

Glossary to Unlearn

The following glossary is not intended to define these terms in a stagnant way or to presume that words have fixed meanings. These entries are merely starting points or entrances into the vocabulary and language of debate, not cards to be read directly in rounds. All of these phrases can be used, manipulated, constituted, and deployed in different ways, even in ways that contradict the following entries. Moreover, we would like to add any other disclaimers that are not implied by the above disclaimer.

100% topical: The entire plan presented by the affirmative is within the resolution.

1ac (order): The 1ac begins the debate....

1ac---	8 to 10 min.
CX of 1ac---	3 min.
1nc---	8 to 10
CX of 1nc---	3 min.
2ac---	8 to 10 min.
CX of 2ac---	3 min.
2nc---	8 to 10 min.
CX of 2nc---	3 min.
1nr---	4 to 6 min.
1ar---	4 to 6 min.
2nr---	4 to 6 min.
2ar---	4 to 6 min.

{Preparation Time to be distributed in-between the speaking events: 3 to 10 min.}

These numbers represent rough guidelines, although they often appear as “rules” in various instances.

- a = affirmative
- n = negative
- c = constructive
- r = rebuttal
- CX = cross examination

1ac (speaker): The person who delivers the first affirmative and gives the 1ar.

1ac (text): the hard copy (written version) of the speech delivered by the first affirmative. Also known as the case and plan.

1nc: As a speaker or as a speech (“You’re the 1nc,” or “Give the 1nc.”), this refers to the negative’s first constructive.

1nr: As a speech, this is the first negative rebuttal and the second portion of the negative block. The 1nr is the only speech in which the same team speaks twice in a row.

1ar: The first affirmative rebuttal is the affirmative’s attempt to respond to the negative block, making this speech an exercise in consolidation and word economy.

2ac: As a speaker or as a speech, the 2nd affirmative constructive defends the 1ac by responding to the arguments presented in the 1nc.

2nc: The 2nd negative constructive typically extends a portion of the arguments presented in the 1nc in addition to making any new arguments that did not fit into the 1nc. This is the bulk and first portion of the negative block.

2nr: The last negative speech in the debate, this oration attempts to summarize the negative’s position by responding to the 1ar and pre-empting possible arguments that the 2ar could make. The 2nr usually revolves around the selection of issues and the presentation of a holistic view of the debate.

2ar: The last speech in the debate, this defense of the affirmative responds to the arguments presented in the 2nr and emphasizes recapitulation and condensation.

3nr: A mythic speech that the negative tries to claim when the 2AR makes new arguments.

abuse: A claim made against the practices of the other team. Usually, abuse refers to a theoretical or technical act of “unfairness” that should be disallowed because of its potential to damage “debate.”

advantage: a benefit to passing the plan. A foreign aid case, for example, might claim to decrease starvation as an advantage.

advocacy: the adamant defense of a particular position. Often, advocacy is contrasted with inconsistency (which makes advocacy weaker because of insincerity), but advocating an argument does not necessarily preclude using the argument as a “test” or pursuing inconsistent positions.

affirmative: the side defending the resolution, a plan, both, or the plan as an example of the resolution. The team that does the first and last speech.

agent: This is short for the “agent of action”, or the entity that adopts the affirmative. Usually, the agent is the federal government. The affirmative plan is hypothetically implemented (passed into existence) by the agent (the Congress, the Supreme Court, the President, etc.). The debaters are also agents of action, particularly through the process of the debate.

agent counterplan: This negative strategy passes the affirmative plan through an agent other than the one in the resolution or the one specified by the affirmative plan. Agent counterplans include external agents (international actors), internal agents (the states, bioregions), and plan specific agents (the executive vs. the legislative, or the FDA vs. the EPA).

alternate causality: the argument that other issues will cause a given event, proving that A does not conclusively cause B because C, D, and E also cause B.

alternate justification: a debate theory that contends that an argument can be defended with multiple propositions, only one of which needs to be defended in the last instance. The affirmative can run an “alternate justification” case by reading multiple plans in the hope that one of the plans will prove that the resolution is a good idea. The negative can use this theory by providing multiple alternatives to a given part of the resolution (a series of agents that are better than the resolitional agent) and using any one of those alternatives to “dejustify” the resolution.

alternative: an option that the negative defends in opposition to the affirmative plan. Often, the negative defends the status quo, a counterplan, or a competing perspective. Negating the plan may not require an alternative or negation may be an alternative in and of itself.

analysis: reasoning that expands or explains on a given argument. Analysis is often contrasted with “evidence”, or quotations from published sources. On the other hand, analysis is also a prerequisite to meaningful evidence.

analytics: a series of arguments that are not supported by “qualified” evidence.

anarchy: an argument that the government (or state) is not the best way to organize human beings in a social formation.

answer: a response to an argument.

anti-topicality: The affirmative defends the opposite of the resolution, usually determined by the verb in the resolution.

argument: a claim, supported by a warrant, advanced to support a course of action or way of thinking.

