

# A Contest of Academic Strength

*Providing academic competition to encourage, acknowledge and reward academic excellence through teamwork among students of all achievement levels.*



**For More Information:**  
California Academic Decathlon  
Ken Scarberry, Executive Director  
4522 Abernathy Road  
Fairfield, CA 94534  
Phone: (707) 646-7601  
Fax: (707) 438-2667  
[kscarberry@solanocoe.net](mailto:kscarberry@solanocoe.net)  
[www.academicdecathlon.org](http://www.academicdecathlon.org)

# CALIFORNIA ACADEMIC DECATHLON

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*Since 1968*, the Academic Decathlon has grown into the premier scholastic competition in America. The Academic Decathlon was created to provide opportunities for high school decathletes to experience the challenges of rigorous team and individual competition. Designed to provide a forum for celebrating and acknowledging scholastic achievement and academic excellence in the context of a team environment, the Academic Decathlon provides high school decathletes the opportunity to participate in an educational forum that fosters a deep respect for knowledge, cooperation, and self-esteem

## GUIDELINES FOR JUDGING SPEECH

Welcome to Academic Decathlon, and thank you for serving as a Speech Judge or Room Manager in this year's competition. **Each student will be giving a prepared speech and an impromptu speech.** Please read the following carefully and adhere to all procedural and timing guidelines. Enjoy the event!

### Teams of Judges

Each team will consist of 2 – 3 speech judges and a room manager. Each team will be assigned to a specific classroom and will be evaluating one student at a time using the U.S. Academic Decathlon Speech Evaluation Form - Scantron (see sample on page 13). Each judge will evaluate the student individually, and only speech judges will evaluate the speeches. The scores of the speech judges will be averaged together to form one score for each decathlete.

### Schedule

**Please be sure to time accurately for a fair competition and release students ON TIME.** Stopwatches or timers will be provided to time the two speeches (prepared and impromptu). All students **must** receive the same amount of time for each speech.

### Time Rules

- Time speeches precisely
- Admit and dismiss students according to established schedule
- Each student is allotted approximately 10 minutes in the speech room
  - 40 seconds for introductions/instructions
  - **3 ½ to four minutes for prepared speech**
  - 10 seconds to set up for impromptu speech
  - One-minute impromptu speech preparation
  - **1 ½ to two minutes for the impromptu speech**
  - 10 seconds to thank and dismiss the student
  - 2 minutes to score the two speeches and prepare for the next student

### 10 minutes total for each student's speeches and scoring session

### **General Rules:**

1. NOTE CARDS may be used, but speech should not be read.
2. GESTURES are acceptable, but PROPS are not allowed.
3. Speech must be given STANDING unless a handicapping condition prevents this.
4. Speech must be researched, written and delivered by the contestant.
5. Under no circumstances may a judge ask a student what school or area he/she is from. There is no penalty if a student reveals where they live or what school they attend.
6. There are specific guidelines regarding the length of the two speeches. If either the prepared or impromptu speech is not within the proper time limit, a time violation is assessed.
7. If a judge knows a student, recognizes the name of the student, or if he/she has any other type of bias toward that student, the judge should disqualify him/herself for that round. Note this on Scantron sheet and return with other scored sheets.

8. Judges may discuss a student's performance after they have completed their Scantron and the student has left the room, but each judge must take responsibility for making his/her own mind. No one judge should be responsible for the other judges' scoring decisions. Teams of speech judges are not to reach consensus regarding a student's performance. Each speech judge must score the student's performance independently of the other judges' feedback.
9. Volunteers are not to applaud or provide any written or verbal praise or recommendations to a student's speech.
10. Speeches are not to be rank ordered with other speeches. That is, each prepared and/or impromptu speech is to be evaluated independently based on its own merits using the rubric located on the Scantron.
11. Pencils provided in the Speech Box must be used on the Scantrons. Do not use any type of ink pen.

