

Varsity Debate Coaching Training Course

ASSESSMENT: KEY

Name: _____

School: _____

1) **What is the “universal structure” of a topicality violation in the 1NC, shell version?**

- A) Interpretation (or Definition)
- B) Violation
- C) Standards
- D) Voting Issue

2) **Give an example of each of the three following types of counterplan: agent, process, consult.**

Agent: States Counterplan, China Counterplan

Process: Executive Order Counterplan, Referendum Counterplan

Consult: Consult with China Counterplan, Consult with the EU Counterplan

3) **Explain how and why topicality standards often invoke “fairness” and “education”.**

"Fairness" and "education" are the foundational criteria on the basis of which procedural rules -- about which Topicality Violations are debates -- can and should be judged.

4) **What is the affirmative doing when it reads a “counter-interpretation” in a topicality debate?**

Defining differently the word or phrase that the negative claims the affirmative plan violates, and in such a way that includes the plan.

5) **Paraphrase the Wilson 2001 evidence supporting the affirmative permutation of the Capitalism Kritik.**

Revolution overthrowing Capitalism is not going to happen, and time spent discussing it trades-off with liberal reforms to improve the lives of the impoverished in a Capitalist society. Therefore, reform within the system is preferable.

6) **Explain the difference between a “link” and an “internal link” on a disadvantage.**

A link argues that the immediate effect of the plan is the initiation of a series of events that leads to and culminates in the impact (i.e., the terminal impact). The internal link is the intermediate

series of actions between the link and the impact -- the connective actions and reactions that flesh out the scenario in which the plan and its link end up causing the impact.

7) Why are the “brink” and “uniqueness” arguments on a disadvantage in tension with each other. What is the conceptual balance point that negatives want to occupy between the two?

Uniqueness is the burden the negative has to prove that the disadvantage impact will not occur in the status quo -- i.e., if the judge votes negative. Brink is the name for the condition that the status quo is on the verge of lurching into the impact -- i.e., that the status quo is on the brink of triggering the impact. The negative attempts to prove that we are on the brink because by doing so its narrative on the link causing the impact is more plausible.

The negative needs to argue both that the disadvantage has uniqueness -- implying that it would be uniquely caused by the passage of the plan -- but also that the status quo is on the brink of the impact. These arguments are in tension but not inherently contradictory.

8) Paraphrase a specific “non-uniqueness” argument against the Midterm Elections DA. Explain why if the affirmative wins the argument they should defeat the disad.

The Republicans will inevitably win back the Senate in the midterm elections of 2014. If this argument is true, the plan will have no effect on the midterm elections even if it is controversial or unpopular. The Democrats may be blamed and their political position may be hurt, but if they are already going to lose the Senate, that political effect has no impact.

9) Why should affirmatives never read both a “link turn” and an “impact turn” in response to the same disadvantage?

If an affirmative turns the link, it is saying that the plan makes the impact less likely than it is in the status quo. If the affirmative turns the impact it is saying that what the negative said is a bad thing (the impact) is actually a good thing. So, if the affirmative team turns both the link and the impact, it is arguing that the plan makes a good thing (the turned impact) less likely (by the turned link). The affirmative has in effect not reversed the disadvantage 180 degrees; it has instead reversed the disad twice, turning it 360 degrees, thereby re-pointing it against the affirmative plan.

10) What does “silence = assent” mean in debate, and what is its significance?

Line-by-line or direct refutation helps ensure that each argument made by the opponent is answered. If an argument is not responded to in competitive debate it is considered conceded or assented to (i.e., agreed with). Silence = assent enforces critical thinking in debate; if a debater has to answer all of the arguments of the other team, it has to think about why each of the other team's arguments is either false or not a reason the team is winning the debate, overall.

11) How can knowing the full context of evidence read in a debate round help a debater evaluate clashing arguments in the rebuttals?

When debaters compare and evaluate clashing arguments in the rebuttals, much of what they do revolves around close textual analysis of the evidence read on both sides. Debaters look for warrants, data, examples, historical parallels, reference to other experts, and other points of support within the text of a piece of evidence that they have read and compare those strengths with weaknesses and flaws they can find in their opponent's evidence. All of this means that knowing the fuller context of the quotations used in pieces of evidence can make more credible and more informed those close textual readings and comparisons.

12) What are the six negative argument options? Which three of these six are considered Varsity-only options?

Case attacks
Disadvantages
Topicality Violations

Varsity only:
Counterplans
Kritiks
Theory

13) Identify and define two common components of risk calculus.

Magnitude -- scope of the impact, how big an impact it is
Probability -- likelihood of the impact
Time-Frame -- how soon the impact occurs
Case Turn -- how the impact and the case advantage interact
(Reversibility -- acceptable alternative answer -- whether the impact can be solved or reversed later)

14) Why does a counterplan need to be competitive with the affirmative plan?

-Because competitiveness requires that counterplan be a reason that the plan is a bad idea, not just another good idea.
-Competitiveness requires that the counterplan refute the plan.
-Because the affirmative could permute to do both and thereby still justify doing the plan. The negative must be able to prove that the counterplan alone is superior to the permutation.

15) When an affirmative runs a permutation against a counterplan, what is the affirmative saying should be the comparison the judge makes when deciding who wins the round?

When running a permutation, the affirmative is arguing that the comparison should be between doing the counterplan alone and adopting some combination of the plan and the counterplan, represented by the permutation. The affirmative is arguing that the permutation is a superior policy option to adopting the counterplan by itself.

16) How is case debate (i.e., case attacks) structured in a debate round?

Case debate is structured by the INC arguments. The rest of the debate is about whether the negative wins any of its INC case attacks on a case issue.

17) Identify and explain two criteria that make for a good piece of debate evidence.

Recency -- sometimes having more recent evidence can beat older evidence because of changes in circumstances or assumptions that make recent evidence truer today.

Strength of warrants -- evidence that has strong warrants or reasoning that justify the author's conclusions are more persuasive and more argumentatively forceful than conclusionary pieces of evidence, where the author's reasoning is elided.

Historical or contemporary parallels -- when an author draws close parallels between a situation addressed in the evidence and a historical or contemporary situation so as to make his or her conclusions supported by real-world outcomes.

18) What distinguishes a Kritik from a disadvantage?

A Kritik doesn't have the burden of uniqueness. It argues not that the plan will initiate a series of events that culminate in the impact, but rather that the plan is an example of a destructive philosophical system or discourse that is having pernicious effects now, and increasingly so. The Kritik proposes an "alternative" to the embracing of this philosophy or discourse represented by the affirmative, and argues that the judge by voting negative can endorse this alternative.

Affirmatives can attempt to make permutation arguments against the alternative, arguing that adopting the plan and the alternative, in some combination, is best.

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19) How can affirmatives claim they are metaphorically "exploring and/or developing the earth's oceans," when running a performative affirmative case?

Through defining oceans as something expansive -- e.g., "oceans of time," "oceans of injustice, or arguing that historical issues involving the oceans in some way -- e.g., the Middle Passage of

slaves brought to America -- should be understood to be brought into the realm of legitimate discussion.

20) Enumerate three identifying characteristics of theory arguments in debate.

Theory arguments are: (i) typically unevidenced, and based solely or predominantly on analytic arguments; (ii) about the rules and procedures that the judge should uphold for the debate taking place; (iii) linked to a violation of fairness or educational practices perpetrated by the other team; (iv) usually impacted as voting issues.