



Debate

With its clash of wit, words, and wisdom, collegiate debate combines the excitement of competition with the rigors of scholarship. Debate hones analysis, communication, and research skills, while deepening students' knowledge of 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

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, University of Kentucky, University of Texas, UC-Berkeley, USC, Cal State Fullerton, Northwestern, University of Kansas, CEDA Nationals, and the NDT. Gonzaga has qualified a team to compete in the NDT for 17 consecutive years.

In 2014, Gonzaga's Debate team was invited to compete in the prestigious **Lafayette Debates in Washington, D.C.** This series of public debates is hosted by the French Embassy in partnership with the Institute for European, Russian, and Eurasian Studies of the George Washington University. The topics for these debates are chosen to address issues of critical importance to the United States and France.

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 as well. Two **debate 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 also served as the host institution for the NDT, the national championship tournament of collegiate debate.

WHY DEBATE AT GONZAGA?

Debate at Gonzaga is a deeply rooted tradition at the University and within the College of Arts and Sciences. This support is reflected in the vast resources committed to our team. The University pays for all students travel expenses at tournaments, including hotel, entry fees, meals, and transportation. In addition, the University provides the team with a large, fully furnished house that we base our operations from, as well as two full-time coaches and a part-time coach who researches and travels with the team. Our **17 consecutive years qualifying to the NDT** speaks to the consistent support the University has shown to our team.

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 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, university presidents, 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 or two part-time assistant coaches from year to year.

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Gonzaga Debate offers a limited number of partial scholarships. Awards for incoming first year students generally range from \$2,000 - \$7,500. Scholarships are merit-based and must be earned each year. Students who work hard, support their teammates, and show improvement often see scholarship amounts increase during their college career. Debate recruits are automatically considered for these scholarships after being accepted. Students with three or more years of high school experience in CX/policy debate are given preference for awards.

