

### LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE DESCRIPTION

**Event description** – Lincoln Douglas debate is designed to center on a proposition of value. A proposition of value concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. Debaters are encouraged to develop argumentation based upon a values perspective. To that end, no plan (or counterplan) will be offered by the debaters. In Lincoln Douglas Debate, a plan is defined by the NFL as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. Neither the affirmative nor negative side is permitted to offer a plan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a general principle. Debaters may offer generalized, practical examples or solutions to illustrate how the general principle could guide decisions.

The hallmarks of Lincoln Douglas debate include:

- 1) Parallel Burdens
- 2) Value Structure
- 3) Argumentation
- 4) Cross Examination
- 5) Effective Delivery

**1. Parallel Burdens** - No question of values can be determined entirely true or false. This is why the resolution is debatable. Therefore neither debater should be held to a standard of absolute proof. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.

- *Burden of proof*: Each debater has the equal burden to prove the validity of his/her side of the resolution as a general principle. As an LD resolution is a statement of value, there is no presumption for either side.
- *Burden of clash*: Each debater has an equal burden to clash with his/her opponent's position. After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his/her opponent.
- *Resolutional burden*: The debaters are equally obligated to focus the debate on the central questions of the resolution, not whether the resolution itself is worthy of debate. Because the affirmative must uphold the resolution, the negative must also argue the resolution as presented.

**2. Value Structure** -The value structure (or framework) is established by the debater to serve two functions: a) to provide an interpretation of the central focus of the resolution, and b) to provide a method for the judge to evaluate the central questions of the resolution. The value structure often consists of a statement of the resolution (if affirming), definitions (dictionary or contextual), the value premise (or core value), and the value criterion (or standard). This structure is commonly but not always employed.

*Definitions*: The affirmative should offer definitions, be they dictionary or contextual, that provides a reasonable ground for debate. The negative has the option to challenge these definitions and to offer counter-definitions.

*Value Premise/Core Value*: A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serves as the highest goal to be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved. In general, the debater will establish a value which focuses the central questions of the resolution and will serve as a foundation for argumentation.

*Value Criterion/Standard*: In general, each debater will present a value criterion (a standard) which the debater will use to:

- explain how the value should be protected, respected, maximized, advanced, or achieved.
- measure whether a given side or argument protects, respects, maximizes, advances, or achieves the value.
- evaluate the relevance and importance of an argument in the context of the round.

The relationship between the value premise and the criterion should be clearly articulated.

During the debate, the debaters may argue the validity or priority of the two value structures. They may accept their opponent's value structure, prove the superiority of their own value structure, or synthesize the two.

**3. Argumentation** – Because Lincoln Douglas debate is an educational debate activity, debaters are obligated to construct logical chains of reasoning which lead to the conclusion of the affirmative or negative position. The nature

### LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE DESCRIPTION *continued*

of proof may take a variety of forms (e.g., a student's original analysis, application of philosophy, examples, analogies, statistics, expert opinion, etc.). Arguments should be presented in a cohesive manner that shows a clear relationship to the value structure. Any research should be conducted and presented ethically from academically sound and appropriately cited sources.

**4. Cross-Examination** - Cross-examination should be used by the debater to clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments in the round.

**5. Effective delivery:** Lincoln Douglas debate is an oral communication activity that requires clarity of thought and expression. Arguments should be worded and delivered in a manner accessible to an educated non-specialist audience. This encompasses:

- *Written communication:* Cases and arguments should be constructed in a manner that is organized, accessible, and informative to the listener. The debater should employ clear logic and analysis supported by topical research.
- *Verbal communication:* The debater has the obligation to be clear, audible and comprehensible, and to speak persuasively to the listeners. Additionally, debaters should strive for fluency, expressiveness, effective word choice, and eloquence.
- *Non-verbal communication:* The debater should demonstrate an effective use of gestures, eye-contact, and posture. Throughout the debate, the debaters should demonstrate civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.

