



ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY

A GUIDE TO
HOSTING LOCAL
DEBATES AND
FORUMS

PREPARED AND PRESENTED BY

THE POLITICAL COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI

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INTRODUCTION

The health of our democracy depends on an active and informed communication process in which citizens from all walks of life engage in constructive, meaningful dialogue. Political debates and public issue forums are events that facilitate active communication and engage citizens in the civic process, but these events may seem daunting to organize. To aid citizens and civic organizations in their efforts to organize events around topics of importance to their communities, the University of Missouri's Political Communication Institute has developed this guide to hosting debates and issue forums at the local level. This guide provides insight on the main questions and issues related to organizing and planning these events.

Whether you are a local civic organization that would like to host a candidate debate or community group that would like to organize a town hall issue forum, we hope this guide will serve as a useful starting point for your own event preparation. The information provided in this document is not an exhaustive list and the requirements for any given debate or forum will vary based on situation, circumstances, and goals. However, this guide will discuss the essential elements of event planning for the sponsoring organization that seeks to host a campaign debate between candidates for elective office or sponsor a public forum on issues of importance and interest to your local community.



PLANNING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

Organizations that wish to host a debate or forum must first initiate a planning process to decide key elements of the event, such as the location, date, format, selection of moderators, and also debate or forum participants. Before contacting political campaigns or elected officials, the hosting organization should consider and have proposals for format, moderators, date, location, and a negotiation timetable so that the event planning may occur in a timely manner. Planning an event will take time, so it is important for you to formulate a plan early on. For instance, the back-and-forth between campaigns will take time, often facilitated by representatives of the host organization, as will finding a host site with availability for the desired dates. (For planning itinerary/timetable examples, see Appendix pp. 14-17.)

SPONSORSHIP

Debates and forums are often sponsored by local community organizations. For our presidential debates in the U.S., the sponsoring organization since 1988 has been the non-partisan Commission on Presidential Debates (www.debates.org). Your local debate or forum can be sponsored by a business or civic organization in your area, perhaps in partnership with a local news or media organization. An ad hoc community task force or sponsoring organization can also be formed for the purpose of planning the event. It is important that any sponsoring organization is viewed as unbiased and acts as a neutral entity in hosting the event.

NEGOTIATORS

It is important for the hosting organization to have at least one individual designated as point person for negotiation. This individual may be designated as the debate or forum director. In dealing with campaigns and candidates seeking elective office, the debate director will work closely with the campaign managers of those candidates who will be invited as debate participants. In planning local issue forums, the forum director can be someone from the hosting organization who coordinates with the individuals participating in the event who may serve as expert panelists. Whether a political debate or an issue forum, it is vital that everyone involved has an understanding and agreement of the specific purpose and nature of the event and how it will be organized.

PLANNING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

LOCATION

Debates and forums can occur in any number of venues, such as auditoriums, large lecture halls, gymnasiums, public libraries, television studios, or performing arts centers. Events can also occur outside, but weather is an important factor to consider. When considering venues, you should think about how audio and video will be affected by the layout. Sound and lighting will vary depending on the venue, so these are important issues to think about when you are securing a location for your event, especially if you plan to broadcast the event. Often, partnering with a local media/broadcasting organization may be a useful strategy to assist the host organization in dealing with issues related to sound and lighting, as well as any expertise needed to plan audio and video/broadcasting capabilities.

DATE

Debates and forums can drive news coverage for the days leading up to and after the event. Therefore, it is important to consider which day of the week to hold the event. For instance, in many communities, a Friday night debate or forum would have to compete with high school football. You may also wish to coordinate your event in conjunction with your primary local news (such as the release of a weekly newspaper). If you wish for your event to be broadcast via radio or television, you should work closely with your local news broadcasters to identify a date and time for the event that does not conflict with pre-planned or otherwise committed primetime programming.

MODERATORS AND QUESTIONERS

Debates typically have either a single moderator or a panel of questioners. In either case, it is important that the questioners are viewed by both the campaigns and the public as objective. Questioners are typically journalists, but they can also be experts in the subject area of the debate (such as a public policy professor). To ensure wider local coverage of your debate or forum, representatives of multiple news organizations, such as journalists from television, radio, and print outlets, could be selected as the questioners. For local forums and town hall debates, the questioners will most likely be members of the audience, with expert panelists or representatives of interest groups responding to questions; but it is still important to have a moderator to facilitate the process. (For example of an invitation to debate panelists/moderator, see Appendix p. 18.)

