Answers to Many Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Can I rent a refrigerator and microwave?
A: No. Unfortunately, the dorms do not have a sufficient supply to make these available to our students. If you need refrigerator access to store medicines, please contact the SDI in advance.

Q: Are the dorms air conditioned?
A: No, and students may not bring air conditioning units as the dorm prohibits their installation. We recommend that students bring box fans, which will also be available for purchase at registration. Fortunately, lab rooms, where students spend most of their time, will be air conditioned and the dorms cool off significantly at night.

Q: Are there laundry facilities available?
A: Yes. There are coin-operated washers/dryers available in the dorm. Quarters are available at the dorm front desk. Students need to supply their own detergent, etc.

Q: Do I need to bring dress clothes?
A: It’s entirely up to you. The judges at our tournaments will not penalize you if you debate in shorts and a tee shirt.

Q: I like to workout. Are there athletic facilities available near the dorm?
A: Yes. There are several athletic facilities available near the dorm. These facilities require a small usage fee.

Q: Should I bring a laptop? And if I do, will it be safe?
A: We strongly recommend students bring a laptop. Most students will debate paperlessly (by reading evidence off of a computer) and research is done online. If you do decide to bring a laptop, the SDI cannot be held responsible for any loss or damage that happens to the laptop. It has been our experience that students who act responsibly with their laptops (i.e. keep it with them or locked up at all times) do not encounter problems with theft. If you choose to bring a laptop, please review the sheet in this packet about how to configure your computer before you arrive.

Q: Will I have an opportunity to attend religious services?
A: Yes. Stop by our office during the camp and let us know what denomination you would like to attend. We will then coordinate shuttles. You must let us know several days in advance.

Q: What’s the weather like in Michigan?
A: Unpredictable, so pack accordingly. There have been some summers where the average temperature was in the 90s, and other summers where it was in the 60s. If you are in East Lansing long enough, you could experience both extremes. Be sure to bring jeans and a sweatshirt in addition to shorts and tees.

Q: How much spending money will I need?
A: It depends. The appropriate amount of spending money varies for each student, and you know your personal proclivities best. Last year, we surveyed all of our students about how much money they thought was needed, and here are the averages for each session: 2 weekers - $125; 3 weekers - $180, 4 weekers - $300. Please keep in mind that the best amount for you depends on how much you expect to eat out, go shopping, or buy supplies and souvenirs while you’re here.

A complete list of answers to frequently asked questions is available at: http://debate.msu.edu/faqs.html
What to Do if Bringing Your Computer

Please follow these instructions **before** arriving at the SDI. This is the only way to ensure that your computer does not get a virus that would cause it to slow or crash. You will be in good shape if you configure your computer correctly, but we cannot stress enough the importance of following these steps before you arrive and connect to the campus network.

1) Make sure you have an Ethernet adapter installed in your computer, and bring an Ethernet cord with you.
Most likely, this is already installed and functional without any further work on your part, especially if you have high-speed internet access at home. To make sure you have one, look on your computer for a port which looks like a slightly larger than normal phone jack. It is most likely right next to the normal phone jack for your dial-up modem.

Please note that the campus network does NOT have dial-up phone access numbers you can use with a regular modem. If you need to purchase and install an Ethernet card, consult your local electronics or computer store for assistance in selecting the right model. Make sure you tell them if you need a laptop or a desktop model.

Only some parts of the campus are wireless (the libraries and some classrooms and common areas). If you usually use wireless internet at home, make sure you also have a wired Ethernet adapter in your computer.

2) Update your operating system.

- If running Windows, open Internet Explorer, go to the “Tools” menu, and select “Windows Update.” Follow the onscreen prompts to install all high priority security patches, updates, and service packs.
- If running Mac OS, go to www.apple.com, click on the tab for “Support,” then “Downloads” and make sure you have the most recent version of your operating system.

3) Install a virus scanner and make sure it’s turned on. If you don’t already have a virus scanner, you should purchase one, either in a store or online. Popular choices include:

   For Windows:
   McAfee -- http://www.mcafee.com
   Symantec/Norton -- http://www.symantec.com

   For Macs:
   A variety of options can be found at www.pure-mac.com/virus.html

4) Update your virus definitions. This is extremely important. Having anti-virus software is useless if you do not update your software so that it can protect you against the newest viruses. Consult your virus scanner’s documentation for how to do this.

5) Install a firewall.

- If you are running Windows XP Service Pack 2, there is a built-in firewall. To ensure it is turned on, go to Start – Settings – Control Panel. Click on the icon for “Network and Internet Connections.” Then click
“Change Windows Firewall Settings.” Make sure it is set to “On.” Note: Even though Windows has a built in firewall, you may also want to install a third party firewall.