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## LINCOLN DOUGLAS JUDGING GUIDELINES

1. A decision *SHOULD NOT* be based upon:
  - a. *Personal bias* – A judge's preference for a side of the resolution or a topic bias should not enter into the decision. A judge must decide the round based on the arguments presented in that round. Objectivity is the primary responsibility of any judge.
  - b. *Partiality* – The judge should not be influenced by the reputation of or relationship with the debaters, schools, or coaches. If a situation arises where impartiality is in doubt, the judge has the responsibility to report this potential conflict of interest to the tab room.
  - c. *New arguments introduced in rebuttals*– The judges shall disregard new arguments introduced in the rebuttals. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the answering of arguments introduced by opponents.
2. A decision *SHOULD BE* based upon the consideration of any or all of the following questions:
  - a. *Burden of proof* - Which debater has proven his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle by the end of the round? No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. A judge should prefer quality and depth of argumentation to mere quantity of argumentation. A judge should base the decision on which debater more effectively resolved the central questions of the resolution rather than on insignificant dropped arguments.
  - b. *Value structure* – Which debater better established a clear and cohesive relationship between the argumentation and the value structure?
  - c. *Argumentation* – Which debater better presented his/her arguments with logical reasoning using appropriate support? Which debater best utilized cross-examination to clarify, challenge, or advance arguments?
  - d. *Resolutionality* – Which debater best addressed the central questions of the resolution?
  - e. *Clash* – Which debater best showed the ability to both attack his/her opponent's case and to defend his/her own?
  - f. *Delivery* – Which debater communicated in a more persuasive, clear, and professional manner? A judge should give weight only to those arguments that were presented in a manner that was clear and understandable to him or her as a judge.

### INTRODUCTION TO JUDGING LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE

Thank you for agreeing to judge a Lincoln Douglas debate round. Your service is especially important as this event is designed to bring judges and debaters together in an educational, productive, and encouraging experience. This activity is designed to teach excellent critical thinking and public presentation skills. Your role as a judge is to determine which debater did a better job of convincing you that his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.

#### BEFORE THE ROUND:

- Find out the exact wording of the debate resolution and write it down.
- Read and follow the instructions on the judging ballot you will receive.
- Read any additional Lincoln Douglas instructions that are provided to you.
- Talk with debaters before the round starts if you wish, but the conversation should not demonstrate favoritism toward a debater.
- Debaters should *always* be respectful of one another and of you, and you should set a tone of decorum and professionalism.

#### TO BEGIN THE ROUND:

- You will be instructed as to which side the debaters have been assigned.
- The Affirmative debater should be listed on the left side of the ballot and you may ask the debater to sit on the left side of the room as you, the judge, look at the debaters.
- The Negative debater should be listed on the right side of the ballot and you may ask the debater to sit on the right side of the room as you, the judge, look at the debaters.
- Record each debater's code and side. You can confirm this information with the debaters.
- When both debaters are ready, the Affirmative debater will stand in the front of the room to deliver the initial speech.

#### DURING THE ROUND:

- While the debaters may keep track of their own time, judges need to monitor speaking times during the round. Speech times and order are listed on the ballot.
- Each debater has four minutes of preparation time (total) in each round which can be used prior to any of that debater's speeches or cross-examination period. Judges need to monitor how much preparation time has elapsed for each debater.
- During the debate, you are encouraged to take notes of the arguments made by the debaters to assist you in making your decision at the end of the round.
- You should also keep track of what a debater says, if anything, in response to the other debater's arguments. To ensure fairness, your notes should help you determine if a debater is improperly making brand new arguments in the final rebuttal speeches to which the opposing debater has no opportunity to respond.
- Judges should not ask questions during the round.

#### AFTER THE ROUND:

- Check your codes carefully. This is especially important when marking the winner of the debate.
- In your written comments, please be as constructive and educational as possible. Provide a detailed justification of your decision, referring to the central issues the debaters presented in the round. Evaluate the round based only on the arguments that the debaters made and not on personal opinions or on arguments that you would have made.
- Please completely fill out the ballot and return it promptly to the designated location.

