

Debate Terminology

Make a motion - "I move that (or to)..." or "I motion to..."

Leave the room - (toilet, etc.)... "Motion! Personal privilege. To leave the room."

Second a motion - "Second!"

Bill - type of legislation that describes the details of how a policy would be enacted, if voted into law by the assembly.

Chamber - the group of students in a single room.

Cross-examination - period where the members of the assembly ask individual questions of the speaker. Multiple-part (or two-part) questions are not allowed because they take time from other members who may wish to question the speaker.

Docket - the complete packet of legislation (as titles or full text) distributed by a tournament.

Floor - when a member has the full attention of the assembly to speak (also refers to the area where the assembly meets, where its members speak, and where it conducts its business).

Legislation - a specific, written proposal (in the form of a "bill" or "resolution") made by a member or committee for assembly to debate.

Motion - a formal proposal to an assembly to take a certain action.

Presiding Officer/Chair - the leader of a legislative assembly who runs its meetings by recognizing members to speak or move. Also called the "presiding officer," or "P.O." Modeled after the Speaker of the House, or the Vice President or President pro tempore of the Senate.

Priority or Precedence - standard rule which requires the presiding officer to choose speakers who have spoken least (or not at all).

Recency - the presiding officer selects speakers based on who has spoken least recently (or earlier).

Resolution - an expression of conviction, or value belief of an assembly, which may urge, request or suggest further action by another decision-making authority or amend the Constitution.

Vote - the most common manner of voting in congress. Students will raise their hands or stand up.