

Dear TRiO Personnel:

The Georgia Association of Special Program Personnel (G.A.S.P.P.), Inc. will host its annual Debate Competition at the Crowne Plaza Atlanta Airport Hotel on November 10-12, 2006. This event is held in conjunction with the GASPP Student Leadership Conference, and is specifically designed for Student Support Services and Ronald E. McNair participants.

One of the major objectives for this activity is to encourage collegiate TRIO participants to discuss relative social, political, and religious issues affecting the global community. In addition, the Debate Competition seeks to strengthen the bonds between the collegiate TRIO Programs in Georgia. To achieve this goal, the organizing committee has adopted the Parliamentary Debate format.

During this debate format, the topic is presented in a general meeting area or in a designated room where the debate will be held. Occasionally, two or three different topics are provided, and the side proposing the resolution is allowed to select which topic to debate. Each team consists of two members:

Proposing Team (Government)

1. Prime Minister
2. Member of the Government

Opposing Team (the Opposition)

1. Leader of the Opposition
2. Member of the Opposition

After the Judge (Speaker of the House) announces the topic(s), each team is given 15 minutes to prepare for the beginning of the debate round. "During the 15 minutes of preparation time, the Government prepares its case proposing the resolution while the Opposition attempts to anticipate the Government's case and draft arguments that oppose the resolution."

After the preparation time concludes, the Judge recognizes the Prime Minister as the first person to speak. The speaking order and times are outlined below.

TIME	PERSON
7 minutes	Prime Minister (Proposing Team)
8 minutes	Leader of the Opposition (Opposing Team)
8 minutes	Member of Government (Proposing Team)
8 minutes	Member of Opposition (Opposing Team)
4 minutes	Rebuttal: Leader of the Opposition (Opposing Team)
5 minutes	Rebuttal: Prime Minister (Proposing Team)

The official format that will be use during the GASPP Debate Contest is enclosed. This document provides specific information regarding speaking order and times, speaker directives, points of information, points of order, and judges responsibilities. Each team is encouraged to thoroughly review the material and familiarize themselves with the rules of parliamentary debate.

Finally, each Program is allowed to enter one (1) team in the Debate Contest. The first place prize is \$500 for the team; second place team receives \$300, and the third place team receives \$250. Let's take advantage of this opportunity to strengthen our students' debate skills while they learn to network with other TRIO participants from around the state.

We look forward to a tremendous response.

Sincerely,

Robert Reese

Robert Reese, Co-chair
Atlanta Metropolitan College

**THE BASICS OF WHAT HAPPENS IN A
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE**
by Jim Hanson and Diana Thompson

What happens in each round

The tournament posts the round including who debate who, where, and with which judge.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TOPIC

Sometimes, the topic is announced in a main meeting area.

Usually, you go to the room where your debate is, and the judge gives both teams the topic.

At some tournaments, you will be given three topics and you can strike one of the three topics.

You get 15 minutes to prepare after the topic is announced (sometimes more but usually 15 minutes).

You then debate (see the speaking order and times and what each speaker should do below).

At the end of the debate, you usually leave the room while the judge decides who won and completes the ballot. The judge may or may not talk with you later about the decision and provide comments for you.

At some tournaments, there will be a room where results will be posted after each round.

Speaking Order and Times

7 min _Prime Minister Constructive (PMC)

8 min _Leader of Opposition Constructive (LOC)

8 min _Member of Government Constructive (MG)

8 min _Member of Opposition Constructive (MOC)

4 min _Leader of Opposition Rebuttal (LOR)

5 min _Prime Minister Rebuttal (PMR)

The judge, called the Speaker of the House (“Madame Speaker” for women; “Mister Speaker” for men), usually times the speeches. You will receive hand signals from the judge that tell you how much time you have remaining in your speech (for example, if the judge holds up two fingers, it means you have two minutes remaining in your speech).

The debaters can ask questions speeches after the first minute and before the last minute of the constructive speeches.

The debaters and audience members can pound the table to support arguments a speaker makes and they can heckle arguments to show they dislike the arguments.

