



Paladin League Rules

1. How to Read the Rules	2	10. Timing	14
2. Purpose	2	11. Preparation Time	16
3. Eligibility	3	12. Cross-Examination.....	17
4. Lincoln-Douglas Value Debate	4	13. Evidence.....	18
5. Socratic Policy Debate	5	14. Score.....	21
6. Judges.....	6	15. Technical Difficulties	23
7. Schedule	11	16. Miscellaneous.....	25
8. Mavericks	12	17. Appeals.....	27
9. Win/Loss.....	13		

Version 1.4
November 5, 2020

1. How to Read the Rules

A. Formatting

Normal text is binding.

Bolded text is not binding. *It is presented for ease of reading and navigation.*

Italicized text is not binding. *It is provided for guidance, clarity, or explanation. Please explore the Paladin League website for additional information, including manuals and detailed explanations.*

B. Not Enforced

Bold and italicized passages is not enforced. *Judges may use these passages at their discretion.*

2. Purpose

A. Priorities

Paladin tournaments serve the following two purposes, in descending order of priority:

- 1. Prepare students for excellence in life after graduation.*
- 2. Create a competitive online tournament environment.*

B. Independent League

Paladin is not affiliated with any physical league. It is a complement, not a substitute, to physical competition. Participants are encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities to compete, regardless of league.

Paladin rules were created specifically for an online-only setting. They differ from those of other leagues. Participants are encouraged to read the rules carefully.

3. Eligibility

A. Requirements

Someone is eligible to compete if they meet BOTH of the following criteria:

- 1) They are 12–18 years old.
- 2) They either have not graduated high school or graduated in the current calendar year.

Some tournaments have additional Score eligibility requirements (see Score: Tiered Tournaments).

Competitors do not need to be affiliated with any school, region, nationality, or religion to participate.

Junior high students who meet the eligibility requirements are welcome to participate.

Competitors must be prepared to prove their eligibility upon request by a tournament official.

B. No Eligibility Taxes

All members of a team must meet these eligibility requirements.

C. Season Start Check

If a competitor meets the age and high school graduation eligibility requirements on the first day of the competitive season, they continue to meet them for the entire season.

The current season started on September 25, 2020.

4. Lincoln-Douglas Value Debate

A. Resolution

One resolution is selected by a public vote and used for the entire season. *The Lincoln-Douglas Value format uses value resolutions. A value resolution assigns worth to something.*

B. Format

In Lincoln-Douglas, competitors debate one-on-one, as follows:

Speech Name	Abbreviation	Speech Time	CX Time
Affirmative Constructive	AC	6	3
Negative Constructive	NC	7	3
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	IAR	4	
Negative Rebuttal	INR	6	
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	2AR	3	

Preparation time 3 minutes
Cutoff time 90 minutes

A typical LD round lasts 38 minutes.

6. Judges

A. Judge Authority

Paladin believes in maximizing the authority of the judge, for both philosophical and logistical reasons. Many things that are hard-and-fast rules in other settings are non-binding here. Tournament officials will defer to judges as much as possible.

B. Complete Agency

The judge may vote any way they choose for any reason they choose. Judges are encouraged to base their decisions on the content of the round as much as possible, and to set aside personal biases and special knowledge.

Judges are expected to punish debaters for rules violations and unethical behavior.

Judges may not do their own research. Once a debate has started, they should use the internet only for verifying evidence, accessing Paladin documents, and submitting the ballot.

C. Judge Eligibility

Someone is eligible to judge if they meet ALL of the following criteria:

- 1) They are 18+ years old.
- 2) They are fluent in English.
- 3) They have not competed in a Paladin League tournament during the current competitive season.

D. Round Start Check

These eligibility requirements must be met at the start time of the round being judged. *They are ignored at all other times.*

E. Lay Judges Welcome

No previous experience or training is needed to judge. *Inexperienced judges are desirable because they force debaters to communicate in a way that transfers well to "real life."*

Debaters are responsible for teaching the judges representing them enough to do their jobs. Judges are strongly encouraged to review the Paladin Judge Manual.

