

One of the competitions at CQI is the Oral debates, this competition which is similar to others in engineering competition and competitions of other faculties such as jeux du commerce. This competition which is often considered of high prestige in many fields and the competition works as such: each team is composed of two people and each match is one team versus another. Before the subject is given the teams are told if they are going to be the government or the opposition, to which the subject is then given. Subjects can vary from “let it be resolved that there should be a mandatory debate class added to the engineering curriculum” or “LIBRT bars should serve alcohol all night” to more open subjects such as “LIBRT Cake is better than pie”. Both teams then have ten minutes to organize their arguments, the government arguing for the statement and the opposition against. The teams then each have their turn to talk in the order of: 5 min government, 5 min opposition, 5 min government, 5 min opposition, 2 min conclusion opposition, and 2 min conclusion government. The arguments and counter arguments are then noted by a panel of judges, normally 5 or 7, who judge which side was more convincing. The more in depth details of the rules can be found at <http://cqi-qec.qc.ca/2015/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/R%C3%A8gles-CQI2015-oct-2014-EN.pdf> in the index of 5.8 page 20. The competition this year was organized by LP Vallee an ex-debater with a two tier elimination, in a one day competition which worked fabulously. The competition itself was well organized and structured even if there was a half hour delay from the beginning.

In all the engineering competitions that hold a debate aspect to them debates is always considered “different” in a way due to the fact it is based on speech quality rather than being based on a built product or research based. This is what this competition brings that cannot be found in any other competition, it teaches students quick thinking and to analyze problems in different ways and it teaches student self-confidence and precedence in front of an audience when sometimes you don’t know what to say, and this may seem like something not of much use, but try and go to an interview and be shot a curveball question. Overall this competition allows engineers to study something that they don’t see in class, it teaches them quick thinking and public showmanship.

This is a competition that Concordia has always done well in, and this year was no exception, bringing home third place behind poly and McGill. It may be because of the language barrier that Concordia has with most other Quebec schools but it seems to be an effective strategy. I had tried this in the last year with little success but in the future year the debate team would like to start a club which would not only do the engineering competitions but would also compete in cross faculty competitions. This would be good for both the competition aspect but also for the general well formation of the engineers at Concordia. To conclude, the Debate competition at CQI is a well-structured, well respected competition that Concordia excels at and we are hoping will continue to excel at.