PLANNING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS

While our U.S. government is organized largely around a two-party system, representatives of multiple parties as well as independent candidates can appear on election ballots. In political debates, the number of participants can be a controversial issue, especially for third-party and independent candidates. The debate sponsoring organization should develop established criteria for candidate inclusion in a debate well ahead of the event. In fact, this issue should be addressed at the very beginning of the planning process. The Commission on Presidential Debates, for example, requires presidential candidates to be at 15 percent in national polls to participate in our presidential debates. The Indiana Debate Commission, on the other hand, permits all candidates who appear on statewide ballots to participate in any state-level debates this sponsoring organization hosts. Often, polls may not be available for local candidates and therefore excluding these candidates on the basis of polling data may not be a possibility. For forums that are not related to campaigns or elections, the number of participants simply depends on your goals and desired structure for the event. (For example of letter to potential debate participants, see Appendix p. 19.)

FORMAT

A hosting organization can format its debate or forum any number of ways. Some traditional debate formats include single moderator debates (an individual selected to ask questions of the candidates/participants), panelist debates (a panel of 2-4 individuals selected to ask questions), and town hall debates (citizens in attendance ask questions). Staging options include “joint press conferences” with candidates positioned at podiums as well as seated debates with the candidates and moderator seated at one or more tables. Debates can be about a single topic or about several topics. Forums can have similar formats to debates. Participants in the forum can each have podiums, be seated at a table, or be seated without a table. (For format examples, see Appendix pp. 20-23.)

ORDER OF SPEAKERS

In a debate, the order of speakers is typically decided by a coin toss. After that, candidates can alternate who answers first in each subsequent round of questions and answers. In a forum, the order of speakers on a given question can be determined by the moderator or the audience member posing the question. The moderator and/or a volunteer assistant should keep track of the order in which audience members raise their hands or a determined order that allows for alternating questions taken from opposing sides or issue positions.

PLANNING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

EVENT TOPICS

Single-topic debates are good if the campaigns agree to multiple debates. In presidential debates, there is often a foreign policy debate and a domestic policy debate. If you plan on having only one debate, then the campaigns can agree on the general topics to be discussed ahead of time or the moderator or debate panelists might decide the topics and questions for debate. For a public forum, such as one about a ballot initiative or a city proposal, you can organize the event around the particular topic or issue to be decided and citizens attending the forum may be allowed to ask questions.

EVENT SECTIONS

Debates often have opening statements from each candidate, followed by several rounds of questions and answers, followed by candidates' closing statements. An opening statement by the moderator is typically provided to introduce everyone to the debate and candidates. This short preview is typically 2-3 minutes. The opening statements by the candidates are also typically 2-3 minutes and addresses general themes the candidates wish to convey.

Forums can be more open in regards to their specific sections. They may first feature opening remarks by the moderator and the participants on stage, and then feature questions from the audience. The moderator can announce at the beginning of the forum that the event will have questions centering around multiple topics, and that a certain number of questions will be allowed per topic before moving on to a new section.



PLANNING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

RULES

The general rules of the debate should be agreed upon ahead of time, especially regarding issues such as allowing note-taking, using props during the debate, or reading from prepared statements. Timing rules must also be established. In presidential debates, 2-minute answers are typically allowed along with 1-minute follow-ups. Short questions, rather than lengthy statements, from moderators and panelists are also encouraged, typically no more than 30 seconds to 1 minute. The length of time allowed for questions and answers is important to ensure the debate happens within a set time frame, which is even more important if the debate is broadcast. Debates are usually 60 or 90 minutes. Timekeepers are necessary – for the candidates and for the questioners. Cue cards or other electronic devices can be used for time notifications. Forums should also have established rules announced at the beginning of the event, such as rules for audience member decorum and rules for the length of time allowed for on-stage participant answers to audience questions. (For an example of a debate’s general ground rules, see Appendix p. 24.)



