

The MDUDL Guide for Judges of Policy Debate



MDUDL JUDGING GUIDE

Welcome!

Tournament judging is the engine that makes urban debate possible. Because of you, four more students are able to participate in urban debate, four more young people have the opportunity to challenge themselves, improve their public speaking skills, and increase their passion for learning. Thank you for your contribution! If you would like to know more about why this work is so important, please refer to [Why Volunteer in Urban Debate](#).

A Note on Safety:

Urban debate is committed to providing our youth with the most secure environment possible. To maintain such an environment, we have developed a Youth Protection Policy to which all members of the urban debate community must adhere. While this policy is primarily for the protection youth members, it also serves to protect adult staff and volunteers. As part of that policy and our agreement with the Miami-Dade School Board we perform a background check on all volunteers. **You must pass a background check to judge.**

To register for the digital background check, follow the link <https://app.verifiedvolunteers.com> and submit the code: tg103t6 when prompted.

Introduction & What to Expect

Debate judging is for everyone - debate veterans and debate newcomers alike. Debate veterans generally are paired with more advanced forms of debate, but not always. As long as you're willing and able to invest in youth, you're good to go.

The following materials are presented to prepare you for judging your first debate round. As with anything, please don't hesitate to ask questions. League staff are here to help!

Agenda:

1. The role of a judge, what a debate tournament looks like
2. The topic
3. The round itself
4. Making a decision
5. Additional training videos, presentations, materials



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The Role of the Judge

- **Educator**

Judge feedback after the debate helps students to advance their knowledge about their arguments, about debate, and about how to become more persuasive. Debate is about persuasion. Debaters have a duty to adapt to their judges. Some judges have judged many debates and are familiar with debate jargon. Other judges are less familiar with such jargon and should not feel that they must know all the terms that debaters use to be good judges. Intelligent, fair minded individuals who listen carefully to the arguments made are 100% qualified to judge even the highest levels of debate.

- **Decision Maker**

The judge is a decision maker. He or she must ultimately vote for the team that presented the better arguments. This decision is usually best understood as the judge imagining that they were in a position to put the affirmative plan into effect (as Congress and the Supreme Court would), and needed to weigh the merits of the plan based on the arguments made in the debate. The judge must set aside his or her personal opinions about the topic and evaluate the positions based on the arguments made by the debaters.

- **Arbitrator**

Occasionally, judges might have to intervene during the debate if there is a problem. This might be anything from two partners not getting along with each other to someone's evidence being misplaced. However, it is most often a student who is too nervous or upset to go on debating. The judge should do his or her best to try to allow the debaters to work things out themselves. If the debaters clearly need the judge's help, try to be supportive and helpful, but with the ultimate goal of continuing with the round. On a related note, please do not disclose your decision to the debaters at the end of the round.

What does a typical tournament look like?

Tournaments are busy events where dozens to hundreds of high school students dedicate their time on weekends to discussions of government and policy issues. They are generally held on high school or college campuses. When you arrive you may see students in small groups talking and working as they prepare for the days rounds (usually there will be 2 rounds if the tournament is starting after school in the afternoon, or as many as 5 rounds if the tournament is on a full Saturday).

1. Sign In

When you arrive at the school, find the registration table, where you can check in to let us know you have arrived. You may then go to the judges' lounge for breakfast or the main auditorium to see the kids.

2. Pairings

Before every round, pairings will be released in the main auditorium. This is a list of who will be debating who, the judge and location for each round. There will be different pairings, one for each division of competition.

On the pairings, the affirmative team is listed on the left side and the negative team is listed on the right side. Judges are listed by name in the last column of the pairing list under the label "judges." Judges should check all four pairings for your name. If you are listed as a judge (and you probably will be), advance immediately to step 3. If you are not listed as a judge, please standby near the registration table. The tournament staff may need you to replace another judge or may ask you to take a ballot that was not picked up by another judge.

3. Pick Up Your Ballot

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Go to the registration table to pick up your ballot and have your name checked off the pairing.

4. Go to Your Round

Find the room number in which you are listed to judge. If both teams are not in the room when you arrive, give them a few minutes to find the room. In many cases, students are just finishing a previous debate or still trying to find the room. If they do not show up after 10 minutes, report back to the registration table and let the tournament staff know who you are missing. They will be able to advise you on next steps.

