



2026 Rocky Mountain Debating Championship
MSU Denver
Denver, CO
October 24-25, 2026



UNIVERSITY OF
DENVER



Letter of Invitation

Dear friends,

You are invited to attend the **2026 Rocky Mountain Debating Championship** at Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) in Denver, Colorado! This British Parliamentary style tournament, a collaboration between the University of Denver and MSU Denver, will be held at MSU Denver in the Central and West Classroom Buildings. We are steps away from Larimer Square, the 16th Street Mall, Meow Wolf, and Denver's arts and cultural districts. There are numerous hotels and restaurants around our campus. We will be in touch with more details about potential lodging opportunities by the end of the summer.

Check-in will be on the evening of **October 23**, and rounds will take place on **October 24-25, 2026**. This tournament will feature **6 rounds** of preliminary debates, a **novice breakout**, and **semifinals break** in varsity (*with the option to add a quarterfinal round if we have enough entries*). We will follow **YODL rules** and procedures for this tournament including a topic strike process using topic areas we will release about a month before the tournament. This is a **free tournament** open to any and all participants. We will provide lunch on both Saturday and Sunday. We look forward to hosting you at MSU Denver!!

Also, please note that on **Friday, October 23**, there will be an optional additional event at MSU Denver that you might find of interest. In collaboration with the **Civic Debate Consortium** and **Ken Newby of Morehouse College**, MSU Denver will be hosting a one-day **Social Justice Debates (SJD)** event. SJD competitions offer the opportunity to engage one topic (the area for this year is Food Justice) over the course of multiple rounds. The format is evidence-based, judged by topic experts (not coaches), and involves the incorporation of experiential learning opportunities. More details will be made available in August after the 2026 SJD topic wording is announced. **This is an entirely optional activity** and there is no requirement that you attend the SJD event to attend Rocky Mountain (or vice versa). For registration purposes, these will be entirely separate events. Please let us know if you have questions. If you think you might want to join to observe and/or compete, please plan to arrive in Denver on Thursday, October 22. More on this very soon!

Sincerely,

John Rief
MSU Denver
jrief1@msudenver.edu

Rob Margesson
University of Denver
robert.margesson@du.edu

Tournament Staff

Conveners: Rob Margesson and John Rief

Tab Director: Will Silberman

CA Team: TBA

Tournament Ombuds: Gina Iberri-Shea

For all registration questions, travel logistics, and pre-tournament assistance, please contact John Rief at jrief1@msudenver.edu.

Registration Information

There is **no registration fee** for this tournament. The baseline judging commitment is 1 judge per institution. Beyond this baseline, the judging commitment per school will be N-1. So, every team should plan to supply a judge. Schools with more than one team will follow the N-1 rule. That is, institutions with 1 team will owe 1 judge. Institutions with 2 or more teams will supply judges using the rule. Please supply as many chairs as you can. We are planning to hire several local judges but you will need to contact John Rief at jrief1@msudenver.edu to secure them toward your commitment. The earlier you do this, the better. If you have secured a judge with John Rief, this judge will count toward your commitment. We do not plan to charge participating institutions for these judges. **We will assess a fee of \$50.00 per uncovered team.**

Please enter your teams on forensictournament.net by Monday, October 12. No new registrations will be accepted after that time. We need to know our total numbers by this date to complete our catering orders. All changes should be sent to John Rief by no later than **Wednesday, October 21.** If you have questions or special requests, please email John Rief at jrief1@msudenver.edu.

Tournament check-in will take place at [Degree Brewpub](#) from 7-9pm on Friday, October 23. If you are unable to join us, please feel free to email or text John Rief confirming your arrival and to let us know of any last-minute changes.

Tournament Procedures

As noted above, we will follow **YODL rules** at this tournament including the topic strike and points of privilege procedures. **We will not be using open adjudication at this tournament.** If you have any questions about these rules, please do not hesitate to contact Rob Margesson at robert.margesson@du.edu. We will go over these rules at the Saturday morning briefing.

We will use the **[YODL adjudication manual](#)** as our primary source for rules and norms throughout the tournament. While we will not be requiring judges to complete YODL certification, we do expect that everyone will be familiar with the YODL manual. **Please note that while we are using YODL rules, this tournament does not count toward YODL points and is not officially sanctioned by YODL.**

For any issues not addressed in the YODL manual, please consult the [WUDC manual](#). Should any questions or concerns arise, these are the documents our CA team, tab, tournament ombuds, and tournament leadership will reference.

A slate of **topic areas** will be released around one month before the tournament. We will make these topic areas available on forensicstournament.net, via email to currently registered teams, and on the British Parliamentary Debate in North America Facebook group. Teams will be given an opportunity to recommend specific topic wordings to the CA team shortly after the release of these areas. The due date for suggestions will be provided once the topic areas are released.

Food

We will be serving lunch both days of the tournament. Coffee and snacks will be available throughout the day. You will be on your own for breakfast and dinner. Please contact John Rief at jrief1@msudenver.edu with any **dietary requests, restrictions, and allergies** on or before **Monday, October 12** using the [DIETARY RESTRICTIONS SURVEY](#).

Lodging

The [SpringHill Suites by Marriot Denver Downtown](#) is our campus hotel. Given that it is very small, they are unable to supply us with a large room block. However, we do have a courtesy hold for 10 rooms, and they will take independently made reservations any time. Please note that there is a separate block for the SJD-Denver event available in that invite. The rooms on this hold are all Kings, but they all have pull out couch beds as well.

MSU Rocky Mountain Debating

Start Date: Friday, October 23, 2026

End Date: Monday, October 26, 2026

Hotel(s) offering your special group rate:

- **SpringHill Suites by Marriott Denver Downtown for 187.00 USD per night**

[Book your group rate for MSU Rocky Mountain Debating](#)

For individual reservations, the cancellation policy is 48 hours prior to arrival, with no charge. Cancellations made within the 48-hour window will be subject to a charge of one night's stay.

Given the limited number of rooms available at our campus hotel, many of you will need to seek out other options. The Denver Tech Center (DTC) has been a good location for exceptional rates in the

past and is on a light rail line. You will also find numerous hotel options near our campus in downtown. I'm also happy to chat with anyone who would like help locating a good hotel option. Please just email me.

Parking

We will be paying for parking and will release a code to everyone a week ahead of the tournament. Please consult the attached map (below) for the best places to park during the tournament.

Schedule

- Please note that all times are MDT (Mountain Daylight Savings Time) and are subject to minor modifications. You will be informed of any changes well in advance.

Friday, October 23

- Tournament Check-In 7-9pm Degree Brewpub (on our campus)

Saturday, October 24

- Check-in 7-8am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Drop Deadline* 8am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Briefings 8-8:30am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Round 1 9am Central and West
- Round 2 11am Central and West
- Lunch 1pm Central first floor hallway
- Round 3 2pm Central and West
- Round 4 4pm Central and West

Sunday, October 25

- Check-in 7-8am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Drop Deadline* 8am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Briefings 8-8:30am Central Classroom Building, Room 109
- Round 5 9am Central and West
- Round 6 11am Central and West
- Lunch 1pm Central first floor hallway
- Sems + Nov Breakout 2pm Central and West
- Finals 4pm Central and West

* Those students and judges not checked in at this time will be dropped from the tournament.

Campus Map

You will find the Central and West Buildings in the lower right hand (southeast) section of campus on the map below. The best parking area for the tournament is Holly. You can find an online version of the map by clicking on the hyperlink above.



We hope to see you in Denver!