### **Specific Procedure To Be Followed In Each Speech Room**

- Room Manager welcomes student and checks that the student's information coincides with roster/schedule. (If a Room Manager is not available, judges may share the responsibilities of the Room Manager.)
- Judges take new score sheet and write their name in the designated location. The student's name and ID number will be preprinted on the Scantron form. Make sure that you are using the Scantron for the correct student. Each speech judge will have a number (either 1, 2, or 3) preslugged on the Scantrons. Be sure to use the same numbered Scantron throughout the day.
- Judges introduce themselves to student.
- Room Manager briefly explains procedure to student.
- Room Manager explains timing procedure and timing cards. Room Manager will signal student to START prepared speech ("*You may begin*"). Room Manager starts stopwatch or timer, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals student to END prepared speech.
- Room Manager instructs the student to go to the Impromptu Table to prepare his/her impromptu speech. Once the student turns over the Impromptu Card, he/she will have one minute to prepare an impromptu speech. Impromptu cards/topics are rotated for each decathlete.
- Room Manager starts timing impromptu preparation time (1 minute) once the decathlete turns the impromptu sheet over. Room Manager will end the one minute preparation time by announcing "time."
- Room Manager collects impromptu card from decathlete and explains the timing procedure for their impromptu speech.
- Room Manager will signal student to START impromptu speech ("*You may begin*"). Room Manager starts timing when the decathlete begins his/her speech, uses timing cards at appropriate times, and signals student to END prepared speech.
- Room Manager will thank the Decathlete and escort the decathlete out of the room.
- Room Manager will announce both speech times (Prepared and Impromptu) to the judges after the decathlete leaves the room. Room Manager will also notify judges of any timing penalties.
- Room Manager will then reset the Impromptu table and place a new Impromptu Card face down on the Impromptu table for the next student. Impromptu speech topics will be changed after each student.
- BE SURE CONTESTANT LEAVES ON SCHEDULE.
- Judges should not leave the room at any time except during scheduled breaks.

- **JUDGES:** Enter proper information at the top of each form. Preprinted student name and ID number are critical; check them carefully! Turn in the Scantron sheets to Room Manager immediately after finishing and before the next student enters.
- Use a new Scantron for each student. **For students who do not appear, write “No Show” or “Absent” at the top of the form and give to Room Manager to return with scored Scantrons.**
- **ROOM MANAGERS:** Collect all score sheets from the judges. Collate so that the three score sheets for each student are together. Include sheets for “No Shows.” Insert in envelope provided and place in folder on door for pick up at designated times.
- Also include a speech roster that includes the time for each decathlete’s prepared and impromptu speech. Also include any important points such as a student arriving late or leaving early.
- **FINAL REMINDERS:**  
BE AN OBJECTIVE JUDGE—you may discuss scoring with one another after independent completion of Scantron. *Your score should be your individual decision not a consensus.*  
BE SURE to treat each student in the same manner. Maintain your objectivity throughout the day and HAVE FUN!

*Thank you for volunteering for this event. We appreciate your time!*

## SUGGESTED SCRIPT FOR SPEECH ROOM MANAGER

1. "Welcome to the speech room. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am the Room Manager for the panel of judges."

"I would like to introduce the judges. They are:

