

Rules of Debate

Introduction

One of the main goals of an introductory geology course is to help students improve their critical thinking and communication skills. A wonderful route to these goals is a debate. Preparing for and participating in a debate will give you experience in researching a question, evaluating arguments both pro and con, and communicating your findings in a lively forum. Such skills will be useful to you whether you become a business person, teacher, lawyer, scientist, or engineer. The debate activity is divided into several parts. You must participate in each portion for full credit.

RESEARCH PAPER

Each individual debate team member must turn in a research paper worth 30 pts. The paper should be the work of the individual. In other words, team members must do their own independent research and paper. The paper should follow this format:

1. Your name and date of the debate should be single-spaced in the upper right corner (see this paper) one inch from the top of the page.
2. Title should be centered. Title should state the topic and your position (opponent or proponent).
3. Typed, double-spaced, 3-6 pages in length.
4. Your paper will be divided into 3 headings:
 - a. **SUPPORTING**: Make a succinct list of points supporting your position. Then explain the points more fully in the body of your paper which will be in paragraph form.
 - b. **OPPOSING**: Make a succinct list of points you anticipate the opposing side will present. Then explain the points more fully in the body of your paper which will be in paragraph form.
 - c. **REBUTTAL**: In this portion, include how you intend to rebut your opponent with your closing remarks in the debate.
5. Use a minimum of 3 sources, but you will probably want to use more. Sources could include books, newspapers, magazines, and reputable on-line news sources. Check out the in-house as well as on-line resources available through the GCC Library/Media Center. Use reliable, scientific sources to support your data. Wikipedia is not a reliable source. Do not use newspaper articles.
6. Cite your sources on a separate sheet of paper. Entitle the page "**Works Cited**." Use the **MLA** style of citing information. List alphabetically and double space. Go to the following web site: <http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/English/mla/index.html> for specific information on how to cite different sources. You may also want to try web cites like, www.easybib.com to help you format your references. Many bibliography cites offer free formatting.
7. Use in-text parenthetical citations. Every reference listed on your works cited page should be cited. Use the author's name whenever possible (Wood). If the author is unknown use the first word or two in the title and put it in parenthesis ("Earthquake").
8. Attach a copy of your sources to your paper. Sources should be in the order they are listed in your works cited page. If the articles are very lengthy you may just include the title page. If you are referencing a book, you do not need to include a copy.
9. Attach the debate rubric form (last page in this packet) to the top of your report.
10. Submit a copy of your report to me electronically (joe.belcher@gcmail.maricopa.edu). All papers will be run through a plagiarism program.

Turn your work in on time for full credit. You must turn in your paper on the same day that you debate. Late work will receive an automatic 10 point deduction.

Plagiarism: When you write your paper, please remember MCCCDC plagiarism policies. Each student is required to do his/her own work. Put the information in your own words. Direct quotes from your references is highly

discouraged, however, if you really think the quote will add to the content of your paper, you may use a *short* quote as long as it is properly cited (quotation marks, name the person who said it, etc). You must turn in your report electronically (joe.belcher@gcmail.maricopa.edu). All papers will be run through a plagiarism program. If plagiarism is found in your paper, you will receive zero credit.

Grading: You will be graded on organization, content, grammar and spelling. You may be thinking, “This is not an English class, why does it matter?” Writing is critical to every aspect of education. Please check your work for errors. Most people lose points because of grammatical and typographical errors. I expect papers to be scientific research quality. Do not include conjunctions (like can’t or don’t); do not use slang; and, avoid the use of “I.” Tell me what you have discovered about the topic without using phrases like “I think” or “I found.” Find another way to convey the meaning. Use complete sentences. Avoid run-on sentences. Scientific papers usually try to convey the most meaning in the least amount of words. Be concise yet descriptive.

Writing Center: You may take your research paper to the Writing Center when it is open and receive help. The Writing Center is located in High Tech II. It is staffed by English Faculty. You must sign up for a ½ hour appointment. Be sure to bring this paper with you so that the faculty will know what I expect. Appointments fill up so allow yourself and the Writing Center staff adequate time to critique your paper. This is a free service to students and is a great way to make sure your paper is formatted correctly. If you are unable to meet with an instructor in person, you may try submitting your paper to the Electronic Writing Center at: <http://www.gc.maricopa.edu/EWC>. **I STRONGLY ENCOURAGE YOU TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE WRITING CENTER!** Verification that you have used the Writing Center is worth 5 points.

DEBATE

Procedure

Each debate has two teams. One team (Proponents) favors the argument; the other team (Opponents) opposes the argument. Each team has two or three people. Debaters are allowed to take notes while others are speaking, but *please do not read prepared notes verbatim during your presentation*. Computers or overhead projectors may be used to project graphs, illustrations, or data. In the past, I have noticed that debaters who use visual helps are more likely to persuade the audience to their side. **I strongly encourage you to use power point or other visuals.** The instructor will keep time, give signals, call the debate to order, introduce the topic, introduce the participants, and notify each speaker when time is up. The debate format will be as follows, however, the instructor reserves the right to alter the format based on individual needs.

