



# **Solon Speech & Debate**

Competitive Events Manual

“In Their Own Words”

## **Debate Events...**

- Congressional Debate
- Lincoln Douglas Debate
- Policy Debate
- Public Forum Debate

## **Interpretation Events...**

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## **Rhetoric Events...**

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- Informative Speaking
- Original Oratory

# Congressional Debate

A simulation of the U.S. legislative process, students generate a series of bills and resolutions for debate in Congressional Debate. Debaters alternate delivering speeches for and against the topic in a group setting. An elected student serves as a presiding officer to ensure debate flows smoothly. Students are assessed on their research, argumentation, and delivery skills, as well as their knowledge and use of parliamentary procedure.

## Why You Should Join Congressional Debate

Interested in politics? The inner workings of Washington? Debating a wide variety of social, political, and economic issues? Then Congress is for you! Congress puts you in the position of a United States Representative. You get to make and debate important policies that reflect current events around the country.

## Skills Needed and Developed

In Congressional Debate the most important skills include persuasiveness, networking, strong research skills, and the ability to rework speeches in round. Being a debate event, the ultimate goal is to persuade the judges and your fellow representatives to support your side on each piece of legislation. Judges will also assess your speaking skills and rhetorical analysis. Unlike other debate events, and even other speech events, Congress requires its competitors to reach out to other schools in order to network for the ultimate goal of passing legislation. In round it is not a competition of

schools, but rather a clash of ideas. In preparation for a tournament congress requires a commitment to research on all topics. This is especially important because each round you may be required to change your speech based upon prior speeches.

## What a Typical Tournament Looks Like

Each tournament you will be assigned to a chamber with around 15-18 other competitors. After entering the chamber you will start by setting the docket, or deciding the order of the bills to be debated. Then Presiding Officers, who run the chamber, will be elected. At that point debate will begin in an alternating affirmative, negative fashion. A questioning period follows. Once there are no more remaining speeches the process of voting begins. Reflecting the vote of the chamber the bill either passes or fails. After voting, debate begins on the next piece of legislation in the docket order. The tournament consists of 3 or 4, 45 minute to an hour, sessions.



# LINCOLN DOUGLAS DEBATE

## Why Join?

Our debate is unique, in that you have the independence to explore new ideas, without the burden of a partner. No other debate gives you the opportunity to look outside the realm of data, into what a society 'ought' to do. If you enjoy philosophy, new perspectives, and looking beyond data to interpret society, LD is the event for you!

## Important Skills

All debates require a **strong work ethic**, **quick thinking**, and a **decent writing ability**. LD is no different. Specifically though, an LDer must be **independent**, and have an **open mind**. Since we debate alone, not being aware of the duality of any argument can ruin your round. Most importantly, you have to be able to **analyze new arguments** and **draw connections** to a bigger picture. Many of these are learned skills you pick up over time in LD!

## Typical Tournament

LD rounds are 45 minutes with normally 4 rounds in total. The first two rounds are back to back, with 30-45 minutes between the next two. The Cleveland District has a strong LD community, and between rounds is a great time to hang out with friends and meet new people with common interests!



**"Being in Lincoln Douglas has given me a community of peers that I can be competitive with during rounds but then hang out with and have fun with them outside of tournaments."**

**- Nicole Williams, Class of 2022**

**"Our LD team isn't amazing just because it's an awesome event-but also because of how tight knit we all are"**

**- Eugenia Karulina, Class of 2022**

## What is Lincoln Douglas Debate?

LD debate blends philosophical thought and empirical data in a range of real world topics. It is a one-v-one debate, with an Affirmative and Negative side. A case has framework, the moral standard, and contentions, the data. The both sides start with constructives, followed by a questioning period from their opponent. The round finishes with alternating rebuttals in which debaters focus on boiling the round down to it's focus points, and persuading the judge to vote in their favor.

