

## Frequently Asked Questions Concerning The Use of Computers in Texas UIL Debate

- 1) **Q:** *Should our squad use computers?*  
**A:** Only if students:
  - Students type faster than they write.
  - Students really desire to use one.
  - Note: All students still need to know how to flow in the traditional manner.
- 2) **Q:** *Will the tournament director have to check every computer to confirm students have removed or disabled wireless capability before the tournament begins?*  
**A:** No.
- 3) **Q:** *Is it the judge's responsibility to check computers?*  
**A:** No.
- 4) **Q:** *It is always the student's responsibility to disable internet capabilities in the round even if they are not reminded to do so?*  
**A:** Yes. If the debater decides to use a computer, it is the debater's responsibility to know and follow the guidelines, whether reminded by a tournament official or not.
- 5) **Q:** *Is there information in District packets to assist District Directors in implementing this rule?*  
**A:** Yes.
- 6) **Q:** *Can we use a printer? If so, when can it be utilized?*  
**A:** Yes. This is envisioned. Use common sense.
  - Get a silent printer as opposed to a noisy one.
  - Print:
    - A) Between speeches
    - B) During prep time
    - C) After round (only if necessary)
- 7) **Q:** *Will a team be allowed to use a "countdown timer" on their computer?*  
**A:** Yes. You can download them free. One source is <http://pbest.multics.org/timer/>. Some "sit" on top of an Excel spreadsheet.
- 8) **Q:** *May cell phones be used as timers?*  
**A:** Only if placed in airplane mode (all wireless connectivity functions disabled).
- 9) **Q:** *Is PowerPoint allowed?*  
**A:** Not under the current guidelines.
- 10) **Q:** *Can we use "bluetooth" technology?*  
**A:** No.
- 11) **Q:** *Can Google Desktop software be used?*  
**A:** Yes. This software only searches files on your own computer, not the internet.

- 12) **Q:** *Is a scanner allowed?*  
**A:** No. Guidelines do not include this accessory.
- 13) **Q:** *The Constitution states all participants must present upon demand of debater evidence used in the round. With computers, how will we do this?*  
**A:** There are several options, such as using a flashdrive. However, you should consider that your opponent may not be using a computer. Rules require you to provide the evidence easily. It must be accessible and readable to your opponent. We recommend that you give the evidence to the opposing team in hard copy and then get it back. (See question concerning printers in the round.)
- 14) **Q:** *How will computers impact delivery style?*  
**A:** Computers should not diminish the emphasis UIL places on communicative delivery.  
**A)** Debaters may not speak sitting behind the laptop screen, but are expect to stand at the front of the room to deliver a professional presentation.  
**B)** Debaters still need to be making at least fifty percent eye contact with the judge.  
**C)** UIL rule on presentation is real world. Professionals in the business world, lawyers in a courtroom, do not sit behind their computer screen. Eye contact with their audience is critical.
- 15) **Q:** *Can you revise a card with your computer?*  
**A:** No. Just as in a round without computers, this is a violation of ethics.
- 16) **Q:** *Can you use the recorder on your laptop to record the round from your computer?*  
**A:** No. C&CR prohibits recording.
- 17) **Q:** *May spectators use computers while watching a round?*  
**A:** No.

## **Recommendations**

- 1) Travel with an outlet strip.
- 2) Travel with a small, quiet printer.
- 3) Travel with an extra battery, if possible.
- 4) Carry an Expand-o file with:
  - A. A printed hard copy of your 1AC
  - B. Commonly used topicality arguments and case response briefs
  - C. Most commonly used disadvantages
- 5) Use common sense when printing during the round. See quest #6.
- 6) Know how to flow the traditional way.
- 7) Remember that presentation skills are important.

*We encourage you to view the PowerPoint entitled. "Using Computers in Debate" posted on the speech page of the official UIL web site. Questions? Email Jana Riggins, State Director, at [jriggins@austin.utexas.edu](mailto:jriggins@austin.utexas.edu).*