

Tournament Schedule Planning Guide

Congratulations on your being willing to plan and run a tournament. I have drafted the following to help you plan the schedule for your tournament. These are just my thoughts based on years of planning schedules for tournaments. They are not the gospel truth about tournaments. I do believe the ideas contained herein will serve you and those attending your tournament well.

I believe that the utmost priority should be given to creating a schedule that allows each round to start on time and for the tournament to run on time as a whole. I believe we have an obligation to honor the time of all those attending the tournament including the community judges that give graciously of their time to help us adjudicate our events. I believe it is abusive of the kindness of a community judge to make him/her wait for a tournament that is running late.

Planning tournaments that will stay on time requires a commitment on our part as leaders to make this happen.

I have estimated how long it actually takes to run IE, LD and TP rounds generally competed at Stoa tournaments. I have also given consideration to the other activities that must be planned into the schedule during the tournament.

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Individual Events (Speech) Rounds: Recommend 2 Hours Minimum

- Competition Time
 - 80 minutes of speaking time for Platforms and Interps (this is just the starting point for time calculations)
 - Less for Limited Prep Events

- Before Each Speech
 - Speakers introduce themselves
 - The Interpers often ask the judges if they can remove their name tags.
 - For duo, this means two students walking to the side of the room and placing their name tags on a desk, then walking back to center stage
 - Asking if the judges are ready
 - Asking if the timer is ready
 - Positioning to begin their piece
 - Some students greet their judges before their speech

- After Each Speech
 - Student request the time for their speech
 - Students shake the hand of each judge while thanking the judges
 - Students shake the timer's hand and offer thanks as well

- Judging Time
 - Judges write comments on ballots
 - Good timers will keep a record of this time and remind the judges when two minutes have expired
 - Some of the judges are done at this point and some are not
 - The search for the next speaker begins
 - Sometimes, the student is in the room
 - Other times they are in the hallway
 - Sometimes it is the next student on the list
 - Other times the students will try to figure out who goes next based on other speeches they have to give

- New speaker enters the room and introduces him/herself and the process starts all over again.

- All of these activities take time. Conservatively, there are about 3 to 4 minutes from the time one speaker stops speaking and the next begins. That is if there are speakers ready to go and no waiting occurs.
 - There are seven intervals between eight speakers = 21-28 minutes
 - To ensure a timely tournament the more conservative figure is recommended

- Total time in room
 - 80 minutes + 28 minutes = 108 minutes (1 hour 48 minutes) if everything goes smoothly

- Transit time to and from round
 - The time it takes to walk to and from the farthest building on campus must be counted
 - The time it takes to find the actual room in the building must be counted
 - Often takes longer once it is dark
 - There are also practicalities, like the time it takes to stop and go to the bathroom. (I am not trying to be vulgar, but this is an activity all engage in that takes actual time; time that must be accounted for.)

Total Time for an IE Round = 118 minutes (essentially 2 hours)

- **108 minutes in room**
- **10 minutes for transit time** (Allows for 5 minutes each direction. This will be too conservative for large venues.)
- **Scheduling for two hours is recommended as the minimum time for IE events**
- (Even if one uses 3 minutes between speeches, that means the round takes 101 minutes. With transit time, the round cannot be scheduled for less than two hours. Scheduling the IE round for 1 hour and 45 minutes will likely cause the tournament to run late.)

Team Policy Debate Rounds: Recommend 1 Hour 45 Minutes Minimum

- Competition Time
 - 74 minutes (this is just the starting point for time calculations)
- Before the Round
 - Room setup – moving of tables and chairs in those rooms with a preceding speech round
 - Students organize evidence and briefs at the tables and ready their flowpads
 - Debaters engage the judge/judges
 - Each student introduces themselves
 - Often the students will ask questions of the judge/judges
 - Judge/judges offer responses
- Before each speech
 - Student organizes his/her paperwork
 - Student questions the readiness of the judge/judges, timer, and opponents
 - This occurs eight times
- After Constructive Speeches
 - “I am ready for cross examination”
 - Student waits for opponent to join at the podium
 - Sometimes, student questions the readiness of the judge and the timer
 - This occurs four times
- Between all speeches
 - One student leaving the podium
 - Another student approaching the podium
- After the round
 - Debaters congratulate one another
 - Each debater thanks the judge/judges
 - Each debater thanks the timer
 - Debaters sometimes question whether the judge/judges want to review any evidence
 - Some judges review evidence
- The extra time for all these activities is conservatively 12 minutes
 - Accounts for about 1 minute between speeches and 5 minutes for everything else
- Total time in room
 - 74 minutes + 12 minutes = 86 minutes (1 hour 26 minutes) (if everything goes smoothly)

- Transit time to and from round
 - The time it takes to walk to and from the farthest building on campus must be counted.
 - The time it takes to find the actual room in the building must be counted.
 - Often takes longer once it is dark.
 - There are also practicalities, like the time it takes to stop and go to the bathroom.

