What is a Brief?

• It reduces a lot of information into an outline of “essential argumentative elements” of the proposition
  – Can include possible counter arguments

• An outline (mostly using standard outline form)
  – covering various claims that *could* be made, and
  – the evidence that *could* be used in advancing them.

• Briefs can be Affirmative or Negative
  – The first constructive speech (brief) will definitely be used
  – Negative briefs and other Affirmative briefs may or may not be used, depending upon if they apply to the debate *as it unfolds*
Affirmative Debate Brief Format
(this is how you would write & say it)

Introduction: (Word for word; SHORT; not overly dramatic)

Resolved: (Statement of resolution)

Observation I: Definitions (Define key words in the resolution, and any other words necessary to understand the Affirmative case)
   A. First Definition
   B. Second Definition, etc.

Contentions: (This is the Affirmative’s justification for adopting the plan; covers significance, Harms, and Inherency; this is written—and spoken—in outline form)

I. Statement of Harm
   A. More defining statement of harm
      1. More defining statement of harm
         EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word
         (shorthand citation of source is fine)
   B. Continuation/development of harm

II. Statement of Inherency
   A. More defining statement of inherency
      1. More defining statement of inherency
         EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word
         (shorthand citation of source is fine)
   B. Continuation/development of inherency
Affirmative Debate Brief Format
(continued)

**Plan:** (or implied plan; organized into “Planks”; explain the plan in detail)

I. **Agency** (who will oversee/administer the plan?)
II. **Mandates** (what, exactly, will the Affirmative plan do?)
   A.
   B.
III. **Enforcement** (how will the Affirmative make sure the Plan will work?)
   A.
   B.
IV. **Funding/Staffing** (how will the plan be funded or staffed?)
V. **Addendums** (optional; is there anything else we need to know about the plan?)

**Advantages/Solvency:** (What happens if the Affirmative Plan is adopted)

I. **Advantage 1** (general statement)
   EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)
II. **Advantage 2** (general statement)
   EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)

**Conclusion:** (very short restatement of Affirmative philosophy and request for Affirmative vote)
Negative Debate Organization
(this is how you would say it)

NOTE: Negative reacts to the Affirmative case/plan. Use evidence where appropriate.

Negative Philosophy: (Negative position in the debate: usually a statement claiming the Negative’s intent to uphold the status quo, propose minor repairs, state that it will prove the Affirmative is wrong, show the Affirmative plan does not solve, or propose a counterplan)

I. Observations (any general arguments that may apply to more than one of the Affirmative’s arguments OR an important argument that doesn’t directly clash with the Affirmative’s case; also called an “overview”)

Definitions (accept or argue Affirmative definitions; if arguing, must offer counter definitions and explain why Negative’s definitions are better) If arguing Topicality, it comes here or above, under observations)

Case Attacks (using Affirmative’s organizational structure, refute the Affirmative’s contentions; use evidence & reasoning)

Plan Attacks/Solvency Arguments (Creating own organization, explain how the affirmative’s plan will not work. Point out how the plan will not solve the advantages the Affirmative claimed; explain disadvantages to the Affirmative’s plan)

Conclusion (short restatement of the Negative philosophy and request for Negative vote)
Negative Brief Format: Argument Specific
(this is how you write a single brief)

**Expected Affirmative Argument:** Identify the point/observation you think the Affirmative will possibly make. This could be case or plan arguments.

1. **First response** (Your first point of a developed argument)
   a. **Further development of first response**
      EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)
   b. **Additional development of first response** (if needed)
      EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)

2. **Second response** (Your second point of a developed argument)
   a. **Further development of second response**
      EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)
   b. **Additional development of second response** (if needed)
      EVIDENCE – displayed and cited word for word (shorthand citation of source is fine)

**NOTE:** Could also prepare a brief on the Negative Philosophy (the Negative position in the debate: usually a statement claiming the Negative’s intent to uphold the status quo, propose minor repairs, state that it will prove the Affirmative is wrong, show the Affirmative plan does not solve, or propose a counterplan) or **Observations** (any general arguments that may apply to more than one of the Affirmative’s arguments OR an important argument that doesn’t directly clash with the Affirmative’s case; also called an “overview”)