Definition

- Capital punishment, or the death penalty, is the killing of a person as a punishment for some offensive act also known as capital offenses or capital crimes.
- Capital offenses may include murder, treason, genocide, etc.
History

- Capital punishment has in the past been practiced in almost every society, although at this time only 58 nations actively practice it, with 95 countries abolishing it.
- Many other countries haven’t used it for decades or allow it only during wartime.
- The first capital punishment that took place in the United States was in 1608.

Methods

- Lethal Injection
- Electrocution
- Gas Chamber
- Hanging
- Firing Squad
Facts for....

- For every three murders that takes place outside of prison, one takes place inside.
- More humane than other types of punishment.
- Capital punishment allows more space in prisons.
- When a criminal is given a capital punishment, it dissuades others in the society from committing such serious crimes. Others refrain from these types of crimes due to fear of losing their own lives.
- If a criminal is jailed, he may again commit the same crime after being released from prison. Giving him capital punishment would make sure that the society is safe from being attacked by criminals. It seems to be an appropriate punishment for serial killers and for those who continue to commit crimes even after they had served their imprisonment.
Arguments for...

- Ending the life of a prisoner who has killed people could be stopping further murders.
- Without the option of capital punishment, inmates sentenced to life in prison could kill other inmates without further punishment.
- Inmates could potentially escape and kill innocent citizens.
- Preventing murders from happening is morally permissible.

- Therefore, the death penalty is morally permissible.

Arguments For...

- When a criminal commits a crime they get punished.
- The death penalty is a punishment for a murderer.
- Being punished for a crime is morally permissible.

- Therefore, the death penalty is morally permissible.
Facts against...
- Capital punishment is racially and financially biased.
  - Since 1977 the majority of death row defendants (77%) have been executed for killing white victims, even though African-Americans make up about half of all homicide victims.
  - Almost all death row inmates couldn’t afford their own attorney at trial. Local politics, the location of the crime, plea bargaining, and pure chance are what affect this process and make it like a “lottery”.
  "If you can afford the right lawyer, you’ve got the best legal system in the world." - Avery

Arguments Against
- Capital punishment is racially and financially biased.
- Bias is an inclination to hold a particular perspective even at the expense of other alternatives that may be equally valid.
- Holding a bias that could potentially be invalid is unfair.
- Being unfair is morally impermissible.

Therefore, capital punishment is impermissible.
More facts

- The death penalty can never be voluntary.
- The death penalty is not a deterrent.
  - FBI data shows that all 14 states without capital punishment in 2008 had homicide rates at or below the national rate.
- The death penalty costs more and diverts resources from genuine crime control.
- In many cases, the wrong person is convicted on death row.

Arguments Against...

- A criminal is a person.
- Each and every person has a right-to-life.
- Murder takes away the right-to-life.
- A capital punishment is a form of murder.
- Murder is morally impermissible.

- Therefore, capital punishment is morally impermissible.