5. Fill in the Top Portion of the Ballot

Ask the debaters for their school and their names and fill in the information on the appropriate lines. Double-check ballot accuracy.

6. Begin the Debate

When all four debaters are in the room and ready, and when you are ready with paper, a pen, and a timer (you can use your cell phone), tell the debaters to begin the debate. Be sure to:

- Encourage students who refuse to give speeches. They are usually very nervous in the beginning of the year.
- Try to give all novice teams a chance to finish the 1AC (first speech of debate). If they go past time, make sure they at least read the plan.
- Discourage tag team cross examination (both partners participating in cross-x at the same time). It is important that all debaters participate, not just the best one from each team.

7. Take Notes and Time the Speeches

As the debate proceeds, take notes on the arguments that each speaker makes. In debate lingo, this process of taking notes is called “flowing.” Encourage debaters to use all (at least most) of their speech time.

8. Render a Decision

At the conclusion of the debate, reflect briefly on the arguments by reviewing your flow sheet. Next, vote in favor of either the affirmative or negative team. Explain your decision in the space provided on the ballot. **DO NOT REVEAL WHICH TEAM YOU VOTED FOR.** Some debaters refuse to debate in the third and fourth rounds if they know they are not going to win an award.

9. Oral Critique

Provide an oral critique including constructive criticism. Point out things the debaters did well and make suggestions regarding things they should do differently (you should also write these constructive comments on the ballot so that coaches can review them). Be sure to allocate speaker points and ranks.

10. Return Your Completed Ballot

Hand in your completed ballot at the registration table or tab room.

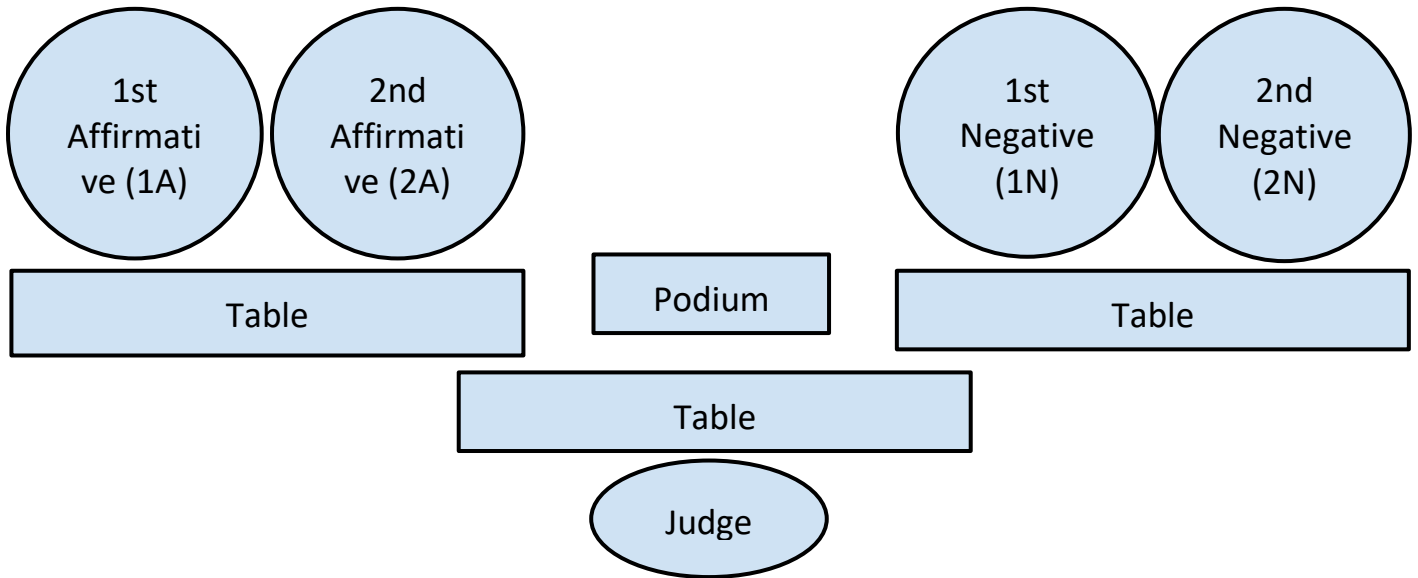
11. Repeat

These steps are taken for each debate round in the tournament. There will be 4 rounds at the tournament, followed by an awards ceremony in the auditorium.