attitudinal inherency: the affirmative obligation to demonstrate that the preferences (attitudes) or a particular group or institution are against the adoption of the plan. A link to negative arguments built into many 1acs.

back-up blocks: briefs or pages that are prepared with arguments to defend a particular position.

ballot: the paper on which the judge votes.

best definition: in topicality debates, the source that interprets a given word in a superior way is the “best definition.”

break: to clear at a tournament by advancing past the preelimination rounds into the elimination debates. “We broke to octas.”

break brackets: changing an elimination round bracket so two teams from the same school do not have to debate one another.

briefs: blocks assembled to use in a debate round. Briefs typically contain evidence, analysis, and tags (outline statements).

bright line: a clear distinction between two categories. Often used as a topicality standard to defend an “inside” and an “outside” of the topic.

brink: the impact of the disadvantage is about to occur and the affirmative will push us over the edge.

burden of proof: the contention that a given team must prove an argument to win.

case turns: negative arguments that defeat the affirmative case by proving that a particular aff. claim actually goes in the other direction. If the affirmative case claims to stop conflict and the negative proves that the case actually increases conflict, the negative has “turned” the case. Impact turns and solvency turns are both case turns, but when they are run together (argued simultaneously), they may act as a double-turn (the affirmative stops something bad) and allow the aff. to win the round.

causal link: the argument that two things or events are connected. A results in B establishes a causal relationship between A and B.

citation: the source of a piece of evidence. A citation includes at least the author, the author’s qualifications, the book or journal or newspaper, the date of publication, and the page number of the evidence.

cite sheet: A list of citations pertaining to a specific argument, often associated with a “cite code.”

claim: an argument or answer.

common person: The average, typical, or “lay” individual, as opposed to an “expert.”

common person definition: If not Webster’s, this is the average or everyday interpretation of a word.

comparative advantage: Even if the affirmative plan does not achieve their entire advantage, they are said to have a comparative advantage over the status quo if they prove that the affirmative change is a good idea in any way.

competitiveness: A counterplan is competitive if it is superior to any combination of the plan and the counterplan. A narrow conception of competitiveness contends that the counterplan is competitive if it is superior to any combination of the entire plan and any or all of (but not more than) the counterplan. The net benefits standard argues that the overall value of the counterplan must be larger than the value of doing the plan with the counterplan. Mutual exclusivity, a subset of net benefits, posits that the counterplan is competitive if it cannot be passed simultaneously with the plan--the two proposals are "mutually exclusive" of one another.

concede: to grant the opposition's argument (in order to win a more important argument). Or, the unfortunate result of dropping an argument advanced by the opposition: a conceded argument is absolutely valid.

conclusionary: to make a statement without support.

conditionality: an "if, then" relationship. Two positions that may not coexist with one another may be run by the negative, on the grounds that each position rejects the affirmative proposal. Also, a system of dependence (A is conditional on B) meaning that if B is disproven, A is also disproven. The negative might argue that the case arguments are conditional on the affirmative solvency. If the plan does not solve, then the debate about the impact of the case goes away. Contradictory arguments are often justified through conditionality, but all conditional arguments are not contradictory. In a compelling sense, all arguments are conditional: every "test" is advocating something and every instance of advocacy is also a test of whether a certain change is a wise course.

consistency: all of the positions advanced by a given team are mutually reinforcing of each other.

consultation counterplan: a negative strategy that makes the passage of the plan contingent on consultation and acceptance by another authority. The trick to the counterplan: if Z (the entity being consulted) wants the plan, it will get passed through the process of consultation; if Z doesn't want the plan, the plan will not be done by the counterplan, but the negative will have a strong link to a "Z Backlash" disad.

contention: an observation made by a given team, usually consisting of multiple arguments that form a position.

context: the larger fabric that has been shortened to produce a piece of evidence. The context of a piece of evidence could involve anything from the rest of the paragraph, the conclusion of the article, other works written by the author, the historical and cultural milieu of the time when the evidence was written, or the situation (context) of the debate itself. A very loose term that attempts to equate a given quotation to a larger plane of consistency.

context challenge: an incredibly serious claim that the opposition has misrepresented a piece of evidence in such a way that it is "out of context." A context challenge often implicates the ethical status of the team being accused, and usually the debate is terminated at the time of the challenge to determine if a "context violation" has been made. A context violation often results in a loss, just as an unsubstantiated challenge results in a loss for the challengers.

contextuality: the claim on topicality that the superior interpretation is one that defines the words in their (grammatical or field) context. Contextual interpretations from "the literature" that discuss multiple words in the topic are better than interpretations that take each word out of context and define them in isolation.

contradiction: Absent the notions of paradox or irony, two arguments advanced by the same team that defeat each other are in contradiction. Arguably, the world government counterplan and the anarchy counterplan contradict.

counter kritik: the affirmative often responds to kritiking positions by defending a "counter kritik." Although a weak argument in most instances, counter critiquing is an attempt to defend an affirmative assumption absent the rest of the affirmative against the assumptions upheld in the negative kritik. If the negative is kritiking the affirmative's use of the state (statism), the affirmative may kritik the negative for assuming autonomous subjectivity. as in this example, however, most of these positions answer the affirmative at the same time that they counter kritik.

