

Hart House High School Debate  
Championships  
**2025 Tournament Package**



# Welcome to Hart House High Schools 2025!

We are thrilled that you've chosen to join us, whether as a debater or judge. Our team has worked tirelessly to prepare an environment that is both welcoming and conducive to high-level competition.

With over 180 teams participating, this year's HHHS is our biggest yet. Whether it's your first tournament or you're an experienced debater aiming for the top, we're excited to offer you a platform to showcase your skills and engage in high-stakes debates.

Please take a moment to read through this guide thoroughly to ensure you have all the information you need for a seamless experience. Should you have any questions or need assistance, please email us at [harthousehs2025@gmail.com](mailto:harthousehs2025@gmail.com).

We're looking forward to hosting you at the University of Toronto for a weekend of serious competition wrapped in fun and camaraderie. Get ready to challenge your peers, perfect your arguments, and enjoy the dynamic atmosphere of HHHS 2025.

See you soon!

- Sophie and Ethan

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## **Schedule**

### *Saturday, February 15th, 2025*

8:45 AM – 9:30 AM: Registration (Hard drop at 9:30 AM sharp)

9:40 AM – 10:10 AM: Briefings

10:20 AM – 12:35 PM: Round 1 (Open Adjudication)

12:35 PM – 1:15 PM: Lunch/Social

1:15 PM – 3:30 PM: Round 2 (Open Adjudication)

3:30 PM – 5:45 PM: Round 3 (Open Adjudication)

5:45 PM – 8:00 PM: Round 4 (Closed Adjudication)

### *Sunday, February 16th, 2025*

8:45 AM – 9:30 AM: Registration (Hard drop at 9:30 AM sharp)

9:40 AM – 12:00 PM: Round 5 (Open Adjudication)

12:00 PM – 1:15 PM: Lunch & Break Announcements

1:15 PM – 3:15 PM: Quarterfinals; Novice Semifinals

3:15 PM – 5:15 PM: Semifinals; Novice Finals

5:15 PM – 7:15 PM: Finals

7:30 PM – 8:00 PM: Awards Ceremony

## Important Forms and Links

[Full Equity Policy](#)

[Equity Report Form](#)

[Scratch Form](#)

[Accessibility & Accommodations Form](#)

[Media Policy](#)

[Media Consent Form](#)

[Dietary Restrictions Form](#)

[Tab Changes Form](#)

*Tab Link*

<https://hhhs2025.calicotab.com/hhhs2025/>

## Getting to the Tournament

**Registration will be in the lobby of Sidney Smith Hall (100 St. George Street). Do NOT go to the Hart House building for registration.**

Locations can be accessed and viewed through the [map linked here](#). Please be aware of ongoing construction which may affect availability.

### *By Subway*

From St. George subway station, take the St. George St. exit. Head south on St. George Street for 650 metres, until you reach Sidney Smith Hall (100 St. George St).

### *By Bus/Streetcar*

The #506 streetcar on College St stops at St George Street and College Street. From this stop, head north on St. George Street for 500 metres until you reach Sidney Smith Hall (100 St. George St).

The #94A bus from Castle Frank station stops at St George Street and Hoskin Avenue. The #94 from Wellesley station and Ossington station also stops at St George Street and Hoskin Avenue.

From this stop, head south on St. George Street for 190 metres until you reach Sidney Smith Hall (100 St. George St).

### *By Car*

There is no parking at Sidney Smith Hall. However, you can get dropped off along St. George St. or on Huron St.

There will be no access to parking on Tower Road or Hart House Circle. For more information about parking on the U of T campus, visit the [Parking Services website](#).