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What does a debate look like?

Room Setup



The teams will typically set up on opposite sides of the classroom, with the podium from which both teams will speak located in the front of the room.

In urban debate, there are two teams competing against each other around a particular debate topic - the Affirmative Team and then Negative Team. The Affirmative Team will be arguing in favor of the Resolution; the Negative Team will be arguing against it.

How should the round proceed?

There will be 8 speeches and 4 cross-examinations in each round.

1AC		1NC		2AC		2NC		1NR	1AR	2NR	2AR
	CX		CX		CX		CX				
6 min	2 min	6 min	2 min	6 min	2 min	6 min	2 min	4 min	4 min	4 min	4 min

A stands for affirmative
C stands for constructive

N stands for negative
R stands for rebuttal

CX stands for cross examination

Constructive Speeches

- There are 4 constructive speeches, the 1AC, 1NC, 2AC, and 2NC.
- These speeches are 6 minutes long and each is followed by a 2 minute cross-examination.
- The 1AC and 1NC should be the initial presentations of arguments.
- The 2AC and 2NC/1NR, the negative block (“neg block”) – contains new responses to the arguments presented in the preceding speeches.
- These 5 speeches will largely contain arguments that are followed by the reading of evidence.

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Cross-examination

After each constructive speech a debater from the opposing team (the debater that will NOT be giving the speech immediately following CX) can ask “clarifying questions” to the debater who just presented. The purpose of cross-examination is much more than just clarification, though. It is a strategic opportunity to set up the arguments that will be made in the next speech and deconstruct the arguments that were just made. This is a vitally important critical thinking task because it tests the thoroughness and fluidity of the debater’s knowledge of their arguments and their evidence.

Rebuttal Speeches

- There are 4 rebuttal speeches, the 1NR, 1AR, 2NR, and 2AR.
- These speeches are 4 minutes long each.
- Since the 1NR is a part of the neg block it is structured more like a constructive speech.
- The 1AR, 2NR, and 2AR are used to clarify, extrapolate, and appropriately apply their arguments from previous speeches. There should not be new arguments or evidence read in these speeches.
- The 2NR and 2AR should wrap up the teams’ overall arguments and convince you why one team deserves to win over the other

Preparation time: Each team has 6 minutes total to prepare and organize their arguments in the round. This time can be used in between speeches. You may offer to keep time for each team or they can keep their own time. Regardless, you must keep track so students do not take advantage and accidentally use too much of theirs. You will be responsible for letting students know when they’ve reached the “cut-off” point in their prep time.

What will be debated?

The 2016-2017 topic is:

Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic and diplomatic engagement of the People’s Republic of China

The affirmative teams today will be standing resolved specifically that the following plan should be enacted:

Plan: The United States federal government should substantially increase its economic and diplomatic engagement of the People’s Republic of China over the implementation and enforcement of the Agreement made at the Twenty-First Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris through a bi-lateral framework.

To win a debate round an affirmative team needs to affirm the resolution by arguing their specific policy option within the resolution, called the plan, should be enacted. To win a debate round the negative team has to win that the status quo or another competitive policy option is preferable to the affirmatives plan.

There is a non-exhaustive list of possible affirmative and negative arguments at the end of this document.

Common Practices & Terms:

Starting Time

The judge announces the start of the debate. Both teams must be ready to begin upon the judge’s announcement. Judges may deduct speaker points for violations.

Prep Time

Each team can use a cumulative total of eight minutes for preparation time (“prep time”), at any time during the debate and in any number of individual periods. Judges traditionally announce “prep time remaining” after each usage. When a team’s prep time has elapsed, their speakers must begin speaking as soon as it is their turn.

Road Map

Simply means that debaters will list out the following issues/arguments they are addressing before their speeches. VERY helpful for judges. This should not count against their speech time.

