



UNITED STATES ACADEMIC DECATHLON®

SPEECH GUIDELINES

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GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING SPEECH

Welcome to Academic Decathlon®, and thank you for serving as a Speech Judge in this year's competition. **Each decathlete will be giving a prepared speech and an impromptu speech.** Please read the following carefully and adhere to all procedural and timing guidelines. Enjoy the event!

Teams of Judges

Each team will consist of 2 – 3 speech judges. Each team will be assigned to a specific room and will be evaluating one decathlete at a time using the U.S. Academic Decathlon® Speech Evaluation Form - Scantron (see sample on page 10). Each judge will evaluate the decathlete individually, and only speech judges will evaluate the speeches. The scores of the speech judges will be averaged together to form one score for each decathlete.

Schedule

Please be sure to time accurately for a fair competition and release decathletes ON TIME. Stopwatches or timers will be provided to time the two speeches (prepared and impromptu). All decathletes **must** receive the same amount of time for each speech.

Time Rules

- Time speeches precisely
- Admit and dismiss decathletes according to established schedule
- Each decathlete is allotted approximately 8 minutes in the speech room
 - 35 seconds for introductions/instructions
 - **3 ½ - 4 minutes for prepared speech**
 - 20 seconds to set up for impromptu speech
 - One-minute impromptu speech preparation
 - **1 ½ - 2 minutes for the impromptu speech**
 - 5 seconds to thank and dismiss the decathlete
- Judges should have approximately 2 minutes to score the two speeches and prepare for the next decathlete

General Rules:

1. NOTE CARDS may be used, but speech should not be read.
2. GESTURES are acceptable, but PROPS are not allowed.
3. Speech must be given STANDING unless a handicapping condition prevents this.
4. Speech must be researched, written and delivered by the contestant.
5. Under no circumstances may a judge ask a decathlete what school or area he/she is from. There is no penalty if a decathlete reveals where they live or what school they attend.
6. There are specific guidelines regarding the length of the two speeches. If either the prepared or impromptu speech is not within the proper time limit, a time violation is assessed.
7. If a judge knows a decathlete, recognizes the name of the decathlete, or if he/she has any other type of bias toward that decathlete, the judge should disqualify him/herself for that round. Note this on Scantron sheet and return with other scored sheets. If there are only two judges in the room, judges must score the Decathlete regardless of their knowledge of the Decathlete. Knowledge of a Decathlete should not influence judging of speech.

8. Judges should not discuss a performance. Each speech judge must score the decathlete's performance independently.
9. Judges are not to applaud or provide any written or verbal praise or recommendations to a decathlete's speech.
10. Speeches are not to be rank ordered with other speeches. That is, each prepared and/or impromptu speech is to be evaluated independently based on its own merits using the rubric located on the Scantron.
11. Pencils provided in the Speech Box must be used on the Scantrons. Do not use any type of ink pen on the Scantron.

Specific Procedure To Be Followed In Each Speech Room

- Head Judge welcomes decathlete and checks that the decathlete's information coincides with roster/schedule.
- Judges take new score sheet and write their name in the designated location. The decathlete's name and ID number will be preprinted on the Scantron form. Make sure that you are using the Scantron for the correct decathlete. Each speech judge will have a number (either 1, 2, or 3) pre-slugged on the Scantrons. Be sure to use the same numbered Scantron throughout the day.
- Head Judge will explain the procedures to decathlete.
- Timing Judge explains timing procedure and timing cards. Head Judge will signal decathlete to START prepared speech ("*You may begin*"). Timing Judge starts stopwatch or timer when Decathlete begins his/her speech, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals decathlete to END prepared speech by holding the "0" time remaining card.
- Once the prepared speech has ended, the Head Judge will give instructions to the decathlete about their impromptu speech.
- Head Judge instructs the decathlete to go to the Impromptu Table to prepare his/her impromptu speech.
- Timing Judge starts timing impromptu preparation time (1 minute) once the decathlete turns the impromptu card over. Impromptu cards/topics are rotated for each decathlete. Timing Judge will end the one minute preparation time by announcing "time."
- Head Judge collects impromptu card from decathlete and confirms speech topic decathlete has selected.
- Head Judge will signal decathlete to START impromptu speech ("*You may begin*"). Timing Judge starts timing when the decathlete begins his/her speech, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals decathlete to END prepared speech.
- Head Judge will thank the Decathlete, collect any impromptu speech notecards and direct the decathlete out of the room.
- Timing Judge will announce both speech times (Prepared and Impromptu) to the judges after the decathlete leaves the room. Timing Judge will also notify judges of any timing penalties.
- Head Judge will then reset the Impromptu table and place a new Impromptu Card face down on the Impromptu table for the next decathlete. Impromptu speech topics will be changed after each decathlete.
- BE SURE CONTESTANT LEAVES ON SCHEDULE.
- Judges should not leave the room at any time except during scheduled breaks.
- **JUDGES:** Enter proper information at the top of each form. Preprinted decathlete name and ID number are critical; check them carefully! Turn in the Scantron sheets to Head Judge immediately after finishing and before the next decathlete enters.
- Use a new Scantron for each decathlete. **For decathletes who do not appear, write "No Show" or "Absent" at the top of the Scantron and give to Head Judge to return with scored Scantrons.** Head Judge will include "No Show" or "Absent" on Speech Roster to be included with completed Scantrons for pick-up.
- **HEAD JUDGE:**

