Not every debate topic is the same. There are of different types and have different requirements for interpretation.

TOPICS OF FACT: Something is or is not true.
*This House believes that advertising does more harm than good for the status of women in society.*
Affirmative burden: How do you determine when it is proven true? Two options: "True beyond a reasonable doubt" fairly strict burden, used in criminal courts. "True based on a preponderance of evidence" easier standard, used in civil courts. Without a standard it is hard to win the debate.

TOPICS OF VALUE: Something is of value or inherent worth.
*This House believes that Shakespeare is a greater writer than Tolstoy.*
Affirmative burden: Define the value term(s) so that the debate has focus. In this example, what are the criteria of a great writer (critical review, popular through time, becomes important for the culture that produces it, popular in many cultures, etc.). Without a clear definition of the value term the debate will be unfocused.

TOPICS OF POLICY: There is something that we should do, some action we should take, as societies or individuals.
*This House would legalize prostitution.*
Affirmative burden: Explain how you would do this, through a "plan" or a "model" to outline the basis of action, such as who would do it, how they would do it, etc.

WHAT TYPES OF MOTIONS ARE THESE?
This house would expand the permanent membership of the UN Security Council.
This House believes that heads of government should be required to have a parliamentary majority to govern
TH supports military intervention to deliver emergency aid in humanitarian crises.
THW recognize the independence of South Ossetia.
THW execute convicted war criminals
This House believes that history will be more kind to George Bush than the present.
This House would designate the resources of polar zones as the common property of humanity.
This House believes that humanity will not reach the 22nd Century.
This House believes state run media cannot effectively serve the function of a free press.

This House believes that commercial media advertising degrades the quality of life.

This House believes that standardized testing is the enemy of learning.

This House prefers need based higher education scholarships to affirmative action in admissions.

This House believes it is wrong to eat whales and sharks.

Pornography should be considered as literature.

This House believes that NATO is an outdated institution.

TB that NATO should withdraw from Afghanistan.

This House would require all candidates for national office to undergo lie detector tests using questions submitted by their opponents.

This House supports ancient alternative remedies.

This House believes that people in drunk drivers' car should be also punished.

THW make polar zones the common property of humanity.

The Chinese were the first outsiders to "discover" America.

Mao was a more evil leader than Hitler.

The moral individual should never lie.

Viewing violent media leads to violent behavior.
WHAT TYPES OF MOTIONS ARE THESE? [ANSWERS]
This house would expand the permanent membership of the UN Security Council. POLICY

This House believes that heads of government should be required to have a parliamentary majority to govern. POLICY

TH supports military intervention to deliver emergency aid in humanitarian crises. POLICY

THW recognize the independence of South Ossetia. POLICY

THW execute convicted war criminals POLICY

This House believes that history will be more kind to George Bush than the present. FACT-FUTURE

This House would designate the resources of polar zones as the common property of humanity. POLICY

This House believes that humanity will not reach the 22nd Century. FACT-FUTURE

This House believes state run media cannot effectively serve the function of a free press. VALUE/FACT?

This House believes that commercial media advertising degrades the quality of life. FACT

This House believes that standardized testing is the enemy of learning. FACT-CAUSALITY

This House prefers need based higher education scholarships to affirmative action in admissions. POLICY/VALUE

This House believes it is wrong to eat whales and sharks. VALUE

Pornography should be considered as literature. FACT-DEFINITION

This House believes that NATO is an outdated institution. FACT-DEFINITION

TB that NATO should withdraw from Afghanistan. POLICY

This House would require all candidates for national office to undergo lie detector tests using questions submitted by their opponents. POLICY

This House supports ancient alternative remedies. POLICY

This House believes that people in drunk drivers’ car are also guilty. VALUE

THW make polar zones the common property of humanity. POLICY
The Chinese were the first outsiders to “discover” America. FACT-PAST

Mao was a more evil leader than Hitler. VALUE

The moral individual should never lie. VALUE

Viewing violent media leads to violent behavior. FACT-CAUSE