

The Question of Ethics: A Formal Debate

In class, you will take part in a formal debate on whether or not American foreign corporations should be forced to adopt a Code of Ethics that will address the wages of foreign workers and the working conditions in factories, on farms, or on plantations. The debate will be based on the following statement and will follow the format listed below.

RESOLVED: US corporations should adopt a standardized Code of Ethics in their business practices abroad.

1. The class will be divided into two groups, one group arguing for the Code of Ethics and the other arguing against. You may not know until the debate which side you will be on, so be prepared to take either side.
2. Each group will be given 15-20 minutes to prepare its argument and to select a spokesperson(s) and a note taker. All members of the group should help write the opening statement, outlining the main points of your argument.
3. Each group will be given five minutes to make its opening statement. The “pro” side will go first. The “con” side should remember that its opening statement should highlight its argument and should not respond to the opening statement made by the Pro group: there will be time for that later. Do keep in mind, however, that since you will have a chance to dispute what the other side has said (this is called a “rebuttal”), one or two appointed people from each group should take notes during the other side’s opening statement.
4. After the opening statements, each group will have five to ten minutes to prepare a response to the other side’s opening statement. Select another spokesperson to present the rebuttal.
5. Each side will have three or four minutes to present its rebuttal. The “con” side will go first.
6. Following the rebuttals the floor will be open for general discussion/comments.

*** Please remember to respect your classmates and their views! ***