# Policy Debate (2P)

*A beginners guide to Policy!*

## OVERVIEW

In Policy Debate, there are two sides that face each other: the affirmative, and the negative. The affirmative team has the advantage of giving the first and last speech. There are 4 constructive speeches (8 mins each), and 4 rebuttal speeches (5 mins each), 2 for each team. After each constructive speech, there is a 3 minute period of time known as “cross-fire” in which debaters can ask questions to their respective opponent, whether it be argumentative or inquisitive. In a typical round\*, the affirmative comes up with a certain policy, or plan, that the United States federal government should do. The negative has flexibility on how they respond to said plan. The most commonly used argument from the negative is known as a *disadvantage*, which simply put is a disadvantage to the affirmative plan. The negative team can also go for a wide-variety of arguments such as: *counterplans*, *topicality violations*, and *kritiks*.

## Why Policy?

Policy Debate is one of the few events in which, depending on judge preference, a team has to adapt from challenging a fundamental societal assumption in a well-rounded kritik, to focusing on a pathos narrative that appeals to a stock-issue judge. In the event, there is an idea known as *tabula rasa*. While not all judges chose tabula rasa to determine the winner, the idea itself allows for a wide range of progressive and unique arguments not found in other events.

## Skills Developed

Competing in Policy Debate, one can expect to develop a completely unique skill set on persuasive argumentation, organization, and most importantly, *spreading*! Many of the skills required in Policy comes with experience, so the only prerequisite one would need in order to pursue a career in this event is open-mindedness.



## Tournament Structure

After arriving at the school that is hosting the tournament, the debater can expect to compete in at least 3 rounds. Each partnership competes against a randomly selected team, with a randomly selected judge, on a randomly selected team. After each round, the judge can elect to give an *oral critique*, in which the judge discloses who won the round, their reason for decision, as well as any general critiques or compliments.

\*typical round: assumes the affirmative reads a plan-text.



# PUBLIC FORUM DEBATE

## What is Public Forum Debate?

Public Forum Debate (PF) is a debate event centered around the discussion of current events and issues. You and a partner will present a series of speeches against an opposing team with cross-examinations in between. It is a more casual debate event, and is by definition meant to be easily understood by any educated person. This is the closest type of debate to those you see on TV – it's informative, interesting, and even funny at times!

## What are the benefits of PF?

PF is one of the most interactive debate events, and as a result has numerous benefits:

- Stronger public **speaking skills**
- Better **interpersonal skills**
- Drastic improvement in **argumentation** and ability to create **logical analysis**
- Stronger knowledge of current events
- Develop confidence in your own beliefs – this is BIG!!

## What does the season look like?

We practice a few times in the summer and **every week** during the school year, where we all come together and **meet with our debate coach** to develop arguments, have practice rounds, and debrief from previous tournaments. **A majority of the work is done at home**, where you will write cases, rebuttals, and collect research to use in rounds.

Every Saturday, we attend tournaments at various schools in the area. A typical tournament consists of **three to five 45 minute rounds**, with a lunch break in the middle of the day and an award ceremony at the end. Some larger tournaments consist of preliminary rounds followed by an **elimination bracket**, and we even attend a few **overnight tournaments** throughout the year!

## What are the most important skills?

- Being able to speak clearly and persuasively with effective use of rhetoric
- Having a strong work ethic and the willingness to put in your own time and dedication
- Researching, finding evidence/statistics, and creating strong arguments
- Being able to work with your partner and the rest of the team.

## How much commitment is needed?

Simply put, the best debater will be the one that puts in the most hours into researching, practicing speeches, and refining arguments. Thus, PF requires **hours every week** of individual preparation on top of team practices. Especially during your first year, **the students who put in the most work on their own are by FAR the most successful**. It may seem like a lot, but at the end, it'll all be worth it!

## Is PF for me?

If you enjoy **voicing your opinion**, **engaging in arguments**, want to **become a better speaker**, gain **self-confidence**, or just want to try debate, this is the event for you! PF is the easiest event for someone with no experience to join as it **fast to grasp** and is the closest form of debate to real life debates. It is a mix of facts, logic, persuasion, and it never hurts to add humor! If you're not sure which event to join, join PF! You won't regret it!

## Sample attire



# Dramatic Interpretation

Competitors will perform an excerpt from a play/book that tells a cohesive narrative in under 10 minutes, with the goal of conveying emotion through effective character development.