- If you don’t have a firewall, you can either buy or download one. One freely available firewall for Windows is
  - Zonealarm – www.zonelab.com

Others for Windows include:
  - Symantec/Norton Firewall – www.symantec.com
  - BlackIce – blackice.iss.net
  - McAfee – www.mcafee.com
  - Outpost – www.agnitum.com
  - Sygate – www.sygate.com

For Mac, firewalls include:
  - Mac OS X includes a firewall called ipfw – you can check to ensure it is installed and functioning properly by consulting your documentation
  - A variety of other resources on firewall software for the Mac are available here: http://seaotter.berkeley.edu/cab/mac-firewalls/

6) Install and Update a Spyware Blocker. This last step is less important for Macintosh, but free software is available if you search the internet. Popular free choices for Windows include:
  - AdAware -- http://www.lavasoftusa.com/software/adaware/

Make sure to run the update function in the program to get the latest definitions.
What to Bring with You

Please note that you are not required to bring these items to the camp. This list is simply a collection of ideas and suggestions for you to consider. The institute cannot be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Items will be available for sale in the camp office and on registration day. Special items are also available through the camp office at a charge of $1.00 per order.

Debate Supplies:
Jump/Flash Drive
Flow Paper
Pens

Electronics:
Laptop Computer
Ethernet Cord
Extension Cord
Mouse
Fan

Personal Items:
Backpack
Laundry Detergent
Clothing
Picture ID
Spending Money
Toiletries
Umbrella
Water Bottle
Wash Cloth

***Note: Sheets, blankets, and towels are all provided by the dorm. Students may exchange their linens for clean ones at the front desk weekly. If you would like to bring your own linens all beds in the dorms are Twin XL.
Travel Information

PART I: GENERAL ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE INFORMATION

Main SDI registration will occur on Sunday July 10th, 2016 between 10am and 6pm. Students should plan to arrive in East Lansing within that window of time. Students should depart East Lansing by 12 noon on the last day of their session:

- 2 week session: Friday, July 22
- 3-week session: Friday, July 29
- 4-week session: Friday, August 5

PART II: AIRLINE TRAVEL OPTIONS

Students who choose to fly to the Spartan Debate Institutes have two airport options:

**Lansing’s Capital City Airport (LAN)**
We strongly encourage students to fly into Lansing because this airport is located only 15 minutes away from the MSU Campus. We offer shuttle service to and from LAN at the cost of $15 each way. This amount would be added directly onto the student’s institute tuition. Our shuttles will operate almost continuously throughout travel days. LAN offers flights from several airlines: Delta (Midwest Express Connection, United, and US Airways. More information can be found at http://www.flylansing.com/.

**Flint’s Bishop International Airport (FNT)**
Flint often has very well priced flights into the area and is only about 45 miles from the MSU campus. The Flint airport is serviced by AirTran, ATA, Delta, Funjet, Northwest, Midwest, and Continental. *Many of the fares for these airlines do not show up on travel sites like Travelocity and Expedia. We offer shuttle service to and from FNT at the cost of $25 each way. This amount would be added directly onto the student’s institute tuition. When booking your trip, please choose a flight that arrives early enough to collect your baggage and luggage. Information about the airlines that fly into FNT can be found at http://www.bishopairport.org/.*

**Detroit and Grand Rapids Airports**
Please note that there are no SDI related shuttle services this year to and from the Detroit or Grand Rapids airports. Students choosing to fly into these airports must assume responsibility for arranging their own transportation. Last year, several students did use a direct bus from Detroit airport to East Lansing (information available at http://www.michiganflyer.com/). We are able to pick students up/drop students off at the East Lansing stop for a $5 charge each direction. Please note that the SDI cannot be responsible for students that miss their bus at the Detroit airport, nor can we accept responsibility for anything occurring while students are en route to/from the SDI.

**WE CANNOT ACCOMMODATE UNACCOMPANIED MINORS**
Many airlines offer the option of accompanying your son or daughter from one flight to the next and require that a specifically identified party meet him or her at the gate. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient staff to meet each student at the gate nor can we determine far enough in advance which staff members will be stationed at the different airports. Both the Lansing and Flint airports are small and have a small centralized baggage claim area. *SDI employees will be stationed in the baggage claim area to ensure that students find their bags and board the correct shuttle. They will drop students off outside the airport terminal on departure days.*
**Train/Bus Shuttles:**
The SDI can pick up/drop off students at the East Lansing Amtrak and Greyhound stations. Arrangements must be made in advance in the same manner as airport pick-up. There is a $5 charge each direction.

**DEPARTURE SHUTTLES:** Departure day shuttles will depart the dorms no earlier than 7am and no later than 12:30pm. Students with flight times requiring earlier departures will need to take a cab. Students with departures late in the day may spend a large amount of time waiting at the airport. Travel to the Lansing airport takes approximately 15 minutes. Travel to the Flint airport takes approximately 50 minutes. Both of these airports are low-traffic, so check-in tends to run efficiently.