---



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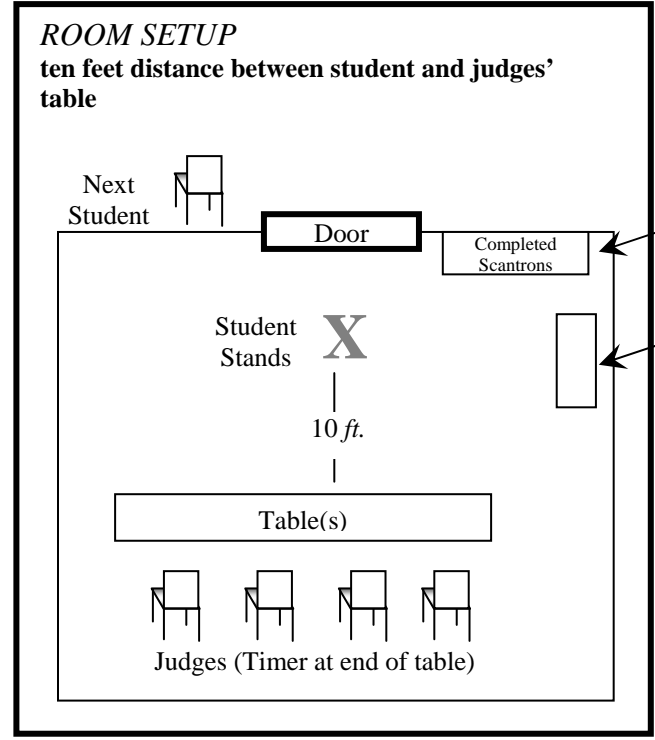
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3. "Please tell us your first name and your identification number."
4. "You'll be speaking from the front of the room. You will give two speeches: a 3 ½ to 4-minute prepared speech and a 1 ½ to 2-minute impromptu speech. I'll give you a list of topics to select from for the impromptu speech after you have finished your prepared speech."
5. "During your prepared speech, I will hold up a blue 1 minute card (*show card to decathlete*) when you have 1 minute remaining and a pink 30 seconds card (*show card to decathlete*) to let you know you have 30 seconds remaining. When 4 minutes have transpired, I will hold up the white "time" card." (*show card to decathlete*).
6. "Ready, please begin." (*Start stopwatch when the decathlete begins speaking. If decathlete doesn't begin promptly, ask him/her to start. Raise the 1-minute card at 3 minutes, the 30 seconds card at 3 ½ minutes, and the TIME card at 4 minutes. Stop the decathlete if he/she continues past 4 minutes and 10 seconds by saying, "Stop." Log the decathletes speech time to be reported to the judges after decathlete leaves the room.*)
7. "There is a sheet with several impromptu topics located on the table/desk (*point to the table/desk*). You are to turn over the sheet and select one of the topics. After turning the impromptu sheet over, you will have one minute to select and prepare your impromptu speech. When you begin your speech, please be prepared to let the judges verbally know which topic you have chosen. Your time will begin once you have informed us of your speech topic and you begin your speech ... (*after student has let the judges know which topic they have chosen.*) I will raise the blue 1-minute card to let you know when you have 1-minute remaining and the pink 30-seconds card to let you know when you have 30-seconds remaining. I will raise the white TIME card when 2 minutes have expired." (*Stop the decathlete if he/she continues past 2 minutes and 10 seconds and log the decathletes speech time to be reported to the judges after decathlete leaves the room.*)
8. (*After the decathlete turns over the impromptu sheet*) "You now have one minute to select and prepare your speech. There is paper and a pencil on the desk, (*which you have placed there*) which you may use to write down some quick thoughts." (*Call time after one minute and Reset the stopwatch.*)
9. "Before you begin your speech and time begins, please let the judges know which topic you have chosen. Your time will begin once you begin your speech - after you let the judges know which topic you have chosen."
10. "Ready, begin." (*Start the stopwatch when the decathlete begins his/her speech. Raise the 1-minute card 1 minute into the speech. Raise the 30 seconds card at 1 ½ minutes and the TIME card at 2 minutes. Stop the decathlete if he/she continues past 2 minutes and 10 seconds. Tell the judges how much time the decathlete used for his/her speech.*)
11. "Thank you. You may now leave the room and go to your next assignment." (*Inform the judges of the amount of time used by the decathlete for his/her speeches and assess penalty(ies) if necessary. Give judges the remaining time to complete their scoring before admitting a new decathlete to the room. Keep strict adherence to the time schedule.*)

# TIME FORMAT AND ROOM SETUP

<b>TIME FORMAT</b>	
<i>Time allotted each student</i>	
Time for introductions and review of procedures (script).....	40 seconds
Prepared Speech .....	4 minutes
Transition to and from Impromptu table .....	10 seconds
Select & Prepare Impromptu .....	1 minute
Impromptu Speech .....	2 minutes
Thank you & dismissal.....	10 seconds
Complete Scoring of Scantron .....	2 minutes
<hr style="border: 0.5px solid black;"/>	
Total Time .....	10 minutes

<b>SCANTRON PICK-UP SCHEDULE</b>	
<b>Session I - Pick-Up.....</b>	<b>11:05 – 11:10</b>
<i>A volunteer will pick up completed Scantrons and roster from the judge's room.</i>	
<b>Session II - Deliver.....</b>	<b>12:05</b>
<i>Judges will deliver the completed Scantrons and roster to the test center before going to lunch.</i>	
<b>Session III - Pick-Up .....</b>	<b>2:00 – 2:05</b>
<i>A volunteer will pick up completed Scantrons and roster from the judge's room.</i>	
<b>Session IV - Deliver .....</b>	<b>3:00</b>
<i>Judges will deliver the completed Scantrons and roster to the test center as part of checking out.</i>	



Posted on back of door

Impromptu Table  
Note Cards, Pencil, & Impromptu Topics

- Desks may be used in place of tables.
- Look to make sure that decathletes are not facing a window/door that could distract them during their presentation.