DEVELOPING A BUDGET

Hosting a debate or forum will cost money. You will likely have to pay for event elements (whether to rent or to own) such as microphones, tables, chairs, podiums, and access to the hosting site. You will also want to print flyers to promote your event and programs to pass out at the event. You will want to provide the participants with amenities such as water and refreshments. You may also want to provide refreshments to the audience. If a site does not have its own equipment, you may have to pay to rent video cameras and other production equipment related to lighting, sound, and miscellaneous technical support, especially if you wish to broadcast your event. It might be the case that local media are not able to attend the event, but would be interested in broadcasting the event, or portions of the event, at a later time. In this case, you would need to rent a video camera and have someone record the event. Again, partnering with a local media/broadcasting organization can be a useful strategy to assist the host organization in allaying broadcast or production costs. Depending on the size and circumstances of your event, you may also wish to hire security. Finally, depending on the availability of volunteers from the sponsoring organization, you may also need to offer compensation for people to serve as ushers, timekeepers, and other roles. These are some of the elements that could cost money in hosting your event. The most important thing to remember is to create a budget well ahead of time.

RECRUITING VOLUNTEERS

As part of the debate or forum, you may wish to recruit local volunteers to assist before, during, and after the event. This is a cost-effective way to have personnel on site to assist with the various elements of the event. Volunteers can serve as ushers, security, assistants to the participants and moderators, and crew members for camera, lighting, and sound. Volunteers can likely be recruited from the hosting organization itself, local high schools, colleges and universities (i.e., student organizations and specific academic departments such as political science, journalism, and communication), civic organizations, or the community at large. The development of a volunteer team for your event can also serve as a community civic engagement opportunity for the sponsoring organization. Volunteers can be recruited through social media, printed promotional material (flyers, etc.), and in-person announcements or presentations. It would be wise to start the volunteer recruitment process early so that you will know of additional assistance needed that might affect the development of your event budget. (For example of potential volunteer positions, see Appendix p. 25.)

PUBLICIZING YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

ONCE YOU ESTABLISH THE OBJECTIVES (AND PARTICIPANTS) OF YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM, YOU NEED TO DETERMINE HOW YOU WILL INVOLVE THE LOCAL MEDIA AND REACH YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE.

MEDIA

Members of the media – print, broadcast, online – can play a crucial role in disseminating information about your debate or forum to the public. As you consider involving the media in your event, there are several important elements to consider, such as contacting media outlets, broadcasting and streaming, accommodating journalists, assisting photographers, and fielding media questions.



MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

CONTACTING MEDIA OUTLETS

The size and scope of your debate or forum (in terms of both audience and subject matter) will help you determine which media outlets you should contact. In general, start by reaching out to local and state media outlets as they are likely to have the greatest interest in your event. If your debate touches on current issues of national relevance, you may want to contact national outlets as well. Be strategic in your selection of outlets and journalists. Above all, be patient, persistent, and professional throughout the entire process. Depending on your event budget, consider hiring or recruiting a media relations expert who can help you craft an effective media plan and successfully navigate the media terrain.

BROADCASTING AND STREAMING

If you desire to record your debate or forum for television broadcasting or online streaming, you will need to make appropriate space for cameras, lighting, power sources, and other technical features. You may be wise to consult with a television producer or media expert on how to best approach this setup.

ACCOMMODATING JOURNALISTS

Establish early on how you will identify and invite journalists to cover your event and develop any credentialing process you will use to provide journalists access to the debate or forum. Depending on the number of journalists interested in covering your event, you will need to ensure that they do not take up too much space in the hall and that they are able to observe the event without undue interference or distraction for those attending your event. Consider setting aside space for a media center, a designated place where journalists can work and view the event and also interact with candidates or forum participants at a designated time. Also consider appointing a volunteer team member as media liaison or point person, someone who can stay close to journalists on site, oversee candidate availability with the journalists, and professionally assist journalists as needed.

ASSISTING PHOTOGRAPHERS

Assuming you would like pictures taken of the debate or forum, you will need to strategically create space for photographers to position themselves in the event area without obstructing the view or flow of the event for others.

MEDIA AND PUBLICITY

FIELDING MEDIA QUESTIONS

Journalists will most likely want to speak with your debate or forum participants before and/or after the event. Consider establishing ground rules for when and where questions can be asked. If space allows for a separate media center, consider using that area for pre- or post-event interview periods. In providing a media filing center, you should also consider the technical needs of journalists, such as electrical and power outlets, viewing screens of the debate hall, etc.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

As you coordinate with the media, you will also want to consider how to promote your debate or forum to the public, specifically your target audience. Promotional materials could include some or all of the following items: a press release that summarizes general event information for the media (who, what, where, when, why, how); posters and flyers that creatively convey general event information to the public; advertisements (patterned after posters and flyers) that can be placed in print or online outlets; a website and social media pages that highlight event information and attract followers; a program designed for the actual event and distributed on site. Depending on your event budget, consider using as many of these promotional materials as possible. Also consider, as previously mentioned, hiring or recruiting a media relations expert who can help you create high-quality materials both for the media and for the general public.



