

The Robins Debate 2017
Version 1.0 10/17/16

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I. General Information

The Robins Debate

February 17, 2016, 12 p.m.

Resolutions to be debated:

- The Federal Reserve left rates too low for too long.
- Brexit will be good for the UK economy.
- The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) will be for the common good of the people of the United States.

Prizes:

- First place team: \$2,000
- Second place team: \$500

Application Deadline: January 18th at 5 PM

About the Debate

The Robins Debate was established as a means for students to discuss and dispute current business issues in a policy style debate. Debate has been a hot topic in and of itself in this presidential election cycle. Debate is an exercise that can build many of the skills that make for successful business careers and lives. As a business school within a liberal arts university, we appreciate the professional development skills that debate can build. Some students may have debate experience, while others are likely to welcome the opportunity to engage in this type of competition. This policy debate will allow students to research important questions, and practice research, persuasion, oral communication, and critical thinking.

You can participate by sending a team of three to five students, accompanied by a faculty member or administrator who will also serve as a judge. No prior judging experience is necessary. UR will pay for land transportation and provide a luncheon prior to the debate, and a reception following.

II. Debate Format

- The Robins Debate is a policy style debate
- Teams of 3 – 5 students, with 2 students participating in each round
- There are three resolutions that are completely known in advance
- Teams can bring pre-prepared papers/electronics to the debate
- Teams are informed of resolution and side they are arguing 15 minutes prior to start of each round
- No internet is to be used during debate
- Teams can take a few movements before starting constructive/rebuttal, but not cross-examinations
- Each speech has a thirty second grace period.
- New arguments can be made at any time during the first four constructive speeches.
- New arguments cannot be made during rebuttals.
- The First Affirmative Constructive can, however, respond to new opposition arguments that were made during the member of the opposition constructive. So the First Affirmative Constructive rebuttal may contain new responses, but not new arguments.
- There will be two judges in rounds 1 & 2 and three judges in the final round. No team will be judged by their own judge.
- Debate format is 44 minutes long broken down in the following way:

Order	Speaker/Team	Description	Duration
1	1st Affirmative	First Affirmative Constructive (1AC)	6 min
2	2nd Negative	Cross-examination of First Affirmative by Second Negative	2 min
3	1st Negative	First Negative Constructive (1NC)	6 min
4	1st Affirmative	Cross-examination of First Negative by First Affirmative	2 min
5	2nd Affirmative	Second Affirmative Constructive (2AC)	6 min
6	1st Negative	Cross-examination of Second Affirmative by First Negative	2 min
7	2nd Negative	Second Negative Constructive (2NC)	6 min
8	2nd Affirmative	Cross-examination of Second Negative by Second Affirmative	2 min
9	1st Negative	First Negative Rebuttal (1NR)	3 min
10	1st Affirmative	First Affirmative Rebuttal (1AR)	3 min
11	2nd Negative	Second Negative Rebuttal (2NR)	3 min
12	2nd Affirmative	Second Affirmative Rebuttal (2AR)	3 min

III. Day of Event Timing

Location:
Robins School of Business
1 Gateway Road
University of Richmond, VA 23173

Day of Event Timeline

12:00 – 1:00pm	Check in & Lunch	Moelchert Commons
1:00 – 1:15pm	Welcome & Introduction	Ukrop Auditorium
1:25 – 2:15pm	Round 1 Team 1 vs. Team 2 Team 3 vs. Team 4 Team 5 vs. Team 6 Team 7 vs. Team 8	Room 1 Room 2 Room 3 Room 4
2:15 – 2:30pm	Break & Round 2 Announcements	Moelchert Commons
2:40 – 3:30pm	Round 2 Winners from Room 1 vs. Room 2 Winners from Room 3 vs. Room 4	Room 1 Room 3
3:45 – 4:00pm	Break & Final Round Announcements	Moelchert Commons
4:10 – 5:00pm	Final Round	Ukrop Auditorium
5:00 – 6:00pm	Closing Comments & Reception	Moelchert Commons

IV. Judging Guidelines

A. Debate Judges

Your job is to do three things:

- Decide which team won the round.
- Maintain an orderly and fair debate.
- Provide comments to the debaters on the judging sheet.

Good judging can be more difficult than good debating, but debate relies on the integrity and skill of the judges to make the right decisions. Many judges have their own style of judging or admire particular debate tactics in rounds. Each judge, however, should have only one goal: to create a level playing field for the debaters.

