

# 2015 CQI/QEC Debates Competition Report

The QEC debates competition is in my opinion the most important competition. As opposed to the other comps, debates does not enhance engineering skills and/or knowledge per say. It is the only non-engineering based match of the event. Topics can vary anywhere debating the importance of machining classes in an engineering bachelors to debating that pies are better than cake. Debates are a massive learning experience in structured communication and conveying information in an efficient manner. It also boosts oral analytical skills. The near totality of this bachelor's classes and extracurricular activities are based on skills, innovation, and knowledge. The debates competition teaches you to more the quintessential communication skills needed to successfully convey engineering innovation and thoughts.

Lessons learned are all regarding the structure of the debates. Good structure is the only way to win. Good arguments that are not structured properly are worthless. First of all, the preparation time must be used to the fullest. As proposition, it is important to take your time and carefully define every word and aspect of the subject as to turn the debate to your advantage as much as possible. An unexpected definition will throw all the opposition's preparation to the gutter. As opposition it is thus important to think of any main possible direction the subject can be turned and create basic arguments opposing them. Secondly, argument correlation is probably the most important aspect. You must keep track of what the other team's arguments and ensure that your arguments counter those and add to your strength. Not countered arguments are an easy way of losing. Even if you have good arguments, if the other team opposes them and you don't oppose all of theirs, they will take it. Now it is primordial to make your argument structure crystal clear to the judges and to show them how you have opposed the other team's arguments. Do not take it for granted that the judges understood. Help them organize their sheet for your win. Finally, keep open the possibility for a grey zone argumentation if you are opposition. This is an easy win when the subject permits it. If the proposition says strawberries are better than Nutella, don't argue Nutella is better than strawberries. Instead use all their arguments saying strawberries are great to your advantage. Say yes strawberries are awesome but strawberries WITH Nutella is even better. If well executed this kind of argument is easier to win.

The QEC competition represents a huge skill forming opportunity as well as networking for future internships and/or job positions. I look forward to this type of event (EngGames & QEC) of fine tune my public speaking skills make myself more comfortable in front of others. That's personally the most enticing aspect of it to me. I look forward to strategically beating other teams. Also having my faults pointed out and improving on them throughout the length of the debates is also quite nice. Watching the progression from my first debate to the last is what really gets me excited.

A major point of improvement for the ECA is getting student interest much higher and getting the word out there on QEC. I find it is a bit of a niche market type thing that only a very select group of students know about. I strongly believe that if more people were interested and partook in selection events, the candidate list would be much bigger allowing us to statistically select more apt Concordia representatives. As bonus this would also allow for more qualification debates and thus practices for passing on "savoir faire" and optimizing team performance.