PLANNING THE LOGISTICS OF YOUR DEBATE OR FORUM

The type of audience/media attendance you wish to have at your debate or forum will largely affect the type of venue you select. When choosing between venues, there are many logistical factors that you should consider, such as audience size and traffic, staging and electrical setup, safety and security, and environmental factors.

AUDIENCE SIZE AND TRAFFIC

The venue you select for your debate or forum not only should be able to comfortably accommodate the number of people you expect to attend (general audience, journalists, volunteers, etc.), but also should not impose an undue burden on the surrounding area (community members not in attendance, etc.). If a large crowd is expected, you might want to collaborate with local law enforcement to ensure that people arrive and leave the event in an orderly fashion. At the very least, consider posting volunteers (ushers, attendants, etc.) at various spots inside and outside the venue to manage and guide the flow of people.

STAGING AND ELECTRICAL SETUP

Once you have selected a venue and decided on the debate or forum's format, you will need to assess in advance what furniture and equipment the venue has on site and what furniture and equipment you will have to provide yourself. You can then plan the staging and electrical setup with a precise blueprint so that the assembly of furniture and equipment before the event is organized and efficient. When creating a blueprint, think about how the participants will engage each other (on a platform, behind lecterns, seated at a table, etc.), where the moderator(s) will be stationed, if/how event participants and audience members are going to engage each other, and where journalists and broadcast teams can be stationed. If your event will be televised or streamed online, you should assess how visually appealing the venue will be on-screen and how much space is available for media equipment. You should also assess the venue's sound system and acoustics, power sources, lighting, and microphones. Additionally, you should assess the amount of seating available and whether you will need to bring additional chairs for the audience and media. (For event staging and layout example, see Appendix p. 26.)

SAFETY AND SECURITY

In selecting a venue for your debate or forum, you will want to familiarize yourself with and follow all fire and building codes associated with the venue. If you intend to set up and leave furniture/equipment on site prior to the event, you will need to ensure that materials are properly secured when unattended. The level of security you have on site during the event will depend on audience size and traffic, time of day, the nature of the event and its publicity, and also who your event participants are. Whatever the circumstances, you may wish to consider having some form of security on site before, during, and after the event. Depending on the venue and time of day, security personnel may already be available; otherwise, consider hiring security or coordinating with local law enforcement on potential security options.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS

The venue you select for your debate or forum should be as conducive as possible to a variety of environmental factors, especially noise. In addition to accounting for architectural features that might increase noise levels (e.g., carpeted vs. cement floors), you should also bear in mind your expected audience size (more people = more noise). Consider communicating to your audience at the start of the debate or forum some general rules for noise control (e.g., limiting applause, forbidding heckling, etc.), thus minimizing the possibility of unnecessary and adverse noise during the actual event. Moreover, inclement weather could affect event turnout as well as the event timetable. Prepare as best you can for these conditions and be sure to arrive at the venue early enough so that you can set up as needed and start on time.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Commission on Presidential Debates: <http://www.debates.org/>

Debates International: <https://www.debatesinternational.org/>

National Democratic Institute: <https://www.ndi.org/what-we-do/debates>

POLITICAL COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE FACULTY AND ASSOCIATES



