



UIL Guidelines: Electronic Retrieval Devices in CX and LD Debate

Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop and tablet computers, netbook computers, and other portable electronic retrieval devices. The use of electronic retrieval devices by competitors in UIL Cross-Examination Debate and Lincoln Douglas Debate rounds is permissible under the conditions specified below.

- A. Internet access may be used to retrieve files, research arguments, and exchange evidence and/or arguments with the opposing team and judge.
- B. Computers or other electronic retrieval devices may neither be used to communicate nor to send or receive information to or from coaches, assistants or other individuals inside or outside the room in which the competition occurs. Examples of information that would be restricted would include *but not be limited to* coach/non-participating competitor generated arguments, advice or arguments to run, questions to ask or response answers during cross-examination period and other information not generated by the participating competitors in the round.
- C. In compliance with the UIL prompting rule, electronic retrieval devices may not be used to send messages or evidence to a debate partner while that partner is speaking or participating in cross-examination period.
- D. Availability of Evidence: Debaters have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. This may be done electronically by flash drive or email chain if the opponent and judge have the capability to view the electronic version on their own devices. In the event that an opponent or judge is not using an electronic retrieval device, a debater who presents evidence from an electronic device must provide a meaningful opportunity for that opponent or judge to review evidence. Examples of such access include providing a printed copy of the evidence and showing the evidence on a device provided by the debater. Whatever manner the evidence or access is provided, the evidence must be quickly and easily accessible by the opposing team and judge.
- E. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, internet connection, batteries, extension cords and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts shall not be responsible for providing wi-fi connection, computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants or any technical assistance.
- F. Sanction: Contestants found to have violated paragraph C above shall forfeit the round of competition and receive zero points. Contestants found to have violated paragraph B above shall be disqualified from the tournament and shall forfeit all rounds. Contest Directors shall be empowered with the final decision concerning disqualification.

Contestants choosing to use laptop computers or other electronic retrieval devices defined above accept the risk of equipment failure. No special consideration or accommodations, including no additional prep time or speech time, will be given by judges, contest directors or tournament hosts should equipment failure occur.

By choosing to use these devices in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking. Laptops or other electronic retrieval devices should not be a deterrent to eye contact and other proper public speaking skills.