- Collect all score sheets from the judges. Collate so that all the score sheets for each decathlete are together. Insert in envelope provided for scheduled pick up times.
 - Also include a speech roster that includes the time for each decathlete's prepared and impromptu speech. Also include any important points such as a decathlete arriving late or leaving early.
- **FINAL REMINDERS:**
BE AN OBJECTIVE JUDGE—*Your score should be your individual decision.*
BE SURE to treat each decathlete in the same manner. Maintain your objectivity throughout the day and HAVE FUN!

Thank you for volunteering for this event. We appreciate your time!

SUGGESTED SCRIPTS FOR SPEECH HEAD JUDGE AND TIMING JUDGE

Head Judge's instructions to decathlete before prepared speech:

"You will be presenting your prepared speech. This speech should be no less than 3 ½ minutes and no more than 4 minutes. When the Timer holds up the "0" time remaining card, you must stop immediately or receive a time penalty. The Timer will now give instructions regarding timing and will demonstrate the timing cards."

(Pause for Timer's instructions.)

"You may now begin your prepared speech."

(Timer begins stopwatch once student begins his/her speech.)

Head Judge's instructions to decathlete before impromptu speech:

"You will now prepare and present your impromptu speech. A topic card with 3 impromptu topics is face down on that table (*gesture toward table*). After I instruct you to begin preparing your impromptu, you should turn over the topic card. You will have 1 minute to choose a topic and prepare your speech. There are notecards and pencils if you wish to use them. The impromptu speech must be no less than 1 ½ minutes and no more than 2 minutes. When the Timer holds up the "0" time remaining card, you must stop your speech immediately or receive a time penalty. The Timer will now give instructions regarding timing and will demonstrate the timing cards."

(Pause for Timer's instructions.)

"You may begin preparing your impromptu speech."

(Wait one minute until Timer calls time)

"Please hand me the topic card and indicate the topic you have chosen."

(Pause for while student indicates topic.)

"You may now begin your impromptu speech."

(Timer begins stopwatch once student begins his/her speech.)

Timing Judge's instructions to decathlete before prepared speech:

Remember: A prepared speech is "in time" if you speak between 3 ½ and 4 minutes. After you have spoken for three minutes, I will hold up the "1" minute card, (show the student the card) meaning you have 1 minute left to speak. After you have spoken for 3 ½ minutes, I will hold up the "30" second card, (show the student the card) meaning you have spoken 3 ½ minutes and still have 30 seconds left. After you have spoken 4 minutes, I will hold up the "0" card, (show the student the card) meaning time is up. You must stop your presentation immediately.

Timing Judge's instructions to decathlete before impromptu speech:

Remember: An impromptu speech is "in time" if you speak between 1½ and 2 minutes. After you have spoken for one minute, I will hold up the "1" minute card, (show the student the card) meaning you have 1 minute left to speak. After you have spoken for 1 ½ minutes, I will hold up the "30" second card, (show the student the card) meaning you have spoken 1 ½ minutes and still have 30 seconds left. After you have spoken 2 minutes, I will hold up the "0" card, (show the student the card) meaning time is up. You must stop your presentation immediately. (After Head Judge says to student, "You may begin preparing your impromptu speech," begin timing of the one-minute prep time. After one minute has elapsed, announce: "Time.")