counterpermutation: the ability of the negative to respond to a permutation by adding something to the counterplan that makes the permutation less than beneficial. Counterpermutations work well against permutations that include something outside of both the plan and the counterplan (an intrinsicness permutation). If the counterplan is "have the 50 states do the plan," and the permutation is to have the federal government do the plan at the same time as the states, a counterperm might ban the federal government and have the 50 states do the plan.

counterplan: a proposal presented by the negative that is beyond the status quo and in opposition to (competitive with) the affirmative plan.

counterplan in the link: a proposal that forces the affirmative to link to a disadvantage that they may not link to in the world of the status quo.

countervision: a blurring of thought and action that provides an alternative perspective to the one advocated by the affirmative.

counterwarrants: the theory stemming from the idea that the affirmative must defend the entire resolution and the resolution can be defeated by a single example. This theory is usually deployed when the negative reads positions that link to parts of the resolution that are not defended by the affirmative. The negative might run a spending DA and claim that it links to a specific topical plan even if that plan is not the one presented by the affirmative.

critic of argument: the judge

cross examination: the three minute period after each constructive speech when the team that has just spoken is questioned by the opposition.

decision rule: an argument that determines that outcome of the round. A monumental, weighty, and all-important position. Arguably if something "outweighs all" it is a decision rule or voting issue.

delay counterplan: a negative proposal to pass the plan in the future (rather than now) in order to avoid a short-term disadvantage. Also known as a timeframe counterplan or an extreme version of incrementalism.

disadvantage: a negative position against the affirmative plan (although the affirmative can also present disadvantages against a negative counterplan). A typical DA has uniqueness, a link, and an impact. Brinks, thresholds, internal links, and link magnifiers are also common arguments that help to strengthen a disadvantage. Uniqueness proves that the impact has not yet happened--the consequences may be likely, but they are not part of the status quo. The link, then, establishes a connection between the plan and the impact. Finally, the impact contends that the detrimental effects of the plan outweigh the advantages. If the spending DA is the example, the uniqueness is that federal spending is under control now, the link is that the plan costs enough money to shock the economy and cause investor-flight, and the impact is that additional spending by the federal government would cause a world-ending depression as foreign investors pull-out of the US economy.

disclosure: the revealing of arguments that will be presented in a debate prior to the beginning of the debate.

dispositionality: arguably the same as conditionality, this theory holds that a given position is contingent on its success. This is another phrase demonstrating the axiom that all arguments are conditional.

division of duties: allocating responsibilities in a debate round to maximize the effectiveness of the team as a whole.

double turn: making two arguments that turn each other and serve to help the opposition.

drop: not answering an argument.

each word must have meaning: Even though the resolution has a “context” and a general list of “topical” cases, each term in the resolution must be given strict scrutiny in order to preserve the topic. A standard in topicality debates the operates alongside issues such as grammar, precision, and the specificity of a violation.

effects topicality: the negative argument that the affirmative is not directly topical; rather, the plan is a series of steps that only meet the resolution eventually and indirectly. Similar to “probabilistic topicality” when the affirmative may or may not result in topical action.

emory switch: a negative strategy where the 2nc spends the speech attacking the case while the 1nr extends disadvantages (plan side).

empirical evidence: evidence based on past experiences, such that the claim relies on verifiable data as opposed to future conjecture.

empirical solvency: if the plan was implemented in the past and succeeded, the affirmative will often read solvency evidence from the previous example of plan, claiming that “X empirically proves the solvency.”

empirically denied: the opposite of empirical solvency, if the plan was tried in the past and it failed, the solvency of the plan is “empirically denied.”

exclusionary counterplan: a counterplan that does most of the affirmative plan, but excludes a portion of the plan. If a plan sends apples and oranges to Russia, an exclusionary counterplan would send apples, exclude oranges, and claim that oranges cause disease. Reasons to defend exclusionary counterplans: 1. The aff. has gotta defend all of the plan--exclusionary counterplans are the only way to scrutinize every aspect of the plan. If the advantages can be obtained and some negative consequence avoided by doing part of the plan, the affirmative should lose. 2. Infinite prep time--the affirmative can prepare the IAC for weeks, even months. We have limited prior notice and some prep time. The essential equalizer is the exclusionary counterplan. 3. The wording of the plan is the crucial affirmative assertion of themselves. After reading countless sources, the plan represents the aff’s best idea on how to solve. For that reason, all of the ideas should be defended--the alternative is viewing the aff. as an amalgamation of their solvency authors, making debate an absurd activity that could be performed by computers. 4. Any permutation is a severance permutation--they would have to jettison part of the plan to permute the counterplan--a theoretical action that should be rejected because it renders every counterplan non-competitive. 5. Competition checks abuse--abusive exclusionary counterplan will lose on competition because the aff. will be able to defend the plan. As long as we win a net benefit, we’re answering all of their “abuse” arguments.

