

Group Debate Discussions. Students are given the opportunity to participate in one of several debate group discussions (12 minutes maximum for pro/con, position/response), which focus on issues of interest to the general public and related to plant ecology. These discussions will take place during class for about a 20-minute period. Each discussion debate will consist of pro and con positions for a particular topic.

For 2015, the debate topics are

- 11/17, Should xeriscaping be mandated by law or receive tax incentives?
- 11/19, Should shrub-grassland wildfires be suppressed or allowed to burn in Utah's deserts?
- 12/1, Should we regulate/reduce human waste and atmospheric inputs into the Great Salt Lake ecosystem?
- 12/3, Should we mandate control the spread of invasive species in the foothills along the Wasatch Front?
- 12/8 Should dogs be allowed to roam freely into canyons along the Wasatch Front?

What is expected as part of this debate:

- You will work in groups of 4 student – 2 'pro' and 2 'con' on the issue; pro-con groups will talk to each other well in advance of the debate so that they know they are debating the same topic
- To prepare for these discussions, groups will want to review recent literature (scientific articles, magazine articles, newspaper articles, etc.).
- Your assignment will be to lead a debate style discussion on this topic between the pro/con groups for a total of 12 minutes. In order, this format will consist of
 - 3 minute 'pro' presentation
 - 3 minute 'con' presentation
 - 3 minute 'pro' rebuttal presentation
 - 3 minute 'con' rebuttal presentation
 - open discussion with all class members
- A 1-page handout describing your position is required and will be presented to the class at the time of the debate.