There are many public parking lots in the area surrounding Hart House, but as they are public lots, availability is not guaranteed. **We highly recommend taking transit instead.** For maps and information about parking locations and disruptions, please use the links below:

[University of Toronto Parking Maps](#)

[Barrier free \(Accessible\) Parking](#)

## Navigating the Campus

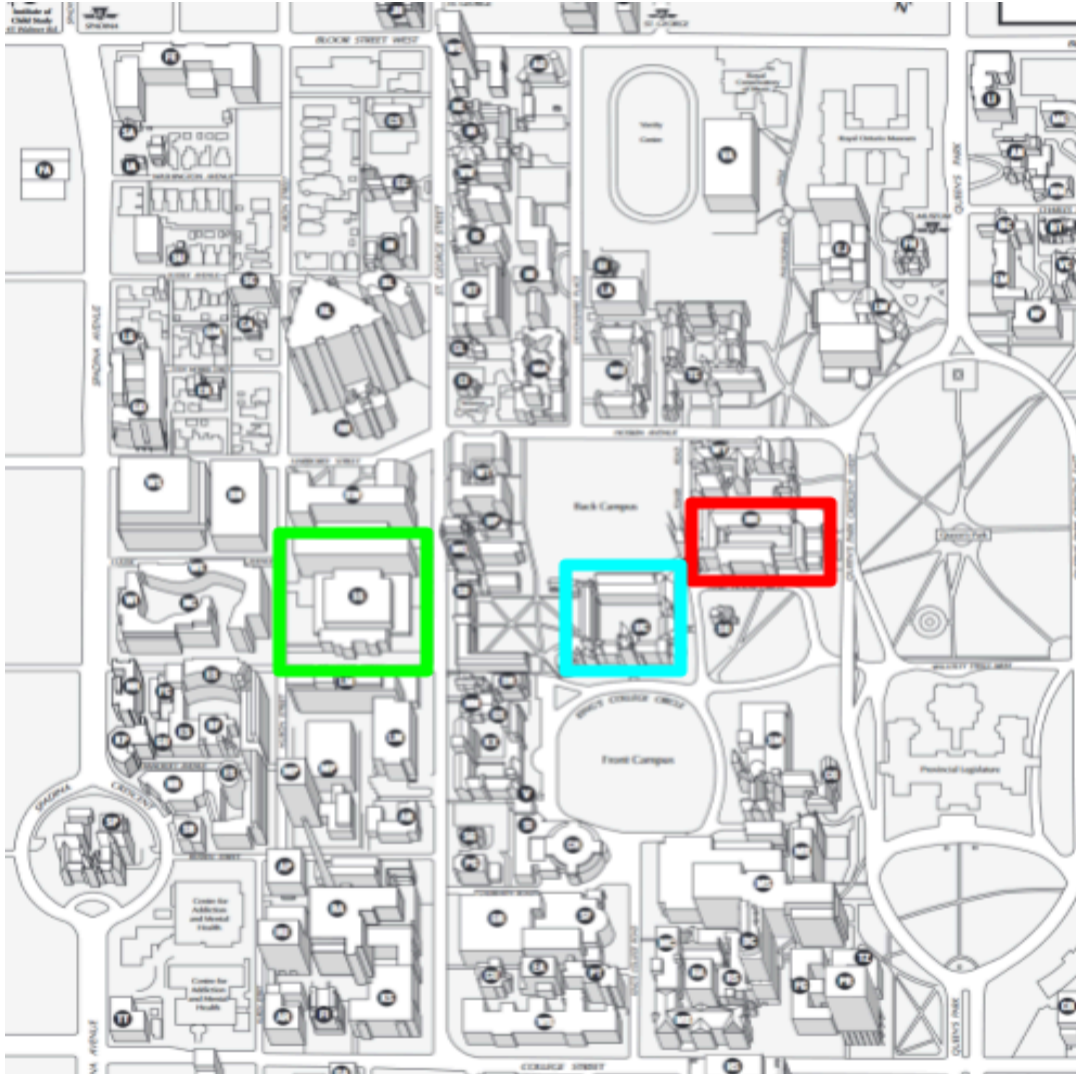
Hart House High Schools 2024 will be taking place in three venues, with the GA (General Assembly) and registration located at Sidney Smith Hall. Once you arrive at Sidney Smith, there will be runners to guide you to the other buildings as needed.

