



Negative Case and Refutation: Winning the NC.

The Negative speaks seven minutes with no idea what the Affirmative will say. This guide shows how to split the NC between your own case and live responses, and gives a simple refutation formula you can use today.

Two jobs in one speech

The Negative Constructive (NC) must do two things: **build your own reasons** the resolution is false, and **answer the Affirmative case**. A common plan for a 7-minute NC is roughly half and half, but adjust to what the Aff actually ran.

PART	SUGGESTED TIME	WHAT GOES HERE
Framework	1 min	Your value and criterion, or reasons the Aff framework is flawed
Your contentions	2.5 to 3 min	One or two reasons the Neg is true
Refutation of AC	2.5 to 3 min	Line-by-line answers
Wrap-up	20 sec	Why you win the framework and the impacts

Some Negs go 'refutation first' so the judge hears the answers while the AC is fresh. Try both in practice and see which fits your style.

Three ways to build a Neg

Counter-framework

Run your own value and criterion, then argue the Neg wins under it.

Direct clash

Accept the Aff framework and show the Aff still loses under it.

Burden attack

Argue the Aff must prove a stronger claim than they did, so the resolution fails even if some of it is true.

Tip

A Neg does not have to defend the opposite of everything. You only need to show the resolution as a whole is not justified.

The refutation formula

Use four beats for every response, spoken in about 15 to 25 seconds: **Label, Claim, Reason, Impact**.

- 1 Label.** 'On their first contention, about strong communities...'
- 2 Claim.** 'This argument does not support the Affirmative.'
- 3 Reason.** 'Because their own evidence says service works only when students choose it.'
- 4 Impact.** 'So the benefit disappears under a mandate, and we lose the value of liberty.'

TYPE OF RESPONSE	WHAT IT DOES	SAMPLE OPENER
No link	Shows the Aff argument does not connect to the resolution	'Even if true, this does not prove the resolution because...'
Turn	Flips the argument to help you	'Their own evidence actually proves the Neg.'
Outweigh	Admits it and shows yours matters more	'Even if that is true, my impact is bigger because...'
Evidence challenge	Questions the source or logic	'Their source does not say that, and the logic fails because...'

Preparing before the round

- ☐ Write one prepared Neg case for the current topic (find the topic as in the research guide in this series).
- ☐ Brainstorm the top five Aff cases you might meet and draft answers to each.
- ☐ Create a 'block file': short, pre-written answers to common arguments.
- ☐ Practice answering a new argument on the spot in under 30 seconds.
- ☐ Keep your flow organized so you can find the Aff's points fast.

Common mistakes: answering only the framework and ignoring contentions, spending the whole NC on your own case with no clash, and saying 'they have no evidence' without explaining why that matters.

PRACTICE: WRITE TWO RESPONSES TO AN AFF CONTENTION

Wrap-up

Need help building Neg blocks?

Scholar Coach can run live practice rounds with feedback. Book a free consultation at the link below.

Built from public guidance: UIL Intro to LD Debate slides, K. Adcock (uiltexas.org) · UIL Intro to LD Debate slides, E. Huber (uiltexas.org) · NSDA High School Unified Manual, 2021-2022 edition (speechanddebate.org). Rules change by league and tournament, so always confirm against your tournament invitation and current league rules.

NOTES

Want a plan built around **your** debater?

Book a free consultation. The short intake takes about a minute and opens right away.

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