



Presidential Debate Format and Rules

Debate #1: Economic Policy -- Tuesday, Oct. 7 (Kahn Room, HMU)

Debate #2: Social Policy -- Tuesday, Oct. 14 (Kahn Room, HMU)

Debate # 3: Foreign & Defense Policy -- Tuesday, Oct. 21 (Myers 137)

Debate #4: Open Forum Debate -- Tuesday, Oct. 28 (Kahn Room, HMU)

ELECTION DAY -- Tuesday, November 4

PARTICIPANTS: Either one or two members of the group will be playing the role of John McCain or Barack Obama. If two people are participating, then they must switch off at the podium for each question and the other may not assist that person in any way (i.e., passing notes, hand signals). It is advisable that you bring some sort of briefing binder or note cards with you to help you respond to the questions, but keep them short and simple and **DO NOT READ FROM YOUR NOTES**.

FORMAT: The basic format for the debate will be as follows (unless otherwise noted):

- A. Opening statements (two minute each).
- B. Questions to McCain/Obama (alternate) from reporters (two minute responses)
- C. Follow up question from reporter based on candidate's response.
- D. Candidates may ask to respond to opponents comments and/or be prompted by the media.
- E. Repeat Steps B, C and D as time allows.
- F. Closing Statements (Two minute each).

BASIC RULES FOR THE DEBATES:

1. Come prepared to participate in the debate actively and successfully.
2. Do not interrupt others while they are speaking.
3. Follow the instructions of the moderator (that's me) at all times.
4. Be respectful and polite towards others.
5. Enjoy yourself...it beats a dull lecture!

TIPS FOR GOOD PUBLIC SPEAKING:

1. Don't speak too fast; clearly articulate your words.
2. Stand up straight; don't put your hands in your pockets; don't shift from foot to foot.
3. Make eye contact with the audience and/or the person you are addressing.
4. Try to avoid splicing your sentences with "um's" and "ah's"; try not to say anything if you have to pause to gather your thoughts.

DRESS: Participants in the debates are expected to *dress appropriately for giving a formal presentation* (coat and tie for guys; dress/skirt/dress pants and blouse for women). No tee shirts, no jeans, and no baseball caps.

REMEMBER: *Your goal in this exercise is to fairly and accurately represent the views of your candidate!!*