## **SPEECH COMPETITION RULES AND GUIDELINES**

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To assess the decathlete's ability to present a speech prepared in advance in accordance with specific written criteria.
- To assess the decathlete's ability to make an impromptu speech.

### **CRITERIA and RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR PREPARED SPEECH**

#### **Content**

1. There is no required speech topic.
2. Speeches must be the original work of the decathlete and must not have been used in any previous competition other than the Academic Decathlon for this year.

#### **Time**

1. Length is three and one-half (3.5) to four (4) minutes. The room manager (timekeeper) gives signals when one (1) minute remains (signified by blue sheet); again when thirty (30) seconds remains (signified by pink sheet); and when no (0) time remains (signified by white sheet).
2. A courtesy time of 10 seconds will be extended past the four minutes to allow the decathlete to wrap-up the speech, but he/she will be assessed a penalty if 4:00 minutes is exceeded. **If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e. 3:30 to 4:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the prepared speech is "-7."**

#### **Delivery**

1. Over reliance on note cards, where decathlete actually read some parts of the speech, represents a poorly prepared speech and may not be scored above the *Fair* range in *Speech Development* category.
2. Glancing at note cards as an occasional guide, especially if it does not detract from the presentation, should not be penalized in any way.
3. Gestures are acceptable, but props (including uniforms and costumes) are not permitted.
4. The decathlete must stand while delivering his/her speech; a disability which prevents standing will be taken into consideration.

**CRITERIA FOR IMPROMPTU SPEECH****Content**

1. The decathlete is given a card with three speech topics written on it. The decathlete picks one of the three topics and speaks on that topic.

**Time**

1. The impromptu speech is delivered immediately following the prepared speech.
2. The decathlete has one minute to select and prepare the topic selection once the Impromptu Card has been turned over by the decathlete. The decathlete must remain at the Impromptu Table while preparing the impromptu speech. Note cards and pencils will be provided on the Impromptu Table. The decathlete may not leave the room during the speech preparation time.
3. The length of the speech is one and one-half (1.5) to two (2) minutes. The timekeeper gives signals when one (1) minute remains (signified by blue sheet); again when thirty (30) seconds remains (signified by pink sheet); and when no (0) time (signified by white sheet).
4. A courtesy time of 10 seconds will be extended past the two minutes to allow the decathlete to wrap-up the speech, but he/she will be assessed a penalty if 2:00 minutes is exceeded. **If the speech is not within the proper time limit (i.e. 1:30 to 2:00), a time violation penalty is assessed. Penalty for the impromptu speech is “-3.”**

**Delivery**

1. Same guidelines as the prepared speech.

**Evaluation**

1. The Speech Evaluation Scantron shows specific items for the decathlete’s evaluation.

**SPEECH PENALTIES**

There is no penalty for disclosing a decathlete’s school name or location.

After the decathlete has completed both the prepared and the impromptu speeches and left the room, the room manager will announce to the judges the decathlete’s prepared and impromptu speech times and declare if a penalty time must be assessed. The Homeroom Manager is the final arbiter in the case of time violations. All Scantrons must reflect the same penalty for all judges.

Students should be familiar with the Speech Rules and Guidelines as outlined in the USAD Study Guide.

## DESCRIPTORS FOR PREPARED SPEECH

### *EVALUATION FORM RATING SCALE*

**SPEECH DEVELOPMENT** is the way the speaker puts ideas together so the audience can understand them. The speech is structured around a purpose and this structure must include an opening, body, and conclusion. A good speech immediately engages the audience's attention and then moves forward toward a significant conclusion. This development of speech is supported by relevant examples and illustrations, facts, and figures delivered with such smoothness that they blend into the framework of the speech to present the audience with a unified whole.

**EFFECTIVENESS** is measured in part by the audience's reception of the speech, but a large part is your subjective judgment of how the speech came across. You should ask yourself such questions as "Was I able to determine the speaker's purpose?" "Did the speech relate directly to that purpose?" "Was the speaker able to hold the interest of the audience?" "Was the speech subject appropriate for this particular audience?"