## A Typical Tournament...

involves 4 rounds of competition with 4 or 5 other competitors and 1 judge, all of whom you will perform in front of. The other competitors will perform when it's their turn, and you and the others will listen respectfully. Each round lasts about an hour.

## You Will Need To...

- Accept and learn from feedback
- Be willing to leave your comfort zone
- Make time to attend team practices and to practice on your own
- Speak clearly and audibly
- Empathize with your character(s)

## You Will Learn To...

- Deliver speeches with confidence and clarity
- Embody another persona genuinely
- Allow yourself to be vulnerable in front of others
- Fully dedicate yourself to a performance
- Persist and work through struggles

## You Should Join Because...

Dramatic Interpretation is a unique opportunity to develop crucial skills in an exciting environment. All S&D events will teach you speaking skills, but Drama grows your work ethic, confidence, and last but not least, your EMPATHY.

## You Should Dress...

professionally. Boys should wear suits with button-downs, a tie, and dress shoes. Girls should wear heels or flats with a pant/skirt suit over a blouse or neutral top. Anyone with long hair should tie it up in some way so that it's out of your face.



# DUO INTERPRETATION



## *What Is Duo Interpretation?*

In this exciting event, a team of two competitors perform a prepared ten-minute skit using a published script of a play, movie, book, etc. During this performance, the competitors are expected to convey their chosen story by playing a variety of characters and expressing their emotions towards each other and their situation. They implement a variety of techniques into their performance in order to do this. No props or costumes are used in this event, and the two competitors are not allowed to touch or look at each other.

## *Why Do Students Join This Event?*

Duo Interpretation is known for its creative, high energy performances, so it's no wonder that so many people want to give it a try. While in this event, you will need to have good acting abilities (being able to step into a character's shoes and convey their emotions in their given situation within the story), good chemistry with your partner (teamwork makes the dream work in this event!), and lots of creativity as you find ways to convey the placement of your imaginary environment and objects. Therefore, if you're an innovative individual who finds interest in acting alongside a partner, Duo Interpretation is the event for you!

## *What Skills Will Be Needed/Developed?*

Although it is one of the most popular speech events to watch and observe, actually competing in Duo Interpretation is far from easy. A lot of preparation, practice, and creativity must go into every partnership's performance. In addition, this event is very acting-oriented, requiring competitors to express a range of emotions. If the character you are playing is sad in their situation, you need to be able to convey their sadness to the audience. If they are angry, you need to express their anger (you get the gist of it). This is difficult, but it is a skill that will be necessary and developed if you choose this event. Furthermore, you

will learn how to make distinctions between different characters and be able to tell a clear story without any costumes or props. Throughout the creation of your piece, you will learn different techniques like sound effects, imagining the placement of your surroundings, working out timing with your partner, and much more!

## *What Are The Tournaments Like?*

A typical Saturday tournament for any Duo Interpretation competitor would start with waking up early in the morning, doing whatever morning routines you have, putting on your suit, and doing your hair and makeup. You would then make your way to the high school to get on the bus at the scheduled time you were informed of. Once we arrive at the tournament, we first have a team meeting, then you are free to go and practice your speech with your partner before your first round. When rounds are posted, you are expected to go to your listed room number. It is recommended that you take a water bottle, a logging journal, and a pen. Be courteous and attentive when watching your competitors, and be confident when you are performing. After around three to four rounds, there will be awards where you are again expected to be gracious and respectful. Finally, we load the busses and go home.



## *What's The Tournament Attire?*

Your goal is to look professional for your judges. You are expected to wear a suit and dress shoes. For girls, comfortable heels are highly recommended, and when wearing a skirt suit, you must wear pantyhose. In Duo Interpretation, it is common for partners to wear matching outfits or something along the lines of that (as shown in the pictures). Hair should be styled so that it stays out of your face throughout your performances, and girls should do their makeup.



# Humorous Interpretation

## The Event

In Humorous Interpretation, you must perform a ten-minute speech based on a play, book, movie, or other published work. Typically, multiple characters are used, which you must distinguish based on stance, voice, and facial expression. The goal is not only to make the audience laugh, but also to convey a story. (Think comedy play, not stand-up.)

## Who Should Join?

It's not just about being funny. You must have a sense of timing and delivery and a love for acting. If you consider yourself as someone who is theatrical and creative, then this is the event for you!