TIME FORMAT AND ROOM SETUP

TIME FORMAT

Time allotted each decathlete

Time for introductions and
review of procedures (script).....35 seconds

Prepared Speech4 minutes

Transition to and from

Impromptu table20 seconds

Select & Prepare Impromptu 1 minute

Impromptu Speech2 minutes

Thank you & dismissal.....5 seconds

Complete Scoring of Scantron.....2 minutes

Total Time10 minutes

REVIEW USAD INTERVIEW JUDGE SCHEDULE.

**To be presented during the
Speech Judge Orientation.**

SAMPLE ROOM SETUP

○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

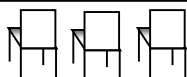
3 Judges + 1
Timer



○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

3 Judges + 1
Timer



○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

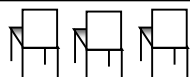
3 Judges + 1
Timer



○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

3 Judges + 1
Timer



○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

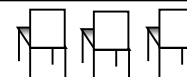
3 Judges + 1
Timer



○ Decathlete

7-8 ft

3 Judges + 1
Timer



SPEECH COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES

OBJECTIVES

- To assess the decathlete's ability to present a speech prepared in advance in accordance with specific written criteria.
- To assess the decathlete's ability to make an impromptu speech.

CRITERIA and RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PREPARED SPEECH

Content

1. There is no required speech topic.
2. Speeches must be the original work of the decathlete and must not have been used in any previous competition other than the Academic Decathlon® for this year.

Time

1. Length is three and one-half (3 ½) to four (4) minutes. The Timing Judge (timekeeper) gives signals when one (1) minute remains; again when thirty (30) seconds remains; and when no (0) time remains.
2. **If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e., 3:30 to 4:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the prepared speech is "-7."**

Delivery

1. Overreliance on note cards, where decathlete actually read some parts of the speech, represents a poorly prepared speech and may not be scored above the *Fair* range in *Speech Development* and other categories.
2. Glancing at note cards as an occasional guide, especially if it does not detract from the presentation, should not be penalized in any way.
3. Gestures are acceptable, but props (including uniforms and costumes) are not permitted.
4. The decathlete must stand while delivering his/her speech; a disability which prevents standing will be taken into consideration.

CRITERIA FOR IMPROMPTU SPEECH

Content

1. The decathlete is given a card with three speech topics written on it. The decathlete picks one of the three topics and speaks on that topic.

Time

1. The impromptu speech is delivered immediately following the prepared speech.
2. The decathlete has one minute to select and prepare the topic selection once the Impromptu Card has been turned over by the decathlete. The decathlete must remain at the Impromptu Table while preparing the impromptu speech. Note cards and pencils will be provided on the Impromptu Table. The decathlete may not leave the room during the speech preparation time.
3. The length of the speech is one and one-half (1.5) to two (2) minutes. The timekeeper gives signals when one (1) minute remains; again when thirty (30) seconds remains; and when no (0) time.
4. **If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e., 1:30 to 2:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the impromptu speech is “-3.”**

Delivery

1. Same guidelines as the prepared speech.

Evaluation

1. The Speech Evaluation Scantron shows specific items for the decathlete’s evaluation.

SPEECH PENALTIES

There is no penalty for disclosing a decathlete’s school name or location.

After the decathlete has completed both the prepared and the impromptu speeches and left the room, the Timing Judge will announce to the judges the decathlete’s prepared and impromptu speech times and declare if a penalty time must be assessed. The Timing Judge is the final arbiter in the case of time violations. All Scantrons must reflect the same penalty for all judges.

Decathletes should be familiar with the Speech Rules and Guidelines as outlined in the USAD Study Guide.

DESCRIPTORS FOR PREPARED SPEECH

EVALUATION FORM RATING SCALE

SPEECH DEVELOPMENT is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose and this structure must include an opening, body, and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience's attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. This development of speech is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts, and figures delivered with such smoothness that they blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.