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Flowing

A term for how debaters take notes during a round. Referring to a flow just means referring to your notes.

Cross-Examination

Judges should listen attentively to cross-examinations, but do not credit arguments or evidence presented during cross-examination speeches. These arguments must be raised during one of the regular speeches to be considerable by the judge.

Rebuttal Arguments

Debaters may not introduce new Affirmative arguments or new Negative attacks. Debaters can offer new analysis or evidence on issues already raised in the Constructives. Debaters are trained to point out new arguments and how they should be regarded or justified, so judges need not treat this as a rules/ethics violation, but should rather discount new arguments in their final decision about the debate.

Rudeness

Debaters may not interrupt, distract, or act impolitely to judges or opponents. Judges may deduct speaker points for violations.

Tag teaming

This means both debaters on a team can answer questions during cross-examination. This is discouraged.

Observers

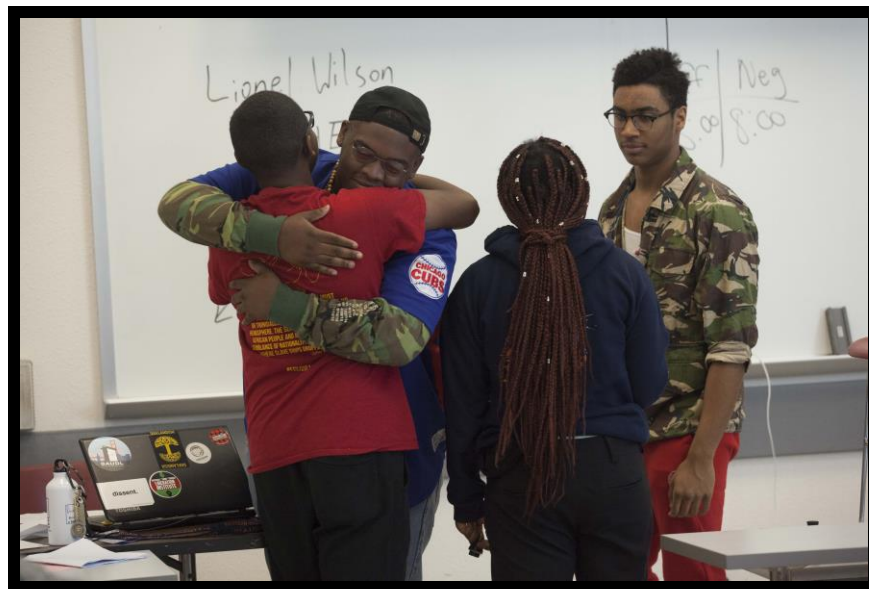
Guest observers are permitted in the debate room, but must keep a distance from the debaters and remain silent during speeches. Judges may eject violators from the debate room.

Coaching Period

Coaches, teammates, and observers may not talk to or signal debaters after the debate round starts, inside or outside the room or via electronic communication. This will be investigated as cheating if it is determined to be an attempt to aid the debaters unfairly during the course of a debate after the first speech has begun.

Electronics

Students are allowed to use laptops and other electronic devices as a means to store and/or read materials from the evidence packet(s) provided by the Urban Debate League. Students are not allowed to go online (research, email, texting, chatting, Facebook, etc.) during a debate round, including during the judge's oral critique of the round.



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Making a Decision & Delivering Feedback

How Do I...?

How Do I Determine the Winner?

The most important job of the judge is to carefully listen to the arguments made by both teams and, based on those arguments alone (not your personal position/opinion), decide whether or not you agree with them. It is important to remember that the argument content of the speeches is the most important factor in determining a winner. Neither the quality of a cross-examination nor one's speaking abilities/vocabulary should determine the winner of a debate. Example of how you might decide a debate round:

The affirmative team will provide a list of pros that are associated with their plan. The negative team will provide a list of cons associated with the plan. After weighing the lists of arguments against each other, if you agree with the affirmative's plan based on the arguments presented in the debate round, then you should vote for the affirmative team. If, conversely, you think that the affirmative's plan is a bad idea, then you should vote for the negative team.

How Do I Assign Speaker Points?

