

Welcome to a new style of debate!

IPDA is a new event being offered at the two-year college national tournament, Phi Rho Pi. It has previously been offered at other national tournaments, including Pi Kappa Delta. As a style of debate, it differs substantially from other forms of debate, so it's worth considering some of those differences.

Philosophy

IPDA privileges the use of lay judges, accessibility to all, and real-world application. In other words, the goal should be an intelligent argument that everyone can understand.

Debaters are expected to be courteous, to have real-world oratory skills, and to avoid falling back on 'debate truisms' and tactics like 'spreading' or reliance on highly technical debate jargon or unwritten rules of debate theory. This form of debate should be accessible to Individual Events teams as well as 'debate schools.'

This concept is best-illustrated by a point made in the IPDA guidelines: "The goal of the International Public Debate Association is to promote a highly rhetorical and oratorical style of public speaking. For this reason, it is recommended that judges be instructed to award the decision in a close round to the superior speaking style rather than to the negative." Basically, the rules explicitly favor the better speaker over a long-held debate tradition.

30 Minutes of Prep
5 minute affirmative
2 minute cross-examination
6 minute negative
2 minute cross-examination
3 minute affirmative rebuttal
5 minute negative rebuttal
3 minute affirmative rebuttal

In the Round

Each debate will begin with five topics, and contestants will alternate striking off topics until only one is left—that topic becomes the resolution for the round.

Contestants are allowed 30 minutes of prep time that is open-note, open-file, open-everything. They may, according to IPDA guidelines, consult with one another. In general, IPDA also allows consulting with coaches. However, at the Litrenta Triangle this year, we are going to ask students and coaches to refrain from interacting during prep time.

During the debate itself, students may consult notes made during prep time, but, quoting from the IPDA website: "The use of evidence cards and/or verbatim printed materials is prohibited. Such materials may be studied, memorized and/or paraphrased and handwritten notes made, but printed information may not be physically present in the round."

Also during the debate, avoid turning the round into a Parliamentary Debate round. IPDA encourages having the Negative redefine terms when presented with unfair definitions by the Affirmative (in contrast to running a procedural). Likewise: "There will be no "rising" to points of order, standing with one hand on your head, or heckling during speeches. If debaters have questions or problems they should ask about them during cross-examination and/or raise them as points during their next speech."

Finally, electronic devices beyond a timer or a stopwatch are forbidden during the round. No device that can be used for electronic retrieval will be permitted.

A General Note

The idea behind IPDA is that a well-educated college student without debate experience should be able to walk into a round, and that a well-educated citizen should be able to judge the round. Please help us keep this event 'true' to its purpose as we introduce it at the Litrenta Triangle.