EFFECTIVENESS is measured in part by the audience's reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across. You should ask yourself such questions as "Was I able to determine the speaker's purpose?" "Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?" "Was the speaker able to hold the interest of the audience?" "Was the speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?"

CORRECTNESS of language insures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct punctuation will show that the speaker is the master of words being used.

APPROPRIATENESS of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

SPEECH VALUE justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of them.

VOICE is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch to another for emphasis, and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard and the words easily understood.

NON-VERBAL presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce the speech whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions, and body positioning. The speaker's manner should indicate an interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

USAD, February 2004

USA U.S. ACADEMIC DECATHLON

SPEECH EVALUATION FORM

DIRECTIONS

USE NO. 2 PENCIL ONLY

PLEASE -

1. MAKE DARK MARKS
2. ERASE COMPLETELY TO CHANGE
3. ENTER: STUDENT'S NAME AND NUMBER
YOUR NAME AND NUMBER
ROOM NUMBER
4. MARK 1 STUDENT PER FORM

EXAMPLE:

1	0	2
10	1	1
21	2	1
32	3	1

STUDENT'S NAME

JUDGE'S NAME

ROOM NUMBER

JUDGE

1	2	3
4	5	6

STUDENT ID NUMBER

0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

VOLUNTEER NUMBER

0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

PREPARED SPEECH

		EXCELLENT				VERY GOOD				GOOD				FAIR				POOR			
SPEECH DEVELOPMENT	• ORGANIZATION	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0		2	1	0					
	• BODY																				
	• OPENING/CLOSING																				
EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• INTEREST																				
	• RECEPTION																				
CORRECTNESS	• GRAMMAR	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• PRONUNCIATION																				
	• WORD SELECTION																				
APPROPRIATENESS	• WORD SELECTION AND STYLE APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
SPEECH VALUE	• IDEAS	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• LOGIC																				
	• ORIGINALITY																				
VOICE	• FLEXIBILITY	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• VOLUME																				
	• VARIETY																				
NON-VERBAL	• APPEARANCE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• MOVEMENT																				
	• ASSURANCE																				

IMPROMPTU SPEECH

		EXCELLENT				VERY GOOD				GOOD				FAIR				POOR			
CONTENT	• ORIGINALITY	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• IDEAS																				
	• ORGANIZATION																				
DELIVERY	• MOVEMENT/GESTURE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• BODY LANGUAGE																				
	• VOICE																				
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0									
	• VERBAL COMMUNICATION																				
	• NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION																				

