DEBATE

www.gonzagadebate.com

THE PROGRAM

Gonzaga’s Debate Program has a long history of excellence in collegiate policy debate. For over 100 years, Gonzaga has supported intercollegiate debate as an integral part of Jesuit education. The program has distinguished itself by reaching national prominence year after year, and it is deeply committed to competing at the highest level on both the regional and national circuits.

Over the years, Gonzaga Debate has enjoyed enormous success. Gonzaga consistently finishes among the top of the National Debate Tournament (NDT) National Varsity Rankings and the Cross Examination Debate Association (CEDA) Rankings, including a fourth overall national ranking in 2012 and a run to the Final Four of the NDT, which was a first for Gonzaga’s Debate Program. Gonzaga teams have reached elimination rounds at all the major national tournaments, including Wake Forest, Harvard, Kentucky, Texas, UC-Berkeley, USC, Cal State Fullerton, Northwestern, Kansas, CEDA Nationals, and the NDT. Throughout its history, Gonzaga has consistently qualified teams to compete in the NDT, which it did again in 2013 for the third consecutive year.

THE PASSION

With its clash of wit, words, and wisdom, collegiate debate combines the excitement of competition with the rigors of scholarship. Debate hones analytical, communication, and research skills, while deepening knowledge on specific topics in politics, history, economics, law, and philosophy. Students who are driven by an intellectual challenge and the desire to succeed are highly encouraged to pursue collegiate academic debate.

The program encourages students to extensively research scholarly publications in order to present interdisciplinary perspectives that appeal to a wide range of audiences. This comprehensive and meticulous preparation, coupled with superior training in speaking, cross-examination, and critical thinking, has been the foundation for the program’s success.

As an academic discipline, the program offers coursework through Gonzaga’s Communication Arts Department. Two courses, “Principles of Debate” and “Argumentation and Debate,” are open to students who meet course prerequisites. In addition, student debaters may receive academic credit for ongoing participation in the program.

The Gonzaga Debate Program also provides a number of services to the college forensics community. In September, Gonzaga hosts the Jesuit Invitational Debates, the largest college debate tournament in the Northwest and the season opener for the West Coast college debate community. In January, focus turns to hosting the Conway Classic, one of the largest and most prestigious high school tournaments in the Northwest. In addition, Gonzaga sponsors the Gonzaga Debate Institute (GDI) each summer for high school debaters. The GDI has quickly grown into one of the finest summer institutes in the nation and the largest in the Northwest. In 2005, Gonzaga served as the host institution for the NDT, the national championship tournament of the college community.
THE PEOPLE

The Students
Many former Gonzaga debate students have pursued graduate studies and gained admission into prestigious graduate programs and law schools across the country. Gonzaga debaters have attended and received post-graduate degrees from institutions such as Boston College, Wake Forest University, UC-Berkeley, University of Oregon, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, Pepperdine University, Georgetown University, Marquette University, University of Minnesota, and many others. Some have gone on to become respected debate coaches, political consultants, attorneys, presidents of universities, and even the Speaker of the House in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Coaches
The Gonzaga coaching staff has extensive experience in both competing and coaching at the highest levels of collegiate debate. The team employs two full-time coaches and one-to-two part-time assistant coaches from year to year.

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