**Sidney Smith Hall (highlighted in green) :** 100 St George St

➤ General Assembly: rooms SS 2117 & SS 2118 (second floor)

**Hart House (highlighted in red):** 7 Hart House Circle

**University College (highlighted in aqua):** 15 King's College Circle



## Media Consent

Please view our full media policy [here](#). Once you have reviewed it, please ensure [you submit your form](#). This is required for all participants. Even if you do not submit a Media Consent Form, you are still bound by the tournament's Media Policy, particularly regarding (but not limited to) acknowledgement, conduct, and responsibilities surrounding unofficial Images and Images containing the likeness of other Participants.

# Tournament Policies

## *Equity Policy and Links*

Hart House High Schools 2025, as administered by the Equity Officers, is committed to providing a tournament which fosters equity, inclusion, and respect. We seek to foster a safe, welcoming environment that allows for the thoughtful exchange of ideas, where all participants are able to feel respected and welcomed. The role of the Equity Team is to facilitate an environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, and vilification by outlining these guidelines and responding to reports of equity violations that may occur throughout the competition.

No participant should be made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or disrespected by another's words or actions. Equity policies such as this exist to clearly articulate what behaviors will not be tolerated, in the hope that this clarity will prevent potential equity violations from arising. Equity offers the opportunity to create an open, educational environment that provides access and accountability through teachable moments. In the event that breaches of equity do occur, the equity team is there as an educational tool and as a complaints resolution mechanism, rather than just for punitive measures. In circumstances involving severe breaches, the Equity Team is the starting point for any further points of contact needed for reconciliation.

[Full Equity Policy](#)

[Equity Report Form](#)

[Scratch Form](#)

[Accessibility & Accommodations Form](#)

## *Electronic Devices and Internet Access*

The use of portable electronics (i.e. phones, tablets, and laptops) for the purposes of digital note taking are **NOT** permitted for debaters at the 2025 Hart House High Schools unless an exception has been explicitly granted for accessibility accommodations. The accommodations process can only be initiated by a request made through the [Accessibility & Accommodations](#)

[Form](#), and the exception is only granted once the Equity Team has reached out to the debater to provide written confirmation of their accommodation.

Debaters are permitted to use a phone solely as a time-keeping device, subject to the codes of conduct regarding technology use as defined below. Utilize your best judgment when choosing to engage with your phone. Note that the policy on digital note taking is a zero tolerance policy and will affect a team's break eligibility if breached. **The use of generative AI systems (ex. ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Copilot, Gemini, etc.) are strictly prohibited.** Participants may be required to show device browser/account history in an investigation by the equity team if there is cause for concern. Please see the full [Full Equity Policy](#) for more details.

### *Junior Status*

Junior designation is assigned to debaters who are either in grades 6-9 **or** for whom this is their first or second debate tournament (in any format) attended.

### *Ironperson*

If a team member is absent, the other team member should ironperson (give both speeches). A team will only remain break eligible if no more than two of the five inrounds (Rounds 1 - 5) are ironpersoned. Ironpersonning in outrounds (Quarterfinals/Junior Semifinals and later) is at the discretion of the OrgComm.

### *Spectators*

Spectators are permitted to watch any debate room, provided consent is obtained from all debaters. To obtain consent, you should approach the judge of the room before the round begins. Spectators must remain silent throughout the debate round, and may not communicate with or provide any assistance to debaters.

We ask that spectators do **not** loiter in, or near the general assembly (GA) to avoid overcrowding, and to allow participants to move in and out.



## *Dress Code*

There is no dress code for debaters or judges—wear what floats your boat. You will see people wearing everything from a t-shirt and hoodie to a full suit jacket with tie. The choice is yours!

## **Tournament Food**

All participants should bring their own reusable water bottles, as bottled water will not be provided. There are water fountains in Sidney Smith Hall.

Snacks will be provided on both Saturday and Sunday. Please note that this is not breakfast—you should eat breakfast before you come to the tournament.