F. Judging Burden

A judging burden is a requirement to be available to judge a certain number of rounds. *Burdens are expressed with two numbers: the expected number of required rounds followed by the maximum number of required rounds.*

Example: If the judging burden is 4-5 rounds, the judge is expected to judge 4 rounds but is required to be available for a 5th round if needed.

A judge might be asked to judge less than the expected number of rounds.

G. Burden Per Entry

Burdens are assigned on a per-entry basis.

Example: Kevin registers for LD debate. He is responsible for finding a primary judge for 4-5 rounds. His sister Hannah signs up for Socratic Policy debate with her partner Makayla. Hannah and Makayla are responsible for an additional primary judge for 4-5 rounds.

H. Primary Judges

At registration, competitors must register at least one primary judge. Judging burden will be divided as evenly as possible between primary judges. *Thus, the more people are signed up, the less each of them will be asked to judge.*

I. Backup Judges

Judges may be replaced at will, provided the replacement is eligible. The backup judge fulfills the original judge's burden for the round. The backup judge may not accept a ballot if they have already been assigned one for the round.

The tournament does not need to be notified when a backup judge is used. *From a tabulation standpoint, a backup judge is the same as the primary judge they replace.*

Primary judges should forward the ballot email to the backup judge and have the backup judge accept the ballot immediately.

J. Ballot Push

Ballots are distributed (or “pushed”) by email at least 30 minutes before the round. Judges must click to accept the ballot. If they do not do so in a timely fashion, the ballot may be offered to another judge (or “repushed”). *Judges will always be given at least 30 minutes to accept.*

If the second judge accepts the ballot, the first judge no longer has the option of judging that round. The first judge is not penalized and their judging burden is unchanged. The second judge fulfills one round of their own burden.

If no judge can be found for the round, the first judge will be penalized for failing to appear. The second judge will not be penalized.

At the discretion of tournament officials, a ballot may be repushed multiple times.

K. Ballot Transfer

Once a ballot has been accepted, it cannot be transferred to anyone except a backup judge.

If a second judge accepts a ballot, the primary judge loses the option of accepting it.

Once a ballot is accepted, the judge who accepted it must judge the round, find a backup, or face a penalty.

L. Failure to Appear

If no judge has appeared 20 minutes after the round start time, or if the round cannot conclude because of scheduling/technical difficulties on the judge’s part, the competitor the judge represents will be penalized with a forfeit in that round. The competitors with the missing judge will each receive a bye.

Example: Jane's mother Mary is assigned to judge round 2 but does not show up. Jane's judge votes for her, but because of Mary's failure to appear, she receives a forfeit and her opponent receives a bye. The competitors Mary was supposed to judge each get a bye.

Failure to appear does not change the judging burden.

The penalty for failing to appear will be applied uniformly regardless of cause. *In other words, telling tournament officials why a judge missed a ballot will change nothing.*

Competitors on both sides of the debate must report a judge's failure to appear using an Incident Report.

M. Failure to Submit

Judges must submit their ballot no later than 1 hour after the cutoff time. Failing to submit a ballot will be treated as failing to appear.

The due time listed on a ballot is provided as guidance to keep the tournament on time and does not necessarily reflect the time that a judge will have failed to submit.

N. Late Submission

If a ballot is submitted later than 1 hour after the cutoff time, the contents of the ballot will be honored and the judge will fulfill a round of their burden. However, the competitor the judge represents will be penalized with a forfeit.

Example: Aaliyah's father Brandon is assigned to judge a Lincoln-Douglas round that starts at noon. He submits his ballot at 3:15 PM, fifteen minutes too late. The results of Brandon's ballot are honored. Aaliyah's judge votes for her, but because of Brandon's late ballot, she receives a forfeit and her opponent receives a bye.

If a ballot is submitted late, it may impact the accuracy of power matching. Matchups will not be retabulated to factor in late ballots if doing so negatively impacts the tournament schedule.

O. Conflicts of Interest

Judges are expected to avoid judging rounds if their personal biases for the competitors would make impartial ruling difficult. To prevent this, competitors are encouraged to recruit judges who are not already familiar with the competitors.

Judges will have the opportunity to report potential conflicts of interest before the tournament begins.

