

BOSTON UNIVERSITY STUDENT GOVERNMENT
DEBATE RULES



STUDENT ELECTIONS COMMISSION

Revision March 22nd, 2019

Article I: General Rules

Section I: General Expectations

1. Participants, moderators, and members of the audience shall be respectful of each other at all times.
2. All candidates and affiliated individuals shall be held accountable to the contents of these rules as well as the current Executive Board Election Rules.
3. All debate rules violations shall be addressed as established by the current Executive Board Election Rules.

Section II: Participants

1. Candidates for Student Body President, Executive Vice President, Vice President of Finance, and Vice President of Internal Affairs shall be the only participants in the debate.
2. Candidates shall refrain from using technology at all times during the debate.
3. Candidates may print copies of their platform for personal use, but are not allowed to use props of any kind during the debate.

Section III: Moderators

1. The SEC Co-Chairs shall be the moderators of the debate and shall enforce all rules and regulations hereby established.
2. Moderators must not actively engage in discussion with candidates
3. Moderators must address any disrespectful behavior and redirect the debate when necessary
4. In order to ensure fairness and impartiality, moderators must enforce debate rules equally, especially those pertaining to speaking time limits.

Section IV: Audience

1. The audience shall maintain appropriate decorum to avoid distractions to candidates, moderators and other members of the audience.

Article II: Debate Format

Section I: Opening Statements

1. Each slate shall be given a total of three minutes to present an opening statement.
2. All candidates may speak during the opening statement for their slate.
3. The order in which slates will obtain the floor shall be determined randomly and shall be alternated for the duration of the debate.

Section II: General Questions

1. The SEC shall prepare a set of general questions, applicable to all slates participating in the debate.
2. All questions asked by the SEC shall be neutral and, thus, not favor any slate or candidate.
3. After the SEC has asked a question, each slate shall have a maximum of 2 minutes to respond to that question.
4. After each slate has been given time to answer the question, there shall be a period of 5 minutes of open discussion, which must relate to the question or topic at hand.
5. The SEC reserves the right to modify speaking times depending on overall time constraints.

Section III: Platform-Specific Questions

1. The SEC shall prepare a set of questions relating to each slate's platforms.
2. All questions asked by the SEC shall be neutral and, thus, not favor any slate or candidate.
3. For each round of questions the SEC must:
 - a. Ask one question that is applicable to all slates **OR**,
 - b. Ask one question of equal complexity to each slate.

4. After the SEC has asked a question, each slate shall have a maximum of 2 minutes to respond to that question.
5. After each slate has been given time to answer the question, there shall be a period of 5 minutes of open discussion, which must relate to the question or topic at hand.
6. The SEC reserves the right to modify speaking times depending on overall time constraints.

Section IV: Questions from the Audience

1. Once the SEC has asked their set of questions, they shall allow the audience to ask questions to the candidates.
2. The SEC shall decide which members of the audience may ask a question at a given time
3. The SEC shall provide equal opportunity among the audience, giving preference to those who have not asked a question.
4. For each round of questions, members of the audience must:
 - a. Ask one question that is applicable to all slates **OR**,
 - b. Ask one question of equal complexity to each slate.
5. After a member of the audience has asked a question, each slate shall have a maximum of 2 minutes to respond to that question.
6. No discussion period shall be provided after each slate has responded to the question.

Section V: Closing Statements

1. Each slate shall be given a total of three minutes to present a closing statement.
2. All candidates may speak during the closing statement for their slate.
3. The order in which slates will be given the floor for closing statements shall be the same order in which opening statements were given.