This exercise will be conducted in two class sessions. During the first class session, half of you will participate in the debate; during the second, the other half will participate in the debate. I will divide the class up into fourths by last name, and on 25 February, ¼ of you will defend the debate thesis and ¼ of you will argue against it, with the remaining ½ of the class taking notes and then voting on the winning side. On 17 March, the ½ of the class that has not participated in the debate will divide into the pro-side and the con-side, while the ½ of the class that debated in February will sit in judgment.

The class-time will be divided as follows: 10 minutes for set up, including announcement of the thesis; 30 minutes for preparation; 5 minutes each for pro and con first arguments (with a coin flip determining the order); 5 minutes for preparing the response; 5 minutes each for responses (with a coin flip determining the order); vote and decision. Each side will be represented by one person during the first arguments and a different person during the second. I will be strict with the time limits.

There will be an award of 10 extra credit points for each member of the winning side in each debate. The group that will vote is asked not to vote based on your view of the thesis, but rather which side did the better job of defending their side. Think about the arguments that are presented. I reserve the right to set aside the group judgment if you are not serious about your responsibility here.

The ½ of the class that sits in judgment will then write a 1-page paper consisting of two paragraphs. In the first paragraph, you will write out the most compelling argument you heard from the pro-side, and in the second, the most compelling argument you heard from the con-side. You will also turn in the notes you took during the debate. The grade will be divided up 40/40/20, with 40 points for each argument and 20 points for the notes. This will be due the Tuesday following the debate in class—so 1 March and 22 March.