If a judge receives a ballot creating a conflict of interest, they may report the situation to tournament staff and request that it be repushed, or transfer the ballot to a backup judge without the conflict. If a new judge cannot be found, they are responsible for judging that round.

P. No Verbal Feedback

Judges may not give verbal feedback or reveal their decision directly to students until the tournament is over. *They are encouraged to give written feedback on the ballot.*

Q. Changing a Submitted Ballot

Judges may alter the winner and/or speaker points on a ballot by directly contacting tournament officials. The right to change a ballot persists until either of the following occurs:

- 1) 30 minutes after Cutoff Time for that round
- 2) Tournament staff uses the content of the ballot for matchmaking

Judges are always welcome to provide additional feedback to pass on to the competitors.

7. Schedule

A. Postings

30 minutes before a round begins, participants will receive an email with a unique link to a video chat for that round. Participants are encouraged to join the room as soon as possible to give themselves time to resolve potential technical difficulties.

B. Failure to Appear

If a round cannot start by 20 minutes after the round start time due to the absence of a competitor, that competitor will be penalized with a forfeit. Their opponent(s) will receive a bye. Judges must report the failure to appear to the tournament via the Paladin website (*instead of filling out a ballot*).

C. Absence Disqualification

If a competitor/team fails to appear twice in a row, they will be disqualified from the tournament.

D. No Exceptions

No accommodations will be made for anyone for personal emergencies or other special circumstances. This is for logistical reasons and to protect the competitive integrity of the tournament.

8. Mavericks

A. Going Maverick

If one member of a team is not available for any reason, their partner may speak on their behalf for one or all speeches/cross-examination. *This is known as "going maverick."* It is not considered to be a failure to appear.

Debaters have the option of going maverick for an entire tournament. If they do, they should list Maverick as their partner during registration.

B. Reporting

If a team is registered with two competitors but one of them goes maverick, the maverick must report the incident to the tournament by midnight of the day of the round. If the maverick does not report it in time, they will receive a punitive loss for that round.

If a team registered as a maverick, or if 3 maverick reports have already been filed for that team at that tournament, no reporting is necessary.

C. No Score Taxis

If a competitor fails to appear for a round and their partner goes maverick 3 or more times in a tournament, they will receive a Score of 0 for the tournament (see Score). The maverick's Score will not be altered. *This is to prevent a potential rule exploit in which an experienced debater goes maverick but shares their Score with a non-participating partner, thereby "taxiing" them to a higher place on the leaderboard.*

9. Win/Loss

A. Bye

If a debater receives a bye, they win that round, even if they received a losing ballot.

B. Forfeit

If a debater receives a forfeit, they lose that round, even if they received a winning ballot.

C. Double Loss

Double losses (in which both sides lose the round) may be given by tournament staff in certain special circumstances, such as resolving an appeal. Judges may not issue double losses.

D. Placeholder

This clause is intentionally left blank.

E. Split Decision

If a round has multiple judges, the outcome is determined by the majority decision. The minority decision is ignored.

F. Odd-Numbered Panels

Rounds must always have an odd number of judges. *This is to avoid ties.*

10. Timing

A. Judge is Timer

Judges are responsible for timing speeches, cross-examination, prep time, and cutoff time to ensure that the rules are upheld.

B. No Time Signals

Judges are not expected to provide time signals. Instead, competitors are encouraged to time themselves.

C. Start

Speech time begins when a competitor begins speaking.

D. Pleasantries

Opening pleasantries, such as confirming that the judge is ready, do not start the speech time. To be exempted, pleasantries must be devoid of substantive or persuasive content. *In other words, it must not refer to the content of the speech or potentially influence the judge's decision.*

Signposting – the practice of telling the judge what you will cover during the speech – is not a pleasantry.

E. End

A speech ends when the allotted time is used up or the competitor finishes. *It is customary to signal the end of a speech by thanking the judge for listening.*

Once a speech has begun, it can only be stopped for a technical pause (see *Technical Difficulties: Technical Pause*).

Once a speech has ended, it cannot be resumed.

F. No Overtime

Competitors may not begin a new sentence after their speech time has ended. They may go up to 10 seconds overtime to finish their current sentence.

Introducing a new argument in overtime is frowned upon.