A list of potential stores near Sidney Smith Hall where you could get breakfast before registration:

- McDonalds: 197 Bloor Street West
- Starbucks: 1 Bedford Avenue AND 203 College Street
- Tim Hortons: 246 Bloor Street West
- Second Cup: 179 College Street
- Galleria (Asian food grocer): 351 Bloor Street West

Lunch will be provided on both Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday, we will be serving shawarma wraps, and on Sunday, pizza. We will have alternate food options available for those who indicated dietary restrictions. If you have not done so already, **please fill out the [dietary restrictions form](#)** by Thursday February 13th, 2025.

Please be aware that lunch is provided only for debaters and judges - parents and spectators will be responsible for their own arrangements.

Dinner on both days will not be provided, and debaters are free to go after round 4 on Saturday and awards on Sunday.

If you've made it this far, thank you for reading this guide carefully and in full. When you arrive at the registration desk on Saturday, say the code "Diana loves Pikmin", and you will get some

extra raffle tickets :). We ask that you do not spoil or share this information to preserve the fun and integrity of this little surprise search activity! (It also decreases your chances of winning).

Potential dinner options near Sidney Smith Hall:

Spicy Mafia (Chinese) <a href="#">181 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P7</a>	Dear Saigon (Vietnamese) <a href="#">185 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P7</a>
Burritos & Quesadillas <a href="#">187 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P7</a>	YUBU (Korean) <a href="#">364 Huron St, Toronto, ON M5S 2G4</a>
Myungrang Hotdog (Korean Hotdogs) <a href="#">199 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P9</a>	Subway <a href="#">195 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P9</a>
Smoke's Poutinerie Spadina <a href="#">457 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 2G7</a>	Popeye's <a href="#">267 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1R6</a>
Burger King <a href="#">267 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1R6</a>	Shawarma Max <a href="#">259 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1R5</a>
McDonald's <a href="#">196 Bloor St W, Toronto, ON M5S 1T8</a>	Galleria (Grab and Go) <a href="#">351 Bloor St W, Toronto, ON M5S 1W7</a>
T&T Supermarket (Grab and Go) <a href="#">297 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1S2</a>	Starbucks (Coffee + Snacks) <a href="#">1 Bedford Rd, Toronto, ON M5R 2J7</a> OR <a href="#">205 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P9</a>
Tim Hortons (Coffee + Snacks) <a href="#">246 Bloor St W, Toronto, ON M5S 1V4</a>	Tim Hortons <a href="#">455 Spadina Ave., Toronto, ON M5S 1A1</a>
Chatime (Bubble Tea) <a href="#">199 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P9</a>	Second Cup Café (Coffee + Snacks) <a href="#">179 College St, Toronto, ON M5T 1P7</a>

There are a multitude of additional dining options farther east towards Yonge Street and southwest towards Chinatown.

## Contact Information

Should you require assistance at any point during the tournament, we encourage you to reach out to direct your concerns to the most appropriate source of support:

For tournament-related concerns, please contact either the Tournament Directors or the OrgComm members pertaining to your inquiry. All members of the OrgComm will be wearing clearly identifiable name tags.

For incidents regarding low to moderate security concerns, please contact the Tournament Directors.

**In case of emergency situations, call 911.**

### *Tournament Directors*

Ethan Qiu (he/him)

Discord: ethanqiu

Phone: 613-882-5083

Sophie Zhang (she/they)

Discord: philosoph13s

Phone: 647-762-4108

### *Tabs*

Please fill out the [tab changes form](#)

### *Equity*

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## **Introduction to British Parliamentary Debate**

British Parliamentary debate emphasizes both depth of argumentation and speaking style. The best BP debates are dynamic and engaging, and feature a clash of major principles grounded in, but not dominated by, real-world examples. In the BP style, tournament hosts select a different topic for each round of debate, by convention worded in the form of a parliamentary motion and beginning with "This house would..." (THW) or "This house believes that..." (THBT).