What each speaker should do during the debate

Prime Minister Constructive presents the government case in favor of the resolution

Leader of the Opposition Constructive presents arguments directly against the government case and presents positions against the proposal or main assumptions in the government case

Member of the Government Constructive defends and rebuilds the government case and attacks the opposition positions

Member of the Opposition Constructive defends and rebuilds the oppositions positions and re-attacks the government case

Leader of the Opposition Rebuttal presents 2 to 5 main reasons that the opposition should win. These reasons are based on the arguments presented in the opposition constructive speeches and they address government responses to these issues. Note: avoid making new responses/arguments other than extensions of arguments presented in the opposition constructive speeches.

Prime Minister Rebuttal presents 2 to 5 main reasons that the government should win. These reasons are based on the arguments presented in the government constructive speeches and they address opposition responses to these issues. Note: Unless the Member of the Opposition constructive made new arguments, the PMR should not make new responses other than extensions of what the Member of the Government constructive argued.

Introductions to each speech

1. Before you start each speech, a speaker should recognize everyone present. Long-winded introductions grow tedious by the end of the round. Keep it brief – with your own personal touch

2. Example introductions to your speeches:

“Speaker of the House, Members of Parliament. The government . . .”

“Speaker of the House, My Honorable Opposition and My Humble Partner. We have argued that . . .”

“Speaker of the House, My Distinguished Opposition, thank you for an engaging debate, my humble colleague for his/her outstanding support & Members of Parliament who have gathered here today . . .”

3. Key tips for your introductions

- • **Always recognize the Speaker of the House (judge)**
- • **Don't forget to recognize your audience (it helps build atmosphere to the round).**
- • **Introductions may seem corny, but niceties add a sense of class and professionalism to the round.**

Points of Information (POI) Questions

1. Questions are allowed after the first minute and before the last minute of a constructive speech. Judges usually knock on a desk to indicate questions may begin/stop.

2. Do not stand up during protected time (the first and last minute of a constructive speech). If done purposely, it is considered extremely rude.

3. Asking a POI -

a. Stand up (you can quietly say "Point of Information" if you wish)

b. Wait to be recognized by the person speaking

c. If told "no thank you" or “not at this time” promptly sit down.

d. Use no more than 15 seconds.

4. Tips for handling POIs during your speech

- **Most speakers take up to three questions during their speeches.**
- **Many speakers will say “I will take your first of three questions” to put the other team on notice of how many questions they are permitted.**
- **Before accepting your last question say, "I will take your last question."**
- **When refusing a POI, avoid using phrases like, "I don't have enough time" or "I need to move on," because you look rushed and disorganized. Try saying, "No thank you" or “Not at this time” or “I'll take your question after I finish this point.” Keep these refusals short as it saves time.**

Points of Order - used when you believe a rule is violated (usually in a rebuttal to point out new arguments).

IF YOU WANT TO MAKE A POINT OF ORDER

- 1. Stand up and say "Point of Order" (loud enough so everyone in the round but especially the judge can hear you)**
- 2. The judge is supposed to stop the time and recognize you.**
- 3. Explain what rule has been violated (for example, “The PMR has made a new argument in her rebuttal. The argument xxx was not presented in the constructives. It should be disregarded as we have no more speeches to respond to it.”**

SOMEONE JUST MADE A POINT OF ORDER AGAINST YOU

- 1. MAKE SURE you remind the judge to stop the time. Ask: “Have you stopped time for the Point of Order?”**
- 2. Listen carefully to what the point of order is.**

3. Request to the judge to permit you a chance to respond.
4. If permitted, think and then clearly and directly respond to the point of order.

WHAT THE JUDGE WILL DO

1. The judge should say one of the following: "point not/well taken."
 - "Point well taken" means that the judge agrees with the point of order. Discard the arguments mooted by the point of order if this occurs and continue with the debate.
 - "Point will be taken under consideration" means that the judge will think about the issue. Continue but you should make arguments that both assume that the judge will and will not agree with the point of order.
 - "Point not well taken" means the judge disagrees with the point of order. The debate should just continue knowing that the point of order did not have an effect.
2. Some judges may not know what they are supposed to do. Explain the above to them.
3. Some judges will do something else such as ask: "why are you interrupting the speaker?" Handle these situations as best as you can.

