

Ontario Student Debating Union  
Remarks to Judges

- When filling out the ballot, be sure to write down your name, the number of judges, as well as the room and round number where specified. Also be sure to get the team names and the names of the speakers correct - ask them their names if you are not sure. A team code may be used instead of the actual school name; do not ask them for their school's name if this is the case.
- Although all debaters may not have the same speaking times, it is important to remember that each has a particular responsibility in the debate. Do not penalize anyone because he/she may have less speaking time.
- It may be true that one team might have a tougher job than the other on a given topic, but teams will have to debate both sides of any prepared round. Judge the winner of the debate based on who was more convincing in their arguments. Be sure to circle the winning team on the ballot.
- Please see the attached scoring guideline for a breakdown of how to award individual scores. The mark is out of 100, but the actual scoring range is 65 to 90, and except in some fairly rare cases **the effective range is low 70's to mid 80's**. There are no individual categories to grade, only a final score.
- There is no penalty per se for a shorter speech, however, it will probably lack in content and/or refutation. A concise speech is preferable to a repetitive one.
- Especially for university student judges, please note carefully that is not the same style used in university. It is NOT British Parliamentary, and it is not even the same format of Canadian Parliamentary you may be used to. For example, in this style which we call "Canadian National Debate Format", we expect constructive matter in second speeches ( albeit less ) and the way you see people debate may very well differ from your style - please do not penalize debaters as a result.
- Please don't penalize a speaker for a so-called "LO Dump" if they bring up a constructive argument or two during the first half of their speech. This is NORMAL, although not everyone will necessarily do it. On the other hand, strategically cramming a bunch of important information into the last two minutes of the second opposition is an "LO Dump", and should be considered when judging.

- Please judge debaters on what they DID say, not what you think they should have said, nor should you insert yourself into the round and judge based on how well you might have refuted their arguments or presented a better case.
- Please keep your expectations to what a reasonable high school student might present. They do not have the same knowledge base as you the judge may have, so please consider their breadth of knowledge may not be the same as yours. Having said that, in a prepared round more in-depth understanding of the facts, ideas, etc. would be expected.
- Please do not penalize debaters for not following the style you prefer. Some prefer constructive first, some the other way around. If doing something a particular way results in a less effective speech for some reason, that is one thing, but don't penalize for it otherwise.
- While picking the team winner is very important, please score appropriately the individual debaters as well. Deciding who won the debate, and then giving everyone the same score with one speaker on the winning team a point higher is not a proper way to judge. Make sure scores, and the differences between speakers, accurately reflect your impression of the relative differences between the debaters as well as the teams. Also, be consistent in your scoring from round to round.

### Conferral Judging: and Comments

- At the end of each round, the debaters will be asked to leave the room. At this point judges will discuss the debate amongst themselves, with the chair of the panel leading the discussion. After a period which should never exceed ten minutes, the judges will **independently** fill out their ballots and assign speaker scores. The judges need not all agree on who has won the round. The chair's decision does NOT carry the round ( unless in the unique situation where there is an even number of judges and there is a tie in the ballots ).
- The debaters will return to the room, and the chair will give BRIEF oral comments not to exceed ten minutes. Do not indicate which team has won, while trying to include thoughts from all judges in your remarks. One approach is to focus on one thing that each debater did well, as well as provide one area for improvement for each debater. Keep the comment short, please.
- Please make helpful comments. Reminder they are high school kids, and perhaps as young as grade 7. Comments such as "you should debate this way because we do so at university worlds", or "you should have said this", or "I didn't like your case model because I would have done it this way" are not helpful in any way, nor is it good judging.