Debaters are told the motion and their positions in the debate fifteen minutes before the start of the round and have that time to prepare. There are two teams of two people each on the proposition (also known as the government) side, and two teams on the opposition side.

A BP debate is divided into two halves: the front half, featuring the 1st (or Opening) Proposition and 1st Opposition teams, and the back half, with the 2nd (or Closing) Proposition and 2nd Opposition teams. The debate alternates between speakers from each side, starting with the Prime Minister from 1st Proposition and ending with the Opposition Whip from 2nd Opposition. Each speaker has five minutes of speaking time, with a fifteen second grace period. Broadly speaking, front half teams lay out the terms of the debate and present the bulk of the arguments, and back half teams deepen the debate with new argumentation and summarize the round.

At the end of a debate, judges rank the teams from 1st to 4th and also assign individual scores to the speakers. To win a BP debate, a team needs to be the most persuasive and relevant in the round, presenting the best argumentation and effectively dealing with the arguments of the opposing side. While teams on the same side of the motion are arguing for the same thing, it is important to note that they are also competing against one another for position, and while they

cannot contradict each other, they must have unique stances and arguments in the round, and they should not prepare together or share any information.

## *Speakers and Roles*

The following section outlines what speakers in every position are generally expected to do. Except where explicitly stated, these expectations are not hard and fast rules, merely useful guidelines based on what tends to make for good debates. Judges should look at the whole context of a round and remember that there's no automatic win or loss.

### **Front Half Speaking Positions**

#### 1. Prime Minister

As the first speaker in the round, the Prime Minister has the opportunity to shape the form of the debate to come and has the responsibility to set up a debate that is clear and fair. The PM must do two things: introduce the “model” for the debate and give most of the arguments for 1st Proposition. What is a model? It's helpful to think of a model as answering basic questions about the round: who, what, where, when, and how? (The why is the rest of the debate). Models make the debate more specific and are essential for a clear and good round. For a motion like "THW allow assisted suicide," the model should specify where the debate is taking place (Canada? The U.S.? All Western liberal democracies?) and what the system for assisted suicide will be like. Without a model, debates end up being confusing and tend to get bogged down in questions that can no longer be answered after 1st Proposition has given up the opportunity to answer them.

Sometimes there are potential problems in the case that can make it unwinnable, so you should deal with those in the model too. In the assisted suicide example, you can't win the case if doctors can simply kill patients at will--thus, the model must include a way of ensuring that patients are the ones in charge of the decision. The model can't be "tight," however, meaning that it must allow room for opposition arguments, and it should be within the spirit of the motion and should not seek to avoid major parts of the debate. The purpose of a model is to make for a better debate, not to trick the opposition.

Some resolutions will answer some of the questions normally addressed by a model. Others will not require much of a model (“This house believes that vegetarianism is the only moral choice”). Use your judgment, but always make sure the debate is clear.

After briefly presenting the model, you should present and explain (on average) two to three arguments for the case. In coming up with arguments, make sure you understand the goals of the case you're presenting. Think about who the case affects and what the major principles involved are, then develop those into arguments that deal with the most important issues. Examples are useful, but they're not arguments in and of themselves, just supporting material. It's also important to link your argument back to the case—that is, to explain why the argument proves the case you're presenting. When choosing the arguments you will present, go for quality over quantity: a couple strong arguments that discuss the big issues are always better than a heap of small, tangential arguments.

## 2. The Leader of the Opposition

The role of the LO is to introduce the Opposition's case by laying out the “stance” the team will take, presenting a couple of arguments for the Opposition, and refuting the arguments made by the PM. It is not enough, as Opposition, to simply be against Proposition--you also have to stand for something in the round. Oftentimes, Opposition teams are in favor of the status quo, but they can stand for something else as well, as long as it's within the spirit of your side of the motion.

Debates are better when there's a clear division between the principles that each side supports, and you'll get more mileage out of having a more distinct, but harder to defend stance than out of one that's principally the same and differs only on a minor point: better to say that assisted suicide is never okay than to say that it's okay in a more limited set of circumstances than those that proposition allows. Just don't go so far that your position ends up being indefensible. Outline your stance at the beginning of your speech so it's clear what your team is defending. Also, if the Prime Minister's model is unfair or overly vague, mention that very briefly at the start as well.