G. No Restart

Once a time block (*such as a speech*) has begun, it can only be restarted for a technical repeat (see *Technical Difficulties: Technical Repeat*).

H. No Rollover

Unused speech time is lost; it cannot be used in future speeches.

I. Time Announcement

After a speech, cross-examination, or preparation time block, any competitor may confirm to the judge how long that time block lasted by writing the time in chat. No additional information may be provided. *Example: "The AC was 5:58."*

It's a good practice to do this whenever you finish a speech.

11. Preparation Time

A. Meaning

Each competitor/team has a budget of time that they may use to prepare before a speech or cross-examination.

B. No Interaction

Competitors may not interact with the judge during prep time except in reference to debate procedure (*such as announcing the intent to use prep time or requesting a technical pause*).

C. Begins Immediately

If a competitor is due to speak, they have 10 seconds to start speaking or using preparation time.

Competitors should alert the judge if they will use preparation time.

D. Rollover

Unused preparation time can be used later in the round. It cannot be used as speech time.

Example: In a Lincoln-Douglas round, the negative competitor uses 1 minute to prepare for the NC. They have 2 minutes left to prepare for the NR.

Preparation time is pooled between both competitors on a team.

E. Speech Begins When Prep Ends

If a competitor has used all their preparation time, their speech time must begin whether or not they have begun speaking.

12. Cross-Examination

A. Placeholder

This clause is intentionally left blank.

B. Witness and Examiner

In cross-examination, the person who just spoke – or “witness” – answers questions, while a representative of the other team – or “examiner” – asks questions.

C. Placeholder

Cross-examination must begin within 10 seconds of the end of the preceding speech.

D. Speech Timing Rules

Cross-examination uses the same timing rules, such as measuring overtime, that are used for speeches.

If a question is asked just as time expires, the witness may not answer it because doing so requires starting a new sentence in overtime.

E. Placeholder

This clause is intentionally left blank.

13. Evidence

A. Immediate Credit

Competitors must credit the original source whenever they quote someone else's words. Credit must be given before the speech is over. *Crediting a source immediately before or after the quote is encouraged.*

Practices such as "Sources are available upon request," are not permitted.

B. Distinction Clarity

Competitors must make clear when they are using their own words, and when they are quoting someone else. They must also indicate when they skip over more than 2 full sentences in the original text.

Example: "Later in the article, they say ..."

C. Two Standards of Completeness

Competitors are expected to provide enough information about a source to meet BOTH standards of completeness:

- 1) Everything the judge needs to know to accurately evaluate the evidence.*
- 2) Full credit to the original author(s).*

The name and credentials of the author and the year of publication are usually an acceptable minimum.

D. Modification

Evidence may be modified by adding or removing words. Modification may not add to or alter the meaning of the text. Essential context must be included. Reasonable simplification (such as "April 27, 1882" to "In the 1880s") is acceptable.

Debaters should abbreviate and round in a way that is unfavorable to them to avoid even the temptation of evidence tampering. "57.29%" rounded to "over half" is fine; rounded to "60%" is questionable.

E. Summary

Evidence that originally existed in the form of words must be presented in the form of quoted words. *Summarizing without presenting the actual quote is not allowed. Summarizing non-word evidence (such as a chart) is allowed, but you still need the actual chart available for review.*

F. Placeholder

This clause is intentionally left blank.

G. Evidence Review

Upon request by the opponent during the round or the judge at any time before the participants leave the room, a competitor must produce any cited evidence for review. If the evidence has been modified, the original text must also be available.

Modifying the evidence in a way that makes the original visible – such as shrinking the font size of omitted text – is encouraged.

Competitors are responsible for delivering evidence in a legible and timely fashion. Failing to produce evidence for review due to a technical issue is just as serious as outright refusing to produce it.

Evidence may be shared by pasting text into the chat, sharing a high-resolution picture of the evidence, or emailing the judge and opponents.

H. Research during the Round

Competitors may use the internet or any other resource to gain new information or evidence during the round. Evidence created this way is held to the same standards as any other evidence.

An explanation of this rule is available on the Paladin League website.