Director

Dr. Mitchell S. McKinney

McKinneyM@missouri.edu

573-882-9230



Co-Director

Dr. Ben Warner

warnerbe@missouri.edu

573-882-3610



Institute Faculty

Dr. Cassandra C. Kearney

kearneyc@missouri.edu

573-882-8210



Research Associate

Josh C. Bramlett

jcbyr2@mail.missouri.edu



Research Associate

Wm. Bryan Paul

wbpztz@mail.missouri.edu

APPENDIX

DEBATE DAY ITINERARY

8:00AM-NOON	Finalize Stage set up Finalize Holding / Media Room set up
NOON-4:00PM	Finalize camera / sound / lighting set up Conduct checks
6:00PM	Holding rooms will be available for each candidate two hours prior to the debate.
6:00-7:00PM	Each candidate will be granted 30 minutes to inspect the debate stage, acoustics, and lighting system. Candidate “walk throughs” must be completed one hour prior to the debate. 6:00 - 6:30 Candidate A Walkthrough 6:30 - 7:00 Candidate B Walkthrough
7:00PM	Candidate speaking order will be determined by a coin toss one hour prior to the debate. The Moderator will assemble with a representative from each campaign for the coin toss. “Heads” Candidate A will be the first speaker, “Tails” Candidate B will speak first.
7:00-7:15PM	Stage inspection by Panelists
7:15PM	Debate Hall Opens for General Public • Reserved seating will not be allowed • Candidate-specific seating will not be designated • The Hall will be filled from front to back; once the lower level is full, the balcony will then be opened for seating • Ushers will ask large groups (10 or more) to break into smaller groups for seating
APPROX. 7:50	Hosts, Moderator & Panelists prepare to enter stage
APPROX. 7:55	Candidates escorted from Holding Rooms to prepare to enter stage • Campaign Staff take seats in Balcony Area • Candidate Family / Guests escorted to front of Auditorium
8:00-8:05PM	Welcome by Host(s) of Sponsoring Organization(s) Introduce Moderator

APPENDIX

DEBATE DAY ITINERARY

8:05-8:10PM	<p>Moderator provides audience instructions</p> <p>The audience will be asked to refrain from applauding or in other ways demonstrating support or nonsupport for a candidate once the debate begins. Applause will be invited as the candidates are introduced prior to the broadcast introductions, and also at the conclusion of the debate.</p> <p>Moderator introduces panelists</p>
8:10-8:13PM	<p>Candidates Introduced / Enter Stage (assistance with microphones)</p>
8:13-8:15PM	<p>Quiet Time Before Broadcast</p>
8:15--9:15PM	<p>DEBATE!!!</p>

APPENDIX

DEBATE PLANNING TIMETABLE

JULY 27-AUG. 1	Identify/secure venue Identify/invite co-sponsors, including possible broadcasters Determine which debate formats will be suggested to candidates Solidify ground rules for candidates, media, and audience Finalize letter of invitation to candidates
AUG. 2-AUG. 8	Finalize agreement with co-sponsors and broadcasters Send letter of invitation to candidates
AUG. 9-AUG. 15	Meet with media sponsor to assess venue Develop negotiating strategy with candidates Make initial contact with candidates to follow up on formal invitation
AUG. 16-AUG. 22	Decide on negotiation meeting dates Schedule a date to meet with each campaign separately or jointly to agree to details of event Develop event promotion strategy
AUG. 23-AUG. 29	Meet with each campaign separately or jointly Finalize details for securing venue and broadcaster
AUG. 30-SEPT. 5	Invite moderator/panelists Develop volunteer recruitment plan
SEPT. 6-SEPT. 12	Representatives of all participating parties meet to finalize all event details Issue press release about the event Start grassroots promotion campaign Order tickets and programs Arrangements made for equipment on site Sign agreements with moderator and panelists Secure extra security for debate sites Develop plan for distributing event tickets (if ticketed event)
SEPT. 13-SEPT. 19	Distribute tickets to candidates (if ticketed event) Meet with moderator/panelists to review rules of event Send out press release on “how to get tickets” (if ticketed event)

APPENDIX

DEBATE PLANNING TIMETABLE

2 WEEKS OUT	Distribute press packets to local media and credentials procedure Placement of advertisements, listings, and PSAs begin Volunteers trained and assigned Promotion campaign intensifies All event arrangements reconfirmed Candidates sent letter of further details/changes
1 WEEK OUT	Site reviewed with media sponsor Walk through of event details takes place Promotion campaign continues
1 DAY OUT	Walk-through with volunteers at site
DAY OF	Final walk-through of event details takes place Volunteers on location Candidates inspect and give approval of set design Parking reserved for candidates Rooms arranged for candidates and media Media gives approval of communication set up Equipment on location Security on location Take tickets (if ticketed event) Maintain crowd control Answer last minute questions of candidates Escort candidates Answer questions of media Control media
1 DAY AFTER	Press release issued on “success of debate event” Thank you letters sent to participants

APPENDIX

INVITATION TO DEBATE PANELIST/MODERATOR

September X, 20XX

Potential Panelist

Address

Address

Dear X,

The XXXXX has organized a debate between the candidates running for XXXX. The candidates, XXXX and XXXX, have agreed to a debate on XXXX at the XXXX. We are seeking three panelists to serve as the questioners for the debate, and we are honored to invite you to participate as one of the panelists. Attached to this letter you will find the general debate rules that the candidates have agreed upon, including the debate format.