Table pounding and Heckling - verbal ways of agreeing and disagreeing with the speaker.

1. If you like a point, you should "pound"
 - a. "pound" on a desk.
 - b. say "here, here."
2. If you do not like a point, you should heckle
 - a. a. Say: "Boo" or "Hiss" or "Shame, shame"

- c. c. Say a witty, humorous comment (careful, you do not want to appear rude).
- d. d. Avoid being too loud, you want to make a point without interrupting the speaker.

3. If you are heckled, then you need to think up a witty response. Ideas for responding

- a. a. Mock their heckling. For example, “boo, hiss you” or “this is a sign I have made a good argument.”
- b. b. Mock their arguments. For example, “No, hiss your argument that said xxxx” (pointing out the argument’s flaw)
- c. c. Provide a point specific reply. For example, “As I said, cars produce pollution, that is a fact, not something to be hissed at.”

Types of Resolutions you might debate.

- **Factual Resolution** - Fact resolutions ask you to prove the resolution true or false.

Example: This house believes that federal welfare policies have increased poverty.

Government: Show the resolution is probably true. *Example: Federal welfare programs have created dependency that entrenches poverty.*

Opposition: Show the resolution is probably false. *Example: Federal welfare programs provide food, housing, medical care, and job training that directly reduce poverty.*

- **Value Resolutions** - Value resolutions ask you to evaluate an idea/concept/theory.

Example: This house believes even tough use of the law is justified.

Government: Show the value is justified/is what the resolution says it is. *Example: Tough use of the law prevents crime so it is justified.*

Opposition: Show the value is not justified/is not what the resolution says it is. *Example: Tough use of the law treats people unfairly and does not stop crime.*

- **Value Comparison Resolutions** - Value comparison resolutions ask you to compare two values.

Example: This house values liberty over community.

Governments: Show the value is more important, better, more justified, etc. than the other value.
Example: Liberty is more important than community because it emphasizes individual rights.

Oppositions: Show that the other value is important, better, more justified, etc. than the value that the government defends in their case. *Example: Community is more important people consideration of groupings of people is more important than focusing on individuals.*

- **Policy Resolutions** - Policy resolutions support a new policy action.

Example: The United States should regulate the internet.

Governments: Asks you to present a proposal; this proposal is usually defended by arguing there is a problem (significance), the current policy isn't solving or is actually causing this problem (inherency), and here is a proposal that will solve the problem (solvency). Often, the government will support a specific example of the policy resolution.
Example: Internet sales of bad prescription drugs is increasing. Current policy permits this. The federal government will regulate prescription drug sales over the internet. This would stop sales of bad prescription drugs.

Oppositions: Show the government proposal would be disadvantageous (disads), that the problem isn't

so big (significance), that the current policy is solving the problem (inherency) and that the affirmative proposal will not solve the problem (solvency). Show that the government proposal does not support the resolution. Show that another action would be superior to the government proposal. Show that the assumptions of the government case are harmful (kritiks). *Example: Internet sales of bad prescription drugs are not increasing. Current policy gives states the ability to stop such sales. Federal action will not reduce prescription drug sales. Federal action will undermine state and local solutions which are needed for ensuring innovative policies and for good state-federal relations.*

- **Metaphor Resolutions** - Resolutions that use vague or figurative language.

Example: This house believes that an apple a day keeps the doctor away.

Let's you do anything you want on the government so long as you can explain how the government case fits the idea behind the government. *For example, you could argue that preventive medicine should be promoted more. Explanation: Preventive medicine is like "an apple a day" that prevents a need for curative medical care from doctors.*

The opposition generally has to argue against whatever case the government presents (unless it is an unreasonable interpretation of the metaphor). *For example, you could argue that preventive medicine should be promoted more. Explanation: Preventive medicine is like "an apple a day" that prevents a need for curative medical care from doctors.*

Sample resolutions that you might debate.

This house supports the right to work.

This house believes quality of life is more important than presence of life.

This house would balance the books.

**The United States federal government should support
unrestrained trade.**

**This House believes the right to privacy is more important
than the freedom of press.**