



TIPS FOR EVALUATORS – LEGISLATIVE

Welcome to Texas Youth and Government! Thank you for volunteering your time and expertise to help our students as an Evaluator!

What is Texas Youth and Government?

Since 1936, YMCA Youth and Government has offered students across the country the opportunity to serve their schools, communities, states and nation through model government, civic engagement, advocacy, leadership and character development, service-learning, and other opportunities to amplify youth voice and strengthen youth civic health.

Students may participate in any of our five sections which include Legislative, State Affairs Forum, Media, Mock Trial, and Appeals Court.

What is Legislative?

The Legislative section involves participants identifying issues for legislation, bill writing, debating, bill presentation, and participation in a legislative body. Participants prepare legislation (bills, or sometimes joint resolutions) in their clubs for consideration, debate, and action at the District and State Conferences.

At the District Conference, Hearing Committees consider each bill and take appropriate action. At the State Conference, all bills are heard first in a committee, and some bills then advance to be heard again by a larger audience in the House and/or Senate chambers. Bills that pass both chambers are sent to the Youth Governor for their consideration.

YMCA Core Values

In 1994, the Y defined "character" as the demonstration of four core values: caring, honesty, respect and responsibility. Today, these values continue to guide everything we do, and are the standard to which we hold the students who participate in our program. We expect our students, volunteers, and staff to show a sincere concern for others, be truthful in what they say and do, treat each other as we'd all like to be treated, and be accountable for promises and actions.

- Respect: Respect other delegates, value diverse perspectives, and treat others as we'd like to be treated.
- Responsibility: Be accountable for your promises and actions.
- Caring: Show compassion, kindness, and concern for others.
- Honesty: Be honest and truthful to ensure integrity in every conversation.

Best Practices for Scoring

In committee, there is 1 adult in the room who serves both as a monitor and evaluator. Youth and Government is very much a student led program. Please let the chairs control the room unless there is danger, or serious violation of character, such as bullying, sexism or racism. The rules of the room are no gum, food, drinks, or cell phones. The clerk may have a cell phone for timing purposes.



As a committee evaluator, you're going to be evaluating debate skills and the relevance of the speeches to debate. You will be given an evaluation sheet with criteria being rated 1-5, with 1 being poor and 5 being superior.

The following are some questions you can consider to guide your scoring for each area.

Grammar and Organization

- Did the delegate write their bill using proper grammar/organization?
- Did the delegate clearly and concisely summarize their ideas in the bill?

Quality of Debate

- Did the delegate present themselves well and make eye contact when speaking?
- Does the delegate read off what they have written down or do they engage with the audience?
- Did the delegate support their argument with facts and research?

Quality of Questions

- Did the delegate's questions to others meaningfully further debate?
- Was the delegate able to respond to other delegates' questions about their bill with confidence and accuracy?
- Did the delegate defend their position respectfully, and with care to remain calm and present their facts and line of reasoning?

Demonstration of Y Core Values

- Did the delegate speak respectfully to other delegates asking challenging questions?
- Did the delegate demonstrate that they are passionate about making positive change in their community?
- Did the delegate ask questions at the appropriate time, without causing interruptions to the flow of the committee?

Overall Debate Contribution:

- Did the delegate ask questions or raise points of order that derailed debate?
- Did the delegate bring a unique perspective and thoughtfully crafted research and questions to the debate?

Please remember to be consistent while evaluating in the committee rooms. Its important that all students are scored fairly, and consistently across the duration of the session.

- Delegates do speak fast, so be ready. Please be unbiased and consistent. Distinguished delegates at district are selected from committees.
- Using a tool like a seating chart can be helpful to organize your scoring. Make three columns: one for questions, one for pros and cons, and one for amendments. This way when a delegate is participating you can place marks under their name for each row and track their score throughout the committee session. Amendment discussion should impact scoring more than pro and con debate.

