

Instructions for Biotech tA/es Organizers and Debaters:

1. This will be a friendly debate that clearly poses an important scientific/engineering question to the audience.
2. It is important to frame the debate question carefully so that it enables a real debate or at least an exchange of ideas.
3. Presentations should be primarily given by students. Faculty can serve as coaches, but the primary presentations should be by the students.
4. The student presentations should strongly connect to their research as well as the debate topic. We want to see data from the students who present.
5. Faculty members should help the student teams to prepare for the debate and provide insights on the big picture and framing the question under debate.
6. Enlisting the input of industrial experts who participate in the debate is strongly encouraged. Their feedback is interesting and valuable, however, the focus is on students interacting with, debating, questioning and being questioned by the industrial participants not on hearing talks from the industrial folks.

You can set up the debate however you prefer. One example is from the April 21, 2019 debate between Team Protein and Team RNA. Team protein's student presented their case for "proteins rule" for 8 minutes. Then the student from team RNA presented their case for 8 minutes. Then team protein did 8 minutes of (awesome and hilarious) rebuttal, following which Team RNA presented 8 minutes of (awesome and hilarious) rebuttal.

NOTE ON HOSTING: The host lab that will take care of the advertising and selecting the theme and the food. BTP pays for all the food.

The other things that we need from both debate teams. Please email the

At Least 3 weeks before the debate so we can provide this to the host lab

1. Names of the teams and the debaters
2. Title of the debate, for advertising fliers.

At Least 2 days before the debate so we can provide it to the host lab

3. The wording of the question for the voting. Please email the questions to the host and cbabbitt@bio.umass.edu for the polling

We recognized that the way we had worded the Protein/RNAs question had really influenced the outcome of the vote: "After hearing both sides, which would you prefer to take: an **RNA drug** or a **protein drug** (circle one)." Because at the time protein drugs were more common, protein drugs won by a landslide.

A better question would have been "What do you think will be the most effective modality in the future: **RNA drugs** or **protein drugs** (circle one)" I think that second question might have had RNA win. So, it would be helpful if you could come up with one or two questions for the voting that you think paint the most neutral phrasing for an unbiased outcome.