## The Skill Set

This event requires big and bold expressions. Be loud and proud. Since you (one person) will be portraying multiple characters, it is essential that you create individual personalities. Use your voice, your stance, and your face.

A learned skill is *popping*, which is how you should switch between characters. A quick and clear pop will give the effect of the character switch. *Blocking* is how you use the stage, showing the actions of the characters.

## Typical Tournament

A typical Saturday for anyone in Humor begins with an early morning, where you must get ready for competition. Suits, hair, and makeup should be done before you come. When we arrive, you must first attend the team meeting. Then find a good spot and practice your speech with a wall as your audience. This will get your voice warmed up and your mind calmed down. Once rounds are posted, take with you a water bottle, a journal, and a pen. Leave your phone

in your bag if you can. (A buzzing or ringing phone is not going to get you on the judge's good side.)

Each round will be unique, giving you an opportunity to see the strengths and weaknesses of each interpreter. Enjoy the speeches and relax.

When it is your turn to speak, tell your judge what time signals (if any) you want and begin. Be confident and clear.

After all rounds, we go to awards, then go home on the bus.

## Competition Attire

You should wear a suit, colored or black, with a nice blouse or dress shirt underneath. If you have a skirt suit, wear tights. Try to get comfortable heels or dress shoes.

Hair should be styled in a way that gets it out of your face. Makeup should be professional. Make your eyes stand out, because that is where most of your emotion will be.



# Program Oral Interpretation

## WHAT IS PROGRAM ORAL INTERPRETATION?

Program Oral Interpretation; more commonly known as POI is designed to test a student's ability to combine at least two of three genres of literature into a single, cohesive performance. Using the genres of poetry, drama, and prose; POI competitors are tasked with developing an interesting argument or theme for their overall piece usually called a Program.

### DID YOU KNOW?

POI IS THE ONLY INTERP EVENT WHERE A PROP IS ALLOWED!

A Program uses the performer's ability to portray genuine characters through various literature. A manuscript is required and may be used as a prop within the performance. Each program is 10 minutes with a grace period of 30 seconds.

## WHY SHOULD YOU JOIN THIS EVENT?

If you are passionate about any subject, issue, or topic, this is the event for you! The ability to compile dramas, poetry, and prose into a storyline that flows, impacts a listener's life, and may even change their views on a controversial issue is exclusive to POI. Though this skill may not come naturally to everyone, it can easily be taught and learnt.

### SKILLS NEEDED

- Diligence
- Availability
- Passion

### SKILLS DEVELOPED

- Confidence
- Characterization
- Resilience

## WHAT A TYPICAL TOURNAMENT LOOKS LIKE IN THIS EVENT

In POI your average tournament will consist of 4 rounds which take place in classrooms. Once the judge arrives, competitors will quietly file into the classroom and respectfully sit through about 5 speeches per round.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD BE WEARING ON COMPETITION DAY

When going to a tournament all competitors must look well put together and professional, so keep it conservative and dress in business attire. For girls a nice pant/skirt suit paired with a blouse. For boys a suit paired with a button down shirt and tie. Be sure all clothing fits properly.



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**We're waiting for you to join, you might just be our next champion!**

# ✨ ***International Extemp*** ✨

## What is International Extemp?

International Extemp, or IX, is an event that blends your knowledge of current world affairs with your ability to craft and present a speech. IX tests your ability to identify relationships between countries and oratorically analyze the political, economic, and social factors that dominate the global stage.

## What do tournaments look like for IX?

You draw a question regarding foreign affairs during the tournament and are given 30 minutes to write and memorize a 7 minute speech using news sources from the internet.

## Example Questions:

- What do falling oil prices mean for the global economy?
- Has the US lost the war in Afghanistan?
- How is Russia trying to exert its influence in Latin America?
- Will the 2020s continue to see a decline in European unity?

(March & April 2020 Extemp questions from the National Speech and Debate Association)



## What skills and materials are needed for IX?

Unlike other Speech events, IX (and USX) are different because you don't make a speech ahead of time. Rather, all of your speech preparations are done on the spot. Also, you don't write a speech word by word - it's more like talking and explaining for 7 minutes straight.

