U.S. 2004 Debates Rules

Rules common to all of the 2004 presidential and vice presidential debates:

- 9:00 p.m. Eastern Time start time
- 90 minutes in length
- Single moderator
- Questions chosen by moderator (except town meeting)
- Traffic light system to indicate available time
- Coin toss to determine order of speakers
- No opening statements
- Two-minute responses, 90-second rebuttals and, at moderator's discretion, discussion extensions of one minute
- 2-minute closing statements

Rules unique to individual 2004 presidential and vice presidential debates:

1st Presidential Debate

- Format – Candidates standing at podiums
- Topic – Domestic Policy
- Candidates questioned in turn

Vice Presidential Debate

- Format – Candidates and moderator seated at table
- Topic – Domestic and Foreign Policy
- Candidates questioned in turn

2nd Presidential Debate

- Format - Town Hall
- Topic – All topics
- Candidates questioned by uncommitted voters identified by the Gallup Organization.

3rd Presidential Debate

- Format – Candidates standing at podiums
- Topic – Foreign Policy
- Candidates questioned in turn