# National Forensic League

## Lincoln Douglas Debate Ballot

8 1/2 x 14

Round / Flight \_\_\_\_\_ Room \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Judge \_\_\_\_\_  
(name/affiliation)

Affirmative: \_\_\_\_\_ (name/code)      Negative: \_\_\_\_\_ (name/code)  
 Points: \_\_\_\_\_ (20-30)      Points: \_\_\_\_\_ (20-30)

1. In LD debate, the resolution to be evaluated is a proposition of value. Values are ideals held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. that serve as the highest goals to be considered or achieved within the context of the resolution in question. A proposition of value concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is.
2. Each debater has the burden to prove his or her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle. No debater can realistically be expected to prove complete validity or invalidity of the resolution. The better debater is the one who, on the whole, proves his/her side of the resolution more valid as a general principle.
3. Students are encouraged to research topic-specific literature and applicable works of philosophy. The nature of proof should be in the logic and the ethos of a student's independent analysis and/or authoritative opinion.
4. Communication in LD debate should emphasize clarity. Accordingly, a judge should only evaluate those arguments that were presented in a manner that was clear and understandable to him/her as a judge. Throughout the debate, the competitors should display civility as well as a professional demeanor and style of delivery.
5. After a case is presented, neither debater should be rewarded for presenting a speech completely unrelated to the arguments of his or her opponent; there must be clash concerning the major arguments in the debate. Cross-examination should clarify, challenge, and/or advance arguments.
6. The judge shall disregard new arguments introduced in rebuttal. This does not include the introduction of new evidence in support of points already advanced or the refutation of arguments introduced by opponents.
7. Because LD debaters cannot choose which side of the resolution to advocate, judges must be objective evaluators of both sides of the resolution. Evaluate the round based only on the arguments that the debaters made and not on personal opinions or on arguments you would have made.

Description:	<b>Below Average</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Point Range:	<b>20-21</b>	<b>22-23</b>	<b>24-26</b>	<b>27-28</b>	<b>29-30</b>

### Comments

Please provide detailed comments (both positive feedback & constructive criticism) designed to help both the debater and the coach-- for example, suggestions on improving: case construction, refutation, logic, delivery, etc.

Affirmative

Negative

Sample

**Reasons for Decision** (Provide a detailed justification of your decision, referring to the central issues the debaters presented in the round.)

Based on my evaluation of the round, the debate was won by \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_.  
(name/code)      (side)

Judge's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Aff Constructive 6 minutes	Neg Cross-Ex 3 minutes	Neg Constructive 7 minutes	Aff Cross-Ex 3 minutes	Aff Rebuttal 4 minutes	Neg Rebuttal 6 minutes	Aff Rebuttal 3 minutes
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The debaters are each allotted four minutes of preparation time that may be used before their own speaking times at their discretion.

# NFL LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE JUDGE PARADIGM CARD

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ School: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State: \_\_\_\_\_ NFL District: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

In order to assist the debaters you will be judging, please answer all of the questions accurately and thoroughly.

## 1. Your experience with LD debate (check all that apply):

- A. Current LD coach
- B. Former LD coach
- C. Former LD competitor
- D. Summer LD instructor
- E. Experienced LD judge
- F. Former Policy debater
- G. Collegiate policy debater
- H. Current Public Forum coach or judge
- I. Speech Coach
- J. Community Judge
- K. No LD experience
- L. I have judged LD debate for \_\_\_\_\_ years.

