Lincoln/Douglas Debate

One debater vs. one debater
Lincoln/Douglas debate is value based debate, meaning it focuses on what is “right” or just. Each debater prepares arguments in favor of and against a given resolution. The resolution changes every two months. At each tournament, debaters debate two affirmative rounds (in favor of the resolution) and two negative rounds (against the resolution).

Rounds last approximately 45 minutes.

Public Forum Debate

Two person team vs. two person team
Public Forum debate is debate that focuses on topics of current national importance. Each team prepares arguments in favor of and against a given resolution. The resolution changes every month. At each tournament, each team will debate a mixture of pro rounds (in favor of the resolution) and con rounds (against the resolution), depending on a coin flip that occurs each round.

Rounds last approximately 35 minutes.

Congressional Debate

Congressional Debate simulates chambers of congress. Each representative prepares multiple three minute speeches supporting or negating pieces of student produced legislation provided before the tournament. Speeches are prepared ahead of time and may be read when presented. Congressional Debate follows parliamentary procedure (Robert’s Rules of Order) in the chamber.

Sessions last approximately 1 ½ hours.

Policy Debate

Two person team vs. two person team
Policy debate focuses on a policy question for the duration of the academic year, this format tests a student’s research, analytical, and delivery skills. Policy debate involves the proposal of a plan by the affirmative team to enact a policy, while the negative team offers reasons to reject that proposal. Throughout the debate, students have the opportunity to cross-examine one another. A judge or panel of judges determines the winner based on the arguments presented.

Sessions last approximately 1 ½ hours.