B. How to Decide Who Won

This may be the simplest duty of the judge, but it is also the most important. The question each judge should ask himself or herself is: Who did the better debating in this round?

That question leads to obvious ambiguities about the phrase “better debating.” The team that presented a better argument for its side of the debate did the better debating. Better arguments can be presented with better style or more logically appealing, but the substance of the arguments should outweigh purely superficial style. The team that “looked good” did not necessarily win.

Please note that the Judge does not have to agree with the side that did the better debating, the judge merely has to recognize that their arguments were superior. If someone decides to propose the case “Abortion is immoral,” the judge may dislike that debater. The judge may know of twenty reasons why abortion is not immoral. But the judge must decide if the Affirmative’s arguments for the case statement outweigh the Negative’s arguments that abortion is not immoral.

The judge should adopt a convention known as tabula rasa, the blank slate. A blank slate perspective means that the judge has no preconceived notions about the round and brings no knowledge or arguments to the round.

1. The Affirmative does not lose because the judge can beat their case.
2. The Negative does not lose because they did not beat the case as well as the judge could have or in the same way the judge would.

The only time the judge should use any outside knowledge would be when one side asserts bald-faced lies or when one side makes arguments that are so illogical that no ordinary person would believe them.

The judge makes their decision about who won and who lost based on whether the arguments made in favor of “the case,” which is the framework the 1st Affirmative lays out during the first speech, outweighed the arguments against the case.

Notice that only arguments about the case statement are relevant. Many debaters make arguments which might be true and might have to do with the general topic of the debate, but which do not deal with the case statement. These arguments will not win a round, though they may provide context, evidence or support. Whether arguments support the case statement can be argued during the round, so the judge must decide what issues are relevant.

Debaters should not be reading – but making their own arguments. Evidence and support, often documented, is very appropriate, but they should be looking at the judge and their opponents.

C. Awarding Debate Points

In debate judging, there are points given to each team in the debate. The teams should be ranked via points based upon their presentation – so decide which team did an overall “better” job of debating. “Better” is, of course, subjective, but you should consider:

1. Quality of Argumentation

- A. Did they formulate their arguments well?
- B. Did they simply repeat the same points over and over again?
- C. Did they hear, deduce, and respond to the constructive speeches and cross examination questions thoroughly or insightfully?

2. Rhetorical Skill

- A. Did they speak articulately and communicate their ideas effectively?
- B. Did they read a lot of information from their papers?
- C. Did they effectively use vocabulary or idiom?

3. Wit

- A. Did they use wit to create a more appealing argument?
- B. Did they use levity to lighten a heavy point or chastise their opponents?
- C. Did they use sarcasm or irony to illustrate points or communicate fallacies appropriately?

Please assign a score of 1 to 100 to each of the four debaters based on the below guidelines.

1 - 15 points	Don't give anyone points this low.
16 - 20 points	The speech was downright offensive.
21 - 30 points	The speech was really, really bad.
31 - 40 points	The speech was bad.
41 - 50 points	The speech was decent.
51 - 60 points	The speech was good. (55 IS THE AVERAGE SCORE)
61 - 70 points	The speech was very good.
71 - 80 points	The speech was truly excellent.
81 - 90 points	The speech was outstanding.
91 - 95 points	The speech changed your life forever.
96 - 100 points	Don't give anyone this score.

D. Awarding Presentation Style Points (tie breaker only)

Assign each team a score of 1 to 100 based on overall presentation style. This will be used in the event of a tie.

E. Remember

When judging:

- Do NOT allow your own biases to taint your decision.
- Do NOT base your decision on arguments that were not presented in the Round.
- Do NOT base your arguments on any new arguments brought up during the rebuttals.
- After the round, decide which side — Affirmative or Negative -- won the round, and write that on the decision line of your ballot.

V. Judging Ballot

The Robins Debate - Debate Ballot v 1.0

Round: _____ Room: _____

AFF Team Name:		NEG Team Name:	
1A:	Points:	1N:	Points:
2A:	Points:	2N:	Points:
Team Presentation Points (tiebreaker):		Team Presentation Points (tiebreaker):	

In my opinion, _____ won the round.

My overall reasoning is:

Judge Name/Affiliation: _____