- M. How many LD rounds have you judged this season? (select one)
- 1. Fewer than twenty
  - 2. Twenty to forty
  - 3. Forty to sixty
  - 4. Sixty or more

## 2. Please indicate your attitudes towards typical LD practices: (circle one)

### A. What is your preferred rate of delivery?

Slow, conversational style---Typical conversational speed---Rapid conversational speed  
 1            2            3            4            5            6            7

Does the rate of delivery weigh heavily in your decision?            Yes / No  
 Will you vote against a student solely for exceeding your preferred speed?            Yes / No

### B. How important is the criterion in making your decision?

- 1. It is the primary means by which I make my decision.
  - 2. It is a major factor in my evaluation.
  - 3. It may be a factor depending on its use in the round.
  - 4. It rarely informs my decision.
- Do you feel that a value and criterion are required elements of a case?            Yes / No

### C. Rebuttals and Crystallization (check one of the answers for each question)

- 1. Final rebuttals should include a) voting issues or b) line-by-line analysis, or c) both.
- 2. Voting issues should be given a) as the student moves down the flow, b) at the end of the final speech, or c) either is acceptable.
- 3. Voting issues are a) absolutely necessary or b) not necessary.
- 4. The use of jargon or technical language ("extend," "cross-apply," "turn," etc.) during rebuttals is:  
 a) acceptable or b) unacceptable, or c) should be kept to a minimum.

### D. How do you decide the winner of the round? (check the best answer)

- 1. I decide who is the better speaker regardless of whether they won specific arguments.
- 2. I decide who is the winner of the most arguments in the round.
- 3. I decide who is the winner of the key arguments in the round.
- 4. I decide who is the person who persuaded me more of his/her position overall.

### E. How necessary do you feel the use of evidence (both analytical and empirical) is in the round?

Not necessary-----Sometimes necessary-----Always necessary  
 1            2            3            4            5            6            7

### F. Please describe your personal note-taking during the round.

- 1. I do not take notes.
- 2. I only outline the important arguments of each debater's case.
- 3. I write down the key arguments throughout the round.
- 4. I keep detailed notes throughout the round.
- 5. I keep a rigorous flow.

Optional: In approximately 100 words or less, please add any brief comments that you feel are appropriate. You might want to include information about practices that you encourage or discourage in a round.

## New LD Topic Selection Process

1. *Topic Solicitation:* During the months of January through April, coaches and students should send proposed topics or topic areas via the NFL website. A short paragraph explaining the topic area is encouraged, though not required for submission. Submissions should be solicited in four ways: (1) Rostrum ad directing coaches and students to the website and/or mailing address; (2) a prominent ad on the nflonline.org website; (3) announcements in other speech and debate websites; and (4) topic submission as an additional item in the district chair monthly newsletters.

2. *Wording Committee Selection:* NFL LD wording committee should be selected in the following manner: (1) Each year when the committee asks for topics from the public, the national office will also notify the public of the current year's committee members and will announce how many seats will be open for the following year. (2) Nominations for the NFL LD wording committee will be gathered from the widest possible sources. Self-nomination, nomination by districts, district chairs, Executive Council, etc. should be sought. (3) The NFL President will make the final appointments to the committee, based on the recommendations from the Executive Secretary and the NFL Council LD Committee (which should consist of three people who have expressed an interest in the activity). (4) Final appointments should take into consideration the following: active high school coaches, geographic diversity, expertise in relevant subject matter (political science, philosophy, law, etc.) and commitment to the activity. (5) The selection of alternates, should they become necessary, should follow the same procedure if possible. (6) We further recommend that at least one person on the LD wording committee be a grammar or linguistic specialist. (7) There should be nine members + co-chairs on the NFL Wording Committee. The members are to serve staggered three-year terms so that three are up for selection each year. This allows change, but insures there will be some stability. Co-chairs should be appointed and non-voting, except to break ties. Their job is to prepare topics for the committee's work. No one should serve on the LD Wording Committee for more than six years. Meetings should be held at the NFL National Tournament.

3. *Voting Process:* The LD wording committee will release the proposed topics on Thursday of Nationals.

A. Starting Friday of the NFL National Tournament, coaches will be given the opportunity to vote online at the nflonline.org website. Computers should, if possible, be set up at the National site by the hosts so coaches can login to their accounts and vote for the school.

B. One vote for each school. Each vote counts equally (no weighting according to members and degrees). All schools who were NFL Chapters in the previous school year are eligible to vote for the topics for the upcoming school year.