I. Penalize Infractions

Judges are encouraged to penalize unethical use of evidence with a loss. Penalizable infractions include not crediting a source in the speech it was presented, not presenting evidence for immediate review upon request,

modifying evidence in a way that changes its meaning, and intentionally fabricating or misrepresenting facts.

J. Trust in the Judge

Paladin depends on judges to protect the integrity of rounds by holding competitors to high standards of conduct.

14. Score

A. Calculation

At the end of the tournament, each participant is given a Paladin Score based on their finish and the number of competitors in the event, as follows:

s	Size	(Total competitors in the event)
t	Size Normalizer	1.1
f	Your Finish	(1st place is 1, 2nd is 2, and so on)
g	Finish Normalizer	1.25

$$\text{Score} = (((s*t)/((s*(t-1))+3))-1)*25)*(((s*g)/(s*(g-1)+f))-1)/(((s*g)/(s*(g-1)+1))-1)$$

An explanation of this formula is available on the Paladin League website.

B. Immediate Award

Competitors are considered to have received their tournament Score on the midnight after the awards ceremony (*even if it takes longer to post the updated Scores*).

C. Scores are Individual

Scores are given individually to both members of a team. *This allows competitors to change teammates from tournament to tournament.*

D. Persistent Season

All competitors have a Score of 0 at the start of a competitive season. Their season Score is the sum of all the tournament Scores in that season.

Score does not carry over from one season to the next.

E. Tiers

Debaters are given a tier status based on their accumulated season score.

F. Tiered Tournaments

Some tournaments may only accept competitors at certain tiers or higher. Eligibility is checked when registration for the tournament closes. Debaters who are not eligible at that time will be disqualified.

There is a full explanation of tournament types on the Paladin website.

G. Score Lock

The size of an event is considered final one second before the third round begins. *Competitors dropping out of the tournament after that will not impact the available Score. Competitors who fail to appear in the first two rounds will be disqualified before Score is locked.*

H. Minimum Participants

An event must have at least 2 competitors to grant Score.

I. Cash Prizes

The top two finishes in each event will receive monetary prizes with a dollar value equal to the Score they earned. *Prizes will be transferred via Venmo. Competitors will receive emails after the tournament requesting their information, as needed.*

J. Placeholder

This clause is intentionally left blank.

K. Teams Share Prizes

Prizes earned by a team are either transferred to a single account, or divided evenly between two accounts.

15. Technical Difficulties

A. Competitors are Responsible

Technical difficulties are inevitable in any tournament. These rules attempt to strike a balance between leniency and competitive integrity.

Competitors must take responsibility for making sure that they and the judges representing them have stable internet connections, working equipment, and no distractions or scheduling conflicts. If technical difficulties become too severe, the competitor will be penalized and the tournament will proceed. Competitors should adopt a mindset of complete personal responsibility, rather than shifting blame or asking for special treatment when things go wrong.

All participants are encouraged to test their setup before the tournament begins.

B. Cutoff Time

Cutoff time is a maximum duration that a round will be permitted to continue (see *Lincoln-Douglas Value Debate* and *Socratic Policy Debate*).

If a round reaches the cutoff time, the round must end immediately, ending the current time block. *The judge is strongly encouraged to vote against the side most responsible for the delay.*

C. Technical Pause

A technical pause stops the current timer indefinitely. *It should be used only for resolving technical issues.*

Technical pauses are granted at the judge's sole discretion. Judges may use as many technical pauses as they wish, for whatever duration they wish.

Any participant may ask for a technical pause verbally or by placing a "!" in the chat box. The judge is not required to honor the request.

D. Technical Repeat

A technical repeat adds time to the current clock and allows the competitor(s) to repeat a portion of the current time block. *It should be used only for mitigating the effect of technical issues.*

Technical repeats may only be initiated during a technical pause. They may not rewind further than the beginning of the time block interrupted by the technical pause.

During a technical repeat, competitors must recreate the original performance as accurately as possible. Cross-examination questions and answers cannot be changed.

Judges may use as many technical repeats as they wish, adding as much time as they wish.

