Judging Policy Debate

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Judging paradigms

✔ Stock Issues: Legal Model
  - Topicality
  - Significance of Harm
  - Inherency
  - Solvency
  - Advantage Over Disadvantage

✔ Policy Making: Legislative Model
  - Weigh advantages versus disadvantages

✔ Hypothesis Testing: Social Science Model
  - Each negative position (some of which may be contradictory) tests the truth of the affirmative; it must stand good against all tests to be true.

✔ Tabula Rasa: Democracy/Anarchy Model
  - Whatever basis for decision the debaters can agree on will be used as a judging standard.

✔ Game Player: Gaming Model
  - Debate is a rule-governed game; you play by (and are judged by) the rules.
Evaluating Topicality

✔ Standards
  - Precision
  - Each word has meaning
  - Debatability
  - Notice/Fairness
  - Reasonability

✔ Violation
  - What word(s) in the resolution have been violated?
  - How should these words properly be defined?
  - Applying the relevant standard, why does the definition offered demonstrate an aff violation?

✔ Impact
  - Why is this a voting issue?

✔ Extratopicality
  - Does the plan do the resolution and MORE?

Evaluating Inherency

✔ Structural Inherency
  - Law: The USA PATRIOT Act, Section 505 establishes the right of federal agencies to issue National Security Letters without warrants.
  - Absence of Structure: The Obama administration has no procedure in place for the promotion of TSA privatization.

✔ Attitudinal Inherency
  - The Obama administration supports a provocateur strategy as it sends FBI informants into Muslim communities.
Evaluating Solvency

✔ Types of solvency arguments
  – Impracticability: The plan will not work as planned (the plan to make the American Community Survey voluntary, rather than mandatory, will not work as planned because statisticians report that the results would provide an inadequate basis for allocating federal funding)
  – Insufficiency: The plan eliminates NSA authority to collect intelligence under Section 702 of the USA PATRIOT Act, but negative evidence shows that Executive Order 12333 gives the NSA all the authority it needs to continue the same programs as now conducted under Section 702.
  – Counterproductivity: This type of solvency argument holds that an attempt to solve the problem will actually make it worse: Eliminating Section 702 authority for the NSA will be counterproductive because at least it now has receive authorization from the FISA Court. Under Executive Order 12333 there is no check at all.

Evaluating Disads

✔ Link
  – Why will the plan cause this?

✔ Uniqueness:
  – Would the disad happen anyway, even without the plan?

✔ Brink/Linearity
  – Is there any reason to believe that we are at a critical point or is the negative simply saying that the plan would cause more of something which is already happening?

✔ Impact
  – Why would this be bad?
  – Why would it outweigh the case advantages?
Surveillance Disadvantages

✔ Terrorism
✔ Politics
✔ Federalism
✔ Cyber Attacks
✔ Increase Racial Profiling
✔ Reduce Presidential Power
✔ Increase U.S. hegemony
✔ Disease pandemics
✔ Increase corporate surveillance

Evaluating Counterplans

✔ Nontopicality
  – Is it necessary to be nontopical?
  – What word(s) in the resolution does the counterplan fail to meet?

✔ Competitiveness
  – Mutual Exclusivity
  – Net Benefits
  – Permutations

✔ Types
  – Agent (commercial action or state counterplans)
  – Exclusion (exclude parts of the country or certain groups of people)
  – Plan inclusive (do the plan in such a way as to avoid the politics Disad)
Evaluating Kritiks

✔ Types
  – Language
  – Causation
  – Power Relationships
  – Feminism

✔ Links
  – What has the team argued, advocated, or said which makes this kritik relevant?

✔ Decision import
  – Why does the kritik give a reason to vote aff or neg in the debate?
Judging Policy Debate

4 Rules
5 Recommendations

Rule #1: Judge Ethically

✓ Make a decision based upon the debate you hear
  ◦ NOT their coach
  ◦ NOT whether you like the debaters
  ◦ NOT what happened last time this team met your team
  ◦ NOT whether it might help your team

✓ Treat students with respect
  ◦ Don’t misuse your authority to berate students
  ◦ Don’t use profanity or abusive language
Rule #2: Judge Conscientiously

✓ You have a responsibility to listen to the speeches
  o NOT reading the newspaper
  o NOT talking with a friend
  o NOT engaging in distracting nonverbal signals

✓ Base your decision on arguments presented
  o Make an effort to check personal biases
  o Reason for decision should select among arguments presented, not what you thought about the students’ appearance or mannerisms

Rule #3: Judge Consistently

✓ Have a standard which you will apply
  o Stock Issues
  o Policymaking
  o Tabula Rasa

✓ Communicate your standards
  o Judge philosophies
  o Ballot
Rule #4: Communicate Your Decision Fully

- Know the expectations as to oral comments in your league
  - Are oral comments allowed?
  - Can decisions be revealed?

- Fill out ballots completely
  - Assist the tab room
  - Always provide a reason for decision on the ballot

Don’t Do the Debaters’ Work For Them

- Don’t debate the debaters
- Let the rebuttals decide the round
- What about dropped arguments?
Keep Each Argument on a Separate Sheet

- Label each sheet at the top
- Each sheet contains a full record of that argument

Don’t Take Out Your Frustrations With the Activity on Students

- It may well be that debate needs fixing
- Find the appropriate forum
- Remember you are an educator; find a basis for motivation/encouragement
Take Ethical Violations Seriously But Don’t Make Everything an Ethical Issue

- Fabrication is a serious charge requiring clear proof
- Context Issues: Was the evidence out of context? Again, a high proof standard should be applied.
- Debaters are required to provide a complete source upon request
- What is meant by “card-clipping:” While debaters are not required to read all of the words in a piece of evidence, they sometimes claim that they read more than they actually did. This practice is called “card-clipping” and is regarded as an unethical practice.

Use Judging as a Tool to Strengthen Your Coaching

- You hear interesting arguments
- You have an opportunity to see which techniques work and which ones do not
What is your judging philosophy?

Example: Debate can most usefully be seen as an exercise in public policy making: The affirmative team is advocating a policy change and the negative team is opposing it.

What do you think about speed?

Example: I believe debate should provide training for good public communication. It is essential that I be able to understand your arguments and your supporting evidence. I will make a commitment to listen carefully, but I expect you to make a commitment to speak clearly.
What do you think about counterplans?

Example: Counterplans can provide a reason to vote negative so long as they are competitive (meaning they give a reason to reject the affirmative policy).

How often do you vote on topicality?

Example: Topicality is an independent voting issue. I will vote on topicality whenever the negative team can show that the affirmative plan fails to follow the terms of the resolution.
What do you think about kritiks?

Example: I will try to keep an open mind about any argument which makes sense, but my predisposition is to arguments which have relevance in the world of public policy making. I often have the reaction that kritik arguments have little relevance for determining public policy.