(The following was developed by the Chicago Urban Debate League)

- Speaker points are given by the judge to each individual debater in a debate round. They are used to award individual speakers at the end of the tournament, and to break ties between teams with similar win-loss records to determine elimination round qualification.
- Whereas deciding who wins and who loses is determined by evidence and argumentation, speaker points are generally given on the basis of style, form, presentation, and persuasiveness. As such, they are inherently subjective, that is, rooted in the judge's personal conception of persuasive speaking style. Also, a debater may lose the round and still receive high speaker points and vice-versa.
- Potential criteria to help you make your determination: Clarity of Enunciation, Modulated or Dynamic Voice Tone, Concision, Organization and Structure, Explanation of Evidence, Responsiveness, Comparative Weighing of Issues, Eye Contact, Appropriate Use of Non-Verbal Gesture, Verbal Variation (e.g., Pause for Effect, Use of Metaphor), Poise, Good Posture, Respect and Courtesy for Others. This is only a partial list; you probably have your own additions/subtractions to what counts as a "persuasive" style.

Speaker Point Rubric

- **30**—An amazing job. It is one of the most impressive speeches you have seen. You have only very minor suggestions for improvement. These should be rare.
- **29-29.5**—Excellent job. The speaker was clear, confident, and made a minor error or two but was very impressive overall.
- **28-28.5**—Very good job. You were impressed but not blown away by the quality of the speeches.
- **27-27.5**—Good job. The speaker made some errors but was speaking clearly, was generally organized, and you understood most of their arguments.
- **26-26.5**—Average job. There were problems with organization, the speaker did not clearly refer to arguments made by the other side and respond to them, but the speaker made a good effort and did their best.
- **25-25.5**—Below average job. The speaker still followed procedure but made very few arguments, was terribly disorganized or read a canned speech during rebuttals instead of referring to specific arguments. This is generally the lowest score given in middle school.

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Please note that giving a speaker less than 25 points. It is considered punitive and requires an additional explanation. Possible reasons for giving a speaker less than 25 points:

- Regular use of profane language.
- Abusive tactics against an opponent.
- Ignoring stated dislikes given during the introductory statement.

How Do I Deliver Feedback?

- Be Encouraging - The debaters will look up to you. Compliments can be a great motivator, and negative comments can be very discouraging. Even if they look confident, middle school and high school debaters are probably very nervous. Provide only a few suggestions for improvement, not a list of everything they did wrong.
- Compliment Sandwich - A good strategy is to couch suggestions in a compliment. For example, “Your 2AR was very impressive, especially when you explained X. Imagine how well you would do if it were a little more organized.”
- Write a Detailed Reason for Decision (RFD) on the Ballot. While the oral critique helps the debaters, it does not help their coaches, so be sure to write comments on the ballot in addition to talking with the debaters after the debate ends. These comments give coaches direction concerning what things the debaters need to improve.
- Base Decisions on the Strength of the Team’s Arguments.
 - Which team gave more reasons for discrediting their opponents’ arguments?
 - Was there a team that extended their arguments all the way to the end of the debate without being attacked by their opponent?
 - Who did and did not use evidence?
 - Who did or did not flow? If they did not flow well, they most likely missed some important points to address.
 - Was there a team that got confused and started arguing for their opponent’s stance?

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Additional Resources:
Sample finished ballot

Houstead
NMB

Open Policy Debate ballot

 The Martin Luther King Classic Debate Tournament - Jan. 16, 2016

Round 3 Sect. I - Room CIB 2058 - Judge **Trescott, Allison** (Hired Judge) ✓

Debaters: Royer Baez and Kevin Molina (RBKM) vs. Farheen Damani and Tatiana Fedrick (FDTF)

Directions:

1. Rank the debaters in this round from 1-4, with 1 being the best debater. There can be no ties.
2. Evaluate debaters with points considering their reasoning, analysis, evidence, organization, refutation and delivery.
3. Determine a winner in this round.
4. Ensure that you have written each student's name on the proper line with their rank and points.