The debate will be approximately 60 minutes, featuring 8 to 10 main questions, including approximately 4 to 5 questions for each candidate with opponent follow up. Each panelist should prepare 4 or 5 possible questions that they would like to ask of each candidate. Before the debate, the three panelists will confer to discuss your questions so that you might avoid duplicative questioning. At no time should the candidates be made aware of the questions that you will ask of them during the debate. While we asked for suggestions from the candidates of panelists to include in the debate, the sponsoring organization has sole discretion in selecting the moderator and panelists. We hope that you will agree to serve as a panelist for this important event.

As you know, this race has generated much media attention at the local and state level. A debate between these candidates is sure to garner widespread media coverage as well as serve as an important source of voter education for the citizens of XXXX. Please notify us no later than XXXX if you will be able to participate in this debate as a panelist. You can contact us at XXXX if you have any questions regarding the debate.

Sincerely,

XXXX

APPENDIX

INVITATION TO DEBATE PARTICIPANTS

September X, 20XX

Campaign

Address

Address

Dear XXXX,

The XXXX wishes to host a debate between the candidates for XXXX. The campaign for XXXX has garnered much media and public attention, and we believe that a debate will provide an important source of voter education for the citizens of XXXX. We hope you will accept this invitation.

Attached you will find a proposal that suggests dates and a location for the debate, a proposed format, and general debate rules. We understand that the campaign schedule is hectic and your time is valuable. We have reached out to XXXX, the possible event host, and they have identified the dates their venue will be available. If you wish to participate, we ask that you please review the proposed dates for this event and identify the dates that your schedule will accommodate.

We are reaching out to both campaigns simultaneously and ask that each campaign identify a representative who will work with us to confirm the details of the debate. Once each candidate has agreed to participate, we will organize a planning meeting between the campaigns and our organization. We will contact your campaign in the next few days to discuss your participation in this important event.

We are excited about working with the campaigns to provide the voters of XXXX an opportunity to learn more about the candidates and their issue positions. Please contact us at XXXX if you have any questions regarding the debate proposal.

Sincerely,

XXXX

APPENDIX

60-MINUTE DEBATE FORMAT WITH 8 QUESTIONS AND FOLLOW-UPS

MODERATOR: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, RULE OVERVIEW

3 minutes

CANDIDATES: 2-MINUTE OPENING STATEMENTS

4 minutes

The debate will feature eight questions: four will be asked to Candidate A first, and four will be asked to Candidate B first. The format for each are below

QUESTION 1 TO CANDIDATE A

30 seconds

CANDIDATE A RESPONSE

2 minutes

CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL

1 minute

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION TO CANDIDATE A

30 seconds

CANDIDATE A RESPONSE

1 minute

CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL

1 minute

TOTAL TIME

6 minutes

QUESTION 2 TO CANDIDATE B

30 seconds

CANDIDATE B RESPONSE

2 minutes

CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL

1 minute

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION TO CANDIDATE B

30 seconds

CANDIDATE B RESPONSE

1 minute

CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL

1 minute

TOTAL TIME

6 minutes

TOTAL TIME OF 8 Q&A'S

48 minutes

2-MINUTE CLOSING STATEMENTS PER CANDIDATE

4 minutes

MODERATOR CONCLUSION

1 minute

TOTAL TIME OF DEBATE

60 minutes

APPENDIX

60-MINUTE DEBATE FORMAT WITH 6 QUESTIONS AND FOLLOW-UPS

MODERATOR: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, RULE OVERVIEW 4 minutes

CANDIDATES: 3-MINUTE OPENING STATEMENTS 6 minutes

The debate will feature six questions: three will be asked to Candidate A first, and three will be asked to Candidate B first. The format for each are below:

QUESTION 1 TO CANDIDATE A 30 seconds

CANDIDATE A RESPONSE 2 minutes

CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL 2 minutes

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION TO CANDIDATE A 30 seconds

CANDIDATE A RESPONSE 1 minute

CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL 1 minute

TOTAL TIME 7 minutes

QUESTION 2 TO CANDIDATE B 30 seconds

CANDIDATE B RESPONSE 2 minutes

CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL 2 minutes

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION TO CANDIDATE B 30 seconds