The answers to exclusionary counterplans are numerous. Among the affirmative tactics, the full plan can be defended, and the theoretical privilege to counterplan with part of the plan may make it easier to devise an effective permutation.

extend: to refer to an argument made previously in the debate, and “pull it across” into the present speech. “Extend the 1ac solvency evidence,” would be an argument made in the 2ac or 1ar.

extensions: the process of extending multiple arguments. Also a reference to second line blocks or back-up briefs.

extra competition: if a counterplan achieves it’s competition through a plank that “bans the affirmative,” the counterplan is extra, or artificially competitive.

extra topicality: if the plan does “more” than the topic requires, it is “overtopical.”

fairness: a question concerning whether a certain practice (conditionality, for instance) is equitable to both teams.

fiat: literally means an “act of God.” The power of fiat allows a team to hypothetically adopt or pass a given policy. Fiat can also be mapped as a “motion of advocacy” where a certain proposal is assumed to exist for the purpose of assessing its merits. Many theories attribute the power of fiat to the word “should” in the resolution. This is because an imaginary change from the status quo (fiat) permits a discussion of “should X occur” as opposed to “would X occur” or “could X occur.”

fiat is utopian: an argument advanced to prove that fiat is illusory and the plan will never be adopted in the same way that the affirmative has presented it. The affirmative is only pretending to “be” the federal government, and we should not forget that. On the other hand, fiat is utopian! may also be an argument for the affirmative in the sense that we need utopian thinking. If fiat really is utopian, we should embrace it as a necessary alternative to the realism of the status quo and the negative.

field context: the experts in the field (scientists, lawyers, policy-makers, etc.) determine the filed context, or the “term of art” in the literature.

flowing: writing down abbreviations for all of the arguments in a debate. The arguments are “flowed” in vertical columns for each speech such that a single argument can be traced horizontally across the flow from its initial presentation to its conclusion. A typical flow has a plan side (with 7 columns: 1ac/1nc/2ac/2nc/1nr/1ar/2nr/2ar) and a case side (with 6 columns: 1nc/2ac/2nc/1nr/1ar/2nr/2ar).

front line: a brief or block with the best arguments consolidated in an efficient way. These are often blocks that are read in the 2ac or 2nc against arguments that the opposition frequently makes. You would read a Clinton Good Answers front line in the 2ac against a Clinton Good DA.

full source cite: a complete citation for the evidence presented (see citation).

games theory: a paradigm governing the way a round is judged that views the round as a game--the object is to provide fair rules so that the contest can be competitive and enjoyable.

grant: to concede an argument in order to use that argument to defeat the opposition somewhere else in the debate. We’ll grant your argument that we link to the disadvantage in order to win our impact turns.

ground: the parameters of the resolution or a particular debate theory. Ground applies to an amorphous assessment of what the affirmative can advocate and how the negative can challenge that advocacy. Ground is also connected to “fair ground.”

harms: the impacts, or advantages of the affirmative case. The harms are the adverse consequences of status quo inaction.

hidden disads: arguments read on the case by the negative that are actually complete disadvantages.

hypotesting: a debate paradigm that corresponds to a scientific experiment where the resolution is the hypothesis. The affirmative is to defend that resolution by proving it true in every instance. The resolution, or hypothesis, can be disproven by a single example (like testing gravity).

impact: the consequence, or end result, of a specific trend or action. Impacts usually imply their own framework for evaluation: an impact of starvation values human life, an impact of deforestation values environmental sustainability; an impact of torture values human rights and freedom, etc.

impact turn: taking an impact and proving that it is good and its opposite is bad. An impact turn to nuclear proliferation would argue that the acquisition of nuclear weapons promotes stability and world peace.

implications: the way an argument effects the overall round.

inclusionary counterplan: a counterplan that includes the affirmative but goes further in its implementation. A counterplan that acted through the United Nations would arguably be inclusionary because the plan in its entirety would be passed by the US through the UN.

infinitely regressive: the contention that a given argument is invalid because it involves a never-ending chain of associations. The claim that the plan is a “means” not an “end” might be infinitely regressive in the sense that every “end” can be redefined as the means to a larger “end.” On

the other hand, infinite regression may be necessary to the critical process because it draws out the extremes of a position and shakes up traditional and rational logic.

inherency: the affirmative burden to prove why the harms of the case will persist absent the plan. Inherency refers to the attitudes, institutions, constraints, and other obstacles in the status quo that prevent the plan from being adopted. For some, the absence of inherency means that the status quo is as good as the plan and the negative has disproven the need for the resolution. For others, inherency is self-evident in the existence of a harm and the “proof” of inherency is merely a link to a backlash or circumvention argument. Often, negative inherency arguments will contradict negative DAs because the DA argues that “policy X” will cause a terrible impact and the inherency argument contends that the status quo has already passed “policy X.”

ins and outs: when a speaker does the 2nd constructive and the first rebuttal, she is doing the “ins.” When a speaker does the 1st constructive and the 1st rebuttal, she is doing the “outs.”

internal link: the connection between two links.

interpretation: a view or perspective that considers the whole resolution contextually to develop a series of cases that would be topical and a series of cases that would be excluded.

