Who We Are

- The John R. Park Debate Society (the speech and debate team) is sponsored by the Department of Communication and has been a campus organization since 1869.
- Utah Forensics is one of only five schools to host the National Debate Tournament (the oldest, longest running, and most prestigious college debate tournament) twice.
- Utah’s Invitational Tournament, the Great Salt Lake Invitational, is one of the oldest and most distinguished tournaments in the Western United States.
- In 2015, the team finished 6th at the National Parliamentary Debate Association National Championships.

What We Do

- **Competition**
  - Parliamentary Debate – We are a member of, and compete in tournaments sanctioned by, the National Parliamentary Debate Association (NPDA).
  - Individual Events – We are a member of, and compete in tournaments sanctioned by, the American Forensics Association (AFA).

- **Public Events**
  - Public Debates - Public debates are where intercollegiate debate started. We host a public debate each semester. Past debates have focused on locally relevant public issues, i.e. guns on campus, Utah liquor laws and public safety, immigration, and nuclear waste storage.

- **High School Outreach**
  - Volunteer Coaching - Our students provide nearly 1,000 hours of support each year for local teams by judging at local tournaments and offering volunteer coaching for teams with limited resources.
  - High School Tournament - Utah Forensics hosts the Beehive Bonanza. This tournament hosts teams from throughout Utah and around the country. Scholarships are awarded to top competitors.
  - Beehive Forensics Institute - Utah Forensics hosts high school students and coaches from throughout the United States at the Beehive Forensics Institute. The Institute offers an intensive two-week program in which top college and high school coaches offer individualized training for high school speech and debate students.

How to Join

- Email: Contact the Director of Forensics, Dr. Michael Middleton (m.middleton@utah.edu).
- Enroll in Forensics Practicum: Enroll in COMM 3270 (fall) or COMM 4270 (spring) which runs concurrently with weekly team practice. These courses often fulfill Upper-Division CW and/or CEL credit requirements. See the most current schedule of classes for confirmation.
- Attend Practice: Practices are open to all students enrolled at the University. We meet on Mondays and Wednesdays from 6:00pm until 9:00pm in the Utah Forensics Squad Room, LNCO 2890.
Reasons to Join:

- **Research & Writing Skills**
  - Speech & Debate teaches students to develop and support sound claims, as well as to hone critical reasoning skills.
  - Speech & Debate teaches students to develop and deliver their ideas and arguments in concise ways.
  - Speech & Debate teaches students effective research practices.
  - Speech & Debate teaches students to “think on their feet” and to present their ideas with confidence.

- **Organizational Skills**
  - Speech & Debate teaches students to organize large quantities of information for effective retrieval and use.
  - Speech & Debate teaches students effective organizational skills through opportunities to judge and help administrate tournaments.
  - Speech & Debate teaches students to organize effectively team efforts to maximize team productivity.

- **Relationships**
  - Speech & Debate offers an opportunity to develop close advising relationships with faculty and instructors in the Department of Communication.
  - Speech & Debate offers an opportunity to travel and develop relationships with students at other campuses in the state and nation.
  - Speech & Debate fosters a sense of camaraderie among teammates that is rare in most college settings.

Some Famous Speech & Debate Participants:
- Kofi Annan, former United Nations Secretary-General
- Oprah Winfrey, talk show host
- Ann Richards, former Governor of Texas
- Stephen Breyer, Supreme Court Justice
- Harry Connick, Jr., Singer/Songwriter
- Bill Clinton, former President of the United States
- Karl Rove, former advisor to President George W. Bush, debated in UT
- Johnny Cochran, famed defense attorney
- Michael Stipe, lead singer of REM
- Ted Turner, founder of CNN

DON’T DELAY!!! JOIN TODAY!!!