

*Ethos, pathos and logos. Master them al land you can shape the world.*

Debatemaster Gindam Taardus, 412 AOV

## Debate encounter

A homebrew mechanism for roleplaying debates in Zeitgeist (Pathfinder). The mechanism is based on determining a score for the three modes of persuasion, [ethos, pathos and logos](#). JS 2021

### Ethos (WIS)

Credibility, the extent to which your argument resonate with audience or jury. Presenting valid and convincing sources of information. A self-assured way of speaking and presenting oneself.

To improve your ethos-bonus: insight in the opinions of your audience or jury; quoting (or being) a respectable authority on the subject at hand; ...

**Ethos-score:** d20 + WIS-modifier + ethos-bonus

### Pathos (CHA)

The extent to which your argument invokes emotions. A personal or illustrative story, a catchy oneliner, a well know quote or slogan. The rhythm of your argument, timing.

To improve your pathos-bonus: evoke a response, supporting your story with imagery, objects, sound-effect, an odour. A fitting joke; ...

**Pathos-score:** d20 + CHA-modifier + pathos-bonus

### Logos (INT)

The solid style of reasoning in your argument. A well structured argument, fitting analogies and supported by thorough research and facts.

To improve your logos-bonus: Conduct or study research, acquiring knowledge. Underlining the structure of your argument and expose sophisms; ...

**Logos-score:** d20 + INT-modifier + logos-bonus

## Fase 1 – Roleplay

Roleplay the debate. Present your arguments and your way of delivering them. Others players can assist, by doing research, inciting the crowd or illustrating an argument by a mirror image, disrupting the opponent, gathering information about the mood of the crowd, etcetera. These actions may require a skill-check. GM determines ethos-, pathos- and logos-bonus.

## Fase 2 – Mechanism / dice

Both debaters roll 3d20 and assign them to ethos pathos and logos, to determine ethos-, pathos and logsscore. The dice are rolled and assigned one at the time as specified below.

By the rules of the debate an opening speaker and rolling (speaking) order is determined. Usually one of the default orders (table 2) is chosen.

The first player rolls a d20 and assigns it to either ethos, pathos, or logos and thus determines a corresponding score. Now the second player rolls a d20 and assigns this to ethos, pathos, or logos, to determine a score, while having the advantage of knowing one score of the first player. Then the second player rolls again a d20 and determines a second score, this time choosing from the two

remaining aspects. Now the first player rolls a d20, picks one of his remaining aspects. Finally both players roll a third d20 to determine their third score. Since there is only one aspect remaining for both players, they can both roll simultaneously.

Determine for each aspect the difference in score. The debater with the highest score gets awarded the points as specified in table 1. Highest sum of points wins the debate. There may be a second or third round.

Difference in score on aspect	Points
0	0
1-4	1
5-9	2
10-14	3
15-19	4
20+	6

**Table 1:** points awarded to highest scoring debater, based on score-difference

### Alternatives - experts

An expert in debates may have some advantages, for example:

A reroll;

Hiding the result of a score until the end of the debate (assign the dice, but cover it by a cup);

Winning a point on equal score;

A flat +1 (+2, +3, ... ) on ethos-, pathos- and logosbonus;

the option to choose which of the default orders (table 2) will be applied;

changing the debate order by one step in table 2;

...

These extra advantages may come as a perk for certain classes, might be chosen as a feat or could be awarded after successfully winning a debate.

+4	B B B A A A
+3	B B A B A A
+2	B B A A (A B)
+1	B A B A (A B)
default	B A A B (A B)
	A B B A (A B)
-1	A B A B (A B)
-2	A A B B (A B)
-3	A A B A B B
-4	A A A B B B

**Table 2:** Order of the debate. (A B) means both can roll simultaneously