CANDIDATE B RESPONSE 1 minute

CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL 1 minute

TOTAL TIME 7 minutes

TOTAL TIME OF 6 Q&A'S 42 minutes

2-MINUTE CLOSING STATEMENTS PER CANDIDATE 4 minutes

MODERATOR CONCLUSION 1 minute

TOTAL TIME OF DEBATE 57 minutes

APPENDIX

60-MINUTE DEBATE FORMAT WITH 10 QUESTIONS, NO FOLLOW-UPS

MODERATOR: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, RULE OVERVIEW

4 minutes

CANDIDATES: 3-MINUTE OPENING STATEMENTS

6 minutes

The debate will feature 10 questions: five will be asked to Candidate A first, and five will be asked to Candidate B first. The format for each are below:

QUESTION 1 TO CANDIDATE A

30 seconds

CANDIDATE A RESPONSE

2 minutes

CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL

2 minutes

TOTAL TIME

4.5 minutes

QUESTION 2 TO CANDIDATE B

30 seconds

CANDIDATE B RESPONSE

2 minutes

CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL

2 minutes

TOTAL TIME

4.5 minutes

TOTAL TIME OF 10 Q&A'S

45 minutes

2-MINUTE CLOSING STATEMENTS PER CANDIDATE

4 minutes

MODERATOR CONCLUSION

1 minute

TOTAL TIME OF DEBATE

60 minutes

APPENDIX

TOWN HALL DEBATE WITH NO FOLLOW-UPS

MODERATOR: WELCOME, INTRODUCTION, RULE OVERVIEW	4 minutes
CANDIDATES: 3-MINUTE OPENING STATEMENTS	6 minutes
The debate will feature 10 questions: five will be asked to Candidate A first, and five will be asked to Candidate B first. The format for each are below:	
AUDIENCE QUESTION 1 TO CANDIDATE A	30 seconds
CANDIDATE A RESPONSE	2 minutes
CANDIDATE B REBUTTAL	2 minutes
TOTAL TIME	4.5 minutes
AUDIENCE QUESTION 2 TO CANDIDATE B	30 seconds
CANDIDATE B RESPONSE	2 minutes
CANDIDATE A REBUTTAL	2 minutes
TOTAL TIME	4.5 minutes
TOTAL TIME OF 10 Q&A'S	45 minutes
2-MINUTE CLOSING STATEMENTS PER CANDIDATE	4 minutes
MODERATOR CONCLUSION	1 minute
TOTAL TIME OF DEBATE	60 minutes

APPENDIX

DEBATE GENERAL GROUND RULES

Candidates Have Agreed to the Following:

1. Candidates will not be allowed to use prepared notes or props during the debate. Each candidate will be provided with a legal pad and pens for taking notes during the debate. A pitcher of water and a glass will be on a shelf in each podium.
2. No campaign materials (e.g. handbills, literature, banners, signs, etc.) will be allowed in the debate hall.
3. Candidates will be responsible for their own dress and appearance. Candidates will provide their own makeup. A makeup area will be provided.
4. There will be no audience reaction shots during the debate, although panning of the audience before and after the debate will be allowed.
5. Candidates will be introduced initially by title/full name (i.e. Governor XXXX; Representative XXXX). Thereafter, "Mr." and/or "Ms." will be used.
6. Candidates will remain behind their podiums at all times during the debate.
7. Candidates are prohibited from using audio or video from the debate in or for campaign advertising.
8. During the debate candidates will not be allowed to interrupt one another; however, the moderator may need to interrupt if a response exceeds the allotted time.

APPENDIX

DEBATE VOLUNTEER COMMITTEES

DEBATE MANAGER

MEDIA / PROMOTIONS COMMITTEE

Chair and 2-3 volunteers needed

DEBATE PRODUCTION COMMITTEE

Chair and 2-3 volunteers needed to assist with hall and stage set up, coordinate with technical crews, and assist debate manager with debate planning timetable and debate day itinerary

HOST/HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE

Chair and 2 volunteers needed to host candidate A, 2 volunteers needed to host candidate B, 1 volunteer needed to host panelists/debate moderator

