The Bill Todd Debates, December 5, 2026

Friends and Colleagues,

On behalf of the University of Miami Debate Team and the UM School of Communication, and in honor of our friend and mentor, the late Professor Bill Todd, we are pleased to invite student debaters of all experience and skill levels to participate in a British Parliamentary debate tournament on our campus on Saturday, December 5, 2026. We offer four preliminary rounds and a final round. If there are sufficient novice entries and available judges, we will also hold separate novice finals.

Fees and Judging: ***There will be no fees for the event***, however, you must provide judging to cover your teams. For judging, we will follow the N-1 rule (the number of judges required is the total number of teams entered minus one; and if you have a team entered, you must supply a judge). Teams may not participate if they cannot supply judging. Judges may be undergraduate students who are fully enrolled and in good standing. Lunch will be provided on Saturday. We will provide awards for top speakers including novice recognition and trophies for the finalists. UM students will be allowed to participate and will be eligible to receive awards.

Please register for the tournament at https://forensicstournament.net/BillToddDebates/26

Deadline for entry: Monday, Nov. 30, 5:00 pm Miami time, however, please enter as early as possible *even if your entry is tentative* to help us in planning. Or just let Patrick know you are thinking about attending.

Hotels: Lodging is expensive in Coral Gables and Miami. If you would like help securing lodging, please contact Patrick Waldinger asap with your needs: he may be able to access university rates at some area hotels. We recommend Aloft Miami Dadeland and Hampton Miami Dadeland for location and relative value**.**

Directions: For directions to The University of Miami, and campus maps, visit Directions and Maps. The School of Communication is located at 5100 Brunson Drive, Coral Gables, FL 331524-2105.

Parking: You will be required to pay for on-campus parking through Pay by Phone, a Pay Station, or the UM Parking Portal @ https://universityofmiami.t2hosted.com/cmn/auth_ext.aspx. See University of Miami Visitor Parking for more detailed information and maps.

Tournament Operation:

All participants debate at the invitation of the University of Miami according to its tournament rules and the rules the University holds generally for conduct of guests while on campus. Unless indicated otherwise, and where relevant, the tournament will in general, attempt to follow the guidelines of The World Universities Debating Championships Debating and Judging Manual and the American Forensic Association Code of Standards related to tournament operation and contestant, judge and coach conduct. Motions will be drawn from significant news sources including, for example, The New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, The Economist, The Guardian, and Foreign Affairs. Participation is open to any undergraduate student seeking a degree from an accredited academic institution. Students must have the approval of their institution to compete. Please forward your questions about format, tournament operation, etc. to Patrick Waldinger at waldinger@miami.edu or 305-284-8084.

The University of Miami is a tobacco free campus.

Equity/ Title IX: The University of Miami Debate Team seeks to foster an environment where all competitors, judges and guests feel welcome and safe. We encourage you to help us in this endeavor.

Consistent with YODL rules and norms on Equity and Points of Privilege, which will take precedence over Worlds' rules and procedures if in conflict, debaters may raise a Point of Privilege in-round to address equity issues occurring in the moment. The Chair should immediately stop time, address the concern (typically by counseling the debaters to refrain from potentially offensive behavior) and then resume time. Judges are empowered to consider equity issues and/or abuse of Points of Privilege when assigning rankings and points. Chairs are expected to manage Points of Privilege offered by the debaters. Points of Privilege are intended to allow debaters to address potentially offensive behavior by others in the round. If a debater requests a Point of Privilege, the Chair should stop the speaker's time, allow the debater raising the point to state their concern and then respond either by counselling the speaker on more appropriate behavior, counselling the debater raising the point that their point is not valid or by deferring decision by taking the point "under advisement." Should any participant(s) believe the equity issue is not sufficiently addressed via a Point of Privilege or should an equity issue occur outside a debate round, the participant(s) may address the issue with the tournament host or their designee. The coach of the programs involved must be invited to participate in this discussion. The host or designee should assume an ombudsman perspective, with a charge of resolving the equity issue which may involve facilitating discussion between those involved to address the issue. No participant unwilling to participate in such a discussion may be required to do so.

Should the issue remain unresolved or if it is of sufficient magnitude to exceed management by tournament staff, the host or involved parties may seek the involvement of the host institution's Equity and Title IX office. The University of Miami's Title IX Office, guidelines, and complaint procedures can be located at Title IX.

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Accessibility: If you need accommodations, please contact Patrick Waldinger. All our classrooms are wheelchair accessible. We will designate a Quiet Room to allow participants to relax and regain composure. Upon request, we will provide a breastfeeding room. There are gender neutral bathrooms on campus. We can provide a list of rental car and car services that accommodate wheelchairs. The University of Miami's Office of Disability Services (ODS) is in the Camner Center for Academic Resources in The Whitten University Center N201. ODS staff can be reached at 305-284-2374 (Voice), 305-284-3401 (TDD).

Eligibility: The tournament is open to any undergraduate student seeking a degree from an accredited academic institution. Students must have the approval of their institution to compete and have a faculty advisor/official coach available for questions or concerns.

We sincerely hope you will join us in Miami for the Bill Todd Debates. Do not hesitate to contact us if we can answer questions or help in any way. Sincerely,

Patrick Waldinger
Director of Debate
waldinger@miami.edu

Davalyn Suarez
Assistant Director of Debate
dxs1271@miami.edu

Sophia Ives
UM Debate Team President
sni17@miami.edu

Tentative Schedule (times approximate)

Saturday, December 5, 2026

9:00 - 9:30 am	Registration, Breakfast, Francis L. Wolfson School of Communication Courtyard
9:30 am	Mandatory Judge and Competitor Briefing
9:45 am	Round I announced
10:00 am	Round I
11:30	Round II announced
11:45	Round II
	Lunch (provided by UM)
2:15 pm	Round III announced
2:30 pm	Round III
4:15 pm	Round IV announced
4:30 pm	Round IV
6:00 pm	Announcement of Finals and other awards recognition
6:15 pm	Final Round Motion
6:30 pm	Final Round begins