intrinsicness: the question of whether an argument is inextricable, implied, or germane to the resolution. It’s literal meaning, however, is twisted into at least two contexts. In a counterplan debate, intrinsicness permutations refer to permutations that include something outside of both the plan and the counterplan. The permutation is not “intrinsic” to the plan vs. the counterplan. On disadvantages, the affirmative will make non-intrinsic” answers to show that the disadvantage is not “exclusively” linked to the plan or the resolution. Other, non-related changes can be made to avoid the disadvantage. If the disadvantage argues that Japan will get upset if the US normalizes relations with Russia, the impact of Japanese nationalism is “non-intrinsic” because the US could appease Japan by removing troops from Okinawa or the US could consult with Japan before the passage of the plan. The questions remain: Does an intrinsicness answer respond to the original link? Should the intrinsicness answer become part of the plan? Should intrinsicness stem from the topic or from outside the topic? What solvency burdens apply? What fiat legitimizes the intrinsicness answer?

intrinsicness permutations: a permutation that includes action outside of the plan, the counterplan, or any combination of the two.

“it’s just a non-unique DA”: the claim that a critical or philosophical position is invalid because it is a disadvantage without a unique link. The problem with this response, among others, is that it presupposes that flawed logic occurs in the status quo or in the plan, but not in both. In other words, militarism may be “non-unique,” but that does not mean we shouldn’t consider rejecting each instance of militarism.

judge: the adjudicator who participates in the round by watching, listening, flowing, and then voting.

jurisdiction: similar to a court setting, this theory contends that the judge can only vote affirmative within the jurisdiction of the resolution.

justification: the resolution-centered theory based on the affirmative’s burden to defend each portion of the topic against any potential alternatives.

kritiking: deserving more than a simple glossary entry, this style of debating applies a critical perspective to the assumptions held by the affirmative (or held by the resolution, the activity of debate, or the negative). Often, the negative kritiks the affirmative by showing how a particular foundation (subjectivity, for example) of the case is unreliable and intellectually bankrupt. Because of the flawed assumption, the affirmative will not solve the problem—their type of policy is complicit with other actions that have backfired. Very diverse arguments can be kritiked, including the mindset (thought process) of the affirmative’s authors, the cultural biases of the opposition, the consequences of specific language (rhetoric) used in the round, or the way the debate itself takes place. Sometimes debaters will specify that they are kritiking on a “local level”, meaning that their criticisms apply to the “pre-fiat” and immediate world of the round. In general, this way of debating does not require the use of “critical theory,” but many of these positions rely on authors who are critical of the Western project of enlightenment, democracy, and free market expansion. As examples, Marx kritiks capitalism, Foucault kritiks traditional notions of power, Heidegger kritiks humanism, Haraway kritiks the patriarchal nature of society, Said kritiks cultural imperialism, Baudrillard kritiks the dichotomy between subject and object, Deleuze kritiks State control of the military machine, etc.

legal definitions: interpretations of words that come from legal sources such as *Corpus Juris Secundum*, *Words & Phrases*, or a specific court case.

limits: the parameters of the topic, or the results of a given interpretation of the topic. Overlimiting means an interpretation is too restrictive and narrow—only a few affirmative cases would be topical, if any. Contrary to popular usage, to delimit is “to fix the limits of the topic,” while to unlimit is “to make the topic so broad” that the number of cases literally explodes negative ground.

linearity: a form of uniqueness or a type of threshold. Linearity holds that as the link increases in likelihood, the risk of the impact increases proportionately. A non-linear position would argue that the threshold is absolute—being removed from the threshold by a large distance is not noticeably better than being near the threshold but not over it. A linear position, on the other hand, argues that each increment of the link is relevant because it corresponds to an increment of impact: every dollar spent on the military is a dollar that gets taken away from welfare.

link: the connection, articulation, relationship, or association between two events or trends. The “link” between proliferation and nuclear war might contend that the acquisition of nuclear weapons causes accidents and escalation will result.

link expander: a means of helping to explain the link. A link expander (or magnifier) could be anything from an empirical example of the link to another reason why A will result in B.

malthus: a negative position that questions the benefit to “saving lives” in the short-term, because saving lives now will result in more deaths later when the carrying capacity collapses from overpopulation.

minor repair: either adding a small provision or alteration to the status quo (a negative mini-counterplan) or adding a provision to the plan/resolution to avoid a potential disadvantage (an affirmative answer to disadvantages that tries to prove the “non-germaneness” of the negative’s position). A number of questions surround minor repairs such as: are they plan amendments? do they have to be topical or non-topical? what solvency burdens apply to minor repairs?

mixing burdens: confusing one issue for another. On topicality, for example, the negative team would be mixing burdens if they required the plan to solve in order to be topical. Such a violation would confuse solvency for topicality.

mutually exclusive: a standard of competition for counterplans that positions that counterplan as an option that can not coexist with (be done at the same time as) the plan. Many theorists reject mutual exclusivity in favor of net benefits analysis (is the counterplan more beneficial than a combination of the plan and the counterplan?).