Total Time for TP Round = 96 minutes (1 hour 36 minutes)

- **86 minutes in room**
- **10 minutes transit time** (Allows for 5 minutes each direction. This will be too conservative for large venues.)
- **Scheduling for 1 hour and 45 minutes for TP Debate allows a couple of minutes for unforeseen circumstances**
- (Scheduling the TP round for 1 hour and 30 minutes will likely cause the tournament to run late.)

Lincoln Douglas Debate Rounds: Recommend One Hour Minimum

- Competition Time
 - 38 minutes (this is just the starting point for time calculations)
- Before the Round
 - Room setup – moving of tables and chairs in those rooms with a preceding speech round
 - Students organize evidence and briefs at the tables and ready their flowpads
 - Debaters engage the judge/judges
 - Each student introduces themselves
 - Often the students will ask questions of the judge/judges
 - Judge/judges offer responses
- Before each speech
 - Student organizes his/her paperwork
 - Student questions the readiness of the judge/judges, timer, and opponents
 - This occurs five times
- After Constructive Speeches
 - “I am ready for cross examination”
 - Student waits for opponent to join at the podium
 - Sometimes, student questions the readiness of the judge and the timer
 - This occurs two times
- Between all speeches
 - One student leaving the podium
 - Other student approaching the podium

- After the round
 - Debaters congratulate one another
 - Each debater thanks the judge/judges
 - Each debater thanks the timer
- The extra time for all these activities is conservatively 9 minutes
 - Accounts for about 1 minute between speeches and 5 minutes for everything else
- Total time in room
 - 38 minutes + 9 minutes = 47 minutes (if everything goes smoothly)
- Transit time to and from round
 - The time it takes to walk to and from the farthest building on campus must be counted.
 - The time it takes to find the actual room in the building must be counted.
 - Often takes longer once it is dark.
 - There are also practicalities, like the time it takes to stop and go to the bathroom.

Total Time for LD Round = 57 minutes (essentially 1 hour)

- **47 minutes in room**
- **10 minutes transit time** (Allows for 5 minutes each direction. This will be too conservative for large venues.)
- **Scheduling 1 hour for LD debate is the minimum time needed for the LD round**
- (Scheduling the LD round for 45 minutes will likely cause the tournament to run late.)

Announcements:

- Make sure to schedule enough time for announcements. Plan on the actual time it will take to read all the names of the students that are advancing. Allow for all of the cheering, jumping up and down, the hugging, and yes, the tears and comforting.
- Plan the time needed to push the Outround Ballots. Plan on this taking longer than you expect because of the increased difficulty in finding “clean” judges.
- Figure in the time it takes to move masses of people to the outrounds, particularly the later outrounds. Getting all those people settled takes time.

Meals:

- I recommend planning for meals
 - The nutritional needs of students, parents and siblings should be considered
 - Parents leaving campus to go get food means judges leaving campus and unable to judge
- Scheduling LD, TP, and IE rounds each in their own Pattern means that every competitor is guaranteed a break
 - During prelims, lunch and dinner times can occur during the student's down time in non-competition rounds
- On outround days, plan in time for lunch and dinner
- At tournaments where LD and TP are in the same pattern, time for lunch and dinner should be planned into the schedule

Outrounds:

- Outrounds take more time to panel judges and to get the round going for some of the following reasons:
 - The judging pool is tiring and it gets harder to convince them to judge another round
 - It is also more difficult to find judges that have not judged students in previous rounds
 - Moving large numbers of people to the outrounds adds considerable time to the rounds
 - In the final rounds of debate, the introduction of the judges can consume a significant amount of time

Fun:

- Why not plan some fun at your tournament?
- Consider a social of some kind
 - Ice cream social
 - Dessert social
 - Dinner together
 - Lunch together
 - Family dancing
 - English Country Dance
 - Square Dance
 - 50's Sock Hop/Swing Dance
 - Anything you can think of that would be a fun activity and encourages fellowship