

Proposal #6 – Shift the topic selection process to AFTER the NFA tournament occurs.

(requires majority to pass)

Justification: After discussions with the national council, the NFA-LD committee, and topic paper contributors for the 2022-2023 topic papers, there was a strong sentiment that the timeframe for choosing a topic for the following year occurred during inconvenient times for everyone competing under the current year's topic. The current schedule has topic papers due the weekend after the largest Spring tournament, and the topic research process overlapping with preparations for the national tournament. Combined with the reality that the individual tasked with developing and tabulating votes on speechwire.com is extremely busy during the month of February, this proposal would shift the topic discussion and research process until AFTER the conclusion of the national tournament. With the intention of keeping the topic announcement date the same, this proposed change would have the entire process take place during May and June immediately following the national tournament. These changes would take effect for the 2023-2024 topic selection process to occur in the spring/summer of 2023.

Amend NFA Bylaws Section VI. (G) to read:

Lincoln Douglas Topic

1. The Lincoln-Douglas debate committee, chaired by the Lincoln-Douglas Representative to the National Council, will be responsible for the overseeing and facilitating the topic selection process.
2. The general topic area for NFA-LD will rotate on four-year cycles. Within every four-year period beginning with the 2021-2022 season, the topic areas will include international relations, a domestic social or legal issue, and a domestic economic or technological issue. There will be no restrictions for one year out of every four during this cycle. The LD chairperson is charged with choosing and announcing the general topic area for future seasons. This announcement will be made at the NFA-LD forum at the national tournament and on the NFA-LD Facebook group two years in advance of the season in which the topic area will be debated, with the exception of the 2021-2022 topic which will require only one year notice. Potential topic paper authors are encouraged to consult with the LD chairperson to ensure their potential specific topic area comports with the general topic area for the following season.
3. The LD chairperson will solicit four (4) topic papers by members of the community during August of each year to be submitted by **February 1 May 1** for determining the following year's topic. These members need not be members of the LD committee, although they are encouraged to participate in the process. The proposed areas of these papers will be agreed upon by both the author and members of the committee. Additionally, the community is encouraged to submit unsolicited topic papers by the same deadline.
4. The purpose of topic papers is to provide an argument for why a given topic area would be able to sustain debates for an entire season. The topic papers should describe, in as much detail as possible, the direction and viability of potential resolutions. As such, papers should include the following:
 - a. A topic justification or rationale.

- b. A set of definitions of potential mechanisms and crucial limiting words for potential topic wordings.
- c. A set of 5-6 potential resolitional wordings.
- d. A description of and examples of available solvency advocates that would be topical under potential resolutions. Solvency advocates are understood as authors that provide explicit descriptions of specific actions to be taken by a resolitional actor.
- e. A description, and multiple citations for, 6-7 potential affirmative advantage areas under a proposed topic.
- f. A description, and multiple citations for, core negative ground on a topic, including: 3-4 generic disadvantages, 2-3 generic counterplans, and 3-4 critiques.
- g. A works cited section that provides information on how to access all of the cited sources.

5. If between 4 and 6 papers that meet the requirements are submitted, they will all be distributed to the LD community for a vote. If, however, fewer than 4 appropriate papers are submitted, the LD chairperson will include acceptable papers from previous years to fill out the ballot. If more than 6 papers are submitted, the LD committee will narrow the field down to 6 briefs using a ranked choice voting system. The LD chairperson will solicit votes from committee members who should then vote according to their judgements about the quality of the submitted papers. The LD chairperson should count the votes. The paper(s) with the fewest first-place votes should be eliminated. The ballots choosing the eliminated paper(s) as their first choice will then be counted as votes for their second choice, after which the paper(s) receiving the fewest votes for the second round will also be eliminated. This process should continue until there are 6 papers remaining.

6. By **February 8 May 8**, the LD chairperson will distribute the briefs to the LD community and the membership of the NFA via links to a file sharing platform embedded within the NFA-LD Facebook group as well as a mass email to all NFA member schools for discussion and consideration. A ballot will also be distributed online. Using this ballot, schools should rank all of their choices and return to the NFA President by **March 4 May 22**. Again, the topic paper will be selected using a ranked choice voting system. This time, however, the goal will be to achieve a paper with an outright majority rather than a ballot of 4-6.

7. The selected topic area will be announced on **March 4 May 25**.

8. At the direction of the LD chairperson, the committee will be tasked with choosing, and modifying the wording of, at least 3 resolutions specified in the selected topic paper. The LD committee should work exclusively with terms of art outlined in the paper but may otherwise reword the proposed topics. The LD chairperson will solicit community volunteers to participate in research within the selected topic paper to guide modifications of the proposed resolution wordings. The volunteers will be assigned an area of research and they will be expected to identify major issues and themes within the topic area as well as relevant terms of art in a written report. The committee will host an open forum **after the topic area is announced at**

NFA Nationals to gather community input and will refine the resolutions via e-mail and conference calls.

9. By **May 1 June 8**, a ballot will be sent out with at least three resolutions for consideration. In order for a ballot to be counted, all resolutions must be rank ordered. The ballots must be returned to the NFA President by **May 15 June 22**. A rank choice voting system will again be used to determine the winning topic. Ties will be broken by the President of the NFA, who may at their discretion, consult with the LD debate committee.

10. The resolution will be announced by July 1. The winning resolution will be known only to the President of the NFA until it is announced.