new: the objection to an argument based on the fact that it has been presented too late in the round. A new argument, particularly in the last rebuttals, should not be considered because it has not evolved throughout the round.

no negative fiat: because fiat stems from the word “should” in the topic and because no implied “should not” exists, the negative does not have the ability to fiat a policy. Moreover, the fact that the aff. speaks first and last in the round means that the negative can not “advocate an imaginary plan,” but must try to refute the plan presented in the 1ac.

no-flow: a judge that listens to the round without writing down the details on a flow, is an “observer judge” or a “lay judge.”

non-intrinsic: the claim that a given position (usually a disadvantage or a permutation) is less than relevant (non-germane) to the issue at hand. The existence of an “exterior” world precludes the consideration of a non-intrinsic argument.

non-unique: if the disadvantage will occur in the status quo, it is non-unique. The link can be non-unique (if a policy that links has been recently approved) or the impact can be non-unique (if conflict, oppression, warfare, etc. exists in the status quo). A non-unique disad does not link to the plan, and it may make the affirmative’s link turns more believable because some type of change is necessary to avoid the impact.

normal means: the standard way of passage, adoption, or implementation. Typically, normal means appears in the plan as an abbreviation for status quo enforcement mechanisms, the usual legislative process, and funding out of General Federal Revenues.

observation: a contention in the affirmative case or an off-case position presented by the negative (usually at the top of the 1nc).

offset counterplans: an offset counterplan does the affirmative at the same time that it overcompensates for the affirmative such that the counterplan as a whole is anti-topical. If the topic required an increase in foreign assistance to Europe and the plan sent \$10 in pop rocks; the offset counterplan would send \$10 in pop rocks but also take away \$15 in bottle rocket aid. The net benefit would be that every dollar of foreign assistance is bad because it trades off with more effective spending in the US. The trick to the counterplan is that the permutation cannot advocate anti-topical action (because of a ground argument centering on the verb in the topic). The debate then becomes one about foreign aid in general--can the advantages of the plan be obtained while doing the opposite of the resolution? If so, the negative should win.

open CX: questioning period that involves the entire team rather than one individual from each team.

out of context: the claim that a piece of evidence is not “representative” of the ideas in the original work.

overview: a summary of the debate (or of an individual position) presented at the top of the flow. An overview is an attempt to provide a concise version of the important arguments on an issue, almost like a thesis statement in an essay.

pairings: a list of which teams are debating each other, the judges for the debates, and the rooms.

paradigm: a perspective, framework, or world-view for evaluating a debate round.

perception link: a link that is based on the fear, possibility, or concern that the plan will occur, as opposed to the implementation of the plan itself. A perception link might involve merely “talking” about the passage of the plan, even if the plan never leaves the Congress (or the round).

performative contradiction: an argument that connects a team’s “contradiction” to an “in-round” (discursive) implication. In other words, if the negative kritiks the construction of threats and then claims that the affirmative plan increases the risk of “terrorism,” the affirmative might respond with: “Performative contradiction: your terrorism turn constructs threats, a process that you contend must always be rejected. Reject the contradiction, especially because ‘they knew coming into the round.’” If two arguments run counter to each other, and one of the arguments stresses the importance of rhetoric and the communicative sincerity of debate, the existence of a such “performed hypocrisy” may be enough to reject one or both of the original arguments. On the other hand, ignorance may not be an excuse, not to mention the original argument that still applies to the plan’s construction of threats.

permutation: an affirmative attempt to answer a counterplan by reformulating a proposal that proves the plan is not necessarily excluded by the counterplan. In different ways, the same logic applies to a permutation of a kritiking position. Affirmatives will claim to “permute the ‘kritik’” by holding on to a portion of the case and “rethinking their flawed assumptions.” Permutations claim to be “tests,” so they are not “advocated” beyond their attempt to answer a counterplan. Of course, a test is also advocated, bringing the question to the surface: is a permutation added to the plan? If so, how many permutations are justified? Can the negative counterpermute? None of these questions (or any others) have definitive answers, although each permutation is different. In the broadest sense, permutations can include part of the plan, all of the plan, part of the counterplan, all of the counterplan, part or all of both, and anything beyond the plan or the counterplan.

philosophical competitiveness: the idea that two proposals, if philosophically distinct and at-odds with each other, are automatically competitive. In other words, permutations are impossible in the face of philosophical competition because a forced choice exists between the two alternatives.

pimps: a characterization of analytical arguments as flimsy and easily ignored. On the other hand, a series of strong pimps can defeat the most highly qualified evidence. Proprietors of urban sex-workers.

plan: the proposal presented by the affirmative in support of (or as) the resolution. The plan could include virtually anything, but the typical plan consists of a one page text that outlines and specifies the program (policy) to be followed by the agent.

plank: a provision in a plan, for example the “funding plank” of a plan specifies the source of revenue.

plan meet advantage (pma): this is a solvency attack that proves the mandates of the plan will not achieve the advantage. An absolute PMA takes out the entire advantage.

