

Debates

(updated 06 Feb 2009)

Debate (35 points) The lecture schedule includes four debates. Each of the four lab sections will be assigned one of the debates. Members of the lab section will be assigned roles in the debate and the debate will take place during the first half of the lecture noted in the schedule. Your grade will be determined by your preparedness, your performance, your poise, and your overall contribution to the debate preparation and execution.

Each debate will have four points of view represented. The goal of the team assigned to each point of view is to faithfully represent and defend that point of view and persuade the other teams, the instructors, and all your classmates that your point of view is correct (thereby “winning” the debate). Each of the four groups will have 2 minutes to present an opening statement. The order of the statements will be randomly decided by your instructors ahead of time. Following the statements will be time for questions from the audience, instructors, and the four groups (to each other). We will end with each team making a 1 minute closing statement. Everyone in the room will vote to decide the most convincing team in the debate based on the merits of the arguments presented in class. Each team will also rate the effectiveness and value of the other team members’ contributions during the preparatory phase.

Wed 18 February

A. Consumption v. Population [Friday Lab participating]

Does human population or human consumption play a bigger role in environmental degradation? Which of them should we attempt to control so as to relieve negative pressures on our global ecosystems?

Four Points of View:

1. **Paul Ehrlich** (population is the problem)
2. **Barry Commoner** (consumption is the problem; see exchanges b/w Ehrlich & Commoner!)
3. **George W. Bush** (consumption is the solution)
4. **Robert Mugabe** (Western consumption is a big part of the problem)

You are encouraged to learn about these individuals in order to generate appropriate stances, statements, and examples. Feel free to dress and act as the individual you represent. Finding quotes from their speeches or written work would also be beneficial.

Mon 09 March

B. GM Foods Debate [Wednesday Lab participating]

Should we be planting genetically modified foods around the world?

Four Points of View:

1. **Monsanto**
2. **Greenpeace**
3. **Iowan farmer**
4. **Vietnamese farmer**

You are encouraged to learn about these individuals/groups in order to generate appropriate stances, statements, and examples. Feel free to dress and act as the individual (or member of the group) you represent. Finding quotes from their speeches or written work would also be beneficial.

Mon 30 March

C. Oil Drilling Debate [Thursday Lab participating]

Mon 13 April

D. Climate Change Debate [Tuesday Lab participating]