



## Short Rules for the Open Parliamentary Debate

*The Open Parliamentary Debate is an academic debate format fit for tournament use. It combines the sport aspect of the parliamentary debate with the realism of a public debate. It provides room for development and improvement of well-understood rhetoric under the conditions of productive agonality.*

### The Motion

The Motion of the debate is a practical yes/no question. The Government speakers propose a policy that agrees with the question, the Opposition argues against it. The factions do not simulate a real parliament.

### The Speakers

Participants of the debate are three speakers in each faction (Opening Speaker, Extension Speaker, Closing Speaker) and at least three Non-Aligned Speakers. The Non-Aligned Speakers act as representatives of the public and are as well as the audience the targets of persuasion.

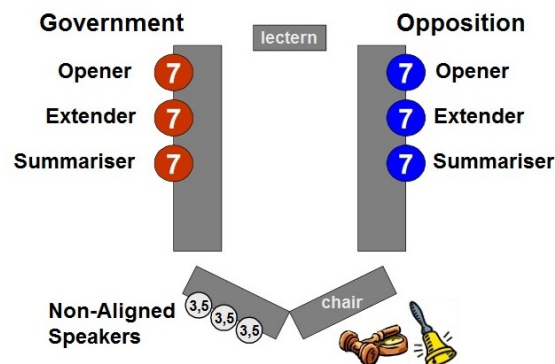
**The Opening Speaker of the Government** defines the motion by proposing a specific policy and puts forward arguments in favour of it. By interacting and by giving reply speeches to the Non-Aligned Speakers he stays relevant during the debate.

**The Opening Speaker of the Opposition** rebuts the Opening Speaker of the Government. With arguments in favor of the Opposition as well as reply speeches he tries to persuade the audience to oppose the motion.

**The Extension Speaker of Government and Opposition** add new arguments or deepen existing points. They ask questions, rebut the other side and give reply speeches.

**The Non-Aligned Speakers** extend the debate by constructing new arguments or substantive rebuttal. Within the first minute of their speeches, they have to position themselves clearly on either side. Non-Aligned Speakers should not contradict earlier arguments of their chosen side. They speak in a predetermined order.

**The Closing Speakers** sum up the clashes of the debate. They are allowed to deepen existing analyses, rebut arguments and give new examples. The Closing Speakers should not start a new line of argumentation. If at least one Non-Aligned Speaker gave a speech, the Opposition speaks first and the Government gets the concluding word.



### Presidency and procedure

The **President** makes sure the rules are followed, decides about their interpretation in questionable cases and takes all measures necessary to enforce them. Points of order or requests for a call to order are not allowed.

If the President leaves his chair the debate is halted until he calls for continuation.

The President opens and closes the debate and reads out the Motion in the beginning. (In case of a public debate, the President can now start a secret voting on the audience's and the Non-Aligned Speakers' position on the Motion.)

The President calls every speaker to the podium. The allotted time begins with the first word of the speaker. During the speech the President marks the beginning and the end of the time for questions with a single stroke of the gavel. The end of the allotted time is marked with two strokes. If a speaker continues for more than fifteen seconds after that, the President stops him by ringing the bell.

If a question takes longer than fifteen seconds, the President stops it immediately with the bell.

The Faction Speakers have seven minutes' speeches. The first and last minute are protected against questions.

The Non-Aligned Speakers have three and a half minutes. The first minute and the last thirty seconds are protected time.

The speech of a Non-Aligned Speaker is followed by a reply speech given by either the Opening or the Extension Speaker of the team he spoke against. The reply speech takes one and no questions are allowed.

The reply speech to the last Non-Aligned Speaker is

followed by the Closing Speakers, starting with the Opposition.

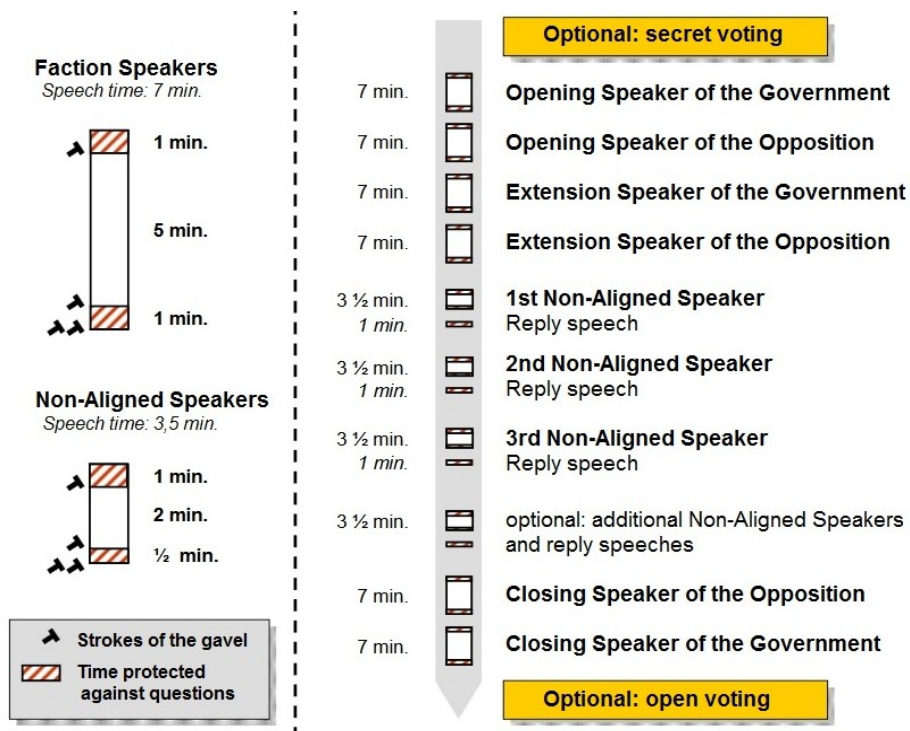
(In case of a public debate, the President would start an open voting after the last speech. All who were entitled to vote earlier are again. After counting the result of the open voting, the result of the secret voting is published.)

Reply speeches, questions, interjections

Reply speeches, questions and interjections are special ways of interaction and liven up the debate. They motivate the speakers to pay attention during the whole length of the debate. The added interaction offers the chance to further clash with the other side and clear up points of contention.

Reply speeches are obligatory, questions are desired, interjections are allowed.

(1) Reply speeches give teams the chance to react to an opposing Non-Aligned Speaker. They are limited to one minute and are held standing at the bench. No questions are allowed during this time.



(2) Questions are an instrument to get a speaker to clarify his position or an argument. Questions are allowed from:

1. All Non-Aligned Speakers as well as the opposing speakers during the unprotected time of Faction Speakers.
2. The Faction Speakers spoken against during the unprotected time of a Non-Aligned Speaker.

Questions last a maximum of fifteen seconds and are offered by standing up and pointing at the speaker. An interjection like "question" or "on that point" may be added.

If multiple questions are offered at the same time, the acceptance or refusal of one question means all others are automatically refused.

Every Faction Speaker should accept at least one question, Non-Aligned Speakers benefit from a question as well.

(3) Interjections help all debaters to point out inconsistencies, mistakes, contradictions and so on. Interjections should not exceed a maximum of seven words. There should be no dialogue between speakers by going back and forth with interjections and replies.

A speaker can forbid interjections for a minute. He needs to ask the President to turn over the bell, then for the next minute there can be no interjections. Questions are still allowed.

The President has the right to restrict the amount of interjections, if he feels they make it impossible to give a speech.

More information about the OPD format: <http://opd.streitkultur.net>

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