plan meet need (pmn): a variation of the PMA, the meet-need is a more damaging attack against the solvency because it questions the ability of the plan to address the harms or the significance.

plan spike: an action taken in the plan, usually an extra-topical mandate, that avoids a particular disadvantage or counterplan. A plan that consults with NATO is an attempt to “spike out” the NATO backlash disad or a consultation counterplan.

policy: the passage of legislation within a larger process of governing.

policy maker: a legislator or policy wonk. The policy-making paradigm treats a debate round like a modified session of Congress where the judge’s responsibility is to vote for the best policy. The analogy to a court-room setting may be more accurate for the policy-making paradigm than a session of Congress, especially considering such complications as the Presidential veto, subcommittee politics, and budgetary constraints.

power-match: a tab-room practice that places teams with similar records against each other.

preemption: an argument that predicts what the opponents will say and responds in advance. A sophisticated preemption, for example, is a flip-shield that answers the uniqueness of the turns in advance. To “preempt” a position is to predict, anticipate, and ward off the arguments of the opposition before they are made.

prelims: the debate rounds that the entire tournament participates in before a break is made and the “out rounds” begin.

preparation time: the allotted period for each time to assemble themselves during the course of a debate. The “preparing period” can be distributed in any way throughout the round, although it is not a common practice to take prep time during a speech.

presses: series of analytics or pimps that answer an argument without relying on evidence. Most presses use logic, common knowledge, or flaws in the cards themselves to refute a claim made by the opposition.

presumption: one team wins a tie.

prima faciality: the “on-face” burdens of a plan, particularly in a legislative context. These burdens usually involve enforcement, administration, and funding issues.

probability: the likelihood of a certain event. High probability means that it is virtually certain to occur.

probabilistic topicality: the argument that the plan may be topical, but it also may not be. The chance that the plan may not be topical is enough to exclude it from the parameters of the resolution. Probabilism is closely related to effects topicality.

process disads: disadvantages that depend on a certain projection of the political process (and fiat) to establish a link. Most process disadvantages deal with Presidential credibility or political capital, but they can also revolve around public perceptions, legislative trade-offs, or even the principle of separation of powers.

processing cards: cutting out quotations and putting the full cite on the top of each card. processing may or may not include tagging and blocking, but it usually implies sorting the cards into distinct piles.

pull: to extend and re-establish a given argument. “Pull the A subpoint,” means the first piece of evidence has not been refuted and should be carried into the next speech on the flow.

qualifications: the claim to “expert status” of an author or publication. Many qualification deal with academic degree or official title (employment), but a qualification can also include personal experience, identity, or even style of writing.

reasonability: the idea that topicality should be interpreted through a perspective of reasonability--if the affirmative is generally within the bounds of the topic, and if the topic is limited in a way that provides a fair division of ground, the affirmative is “reasonably topical.”

rebuttals: the last four speeches of the debate, designed to condense, summarize, and re-explain the strongest arguments presented in the constructives.

reciprocity: each privilege for the affirmative (theoretically) has a corresponding privilege for the negative and vice-versa. A theoretical means to achieve fairness.

reverse voting issue: the idea that a voting issue is two-way. If a team loses a voting issue they have advanced, they should lose the round. Often deployed by the affirmative on topicality.

rhetoric: yeah, right. Debates use “language,” “discourse,” and “rhetoric” fairly interchangeably, although a scrutinizing team can deploy the differences between the three to win some ballots. Some considerations include the utterances of each team, the text of the authors being cited, the collection of discursive strategies into a knowledge/power regime, the meaning or reality of signs (words), the distinctions between reading and writing, and the way these enunciations constitute (participate in) our subjectivities.

right to define: the claim made by the affirmative that they retain the ability to define the terms of the resolution, even if that option was not taken in the 1ac. A better phrase may be “operationally define”, which contends that the affirmative stands in for the resolution after the 1ac.

risk: the chance of an event taking place, usually expressed as a percentage. We have a 10 percent risk of experiencing the effects of global warming in Austin by the year 2001.

roadmap: At the beginning of each speech, many debaters will announce where they are headed on the flow. A typical roadmap gives the order of the off-case positions and then the order of the case advantages before the speech is actually timed.

sandbag: refer to triangular debate. Although a sandbag does not relate to a sandbag, the word has come to mean the practice of holding a good argument back for later use. If you want to “sandbag” your Siberian revolution argument because you believe that the other team will “undercover” it if it isn’t emphasized, you place it at the bottom of the speech or you wait for a later speech to use it. Sandbagging goes against the conventional tactic of making the best argument first.

scenario: a specific elaboration of an impact. A well-developed scenario articulates where, how, why, when, and for how long “it” will happen. A scenario for global warming might be a 2 foot sea-level rise in Bangladesh over the next three years the results in thousands of displaced people and the loss of biodiversity.

second line: a back-up block or brief that defends a particular argument made in the first-line.

sever: to jettison or remove a provision of the plan.

severance permutation: a permutation that does less than all of the plan.