## What prep do you need to do before competition?

We use a software called Prepd to gather articles and share them as a team. Pre-competition prep consists of reading articles on current world trends, giving practice speeches, and watching late night shows to get some good political jokes 😊

## What should I wear for competition?

Boys should wear formal suits with dress shoes and girls can wear blazers with pants or skirts. First impressions are really important for any event so it's crucial to look organized and professional.





# UNITED STATES EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

## The 'event' of the year

The event where you give speeches on both simple and complex issues in the United States, ranging from politics and the economy to sports and pop culture

### DESCRIPTION

On the day of competition, after being dropped off at the school you will head with the other people in your event to the prep room, or space to research and create arguments. When the rounds begin, you will have to pick one topic out of three given to you, prepare it in 30 minutes, and give a 7 minute speech on the topic.

### PREPARING FOR TOURNAMENTS

Before the tournament you will have to...

- Research current events in the news. This means reading articles, publications, books
- File articles in a database, to be used in the tournament
- Bring your computer, paper, and pens to the tournament



These outfits are typically what speakers wear

### EXPLAINER

During the competition, you will have around 3-4 rounds where at the start of each round, you will pick 3 topics from an envelope; only one can be picked. Then, you have 30 minutes to research, prepare, and rehearse a speech under 7 minutes 30 seconds. You will not be speaking on the same topic twice, since all the topics you pick will be different!

### SKILLS DEVELOPED

The skills you will learn to develop are:

- Researching a complex topic
- Simplifying complex topics
- Making your ideas short and concise
- Learning pretty much everything about the United States

### IF YOU ARE...

- Interested in politics
- A news junkie
- Someone who wants a variety of topics
- Good at thinking on your feet

Then you'll love this event!

### FOR MORE INFORMATION...

Contact

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# DECLAMATION

Declamation is a public speaking event where students deliver a portion or portions of a speech previously delivered. The speech the student delivers can be any publicly delivered speech. Commencement addresses, historical speeches, political speeches, and celebrity speeches are common examples that students may use to select their declamation. Speeches are up to 10 minutes in length. As a result, students typically shorten the text of the speech to meet time requirements. The goal of a declamation is to convey a message with clarity, emotion, and persuasiveness. The event is not designed for students to mimic the original author of the speech. Instead, speakers are to develop an oration that delivers the message of the author in an original and engaging manner.

## WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT DECLAMATION?

From my experience, Declamation is an event about understanding and finding power in someone else's words. For those of you who find an interest in public speaking but no interest in writing the script itself, this is the event for you. This event is about being passionate and truly finding meaning in other people's words, and being able to convey that effectively. I chose Declamation because I found a voice while delivering the words of others.

## WHAT SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT IN DECLAMATION?

Declamation, like most other events, requires an eloquence while speaking. Skills such as crisp enunciation, varied hand gestures, and impressive vocal variety are what make a declamation piece truly engaging to watch. But most importantly, the speaker has to use emotion and varied tones to deliver the speech in a way that enhances its real meaning. This is a developed skill acquired through many years of competing in this event, and it will certainly help you in the future to express your voice passionately and confidently. Declamation also helps you to speak professionally and command the attention of your audience. For me specifically, this event has significantly improved my public speaking, and given me the rewarding

feeling of getting that one in a round or winning a tournament.

Here's the link to the judge's ballot if you want to view the evaluation criteria:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8dHaTrhrzGfWWk5QXZhQ0tqUE0/view>



## WHAT DOES A TYPICAL TOURNAMENT LOOK LIKE IN DECLAMATION?

A round in Declamation has a mix of competitiveness and encouragement between competitors. Each speech is delivered with the right emotion and tone, as if the original orators were delivering their speeches. Another aspect is looking to the judges and attempting to read their opinions on your performance, as well as the other competitors. Watching and learning from more experienced competitors is exactly how you grow and develop your skills, so it is important to listen while your fellow competitors are speaking. There are typical 3-4 rounds per tournament in Declamation, unless it's a break round tournament (where there are semifinals, finals, etc.), in which there will be additional rounds to who advance. Waiting for awards can be a bit boring, but when the awards finally arrive, that tiredness is replaced with excitement as the results are announced.