E. Delays Don't Move Cutoff

Technical pauses and repeats do not extend the cutoff time. *Thus, judges should employ them sparingly.*

16. Miscellaneous

A. Attire

There is no formal dress code. *Competitors are encouraged to wear semiformal/business attire.*

B. Visual Aids

Competitors may not supplement their speeches with written, audio, or visual aids. *Gestures are acceptable.*

C. Disruption

Competitors may not interfere with or distract from other people's speeches. *Everyone is expected to mute their microphone when it is not in use.*

D. Spectators

At the discretion of the participants, spectators may be added to the call. Spectators must leave the call at the request of any of the participants. They may not turn on their microphone or video or cause any delays or disruptions.

Example: "Can we wait a few minutes before the next speech? My mom has to restart her phone." No. Waiting for participants is acceptable. Waiting for spectators is not.

E. Decorum

Competitors should treat everyone with the kindness, respect, and dignity appropriate to a formal competitive high school speaking event.

F. Intolerable Behavior

Tournament officials have the right to intervene to prevent or punish intolerable behavior. Behavior is intolerable if it meets any of these conditions:

- 1) **Obscene.** Invokes imagery, language, or subject matter that is not appropriate for minors.
- 2) **Aggressive.** Speaks to participants in a personally hurtful, disrespectful, or threatening manner.
- 3) **Hateful.** Targets a people group based on identity such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, gender, or sexual orientation.

These conditions are deliberately written in an ambiguous way to give tournament officials maximum leeway. However, they are to be invoked only when necessary: when the behavior in question cannot be tolerated.

Consistently engaging in intolerable behavior may result in being banned from future tournaments.

G. Punitive Action

Judges should make clear on a ballot when they take punitive action, both for the benefit of the competitor and so tournament officials have the option to explore the matter further.

H. Outside Help

Competitors may interact with others, such as a friend, mentor, or coach, when they are not speaking. Both in-person and virtual interaction is acceptable.

Non-competitors must not be seen or heard in any way by the judge.

Competitors are encouraged to thoroughly research the topic before the round and depend on their own judgement during the round to maximize their performance and growth.

An explanation of this rule is available on the Paladin League website.

I. No Extra Teammates

A Lincoln-Douglas side must have exactly 1 speaker; a Socratic Policy side may have either 1 or 2 (*see Schedule: Going Maverick*).

J. Non-Rule Materials

Official communication from Paladin League that is not part of this document (*such as information on the website*) is not binding. It may be used to guide interpretation of the rules in the same way as italicized text in this document.

17. Appeals

A. Definition

Appealing is the process of invoking tournament officials to intervene in normal tournament proceedings, such as to overturn a judge's decision. *It is known in other settings as adjudication.*

B. Last Resort

Appeals should be used only as a last resort. Tournament officials will defer to judge authority as much as possible.

C. Rules Only

Appeals may only be used when binding text in this document has been violated. *Judges are the first and only line of defense against legal but unethical behavior, and they are always the preferred way to enforce the rules.*

D. Benefit of the Doubt

Uncertainty will be handled in a way that minimizes disruption, maximizes judge agency, and assumes that the competitors were acting with good intentions.

E. Rule Violation Accusations are Serious

Competitors should not accuse each other of rules violations lightly. Suggesting that the opponent broke the rules calls their integrity into question. Even clear violations should be dealt with carefully and precisely, whether in the round, in an appeal, or when speaking of the round to others. Mishandling a rule violation can cause more harm than the violation itself.

These rules are written with article and clause numbers to facilitate reference. When someone is accused of breaking a rule, it is a good practice to always mention the article and clause number. If you can't find a corresponding clause, you should not be invoking the rules.

Judges should penalize competitors who invoke the rules in a flippant, slanderous, or misleading way.

F. Right to File

An appeal can only be initiated by a tournament official or by a competitor who was directly impacted by a rule violation. *Parents and coaches may not submit appeals on behalf of competitors, but they may guide them through the appeal process.*

G. 24-hour Window

An appeal must be submitted no later than 24 hours after the cutoff time of the last round of the tournament. *It should be submitted as soon as possible, ideally before the judge finishes submitting their ballot.*

H. Official Discretion

Tournament officials have full discretion to launch an investigation, overrule a judge decision, or make any other changes to the tournament in response to an appeal. *The goals of these actions are to minimize the effect of the rule violation, indemnify the victims, and mitigate future violations.*