significance: the stock issue that asks whether the harms are increasing in importance. Significance deals with the trend of the advantage (is the status quo worsening), whereas “Harms” deals with the magnitude of the advantage (is it worthy of concern--is there a need for the plan?)

signpost: to announce where you are on the flow. Guiding someone down the flow requires detailed signposting.

solvency: the connection between a proposal and its effectiveness. If the plan will eliminate the harm, than it solves.

solvency turns: an offensive argument by the negative, this position goes further than simply proving that the plan will not accomplish its goals. This argument flips the case by proving that the solvency will actually worsen the problem.

speaker points: the points awarded to each speaker that determine placement in the bracket but not the outcome of any single round.

speed drills: practices to improve pronunciation, annunciation, and efficiency when speaking. Among the common speed drills you can try: 1) speaking with a pen in your mouth to strengthen vocal muscles, 2) reading the dictionary backwards in a comprehensible way, 3) adding a syllable in-between every syllable you utter, and 4) tape-recording yourself to avoid crutch phrases and to vary pitch, tone, and pace.

spread: to speak quickly, a rapid rate of delivery.

standards: ways to interpret topicality (or other major issues). Reasonability, common person, contextuality, and field context are all standards for evaluating topicality.

stock issues: the five major stock issues are inherency, solvency, harm, significance, and topicality. A stock-issues paradigm goes through each of these components and if the affirmative loses any of the five, the negative wins the round.

substructure: a detailed outline with minor points that combine to form a larger position.

t is a voter: voting issues, of course, are always open to debate, but a common debate involves topicality. Is it a voting issue because of tradition, jurisdiction, fairness, or some other reason?

tabula rasa: a blank slate, or open space that is devoid of bias or preconceived opinions. A “tabula rasa” judge ideally enters the debate with no prior notions or expectations of how the debate should occur. The debate then “inscribes” itself on the slate/judge. A nice concept in principle, but all judges carry certain presuppositions into the round, it’s part of being human. *Tabula rasa*, as a paradigm, can best be achieved temporarily or on certain issues.

tag line: a brief summary of a piece of evidence that is read prior to reading the citation and the evidence. A tag-line can also refer to a single argument or phrase (particularly those phrases that appear on the flow). Usually, these tags are written before the actual round in order to categorize and sort pieces of evidence. A card (piece of evidence) that is “overtagged” has been exaggerated and artificially inflated by the tagline. If the card says war may occur over the next 50 years and the tag reads “On the brink of warfare,” the card has been overtagged.

take outs: answers or responses to a position that simply “disable” or “refute” rather than flip or turn. A series of case take-outs to accidental war, for example, would argue that the risk of accidents is low and that the impact would not be devastating.

test: something conditional is often referred to as a “test.” This usage implies that the test is premised on the “tested” position being extended in the round. An ambiguous distinction is made between advocacy and testing.

threshold: the amount of link that is required to cause the impact. The threshold of a DA is small if the slightest risk of the affirmative will cross the point of safety into the nightmarish realm of the disadvantage’s impact.

time frame permutations: attempts to answer a counterplan by proposing to “do the plan first and then do the counterplan” or vice-versa. Actions that manipulate the time at which a given plan is implemented.

time constraints: the temporal limits placed on a debate round in the form of timed speeches and timed preparation. The 1ar, for example, faces time constraints when attempting to answer the 13 minutes of the negative block in only 5 minutes.

timeframe: the duration (short or long term) of time it takes for a link or a impact to occur. Yes, an accidental nuclear war may be an awful impact, but if the timeframe for such an event is too distant, the size of the impact will be overwhelmed by other events in the short term.

topicality: the question of whether a given plan is within the resolution. Topicality also focuses on the meaning of the resolution in terms the potential affirmative cases that could be run and the ground that would be available to the negative.

triangular debate: when a debater makes a large number of arguments at the top of the flow and then reduces the number of arguments toward the end of the flow, the result is a “triangle” on the flow--the result of time constraints and poor time allocation. Taking advantage of this practice by “hiding” strong arguments at the bottom of a speech is called “sand-bagging.”

turn: like using an opponent’s weight against herself in judo, a turn takes an argument and reverses it.

underview: an additional argument at the bottom of a larger position. The underview is usually an attempt to pre-empt the other team’s arguments by responding to a potential response that has not yet been made. An affirmative case, for example, may contain an underview of uniqueness answers that pre-empt disadvantages by proving that actions similar to the plan have already been taken in the status quo.

uniqueness: the argument that an impact or link is inextricably and exclusively tied to the plan and not the status quo. The uniqueness of a disadvantage proves that the impact will not take place unless the affirmative is adopted. If a team “controls uniqueness,” they have established the current status of a given impact.

verge: the combination of a brink and a threshold. A disadvantage is on the verge if and of the affirmative plan and only the affirmative plan risks the impact.

voting issue: if a certain position is a voting issue, it is important enough to decide a round--a decision rule.

warrant: the substance, content, or reasoning behind a claim. The proof in the pudding.

weigh the impacts: the ability to compare a variety of impacts such that the ultimate calculus is in your favor.