**CORRECTNESS** of language insures that attention will be directed toward what the speaker says, not how it is said. Proper use of grammar and correct punctuation will show that the speaker is the master of words being used.

**APPROPRIATENESS** of language refers to the choice of words that relate to the speech purpose and to the particular audience hearing the speech. Language should promote clear understanding of thoughts and should fit the occasion precisely.

**SPEECH VALUE** justifies the act of speaking. The speaker has a responsibility to say something meaningful and original to the audience. The listeners should feel the speaker has made a contribution to their thinking. The ideas should be important ones, although this does not preclude a humorous presentation of them.

**VOICE** is the sound that carries the message. It should be flexible, moving from one pitch to another for emphasis, and should have a variety of rate and volume. A good voice can be clearly heard and the words easily understood.

**NON-VERBAL** presentation of a speech carries part of the responsibility for effective communication. The speaker's appearance should reinforce the speech whether profound, sad, humorous, or instructional. Body language should support points through gestures, expressions, and body positioning. The speaker's manner should indicate an interest in the audience and confidence in their reactions.

USAD, February 2004

# USA U.S. ACADEMIC DECATHLON

## SPEECH EVALUATION FORM

STUDENT ID NUMBER			
0	0	0	0
1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4
5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7
8	8	8	8
9	9	9	9

VOLUNTEER NUMBER		
0	0	0
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5
6	6	6
7	7	7
8	8	8
9	9	9

### DIRECTIONS

USE NO. 2 PENCIL ONLY

PLEASE -

- MAKE DARK MARKS
- ERASE COMPLETELY TO CHANGE
- ENTER: STUDENT'S NAME AND NUMBER  
YOUR NAME AND NUMBER  
ROOM NUMBER
- MARK 1 STUDENT PER FORM

EXAMPLE:

1	0	2
10	1	0
12	2	1
13	3	2

STUDENT'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

JUDGE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ROOM NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

### JUDGE

1	2	3
4	5	6

PREPARED SPEECH		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR						
SPEECH DEVELOPMENT	• ORGANIZATION	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• BODY											
	• OPENING/CLOSING											
EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• INTEREST											
	• RECEPTION											
CORRECTNESS	• GRAMMAR	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• PRONUNCIATION											
	• WORD SELECTION											
APPROPRIATENESS	• WORD SELECTION AND STYLE APPROPRIATE TO THE AUDIENCE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
SPEECH VALUE	• IDEAS	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• LOGIC											
	• ORIGINALITY											
VOICE	• FLEXIBILITY	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• VOLUME											
	• VARIETY											
NON-VERBAL	• APPEARANCE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• MOVEMENT											
	• ASSURANCE											

IMPROMPTU SPEECH		EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIR	POOR						
CONTENT	• ORIGINALITY	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• IDEAS											
	• ORGANIZATION											
DELIVERY	• MOVEMENT/GESTURE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• BODY LANGUAGE											
	• VOICE											
OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS	• ACHIEVEMENT OF PURPOSE	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	0
	• VERBAL COMMUNICATION											
	• NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION											

SPEECH PENALTIES	BOTH SPEECHES PREPARED ONLY	IMPROMPTU ONLY	NO PENALTY
TIMING VIOLATION	-10	-7	0

01 02 03 M1 0701 -999- 5 4 3 2 1  
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 FORM NO. F-14103-USAD-L  
 SCANTRON

# EVALUATION FORM

What was your role?     Speech Judge             Room Manager (timer)

Chart:    Y = Yes    N = No            ⑤ = Excellent   ④ = Great    ③ = Average    ② = Below Average    ① = Poor		Yes No	Rating
Questions / Comments			
1. Do you feel you were given adequate training to perform your job? Comments:		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
2. What was the most critical component of the training that you found valuable?			
3. Was the time allotted sufficient for the training? Comments (suggestions):		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
4. Was the time allotted sufficient for each decathlete, judging, etc. in the actual session? Comments (suggestions):		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	⑤ ④ ③ ② ①
5. Would you be willing to judge again in the future? If yes, print name and phone number at the bottom of this evaluation form. Comments:		<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N	

*Additional comments can be made on the back of this evaluation form.*

(Optional)

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone w/Area Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return completed evaluation form to the test collection center at the end of the day.

Thank you for volunteering!