# Debates Guidelines

**Terrorism and Security Course**

Part of the final assessment, students have to prepare and participate in the graded debate worth 10 points. This is a group assignment where students have to form groups of 2-3 students, pick a side (affirmative or negative) in the controversial issue selected for a weekly debate class. There are two teams per debate class. There are a total of 5 debates and every student must debate once.

## Purpose of debates

Debates allow students to try an opinion on the issue different to the one they personally hold. They also learn to research into an issue from multiple perspectives. Ultimately, the aim for the debaters is to persuade the audience and/or the other side of their view however controversial it is.

Debate success depends on good preparation and debate performance. Students must study not only their point of view, but that of the opposing side as well. Being prepared for opposition’s claims and arguments will not take teams by surprise. Feel free to consult any sources, but remember that they must be reputable, not necessarily scientific.

Your arguments must be clear, well-supported and structured. To rebut opponents’ claims teams must listen carefully and take notes. In the end of debates, moderator will open the floor for questions and comments.

## Rules

* The team supporting the motion must not shift its point of view. The same goes for the opposition, who must oppose the motion completely (whatever their private opinions may be).
* If a speaker makes a statement, they must be able to provide evidence or reasons to support the statement.
* Facts presented in a debate must be accurate.
* Speakers may not bring up new points in a rebuttal speech. (Open University: <https://www.open.edu/openlearncreate/mod/oucontent/view.php?id=161813&section=4.7>)

## Process

This is an informal debate that will take place during the class and run according to simplified rules and procedures. Debates take place during every second class after a lecture class on the topic indicated on Moodle. Debates will be moderated and timed by the course instructor. Team members receive the same score for debate performance. That is why it is crucial for every student to be active during early brainstorming sessions and the actual debate.

**Round 1**

Team 1 (pro) makes a 5 minutes affirmative statement (arguments for)

Team 2 (con) makes a 5 minutes negative statement (arguments against). No direct response to Team 1.

**Team Discussion Period**

Teams prepare responses or rebuttals (3 minutes)

**Round 2**

Team 1 makes a 3 minutes response or rebuttal

Team 2 makes a 3 minutes response or rebuttal

Both teams can introduce a **secondary argument** and/or submit more evidence

**Floor opens (10-15 minutes)**

Audience asks questions to the teams. A maximum of 3 questions can be asked of each team. Any team member can answer the incoming question.

**Round 3**

Team 1 makes a 3 minutes response or rebuttal AND summarizes key points

Team 2 makes a 3 minutes response or rebuttal AND summarizes key points

In the end, the audience will vote to choose the best position. Remember, the success behind using debates in the classroom is not in winning and losing but rather how well team prepared for and delivered their arguments (Northern Illinois University: <https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/instructional-guide/classroom-debates.shtml>)

## Debate Resource

How to prepare for debate

<https://www.uopeople.edu/blog/what-is-debating/>

<https://www.mcgill.ca/tls/files/tls/burgos-preparation.pdf>

<https://www.wikihow.com/Win-a-Debate>

Debating skills

<https://howdoihomeschool.com/debating-tips-debating-techniques-skills/>

<https://virtualspeech.com/blog/guide-to-debating>

Winning your argument

<https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/how-win-argument>

[https://medium.com/@andreik7/how-to-win-a-debate-tips-910fa8a62d5a](https://medium.com/%40andreik7/how-to-win-a-debate-tips-910fa8a62d5a)