Just like the PM, the LO must give two to three substantive arguments for their case. You also have to refute the arguments given by the PM, meaning you must attempt to defeat the other side's arguments. Refutation is as important to winning a round as constructive argumentation

is—debate is about knocking down the other side's arguments in addition to making your own. There are many ways to refute, including dealing with any untrue assertions or misleading examples, pointing out when logical connections are missing in an argument or when the argument fails to prove the case, explaining the problems with the other side's plan or its goals, and so on. When listening to an opponent's speech, write down what they say and note any problems that you have with it, and use that in your rebuttal.

### 3. The Deputy Prime Minister

As the Deputy Prime Minister, you should clarify any issues with the model that the Opposition might have brought up. You may, but aren't obligated to, bring in a new argument for your side. As this is the first and last chance for your team to respond to the Opposition, refutation is crucial in this speech, and you should deal effectively with all the substantive arguments given by the LO.

You also have to defend your partner's arguments from the criticisms made by the LO by explaining why the arguments still stand, which is known as reconstruction. It is your job to add any new analysis needed to rebuild the PM's arguments: for example, explaining an argument in a different way, talking about problems with the refutation, providing any missing logical links in an argument, adding new examples, etc.

Finally, the DPM often provides a short summary of what has happened in the round, with an emphasis on how your team comes out ahead.

### 4. The Deputy Leader of the Opposition

The DLO does much of the same things that the DPM does. You can bring in a new argument for your side, but the bulk of your constructive arguments should have come out in the LO. As in the DPM speech, it's also necessary to refute the other side's arguments, especially the new ones or those that might have been missed, and the ones that are still standing strong in the round. You must work to rebuild the arguments made by your partner so that they carry into the next half of the debate, and again, you can summarize the front half of the round.

## **Back Half Speaking Positions**

### 5. Member of Government

The Member of Government should present an extension, which is some sort of material new to the round, and refute arguments made by the DLO. Similar to the first speeches from the front half teams, the aim of the extension speech is to stake out a relevant, compelling and distinct position in the debate. This will sometimes be challenging since the team “up the table” from you (ie. 1st Proposition if you are 2nd Proposition) has every opportunity to present an overwhelming amount of material– “burning the turf” – leaving you with little to work with. The key to a good extension is adapting your prepared material to the context of the round, jettisoning points that are no longer appropriate and generating new ones if necessary.

An extension can take a number of forms. The most straightforward is a new argument that has yet to be discussed in the round. Be careful, however, to avoid trivial or tangential points that add little substantive matter to your side. Your argument should matter in the context of the round. Another type of extension focuses on a case study and involves an in-depth analysis of a particular example and its application to the round. An extension can also be built on an argument already presented in the round. This is a difficult task, since you must clearly delineate your material from the front half. Rather than simply restating your arguments, you should add depth to an area that has not been sufficiently explored. In general, debaters should make every effort to “flag” their new material.

While extension speeches must clearly add new material to the debate, they can do so through refutation. An extension speech can have a relatively short new argument, but substantive refutation that has yet to be heard to points brought up by the opposing side. In evaluating the new material that back half teams bring to the round, refutation often plays an important role. As the Member of Government, you have to spend time refuting the second speaker on 1st Opposition and any arguments from the first speaker that are still standing.

## 6. Member of Opposition

The MO speech is very similar to the MG speech. You must present an extension that includes material new to the round, and you must refute the extension given by the MG. If you have difficulty coming up with an extension as the MO, one possible strategy is making the extension the direct opposite of the previous speaker's extension, which ensures that there is a great deal of clash between your sides. However, you can't necessarily rely on the other side to



come up with an extension that yields well to that tactic. Either way, it is essential to clearly address and counter the extension presented by 2nd Proposition.