Rubric

| Category | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|--|---|---|
| Grammar and Organizations | The bill is free of grammatical errors, well-organized and clearly written. The structure supports a logical flow of ideas, with clear sections and headings. | The bill has minor grammatical errors and is generally well-organized. The structure is mostly logical, with slight areas of confusion. | The bill contains noticeable grammatical errors and organizational issues. The structure is somewhat logical but may require reorganization for clarity. | The bill has significant grammatical errors and lacks clear organization. The structure is confusing and detracts from understanding the content. | The bill is poorly written, with numerous grammatical errors and disorganized content. The structure is unclear and severely impedes understanding. |
| Quality of Debate | The debater presents arguments confidently and persuasively, with strong evidence and clear reasoning. Engages deeply with the topic. | The debater presents solid arguments with good evidence and reasoning. Engages well with the topic but may lack some depth. | The debater presents basic arguments with adequate evidence and reasoning. Engages with the topic but lacks depth or clarity. | The debate presents weak arguments with limited evidence and unclear reasoning. Engagement with topic is superficial. | The debater fails to present coherent arguments, lacks evidence, and does not engage meaningfully with the topic. |
| Quality of Questions | Questions are insightful, challenging, and directly relevant to the debate. Demonstrates deep understanding and critical thinking. | Questions are relevant and thought-provoking, showing good understanding and critical thinking. | Questions are relevant but lack depth of insight. Demonstrates basic understanding of the topic. | Questions are somewhat relevant but lack depth and do not enhance debate. Demonstrates limited understanding. | Questions are irrelevant or superficial, demonstrating little to no understanding of the topic. |
| Demonstration of Y Core Values | The debater consistently demonstrates all the YMCA core values (caring, honesty, respect, responsibility) throughout the debate. | The debater demonstrates most of the YMCA core values throughout the debate. | The debater occasionally demonstrates YMCA core values, but not consistently. | The debater demonstrates few YMCA core values, with noticeable lapses in behavior. | The debater fails to demonstrate YMCA core values, with behavior that undermines the spirit of debate. |
| Overall Contribution to Debate | The debater significantly enhances the quality of debate through active participation, insightful contributions and leadership. Plays a key role in advancing the discussion. | The debater contributes positively to the debate with meaningful participation and helpful insights. Supports the overall flow of the discussion. | The debater makes a basic contribution to the debate, participating adequately but without notable impact. | The debater contributes minimally to the debate, with limited participation and impact on discussion. | The debater does not contribute meaningfully to the debate, with little to no participation or impact. |



Hearing Committee Procedure Timeline

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|---|---------|
| BILL OR RESOLUTION LAID OUT | 15 sec |
| AUTHOR OPENING REMARKS (3 MINUTES) | 3 min |
| AUTHORS QUESTION AND ANSWERS PERIOD (1 MINUTE FOR QUESTION AND ANSWER "CONVERSATION" PER PERSON) | 60 sec |
| PRO/CON DEBATE (2 PRO/2 CON) | |
| PRO | 60 sec |
| CON | 60 sec |
| PRO | 60 sec |
| CON | 60 sec |
| AMENDMENT PERIOD (ONLY 1 AMENDMENTS IS MAXIMUM) | |
| CLERK READS 1 ST AMENDMENT | 15 sec |
| AMENDMENT AUTHOR | 60 sec |
| BILL AUTHOR | 60 sec |
| OPTIONAL OPPONENT IF BILL AUTHOR IS FOR AMENDMENT | 60 sec |
| AMENDMENT AUTHOR CLOSING DEBATE | 60 sec |
| CALL FOR A VOTE ON THE AMENDMENT | 115 sec |
| AUTHOR'S SUMMATION PERIOD | 90 sec |
| MOTION – CALL FOR MOTION FOR FAVORABLE RECOMMENDATION FOR HOUSE OR SENATE ACTION | 15 sec |
| VOTE – CALL FOR VOTE ON THE MOTION | 10 sec |
| | |

i. Question and Answer period

- Delegates should ask to "question the bill author."
- Each delegate gets 60 sec. If a delegate wants to question again, ask if anyone who has not questioned: "objects to his/her questioning again."
- Pro/con slips are due by the end of this period.

ii. Proponent/opponent debate period

- ONE question per delegate allowed.
- Amendment slips are due by the end of this period.
- If a motion for the previous question occurs, at least ONE Con speaker can be heard if any members are actually in opposition. There is no need for someone to speak in opposition just for the sake of debate. Any measure can be unanimously supported.

iii. Amendment period

- Amendment author: ONE question per delegate is allowed.
- Bill author: ONE question per delegate is allowed.
- Opponent: 60 sec . Only ask if the bill author was FOR the amendment. ONE question per delegate is allowed.
- Amendment author: 60 sec closing. No questions are allowed.

iv. Author's closing summation: 90 Sec

- No questions.
- Motion for favorable recommendation for House or Senate action (as amended if needed)