he/she is clearly in need of more work. Sometimes characterized by either unimpressive delivery or simplistic argumentation.
21	D	Significantly below average debater - this speaker has some significant work ahead of him/her before he/she will be successful enough to advance to elimination rounds.
20	D-	A speaker receiving this score is typically a novice debater who is just beginning his/her competitive experience. While he/she may show promise, there is much that is in need of improvement.

Scores below 20 are very rarely used and are typically indicators of students who are either woefully unprepared or offensive.

11/2005