C. On the ballot, coaches will indicate their preferences for the November/December, January/February, March/April, and Nationals topics for the upcoming school year and September/October Topic for the subsequent school year. In other words, from the list of 10 topics, they should indicate their first, second, and third choices for each time slot. Topics cannot be repeated within a given time slot, but they can be reselected for another time slot on the ballot. A minimum of 5 different topics must appear on the ballot. To be valid, all three blanks per time slot must be filled in.

D. Voting is completed by September 15 of each year.

4. *Tabulation Process:* The first choice will count as 3 points. The second choice will count as 2 points. The third choice will count as 1 point. The topic with the greatest number of points for any particular time slot will be the topic for that time slot. If the same topic is the chosen for more than one time period, it will be used in the time slot for which it received the highest number of points, and the second-choice or third-choice topic for the other time slots will be used. In case of a tie, the Executive Secretary will use a blind draw to determine the resolution.

5. *Topic Release Dates:* Release dates will remain the same. (Refer to page 4, Announcement Page of the *Rostrum* for all topic release dates).

6. **TRANSITION ISSUES:** For 2006-2007 the topics will be selected as usual. Thus, the Jan/Feb, Mar/April, and Nationals topics will come from the 2007 topic list. A new list will be generated for the 2007-2008 school year. All topics except Sept/Oct will be selected pursuant to the new 2007-2008 list (and the system), not the 2007 topic list. To accommodate the voting date, the September/October Topic during the transition process will be the highest remaining vote getter from the system used up until this point.

# Appendix - Council Minutes

League Administration

## Sample Ballot for Topic Selection

Directions: Indicate your preferences for the headings listed. In other words, from the list of 10 topics, indicate your first, second, and third choices for each time slot. A first choice will receive 3 points, second choice 2 points, and the third choice 1 point. After tabulation, the topic with the highest point total for a given time slot will be selected. Repeating topics within a given time slot is *not* acceptable. However, a topic may be reselected for another time slot. A minimum of five different topics must be listed on the entire ballot. *Fill in all blanks for your ballot to be valid.*

SCHOOL NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ ADVISOR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

List of topics:

- A. INSERT TOPIC
- B. INSERT TOPIC
- C. INSERT TOPIC
- D. INSERT TOPIC
- E. INSERT TOPIC
- F. INSERT TOPIC
- G. INSERT TOPIC
- H. INSERT TOPIC
- I. INSERT TOPIC
- J. INSERT TOPIC

('07-'08) November/December topic:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

('07-'08) January/February topic:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

('07-'08) March/April topic:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

('07-'08) NFL Nationals topic:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

('08-'09) September/October topic:

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

## NEW LD AND PUBLIC FORUM EVIDENCE RULES AND PENALTIES

### RULE

In all rounds, debaters should, at a minimum, orally deliver title of the source and the author's name. Complete citations for each piece of evidence introduced in the round must be available in the round. Written citations must include name of the author, qualifications, complete title of source (E.G. title of book, not chapter; title of journal, not article), and complete date. Online sources must also include the title of the site, database, or access point, the date accessed, and the web address. The additional citation required for online sources must appear on all evidence, but is not read. Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and title need be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. In the subsequent oral citation, only the author's name is required.

### PENALTY

Evidence lacking specified citation and challenged by the opposition shall be disregarded by the judge unless said citation is proffered immediately in the subsequent speech. At the conclusion of a challenge related to the oral presentation of or in round availability of a citation, the judge is the sole determiner of the level of penalty in the round in relationship to the level of the violation, not to exceed a maximum penalty of a loss with zero points, as part of the judge's decision making process. However, if an evidence violation is presented where a debater is found to have committed a "serious distortion" or to have used "non-existent evidence," at the conclusion of due process, the offending debater may be disqualified from the tournament.

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# *Attention Coaches*

# *Judge Bond Notice*

In order to obtain unclaimed judge bonds from the 2006 National Tournament, schools must contact the National Office by November 15, 2006.