USHER COMMITTEE

Chair and 4-6 volunteers needed

TIME KEEPERS COMMITTEE

Chair and 1-2 volunteers needed

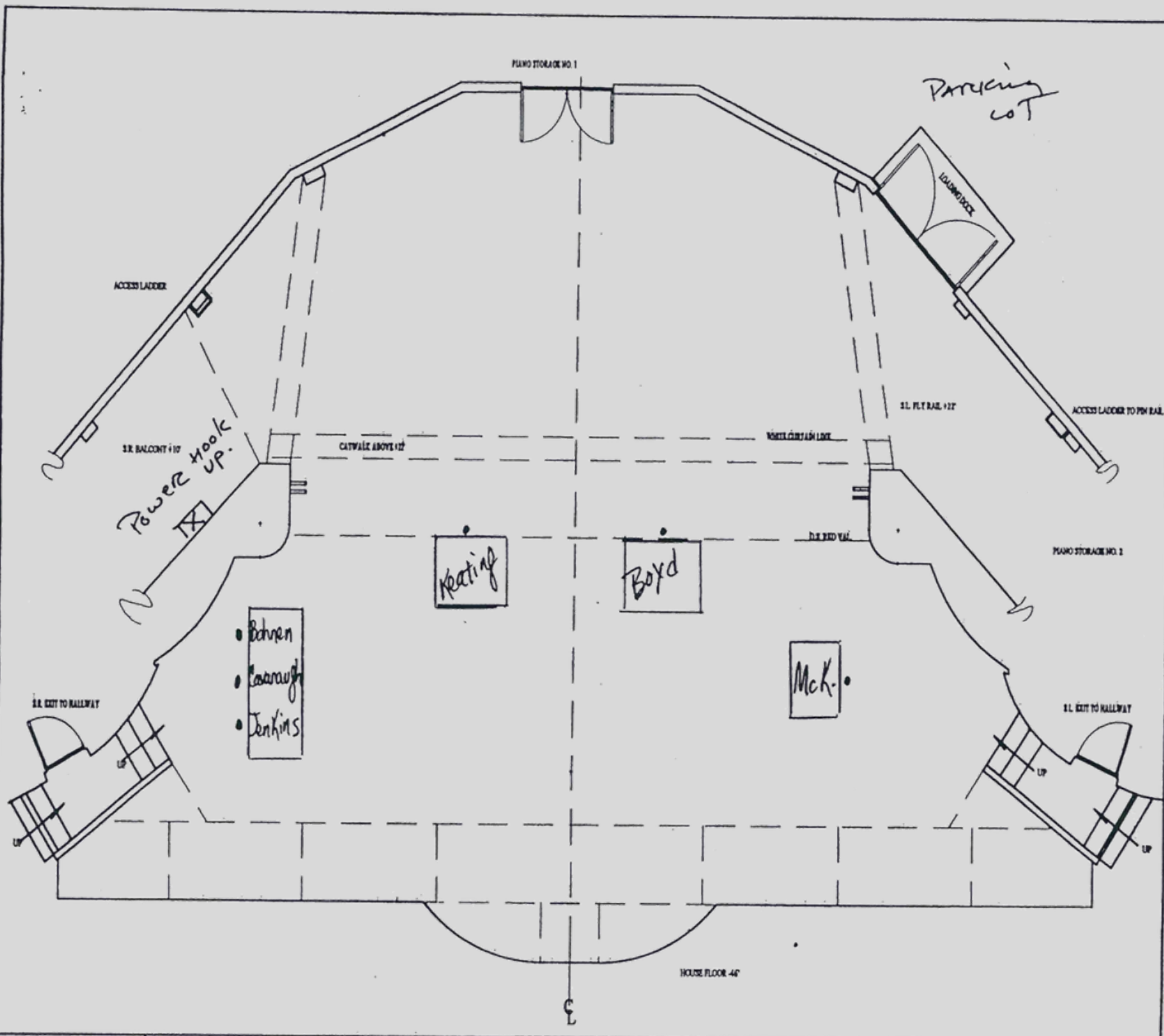
Host and Media volunteers should report to Hall no later than 6 pm (for 8:00 pm debate start)

Usher volunteers should report to Hall no later than 6:45 pm (for 7:00 pm doors open)

If available, volunteers should check with debate headquarters (Hall, room XXX) throughout the day of Debate Day

APPENDIX

DEBATE STAGE EXAMPLE LAYOUT



PAGE NO.

GENERAL GROUND PLAN

HOLMBERG HALL OU SCHOOL OF MUSIC

DRAWN BY G.MAY/12/30/97