## 7. Government Whip

The whip speaker's primary responsibility is to summarize why your team has won the round by analyzing the major issues and principles that have been brought up. While this speech is often described as a “summary” speech, you should not just passively summarize what's happened in the round. Rather, you want to actively add new analysis on what you decide are the most important issues in the debate, explain why your partner's extension gave the best arguments in the round, and refute opposition's arguments (or explain why they've already been dealt with). A good whip speaker understands what it takes to win the round, and emphasizes where you're already winning, while making up lost ground on the issues you're losing.

There are a number of ways this speech can be organized. The most common approach is to look at the round through the lens of two or three major themes or questions. Alternatively, the whip speaker may summarize the round on a team-by-team or front half/back half basis. Regardless of which method you choose, the speech should touch upon the most important arguments in the round, attack what the other side had to say, and rebuild your partner's extension. Involving the extension in your whip speech is very important--if you spend your entire speech discussing 1st Proposition's arguments, for instance, you give the judges the impression that their arguments were the most important ones in the round, rather than yours. Remember that you are competing against them, and you want the judges to consider your arguments the best ones. Although it is generally not advisable, and not common practice, the government whip speaker may also introduce new constructive material.

The government whip has the burden of being the only government speaker with a chance to refute the opposition extension. This may be done explicitly at the start of the speech, or incorporated into the themes/questions. Either way, try to be clear what material from the other side you are addressing so that your judges give you full credit.

## 8. Opposition Whip

As the Opposition Whip, you present your own version of the round. While analysis and refutation are a part of any good whip speech, and some of that will touch on what the

Government Whip said, you shouldn't try to rebut the previous speaker's themes. Rather, refutation and reconstruction should be built into whatever structure you choose for the speech. Again, don't forget the importance of your partner's extension. Finally, as there is no chance for other teams to respond, the Opposition Whip cannot add any new arguments to the debate—you should be presenting more analysis, but you can't pull out a new argument that doesn't relate to what's already been talked about. The whip speech should always feel like it's a part of the debate that's been happening, and the extension and whip speakers should act like a coherent team.

### *Points of Information and Points of Clarification*

Points of information (POIs) are an opportunity for people on the opposing side of a debate to challenge a debater to deal with a particular issue or question during the middle four minutes of his or her speech, i.e. not during the first or last 30 seconds (protected time). POIs do not have to take the form of a question and they should last no more than ten seconds in duration. POIs are required at this tournament, and debaters should try to offer them throughout the debate. Speakers can decline POIs; however, all speakers are expected to take a minimum of one POI during their speech and should be penalized for failing to do so.

Points of clarification (POCs) may be offered during the Prime Minister's speech, in order to clarify any questions opposition teams might have about the model. Points of clarification should be announced as such by the person giving them, and it is considered bad form for the PM not to accept them. Neither POIs nor POCs can be offered by teams on the same side of a debate (i.e., 2nd proposition cannot offer them to 1st proposition, or vice versa).

### *Structure and Style*

It's important that all debaters, regardless of their position, strive to make the structure of their speeches clear and straightforward. There's no “right” way to structure a speech so long as the structure makes sense and is easy to follow— putting the model last in a PM speech isn't bad because you need a particular structure, but rather, because it means it's not clear what you're debating about until the end of your speech. In general, it's best to explain each of your arguments separately and make sure the transitions between your arguments are clear, because otherwise it's hard to follow the logic of each argument. Similarly, it's a good idea to separate

your constructive argumentation from your refutation, or to point out very clearly where you're mixing and matching.

Speaking style, like structure, is a way to present your arguments more effectively. Style includes a lot of things: how you use body language and hand gestures, where you choose to alternate the pitch, rhythm, volume, or speed of your voice, whether you use casual or formal language, or humor, and more—this is nowhere near an exhaustive list. Style is a means by which debaters try to emphasize the important parts of their speeches and convey their arguments in the most persuasive and engaging way possible. If your argument is logical and coherent, but you sound like you don't believe it, you're not likely to win over your judges, so pay attention to your presentation.