# JOIN SPEECH AND DEBATE

## *Informative Speaking*

### *What is informative speaking?*

Informative Speaking is a category/event in Speech and Debate in which you may speak on any topic of your own choosing. It is recommended that you pick a topic which is original and of interest to you. Speeches should be approximately 10 minutes long, with grace periods. You are allowed to use/create visual aids to help enhance or modify your speech if you choose. These, however, are optional, and you may choose to speak without them. The purpose of this event is purely to inform the audience on a particular topic. You should never introduce any kind of bias or opinion in your informative speech.



### *Why should I join?*

This is truly an amazing event which is very different from others in speech. It allows you to explore new ways to express your creative mind and thought process. Specifically, informative speaking allows you to choose your own topic and express yourself in a new way. For those who enjoy teaching others and seeing people learn new things, informative speaking is for you. In addition, for those who enjoy the visual arts, this event is also for you. Informative speaking allows you to express that art in your visual aids, by creating easels and other aesthetic projects. This will also be an interesting and engaging new way to show off your artistic flair in front of others. Informative speaking is for everyone.

### *What skills would I need?*

Informative Speaking is an event which requires you to have certain skills, but nothing which is very difficult. This event is for anyone who wishes to become a part of it and is willing to challenge themselves. You should be confident in yourself as you speak. The more confident you are in your speech and in your abilities, the better you are as a speaker. You also become more enjoyable to listen to and watch as your confidence will translate into other factors, such as solid, crisp gestures while you speak. However, confidence is also a skill which will come with practice. Informative speaking is an event which will develop your overall speaking skill set and prepare you for the future.

### *Why does a typical tournament even look like?*

Tournaments are the place where you compete on a weekly basis and show off your skills to other competitors from other schools. Tournaments begin with check-in and pre-round practices after a team meeting. You should also set up your visuals before your rounds, if you have them. Once round postings go up, you report to your competition room and speak in front of your judge(s) and other competitors in the round. There are typically 3-4 rounds in a tournament. In between rounds, there is a recess period for lunch. After all rounds are completed, results are tabulated and the awards ceremony takes place. You should be in competition clothes all day, including during the awards ceremony to promote professionalism.

# ORIGINAL ORATORY

## What is Original Oratory?

In original oratory students deliver a self-written, ten-minute speech on a topic of their choosing. Limited in their ability to quote words directly, competitors craft an argument using evidence, logic, and emotional appeals. Topics range widely, and can be informative or persuasive in nature. The speech is delivered from memory.

## Why should you join Original Oratory?

Original oratory is an event in which you can showcase your voice and passion for your topic. Your topic can be anything- your favorite sport, a problem you see in society, Einstein's theory of relativity, etc. OO gives you the space and time to speak about what is important to you. It's not just a memorized essay- it's an organized and well-researched presentation about something that is incredibly important to you. OO provides a unique experience: 10 uninterrupted minutes to inform your audience about something you are passionate about, and the chance to persuade them into caring about your message.

## What skills are important in Original Oratory?

Orators must be articulate speakers, and have an engaging speech. They must be able to balance their content with their delivery and style. While orators must have the skill of being good speech writers and speakers, they will also need (or develop very quickly) one of the most important skills in life- persuasion. Imagine yourself at a job interview trying to persuade the interviewer to hire you, or you at your future job trying to convince your boss to give you a pay raise. Or even trying to bargain with your sibling to give you the last poptart. All of these situations require the ability to be persuasive- a skill



An example of what you are expected to wear at tournaments.

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all original orators learn as they need to persuade their audience and their judge.

## What does a typical tournament look like?

A typical OO round has 6 competitors and 1 judge in the room. Each competitor will get the chance to deliver their speech. Then the judge will rank the competitors based on their vocal quality, physical presentation, speech content, and professionalism. There are typically 4 rounds of OO in one tournament.

## What is the best part of OO competitions?

One of the best parts about OO is listening to all of the other speeches. The speeches are inspiring, informative and incredibly insightful. The speakers themselves are incredible as well. You will find that people in this event are kind and helpful, and you will quickly make friends with your fellow OO competitors.