Affirmative RBKM	Points	Ranks
1st Affirmative <u>Kevin Molina</u>	26	4
2nd Affirmative <u>Royer Baez</u>	27	3
Negative FDTF	Points	Ranks
1st Negative <u>Farheen Damani</u>	28	2
2nd Negative <u>Tatiana Fedrick</u>	28.5	1

The Neg side won the debate, code FDTF. Low point win? No

Judge signature Allison Trescott School _____

Use the comment section to give specific advice to the debaters. At the end of the round give an oral critique to advise the students on how they could improve. After giving your oral critique bring your ballot back to the tab room if it has not yet been collected.

COMMENTS AND REASON FOR DECISION

1AC - Very clear speaker. use entire speech time to read evidence. more cards on surveillance leading to damage to the economy would be recommended.

1NC - more time spent on offense arguments please. its not enough to assert that security concerns outweigh destruction of privacy & rights

1NR - reading evidence on internet anonymity is irrelevant. topicality argument does not apply - plan curtails surveillance of domestic civilians, even if NSA is a foreign agency.

2AC - Reading answers to "privacy loss inevitable" is irrelevant b/c negative team did not ~~respond~~ argue this. You spent too much time answering topicality when you should have responded to negative argument that "security concerns come before privacy concerns - right to life."

2NC - Too much time spent reading defense that is irrelevant i.e. "corporations commit much worse privacy infringements."

2NR - "data not relevant men it is deleted" is a new argument.

1NR - Kevin, you are an intelligent guy - do more to help your partner keep track of arguments he needs to respond to.

2AR - Next time do what you can to speak for more than 1 min.

all - focus on economy advantage. Neg - read more offense!

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Possible Affirmative Arguments and Terms:

1. Inherency

- The affirmatives characterization of the status quo.
- States the problem their policy will be addressing (climate change) and what is currently being done (Paris Agreement).

Example: Trump will withdraw from the Paris Agreement and block implementation domestically.

2. Advantages

- These are the benefits of passing the plan. They will outline how without the plan bad things will occur.
- The scenarios are called internal links. The bad thing is called the impact. The aff **MUST MAKE BOTH THE INTERNAL LINK AND IMPACT CLEAR TO WIN THE ROUND.**

Example: (I/L) Failure of the Paris Agreement will cause unmitigated CO₂ levels to facilitate climate change

(I) Climate change causes ecological collapse, sea level rise, and economic disruption

3. Solvency

- The affirmative must win that the plan is capable of preventing the maladies outlined by the advantages.

Example: Chinese US bilateral cooperation on carbon trading spurs global implementation and CO₂ reduction

Possible Negative Arguments and Terms:

For the negative to win the status quo is preferable, to the world in which the plan is passed, **they MUST win that the plan causes something worse than the problems it solves**, this type of argument is called the disadvantage or disad. To assist this the negative can weaken the arguments of the advantage, which are called case arguments, and are usually defensive arguments.

Disadvantage

1. **Uniqueness:** The negatives characterization of the status quo

Example: US-Japan Alliance strong due to Trump-Abe anti-China axis

2. **Link:** How the plan changes the status quo

Example: Soft coop with China seems like an abandonment of hard lining policies to Japan—weakens alliance

3. **Impact:** Why this issue matters

Example: US-Japan Alliance is key to American power projection in Asia, which is key to prevent a Chinese rise

ALL THREE PARTS MUST BE WON TO WIN THE DISAD

Case Arguments

These arguments will try to claim that the status quo is solving the problem or the problem can't be solved. The negative can claim the advantage's impacts are smaller than the affs calculation. Or that their scenario for them happening is unlikely. They could also claim that the plan has legal/implementation/enforcement issues that will stop it from being successful.

Arguments both teams should make in Rebuttals

To win the round the two teams need to compare the hypothetical world of the plan to the future without it. The two teams will try to convince you that the impacts they prevent are more important than the other team's impacts. In their last speeches they will try to tell you why climate change/war is worse.

To do this we want them to explain

1. **Magnitude:** How many people/how much this impacts people's lives
2. **Probability:** How likely are these scenarios to occur
3. **Timeframe:** How soon are these scenarios likely to impact people's lives

They should also make arguments on how these impacts relate to each other. (Will climate change make war more likely or would a large war make climate change worse?)

Also contested issues should be specifically addressed in rebuttals. **Example:** THEY SAY species loss is inevitable BUT reduced atmospheric CO₂ facilitates adaptation.