

There is no debating: Tulane Debate Team is moving forward

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Members of the Tulane Debate Team get together to celebrate their recent big win and the growth of the team as a whole. (Photo by Allison Cruz)

Many Tulane University students might not know about the Tulane Debate Team, but recently the team has been setting a precedent of success and perseverance. When the team traveled recently to Morehouse College in Atlanta, it had a big win. However, it has taken work and effort for the team to get to where it is today.

The Tulane Debate Team, entirely student-run, is the only student organization

advised by [Newcomb-Tulane College](#). Thanh Lam “Lance” Tran, a neuroscience major who graduated in 2014, revitalized the team in 2010.

“Interestingly enough, Lance had never debated before,” says senior Tim DeCotis, president of the debate team. “But he wanted Tulane to give it a shot.”

DeCotis has been on the debate team since the second semester of his first year at Tulane, and as a long-term member he has witnessed the development of the team over the years.

The team was originally small, with five to six members, but recently the team has grown to 19. The members vary in their style of debate, but DeCotis says they share some common qualities.

“The people I’ve debated with here are incredibly passionate and committed to the team and its growth. It’s really fulfilling to work with a group of people like that.”

Debating works like “the World Cup,” DeCotis says, with teams of two debating other teams and then moving on to higher rounds. At the recent competition at Morehouse College, all five Tulane duos advanced. DeCotis and his partner, Claire Kueffner, ended up winning the entire tournament.

DeCotis has high hopes for the team in the future: “I’d love to see our team grow to have the national status that Tulane as a whole does. Even if in a small way, every time we do well at a tournament, we help to build Tulane’s reputation and spread the word about what a great place Tulane is to go to college.”

The team is working on fundraising with the goal of hosting a tournament in the spring of 2017.

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