SPEECH PENALTIES

TIMING VIOLATION

BOTH SPEECHES PREPARED ONLY IMPROMPTU ONLY NO PENALTY

-10 -7 -3 0

SPEECH RATING SCALE

	Excellent (10 - 9)	Very Good (8 - 7)	Good (6 - 5)	Fair (4 - 3)	Poor (2 - 0)
Speech Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization • Body • Opening & Closing 	Excellent structure with an intro that captures your attention and moves forward toward a significant conclusion. Includes excellent examples , illustrations, facts and figures that are delivered with such smoothness that blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.	Very good structure with an intro that captures your attention and moves forward toward a good conclusion. Includes very good examples , illustrations, facts and figures that are delivered so that they generally blend into the framework of the speech.	Good structure with an introduction and generally moves forward toward a conclusion. Includes some good examples , illustrations, facts, and figures.	Some structure but hard to follow at times. Includes some examples , illustrations, facts, and figures but they may have difficulty relating them to the topic being presented. Speaker read a portion of their speech.	Poor or no structure and is hard to follow. The speech includes poor or no examples , illustrations, facts, and figures. Speaker relied on notecards for a major portion or all of their speech.
Effectiveness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement of Purpose • Interest • Reception 	Excellent job communicating a clear and easy to identify purpose. Elements of the speech related directly to the purpose. Excellent job holding the attention of the audience throughout the entire speech.	Very good job of communicating a purpose that was clear. Elements of the speech related directly to the purpose. Very good job holding the attention of the audience.	Good job of communicating a purpose. Elements of the speech generally related to the purpose. Good job holding the attention of the audience for most of the speech.	Attempts to communicate a purpose but may not be clear. Not all elements of the speech relate to an overall purpose. Fair job of holding the attention of the audience for only some of the speech.	Does not communicate a purpose. Elements of the speech seemed random without a focus or purpose. Poor job of holding the attention of the audience.
Correctness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar • Pronunciation • Word Selection 	Excellent use of language and word selection which ensures that attention is directed towards what the speaker says, not how it is said. Excellent use of grammar and correct pronunciation.	Very good use of language and word selection which ensures that attention is directed towards what the speaker says, not how it is said. Very good use of grammar and correct pronunciation.	Good use of language and word selection. The speaker in general has a good use of grammar and correct pronunciation but may make a few mistakes.	Fair use of language and makes some mistakes in word selection. The speaker makes quite a few mistakes in grammar and pronunciation.	Poor use of language and makes frequent mistakes in word selection. The speaker makes frequent mistakes in grammar and pronunciation.
Appropriateness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word selection and style appropriate to the audience 	Excellent topic choice for the audience and the speaker uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech.	Very good topic choice for the audience and the speaker uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech.	Good topic choice for the audience. Speaker generally uses words and a style that fits the nature of the speech; however, some content may not be appropriate.	Fair topic choice and may not be totally appropriate. Words and style may be inappropriate or speaker breaks one of the USAD rules (the speech is sung, etc.).	Poor topic choice and may be offensive or not be totally appropriate. Words and style are very inappropriate or speaker breaks one of the USAD rules (the speech is sung, etc.).
Speech Value <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ideas • Logic • Originality 	Excellent job presenting meaningful and original ideas. Excellent logical ideas that contribute to the thinking of the audience. (Although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of theme.)	Very good job presenting meaningful and original ideas. Good logical ideas that make a contribution to the thinking of the audience.	Good job presenting generally meaningful and original ideas. Generally have good logical ideas that make some contribution to the thinking of the audience.	Fair job presenting some meaningful ideas but may not be very unique. Has some logical ideas that make a contribution to the thinking of the audience.	Poor job of presenting meaningful ideas. Poor job presenting logical ideas that make any contribution to the thinking of the audience.
Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Volume • Variety 	Excellent use of voice...flexible moving from one pitch to another for excellent emphasis of ideas and information being presented. Voice could be clearly heard and words easily understood.	Very good use of voice...flexible moving from one pitch to another for emphasis. Voice could be clearly heard and words easily understood.	Good use of voice...some flexibility moving from one pitch to another for emphasis. Voice could generally be heard and words were mostly understood.	Fair use of voice that showed little flexibility only occasionally moving from one pitch to another. Voice might not always be heard and words may not be understood.	Poor use of voice that showed no flexibility and was generally monotone. Voice might not always be heard and words may not be understood.
Non-Verbal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appearance • Movement • Assurance 	Excellent job using appearance to reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language and movement supported points through use of gestures, expressions, and body positioning.	Very good job using appearance to reinforce the speech, whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language and movement supported points through use of gestures, expressions, and positioning.	Good job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Some body language used to support points through use of gestures, expressions, and body positioning.	Fair job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Little body language used and when used may have been occasionally distracting to what the speaker was saying.	Poor job using appearance to reinforce the speech. Little or no body language used and when used may have been very distracting to what the speaker was saying.

EVALUATION FORM

What was your role?

☐ Speech Judge☐ Head Judge☐ Timing Judge (timer)

Chart: Y = Yes N = No ⑤ = Excellent ④ = Great ③ = Average ② = Below Average ① = Poor		Yes No	Rating
Questions / Comments			
1. Do you feel you were given adequate training to perform your job? Comments:		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
2. What was the most critical component of the training that you found valuable?			
3. Was the time allotted sufficient for the training? Comments (suggestions):		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
4. Was the time allotted sufficient for each decathlete, judging, etc. in the actual session? Comments (suggestions):		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
5. Would you be willing to judge again in the future? If yes, print name and phone number at the bottom of this evaluation form. Comments:		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

Additional comments can be made on the back of this evaluation form.

(Optional)

Print Name: _____ Phone w/Area Code: _____

E-mail: _____

Please return completed evaluation form to the test collection center at the end of the day.

Thank you for volunteering!