1. Debaters will be given 5 minutes to prepare and organize prior to the commencement of the debate.
2. First speaker for Proponents (5-7 minutes)
3. First speaker for Opponents (5-7 minutes)
4. Second speaker for Proponents (5-7 minutes)
5. Second speaker for Opponents (5-7 minutes)
6. Third speaker for Proponents (5-7 minutes)
7. Third speaker for Opponents (5-7 minutes)
8. 3-minute break. Teams plan their rebuttal.
9. Rebuttal by Proponent (4-6 minutes). Teams decide which member will rebut.
10. Rebuttal by Opponent (4-6 minutes). Teams decide which member will rebut.
11. At the end of each debate, there will be a question and answer period.

It is the responsibility of the first speaker *from each side* to identify the issue, state their team’s position, and to define any unfamiliar terms that will be introduced. Both the first and second speakers for each team present points supporting their side, elaborating on each point where necessary. During the rebuttal phase, the teams will present arguments and perspectives to try and counter the points presented by the other team.

If you miss the debate you have signed-up for, you will not be allowed to participate in another debate and you will forfeit your points. If an emergency arises, or you know you have a scheduling conflict, please let me know via phone or e-mail as soon as possible and we will reschedule the debate. Other members of the debate team are counting on you; please be courteous.

Spirit of the debate

Both sides must present their material in a good natured, friendly discourse. Personal attacks and antagonistic comments are not allowed. Your job is to convince the audience that you have examined this issue and have come to your conclusion using scientific evidence and clear reasoning, not emotions.

DEBATE SUMMARY & OUTCOME BY AUDIENCE

As a member of the audience it is your responsibility to listen carefully to the debate and take notes. At the end of the debate you will turn in a hand-written paper worth 5 points. You must turn in 3 debate summaries for a total of 15 points. Each summary must have the following information:

1. A bullet list of the most effective points presented by each side.
2. A synopsis in paragraph form of which side presented the strongest arguments and why you thought so. Make it clear to me which side you agree with.
3. A bullet list of arguments you might have brought up on either side had you been participating in the debate.
4. A list of at least 3 questions to ask the debaters during the question and answer period.

<p style="text-align: center;">Debate 1</p> <p>Global warming</p>	<p>Proponents: Global warming is caused by humans.</p> <p>Opponents: Global warming is not caused by humans.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Debate 2</p> <p>Rebuild New Orleans</p>	<p>Proponents: New Orleans should be rebuilt and the city should be restored to its former glory.</p> <p>Opponents: Building should be prohibited in the areas of New Orleans that are at or below sea level.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Debate 3</p> <p>Drilling for oil in ANWR (Arctic National Wildlife Refuge)</p>	<p>Proponents: Drilling for oil should be allowed in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).</p> <p>Opponents: Drilling for oil should not be allowed in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Debate 4</p> <p>Storing nuclear waste in Yucca Mountain</p>	<p>Proponents: Yucca Mountain is a good place to store nuclear waste.</p> <p>Opponents: Yucca Mountain is not a good place to store nuclear waste.</p>

Name _____

DEBATE RUBRIC

Research Paper (30 points possible):

- ____ 1 pt. - Name & date (upper right corner single spaced), title centered
- ____ 1 pt. – 1” margins, typed, double-spaced with readable 12 pt font
- ____ 1 pt. - 3 headings (Supporting, Opposing, and Rebuttal) with bullet list under Supporting and Opposing
- ____ 2 pt. - Minimum of 3 reliable sources
- ____ 2 pt. - Works Cited page with MLA style formatting
- ____ 2 pt. - Use of in-text parenthetical citations
- ____ 2 pt. - Attach copy of sources to your paper
- ____ 5 pt. – Research paper is within the range of 3-6 pages
- ____ 3 pt. - Writing mechanics (spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.)
- ____ 10 pt. - Organization, content, well thought out arguments that address many sides of the issue
- ____ 1 pt - Attach debate rubric to the top of your paper

You must turn in your paper electronically to joe.belcher@gcmail.maricopa.edu. Send your paper as an attachment with “Debate” in the subject line. If you do not submit your paper electronically **before** you turn in the paper copy you will receive zero credit.

In-class Debate (20 points possible):

- ____ 2 pt. - Professional presentation (standing up straight, speaking clearly and audibly)
- ____ 2 pt - Speaking without reading word-for-word. Appropriate use of notes and/or note cards
- ____ 4 pt - Appropriate use of visual aids – transparencies, power point
- ____ 3 pt - Well organized, logical flow
- ____ 7 pt - Demonstrate knowledge of topic
- ____ 2 pt – Ability to answer questions